

Tourists' demographics and consumer behavior: Unveiling differences in culinary tourism

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ABSTRACT

Culinary tourism has gained increasing attention as destinations seek to create memorable travel experiences. This research addresses a gap in the literature regarding how tourist demographics shape memorable culinary experiences and revisit intention. The study's main objective is to analyze the differences in tourists' demographic attributes, including age, gender, culinary expenditure, and culinary preferences, concerning their perceptions and intentions. The research used quantitative methods through a survey analysis of 400 domestic tourists in Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia. The impact of demographic differences was calculated using ANOVA and an independent-sample t-test with SPSS version 24. The results show that age and culinary expenditure differentiate the perception of memorable culinary tourism experiences. In contrast, no significant differences were found between the demographic variables of gender and culinary tourism preference. Moreover, no significant differences were found in tourists' perceptions of revisit intention across any demographic variables. These findings suggest that tourism managers and policymakers adopt a dual strategy: designing memorable and emotionally engaging culinary experiences across all groups while shifting from demographic-based targeting to psychographic and experiential segmentation. This study contributes to a better understanding of consumer behavior in culinary tourism and provides practical insights for destination management and policy development.

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1. Introduction

Culinary tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing niches in global travel, offering visitors the opportunity to engage with destinations through food, culture, and memory-making (Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2020; Martin et al., 2021). For destinations, culinary offerings are not merely an attraction but a strategic tool to differentiate themselves in a competitive tourism landscape (Recuero-Virto & Arróspide, 2024). In this context,



understanding how tourists perceive, recall, and act upon culinary experiences is crucial for destination management and loyalty building.

Magelang, located in Central Java and internationally recognized for the Borobudur Temple, has also gained attention for its distinctive culinary heritage. Local food and traditional beverages represent the region's unique cultural identity and appeal to both domestic and international travelers. The growing popularity of local food, combined with Magelang's role as a cultural and nature tourism stopover, makes it an ideal setting for examining how culinary experiences shape tourist perceptions and behavioral intentions.

While research on culinary tourism has expanded, many studies continue to treat tourists as a homogeneous group, overlooking how demographic factors (such as age, gender, income, and culinary preferences) shape experiences and outcomes (Seyfi et al., 2024). Recent studies suggest differences in culinary motivations across demographic segments (Agyeiwaah et al., 2019; Pasaco-González et al., 2023), while others point to convergence in preferences due to globalization and shared consumption patterns (Mak et al., 2012). Most existing models appear to be based on inadequate assumptions about tourist behavior and ignore the impact of demographic diversity on culinary tourism and tourist destination choices (Kovalenko et al., 2023; Bartl et al., 2025). Consequently, no consensus has been reached on whether demographic segmentation is essential for understanding culinary tourism behavior. This ambiguity highlights the need to revisit the issue with updated empirical evidence, particularly in emerging destinations such as Indonesia, where culinary tourism is both culturally grounded and economically strategic in nature.

An increase in the 'foodie' culture and interest in trying new foods from different localities have enabled the diversity of the culinary tourism sector (Balderas-Cejudo et al., 2019; Recuero-Virto & Arróspide, 2024). Although there is evidence that different demographic groups have different reasons for going on culinary tours, their preferences, and their levels of satisfaction (Agyeiwaah et al., 2019; Testa et al., 2019; Galati et al., 2023), most empirical studies consider all tourists as one group. For example, sharing new experiences may be more appealing to millennials than to older visitors, who may prioritize comfort and authenticity (Cavagnaro et al., 2018; Fan et al., 2022). This absence of demographic information contributes to the gap between theory and the complex realities of this field. Furthermore, a region's competitiveness is primarily determined by the willingness of people to revisit after enjoying a great meal (Zhang et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2024). However, many of these studies do not break down the data by specific demographics, meaning there is no clear answer to how different groups perceive and respond to their culinary experiences (Kovalenko et al., 2023; Recuero-Virto & Arróspide, 2024; Bartl et al., 2025). Very few researchers have focused on memorable culinary experiences and how their impacts differ among various age groups, sex, education levels, and income brackets.

To address this gap, the present study focuses on two constructs central to culinary tourism research: memorable culinary tourism experience (MCTE) and revisit intention. MCTE are emotionally engaging and distinctive food-related experiences that leave a lasting impression, enhancing destination value and traveller satisfaction (Stone et al., 2022). Revisit intention reflects tourists' willingness to return, recommend, and promote a destination, functioning as a key indicator of loyalty (Soliman, 2021; Lyu et al., 2023).

This research is novel in its scope of examining the specific impact of tourist demographics on memorable culinary tourism experiences and tourists' intentions to revisit a destination. It further applies a segmented analysis tailored to diverse demographic components, which broadens the understanding of culinary tourism behavior. This study significantly contributes to the development of tourism and culinary tourism theory, achieving greater depth of inquiry. This study seeks to understand the differences in the

perception of memorable local culinary tourism experiences and the intention to revisit driven by demographic factors such as age, gender, spending on culinary tours, and preferences.

This study suggests that tourists' perceptions differ based on their demographic details. Martin et al. (2021) and Brochado et al. (2022) emphasize the need to create effective destination marketing plans by examining the impact of demographic factors on shaping memorable culinary tourism experiences and revisiting intentions. With this study, we hope to contribute to tourism development by providing a more focused demographic approach to culinary tourism and bridging the gap in tourism research both theoretically and practically.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Literature Review

2.1.1. Consumer Behavior Theory

This study employs consumer behavior theory as the grand theory to explain the relationship between demographic factors, memorable culinary tourism experiences, and the intention to revisit. Consumer behavior refers to the actions consumers take in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products they hope will meet their needs (Solomon, 2018). According to Solomon et al. (2016), consumer behavior is the study of how individuals or groups select, purchase, use, and evaluate products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. Mowen and Minor (1998) define consumer behavior as the study of the units and decision-making processes involved in the acceptance, use, purchase, and disposition of goods, services, and concepts. In the context of culinary tourism, consumer behavior theory provides a conceptual lens for understanding how tourist demographics influence motivations, preferences, and subsequent evaluations of culinary experiences. Different demographic groups (e.g., age, gender, expenditure levels, and preferences) shape the expectations and perceptions of culinary offerings. For instance, younger travellers may be motivated by novelty and peer influence, whereas older tourists often value authenticity, comfort, and sensory pleasure (Fan et al., 2022). Furthermore, consumer behavior theory underscores the role of memorable culinary tourism experiences as a central outcome of the consumption process. Memorable experiences engage both emotional and cognitive dimensions, aligning with Engel et al. (1995) notion of affect and cognition in consumer decision-making. Prior studies have demonstrated that novelty, authenticity, and sensory richness in gastronomy contribute significantly to memorable experiences, which are then shaped by demographic variations in taste, expectations, and motivations (García-Pérez et al., 2024). Consumer behavior theory is closely tied to revisit intention because post-consumption evaluation and satisfaction influence future behavioral intentions. When tourists perceive culinary experiences as memorable and aligned with their demographic-driven needs and preferences, they are more likely to demonstrate loyalty through word-of-mouth and revisit intentions (Prayoga et al., 2023).

2.1.2. The Role of Tourist Demographics in Culinary Tourism

Demographics shape how tourists engage with and evaluate culinary experiences, including what they seek (motivations), how they appraise value (quality, emotional, and social), and whether they intend to return. Recent work using demographic segmentation shows that age, gender, and income groups can experience and value memorable tourism experiences differently, which in turn affects their intentions to recommend and revisit (Brochado et al., 2022). Evidence from a large-scale study on demographics and prior experience indicates that experiential quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions can vary across demographic profiles, even when

prior participation is controlled, highlighting that the tourist's characteristics (e.g., age, gender) matter for how experiences are interpreted (Pasaco-González et al., 2023). Generational cohorts also display distinct culinary tourism patterns. Research on Generation Z food tourists found that perceived restaurant innovativeness shapes cognitive food images and ultimately influences revisit intention for this younger segment, underscoring that age-linked preferences can structure food-related destination responses (Ding et al., 2022). At the experiential level, studies of memorable gastronomic experiences show that factors such as novelty, ambience, authenticity, and emotional engagement, often prioritized differently by demographic segments, drive what becomes memorable and valuable in culinary travel. These findings reinforce the need to consider demographic heterogeneity when theorizing and designing culinary experiences (Kovalenko et al., 2023). This literature positions demographics as a foundational lens for understanding culinary tourism: they inform motivations, filter perceptions of experience quality and value, and help explain variations in loyalty outcomes, such as revisit intention (Brochado et al., 2022).

2.1.3. Memorable Culinary Tourism Experience

The MCTE reveals a discrepancy between tourist satisfaction and their initial motivations for visiting (Stone et al., 2022; Stone & Sthapit, 2024). Such occurrences are infrequent and yield enduring consequences (Buckley Yadav, 2021; Buckley, 2022). MCTE is more than simply experiencing local food and hospitality; it contains an interactive component within the culture that engages and serves to enhance tourists' memories (Williams et al., 2019; Sthapit et al., 2019; Seyfi et al., 2020). These MCTE foster a sense of place that enhances the tourism value proposition (Zhang et al., 2019; Park and Widyanta, 2022). Tourists verbally share their amazing culinary experiences, enhancing the reputation of the tourist destination and increasing the number of visitors to the location (Choe & Kim, 2018; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021).

Recent studies have shown that demographic factors influence how culinary tourists recall their good culinary experiences (Di-Clemente et al., 2020; Pasaco-González et al., 2023). To improve its services and satisfy more tourists, a destination must understand the differences between these groups. Cheng et al. (2025) and Luong and Nguyen (2025) discuss the importance of tailoring various demographic culinary tourism profiles to ensure authenticity, cultural immersion, and service quality tailored to each group. These tourists experience greater satisfaction through this approach, which increases their loyalty and likelihood of recommending the destination, providing a competitive advantage (Hossain et al., 2023).

2.1.4. Revisit Intention

Revisit intention describes a tourist's willingness or readiness to return to a particular destination for tourism activities (Soliman, 2021; Lyu et al., 2023). It is a vital measure of loyalty to a tourist destination and can be influenced by different parameters, such as satisfaction and unforgettable experiences (Torabi et al., 2022; Soonsan et al., 2023). The literature defines revisit intention as a composite characteristic that includes the intention to return, recommend a specific site, and offer good testimonials (Chen et al., 2020; Mittal et al., 2022). As Viet et al. (2020) and Ding et al. (2022) highlight, demographic variables such as gender, age, and culture strongly shape perceptions of revisit intention in culinary tourism. Older tourists often consider risk perceptions and social approval (Lu, 2021), whereas younger tourists are motivated by novelty and peer or social influence via social media (Jiang et al., 2024). Gupta et al. (2023) and Thio et al. (2024) describe that these differences are shaped by tourists' satisfaction levels, socio-

demographic characteristics, destination value perception, and intended travel experience, creating a complex web of interrelated factors. Thus, demographic segmentation provides insights into how loyalty develops across different population segments.

2.2. Hypothesis Development

2.2.1. Gender and Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences

Gender differences in motivation are evident in culinary tourism. For instance, the functional taste and novelty of food are often more appealing to men than to women (Cordova-Buiza et al., 2021). Travelers can be grouped into three categories: survivors, connoisseurs, and experiencers. Among these, the experiencers segment tends to be more interested in local food, spends more than average, and reports higher satisfaction with their experiences (Nicoletti et al., 2019; Cordova-Buiza et al., 2021). Several studies have confirmed that gender may play a role in shaping memorable culinary experiences. For example, Movahed et al. (2020) analyzed culinary experiences in Iran and found that women expressed stronger desires for enjoyment, freedom, empowerment, and refreshment than men. Interestingly, no significant sex differences were observed in novelty, local culture, meaningfulness, or knowledge acquisition. Similarly, Matalas et al. (2023) observed that female tourists were more motivated by cultural immersion, excitement, interpersonal relationships, and health when engaging in culinary tourism. Meanwhile, male tourists tended to emphasize functional and hedonic aspects. In addition, Kaufman and Severt (2023) highlighted that gender differences emerge within psychocentric food tourism profiles, with women displaying higher motivation for authentic and socially engaging dining experiences. These findings suggest that gender differences in culinary tourism are not universal but manifest in certain motivational dimensions, such as emotional involvement, cultural connection, and social experience. From the perspective of consumer behavior theory, demographic characteristics such as gender are central to shaping motivations, evaluations, and decision-making in consumption (Figueroa-Domecq & Segovia-Perez, 2020; Kinawy, 2025). Gender influences how consumers perceive value, assign meaning, and recall experiences, leading to different levels of memorability in culinary tourism (Brakus et al. 2022). Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that male and female tourists may perceive memorable culinary experiences differently. **H₁: Tourists' Perceptions of Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences Differ Significantly by Gender**

2.2.2. Gender and Revisit Intention

Women and men differ considerably in their valuation and perception of travel attributes, which can influence their intentions to revisit (Hamdy et al. 2023). Previous studies have confirmed that gender differences often emerge in how tourists evaluate destinations and form loyalty-related behaviors. For instance, women and men differ in how they appraise food experience value and convert it into revisit intention, with women typically being more influenced by emotional or social value and men by functional value (Zhu et al., 2024; Leong et al., 2024; Tosun et al., 2024). Similarly, Chen and Lin (2012) found that gender moderates the relationship between destination satisfaction and revisit intention, with women more likely to translate satisfaction into repeat visitation. Recent research also emphasizes that female tourists are often more responsive to cultural and experiential dimensions, which enhance destination attachment and increase loyalty behaviors (Chen et al., 2023). Conversely, some studies suggest minimal or no gender differences in revisit intention, indicating that contextual factors, such as cultural homogeneity or destination inclusivity, may reduce gender-

based variation (Seyfi et al., 2020). From the perspective of consumer behavior theory, demographic characteristics such as gender influence how tourists evaluate their experiences and how these evaluations translate into future behavioral intentions such as loyalty and revisits. Gender shapes the cognitive, consumer decision-making, affective, and conative dimensions of consumer behavior, with the expectation that revisit intentions may differ between male and female tourists (Tosun et al., 2024). **H₂: Tourists' Perceptions of Revisit Intention Differ Significantly by Gender**

2.2.3. Age and Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences

A traveler's age influences how different culinary tourism experiences are remembered and appreciated, as each age group has distinct motivations, preferences, and modes of engagement. Older travelers have different forms of embodied cognition that shape their memorable travel experiences than younger travelers. These differences stem from older travelers' sensory pleasure and emotional engagement (Huang et al., 2022). Previous studies have supported this hypothesis. For example, Coelho and Gosling (2018) developed a scale for measuring MCTE. They found that dimensions such as novelty, environment, culture, meaningfulness, and emotions vary among demographic groups, including different age segments, where older tourists tend to assign greater value to the cultural and environmental components of memorable experiences. Sthapit (2017) found that novelty, authenticity, togetherness, and social interaction are key components of memorable food experiences, and older versus younger visitors differ in how much weight they place on novelty versus authenticity. From the perspective of consumer behavior theory as a grand theory, age is a critical demographic factor that shapes motivations, evaluations, and consumption outcomes. Differences in age groups influence the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of consumer decision-making, affecting the memorability of culinary tourism experiences (Batat, 2019). **H₃: Tourists' Perceptions of Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences Differ Significantly by Age**

2.2.4. Age and Revisit Intention

Senior travelers often consider self-efficacy and social factors, which can lower risk perceptions and enhance their intentions to revisit a location. Lu (2021) describes that environmental risk perception, particularly relevant for seniors, plays a crucial role in deciding to revisit, while socio-psychological risks may strengthen revisit intention. Older tourists are likely to have different intentions to revisit than younger tourists, and may be less satiated by repeat visits than younger travelers (Park et al., 2019). Lu (2021) finds that higher environmental risk perception for senior tourists can reduce revisit intention. However, revisit intentions remain strong when socio-psychological risk perceptions are managed (via trust, safety, and familiarity). Lhendup and Panda (2021) show that older age groups tend to assign more importance to perceived safety and risk mitigation, which moderates their intention to revisit destinations. From the perspective of consumer behavior theory, age reflects a key demographic dimension that influences post-consumption evaluation and behavioral outcomes. Variations in values, needs, and decision-making processes across age groups reinforce the expectation that revisit intentions differ between younger and older tourists (Batat, 2019). **H₄: Tourists' Perceptions of Revisit Intention Differ Significantly by Age**

2.2.5. Culinary Expenditure and Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences

A tourist's culinary expenditure levels likely to affect the memorability of their culinary experiences. Higher expenditure can enable access to unique, premium, or rare

culinary offerings, enhanced settings, and higher service quality, all of which amplify novelty, emotional engagement, and sensory richness. Kovalenko et al. (2023) found that among the factors contributing to a memorable gastronomic experience, novelty, food quality, ambience, and emotional involvement are significant, suggesting that those who invest more may extract greater experiential value. Similarly, García-Pérez and Castillo-Ortiz (2024) show that higher-end or premium culinary experiences often score higher on dimensions such as authenticity and sensory vividness in memory, showing differences in how these experiences are perceived compared to lower-spending culinary activities. Consumer behavior theory emphasizes that resource allocation is central to consumption. Expenditure represents both the ability and willingness to invest in experience quality, affecting how memorable those experiences become (Zhu et al., 2024). **H₅: Tourists' Perceptions of Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences Differ Significantly by Culinary Expenditure**

2.2.6. Culinary Expenditure and Revisit Intention

Different tourist segments prioritize local food taste, quality, and authenticity differently, influencing expenditure patterns. For example, cultural experiencers who value authenticity tend to exhibit higher culinary expenditure and stronger revisit intentions (Tiganis & Chrysochou, 2024). Overemphasis on the price and availability of tourist goods and services constitutes a disregard for fundamental importance, such as taste, quality, authenticity, and cultural connection. This permits distinguishing among market segments: sensory seekers, cultural experiencers, and price-conscious tourists, each differentiated by varying willingness to pay and intentions to revisit (Tiganis & Chrysochou, 2024). Prior research supports this hypothesis. For example, Thio et al. (2024) showed that food consumption value is associated with higher satisfaction and revisit intention among foreign tourists; those willing to pay more for quality/local authenticity tend to have stronger intentions to revisit. Similarly, Prayoga et al. (2023) found that in the Yogyakarta context, richer gastronomic experiences, which often correlate with higher culinary expenditure, lead to greater tourist satisfaction and thus a stronger intention to revisit. According to consumer behavior theory, the willingness to spend reflects consumer valuation and commitment to the experience, directly influencing future intentions. Thus, expenditure is a key determinant of predicting revisit behavior (Hu et al., 2024; García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024). **H₆: Tourists' Perceptions of Revisit Intention Differ Significantly by Culinary Expenditure**

2.2.7. Culinary Tourism Preferences and Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences

Foodies with strong preferences for unique, local, or immersive food experiences tend to be highly interested in culinary tourism activities, such as visiting local restaurants or attending food festivals. Their preferences are shaped by previous food-related travel experiences and cultural exposure (Andersson et al. 2015). In addition, travellers from different regions may have different preferences regarding the atmosphere, sensory richness, or educational components chefs offer during culinary experiences (Recuero-Virto & Arróspide, 2024). Recent studies have provided empirical support for this. For example, García-Pérez and Castillo-Ortiz (2024) show that preferences for novelty, authenticity, atmosphere, and sensory experience lead to stronger memorable gastro-tourism experiences among travellers who favor those attributes. Stone et al. (2022) found that culinary tourists who identify as food-motivated place a greater emphasis on sensory, emotional, and novel aspects of their food travel experiences, which increases the memorability of those experiences. Badu-Baiden et al. (2023) also demonstrate that preference differences (e.g., for local culture, ambience,

and novelty) contribute to variation in how memorable local food experiences are across traveller groups. From the perspective of consumer behavior theory, preferences drive how consumers process, interpret, and recall experiences. Culinary preferences influence cognitive and affective responses, reinforcing the memorability of gastronomic encounters (Stone & Zou, 2025). **H₇: Tourists' Perceptions of Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences Differ Significantly by Culinary Tourism Preferences**

2.2.8. Culinary Tourism Preferences and Revisit Intention

Different culinary preferences, such as preference for local cuisine versus modern/novel offerings and food festivals versus traditional meals, can influence taste, involvement, perceived value, and ultimately, revisit intention. For example, attendees who prefer novelty-rich food festivals or experiential food settings tend to spend more time and money and report stronger intentions to return to the festival. Carvache-Franco et al. (2023) found that food festival attendees with preferences for local cuisine, entertainment, socialization, and novelty had significantly higher intentions to revisit than those centered more on price or convenience. Chang et al. (2018) showed that food involvement and novelty-seeking positively impact food tourism behavior and, through behavior, influence the intention to revisit food festivals. Consumer behavior theory emphasizes the role of preferences in shaping satisfaction and loyalty. Thus, preferences serve as a critical mechanism linking immediate culinary experiences with future revisit behaviors (Zhu et al., 2024). **H₈: Tourists' Perceptions of Revisit Intention Differ Significantly by Culinary Tourism Preferences**

3. Research Methods

3.1. Population and Sampling Method

This study employs a quantitative research approach with a survey method to examine whether there are differences in perceptions of memorable culinary tourism experiences and revisit intention based on tourist demographics (age, gender, culinary expenditure, and culinary tourism preferences) in the context of local culinary tourism in Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia. The participants were domestic tourists who actively engaged in culinary activities during their visit. A total of 400 valid responses were obtained. Respondents were selected using purposive criteria (domestic tourists, ≥17 years old, engaging in at least one culinary activity in Magelang) and convenience sampling at street food centers, restaurants, and culinary festivals. Data collection was conducted at multiple sites and across varied time blocks to reduce selection bias and ensure diversity in the respondent profiles. This approach is suitable because it allows for the collection of numerical data from a large sample, enabling statistical analysis to objectively identify significant differences and patterns.

3.2. Data Collecting Method

Data for this study were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed to respondents during their visit to Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia. The instrument consisted of multiple items designed as indicators for each variable under investigation, with all responses rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). This format allowed for a nuanced assessment of the participants' perceptions and intentions. The measurement of memorable culinary tourism experience (MCTE) was adapted from established scales in prior tourism research, particularly the multidimensional framework proposed by Sthapit (2017), Sthapit et al. (2020), and Stone et al. (2017), using 14 items. Revisit intention (RI) was measured using nine items adapted from Rasoolimanesh et al. (2023) and Kareem and Venugopal (2024).

3.3. Data Analysis Method

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and means, were first applied to summarize the respondents' demographic characteristics and provide an overview of the measured constructs. A pilot test was conducted before the main survey to ensure the instrument's reliability and validity. The reliability of a research instrument is considered acceptable when the Cronbach's alpha value exceeds 0.6. Simultaneously, construct validity is deemed adequate if the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r-count) is greater than the r-table (Ghozali, 2016). To examine group differences across demographic variables, independent-samples t-tests (for binary variables such as gender) and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) (for categorical variables such as age, culinary expenditure, and culinary preference) were conducted, with a significance threshold of $p \leq 0.05$ (Field, 2018). All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 24, which provided a rigorous and transparent basis for interpreting the study results.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the respondents. The culinary tourism demographic profile analysis shows a unique feature in Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia, where female respondents accounted for 62.3% and male respondents for 37.8%. This indicates a disproportionate number of women participating in tourism activities related to the area's culinary offerings. The age distribution of the respondents was centered mainly between 28 and 38 years of age (33%) and 17 to 27 years (32%). These older youths and young professionals, particularly mid-career millennials, tend to be more locally motivated in culinary tourism. Concerning meal expenditure, 34.5% of respondents spent between IDR 1,500,001 - IDR 2,000,000, with a notable share of 25.3% spending between IDR 1,000,001 - IDR 1,500,000. Culinary tourists in Magelang enjoy food experiences and are willing to spend considerable money, which means a moderate-to-substantial economic impact on the region's tourism sector. Respondents mostly selected "restaurants serving local culinary dishes" as the key focal point of culinary tourism, showing a strong appetite for traditional dishes that reflect the region's culture. Furthermore, 31.3% of respondents selected "local culinary festivals," while 30.5% chose "quality restaurants," highlighting the various motives of culinary tourists, including authenticity and gastronomy.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	151	37.8
	Female	249	62.3
Age	17 - 27 years old	128	32.0
	28 - 38 years old	132	33.0
	39 - 49 years old	62	15.5
	50 - 60 years old	78	19.5
	> 60 years old	19	4.8
Culinary Expenditure	IDR 100.000 - IDR. 500.000	50	12.5
	IDR 500.001 - IDR 1.000.000	92	23.0
	IDR 1.000.001 - IDR 1.500.000	101	25.3
	IDR 1.500.001 - IDR 2.000.000	138	34.5
	> IDR 2.000.000	19	4.8
Culinary Tourism Preferences	Local culinary festival	125	31.3
	Quality restaurants	122	30.5
	Restaurants serving local culinary	153	38.3

4.2. Validity Test Result

The validity test in this study employed Pearson's product-moment correlation. An item is considered valid if its correlation coefficient is greater than the r-table value (0.361) at a 0.05 significance level (Ghozali, 2016). The questionnaire comprised 23 statements distributed across two core research variables. Specifically, the MCTE variable comprised 14 valid statement items, while the revisit intention variable contained nine valid statement items. Table 2 presents the validity test results.

Table 2. Validity Test Result

Indicator	Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences	Revisit Intention
MCTE1	0.649	
MCTE2	0.685	
MCTE3	0.669	
MCTE4	0.690	
MCTE5	0.726	
MCTE6	0.754	
MCTE7	0.736	
MCTE8	0.725	
MCTE9	0.714	
MCTE10	0.714	
MCTE11	0.718	
MCTE12	0.761	
MCTE13	0.749	
MCTE14	0.736	
RI1		0.844
RI2		0.861
RI3		0.851
RI4		0.819
RI5		0.833
RI6		0.831
RI7		0.885
RI8		0.877
RI9		0.885

4.3. Reliability Test Result

Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire. A measurement tool is deemed reliable when its Cronbach's alpha value exceeds 0.6 (Ghozali, 2016). Based on Table 3, which shows the Cronbach's alpha values for the memorable culinary tourism experience variable and revisit intention, the questionnaire employed in this study is reliable.

Table 3. Reliability Test Result

Variable	Cronbach's alpha
Memorable Culinary Tourism Experience	0.766
Revisit Intention	0.791

4.4. Examination of Variables within the Scope of Difference Analysis T-test Results for Independent Samples and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The independent-sample t-test results in Table 4 reveal that tourists' perceptions of memorable culinary tourism experiences do not differ significantly by gender at the 0.05 significance level. The mean score for male tourists was 3.48, while for female tourists, it was slightly lower at 3.46, indicating similar evaluations between the two groups. Similarly, the test for revisiting intention also showed no statistically significant

difference between male and female tourists, with both groups reporting nearly identical mean scores (3.84 for males and 3.88 for females). These findings suggest that gender does not significantly shape how tourists remember their culinary experiences or their intention to return to Magelang for culinary tourism. In this context, the first and second hypotheses were rejected.

Table 4. Independent-Samples T-Test for The Gender Variable

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std Dev	T Value	P Value
Memorable Culinary	Male	151	3.48	0.456	0.476	0.635 ^{ns}
Tourism Experience	Female	249	3.46	0.405		
Revisit Intention	Male	151	3.84	0.630	-0.511	0.610 ^{ns}
	Female	249	3.88	0.610		

*significant $p \leq 0.05$; ^{ns} not significant.

The one-way ANOVA results in Table 5 reveal that tourists' perceptions of memorable culinary tourism experiences differ significantly by age group at the 0.05 significance level. Among the age categories, tourists aged 39–49 years reported the highest mean score (3.59), indicating that they perceived their culinary experiences in Magelang to be more memorable than those of other groups, particularly those aged 17–27 years, who had the lowest mean score (3.42). This suggests that older tourists may value authentic and culturally rich food experiences more. However, the ANOVA test for revisit intention showed no significant difference across age groups, indicating that tourists' intentions to revisit the culinary destination remain relatively uniform regardless of age. In this context, the third hypothesis was accepted and the fourth hypothesis was rejected.

Table 5. ANOVA Test for The Age Variable

Variable	Age	N	Mean	Std Dev	F Value	P Value
Memorable Culinary	17 – 27 years old	128	3.42	0.377	2.560	0.050 [*]
Tourism Experience	28 - 38 years old	132	3.47	0.431		
	39 - 49 years old	62	3.59	0.487		
	50 - 60 years old	78	3.48	0.421		
Revisit Intention	17 – 27 years old	128	3.86	0.578	0.766	0.513 ^{ns}
	28 - 38 years old	132	3.82	0.608		
	39 - 49 years old	62	3.96	0.654		
	50 - 60 years old	78	3.87	0.667		

*significant $p \leq 0.05$; ^{ns} not significant.

The ANOVA test results presented in Table 6 show that tourists' perceptions of memorable culinary tourism experiences differ significantly by culinary expenditure level at the 0.05 significance level. Among the expenditure categories, tourists who spent more than IDR 2,000,000 had the highest mean score (3.67), indicating that higher spending is associated with more memorable culinary experiences. In contrast, tourists in the IDR 500,001 – IDR 1,000,000 category had the lowest mean score (3.39), suggesting that tourists with lower culinary budgets may have less immersive or impactful experiences. However, the ANOVA test for revisit intention showed no significant difference across expenditure groups, indicating that tourists' intentions to return to Magelang for culinary tourism are not strongly influenced by their spending level. In this context, the fifth hypothesis was accepted and the sixth hypothesis was rejected.

Table 6. ANOVA Test for The Culinary Expenditure Variable

Variable	Culinary expenditure	N	Mean	Std Dev	F Value	P Value
Memorable	IDR 100.000 – IDR 500.000	50	3.46	0.385	1.248	0.050 *
Culinary	Rp 500.001 – IDR 1.000.000	92	3.39	0.373		
Tourism	IDR 1.000.001 – IDR 1.500.000	101	3.43	0.429		
Experience	IDR 1.500.001 – IDR 2.000.000	138	3.52	0.455		
	IDR 2.000.000	19	3.67	0.444		
Revisit	IDR 100.000 – IDR 500.000	50	3.89	0.645		
Intention	Rp 500.001 – IDR 1.000.000	92	3.80	0.582		
	IDR 1.000.001 – IDR 1.500.000	101	3.82	0.604		
	IDR 1.500.001 – IDR 2.000.000	138	3.89	0.629		
	IDR 2.000.000	19	4.11	0.678		

*significant $p \leq 0.05$; ^{ns} not significant.

The one-way ANOVA results in Table 7 indicate that tourists' perceptions of memorable culinary tourism experiences do not differ significantly by culinary tourism preferences at the 0.05 significance level. The highest mean score was found among tourists who preferred quality restaurants (mean = 3.50), followed closely by those who preferred restaurants serving local culinary (mean = 3.46) and local culinary festivals (mean = 3.44). However, these differences were not statistically significant, suggesting that the type of culinary tourism preference, whether formal dining, street food, or festival-based, does not substantially influence the memorability of the experience. Likewise, the ANOVA test for revisit intention also revealed no significant difference across culinary tourism preference groups, with all groups reporting similar levels of intention to return to Magelang. Therefore, culinary tourism preferences do not appear to be a determining factor in shaping either the experience's memorability or the desire to revisit. In this context, both the seventh and eighth hypotheses were rejected.

Table 7. ANOVA Test For the Culinary Tourism Preferences Variable

Variable	Culinary tourism preferences	N	Mean	Std Dev	F Value	P Value
Memorable	Local culinary festival	125	3.44	0.411	0.586	0.557 ^{ns}
Culinary	Quality restaurants	122	3.50	0.435		
Tourism	Restaurants serving local culinary	153	3.46	0.427		
Experience						
Revisit	Local culinary festival	125	3.89	0.589	1.693	0.185 ^{ns}
Intention	Quality restaurants	122	3.92	0.595		
	Restaurants serving local culinary	153	3.79	0.654		

*significant $p \leq 0.05$; ^{ns} not significant.

4.5. Discussion

This study examined the differences in demographic factors (gender, age, culinary expenditure, and culinary preferences) concerning MCTE and revisit intention in Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia. The results revealed significant and non-significant differences, which can be interpreted through the lens of consumer behavior theory (Solomon, 2018; Mowen & Minor, 1998). Together, these frameworks explain how demographic characteristics shape tourists' evaluations of experiences and their behavioral intentions.

4.5.1. Gender and Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences

Gender can act as a differentiating factor in shaping perceptions and memories of culinary experiences are perceived and remembered. Movahed et al. (2020) demonstrated that female tourists often value cultural immersion, emotional

engagement, and social connection more than their male counterparts, who are inclined toward the hedonic and functional aspects of food consumption. In contrast to this study, the analysis showed that gender did not significantly impact the difference in assessing memorable culinary tourism experiences or revisit intention. Male and female tourists evaluated culinary experiences in Magelang similarly and expressed similar probabilities of returning to the destination. This indicates that gender is not a culinary tourism perception-determining factor and supports studies that lean towards the absence of gender relevance in the outcomes of experiential tourism (Seyfi et al., 2024). There was no significant difference between the genders regarding the memorability of culinary experiences. Memorability is more closely associated with the uniqueness of an experience, such as food and its setting (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016; Afaq et al., 2023). Wijaya et al. (2017) showed that masculinity and femininity do not shape perceptions as much as the overall food and setting experiences. This indicates that culinary experiences in Magelang will likely appeal to all tourists, regardless of gender, suggesting that marketing strategies do not need to be based on gender segmentation. To strengthen these findings, the Consumer Behavior Theory is the grand theory explaining the relationship between demographics and experiential evaluations. According to Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015), consumer behavior is not solely shaped by demographic characteristics. However, it is more strongly influenced by psychological, cultural, and situational factors that drive perceptions of value and satisfaction. In culinary tourism, this theory suggests that the memorability of experiences is less dependent on gender identity and more determined by the sensory, symbolic, and cultural dimensions of food consumption (Sthapit, 2019; Yin et al. 2023).

4.5.2. Gender and Revisit Intention

The findings show no significant differences in revisit intentions between male and female culinary tourists. Both groups demonstrated a relatively similar willingness to return and recommend the destination for its culinary experiences. This outcome differs from prior studies that suggested that women may express stronger loyalty behaviors in tourism due to higher relational orientation and emotional involvement (Cordova-Buiza et al., 2021). However, it supports other findings that report no significant differences across genders when contextual and cultural factors dominate tourist behavior (Seyfi et al., 2024). Several contextual explanations may account for these results. First, culinary tourism products, such as traditional dishes, food festivals, and street food culture, provide an inclusive experience that appeals to both genders. Second, the relatively homogeneous composition of the sample, consisting mostly of domestic tourists, may have reduced variability in revisit intention across genders. The findings are grounded in grand consumer behavior theory, which suggests that gender-based differences in loyalty diminish when contextual factors, such as cultural identity, inclusivity, and domestic familiarity shape tourist experiences (Seyfi et al., 2024; Leong et al., 2024). This supports the view that culinary tourism provides a universally engaging platform that appeals to both genders equally.

4.5.3. Age and Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences

The results indicate significant differences in memorable culinary tourism experiences among different age groups. Younger tourists emphasized novelty, social interaction, and sharing experiences, whereas older tourists valued authenticity, tradition, and cultural depth. These findings align with prior studies highlighting age-

related variations in motivation and perception within culinary tourism (Afaq et al., 2016; Afaq et al., 2023). This observation is consistent with Sie et al. (2021), who posited that individuals are more adept at optimizing their experiences as they age. Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016) found that middle-aged travellers prioritize culturally rich food experiences and appreciate the socio-narrative dimensions of local cuisine. By situating the results in grand consumer behavior theory, the findings highlight that age-related differences in memorable culinary tourism experiences are not random but are systematically shaped by broader consumer value orientations and life-stage influences (Hung & Lu, 2016; Cavagnaro et al., 2021). This theoretical grounding reinforces the claim that culinary tourism must be designed to appeal to various age groups by balancing novelty, social interaction, and cultural authenticity.

4.5.4. Age and Revisit Intention

The results indicate no significant differences in revisit intention between the age groups. In this sample, younger and older tourists demonstrated a relatively similar willingness to return to Magelang for culinary tourism. This finding contrasts with studies that emphasize age as a differentiating factor in loyalty (Huang et al., 2022). This supports other research showing that when a destination provides consistently positive culinary experiences, age may not create substantial differences in revisit behavior (Seyfi et al., 2024). The lack of notable age-related variations in the intention to revisit suggests more complex behavioral patterns. Senior travellers may regard their experiences as more significant; however, health limitations, travel frequency, or the pursuit of novelty may considerably restrict their authentic inclination to revisit. This corroborates the findings of Brochado et al. (2022) and Rasoolimanesh et al. (2025), who argued that the desire to revisit is predominantly influenced by satisfaction, perceived value, and loyalty, with negligible emphasis on demographic factors. By situating the findings within the grand consumer behavior theory, it becomes evident that age is less predictive of revisit intention than experiential quality, satisfaction, and loyalty dynamics (Satar et al., 2023; Zhang & Ha, 2023). This theoretical lens supports the conclusion that demographic segmentation based solely on age may be less effective than strategies that emphasize consistent value creation and positive tourist experiences (Carstensen & Hershfield, 2021; Dahanayake et al., 2024).

4.5.5. Culinary Expenditure and Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences

The findings show significant differences in memorable culinary tourism experiences based on tourists' culinary expenditure levels. Tourists who reported higher spending levels tended to evaluate their culinary experiences as more memorable than those with lower spending levels (Stone et al., 2022; Nowacki et al., 2023). This result aligns with prior research, suggesting that expenditure often enhances the quality, diversity, and richness of tourism experiences (Weingarten & Goodman, 2021). Higher expenditure enables tourists to access premium dining venues, a wider variety of food, and more immersive cultural settings, all of which contribute to stronger memories and greater experiential satisfaction. Conversely, lower expenditure may restrict tourists to simpler culinary encounters, which, while enjoyable, may not generate the same level of memorability. Thus, the results suggest that, within this sample, culinary expenditure does not significantly differentiate tourists' memorable culinary experience. This highlights the inclusive nature of Magelang's culinary tourism, where both budget-conscious and higher-spending tourists can enjoy experiences that are equally distinctive and meaningful to them.

Grounding these findings in consumer behavior theory, it becomes evident that while expenditure can amplify memorability by broadening access to experiences, even modest culinary spending can yield meaningful and lasting impressions when cultural and emotional factors dominate (Stone et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2022; García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024). This reinforces the inclusivity and universal appeal of culinary tourism offerings in Magelang.

4.5.6. Culinary Expenditure and Revisit Intention

The results indicate no significant differences in revisit intention across groups of tourists with different culinary expenditures. In this sample, lower- and higher-spending tourists expressed relatively similar willingness to return to Magelang for culinary tourism. This outcome contrasts with several studies that suggest that higher expenditure is often linked to stronger loyalty intentions because tourists who invest more resources tend to seek to “maximise” the value of their spending through repeat visits (Weingarten & Goodman, 2021). However, this finding is consistent with research showing that revisit intention is influenced more by overall satisfaction, cultural authenticity, and destination accessibility than money spent (Seyfi et al., 2024). Therefore, these findings imply that, within this sample, culinary expenditure is not a key determinant of revisit intention. This highlights the inclusivity of Magelang’s culinary tourism sector, where tourists with varying budgets can develop loyalty and intention to return. By situating the findings within the grand consumer behavior theory, it is evident that expenditure does not inherently predict revisit loyalty; rather, satisfaction, value perception, and cultural resonance are the key drivers (Hu et al., 2024; Qiu et al., 2024). This reinforces the conclusion that Magelang’s culinary tourism offers experiences capable of generating loyalty across diverse spending groups, underscoring its inclusive and accessible appeal to tourists.

4.5.7. Culinary Tourism Preferences and Memorable Culinary Tourism Experiences

The findings reveal no significant differences in memorable culinary tourism experiences among tourists with different culinary preferences, whether for traditional, modern, fine, or street food. In this sample, all groups reported relatively similar levels of memorability in their experiences. This result contrasts with earlier studies, suggesting that food preferences can shape how tourists evaluate and recall experiences, with “foodies” or authenticity-seeking tourists often perceiving greater memorability (Andersson et al., 2015; Nicoletti et al., 2019). However, this aligns with research indicating that when a destination offers consistently high-quality and culturally distinctive products, the differences across preference groups may diminish (Seyfi et al., 2024). Magelang’s culinary options are likely to fulfill diverse preferences, resulting in minimal perceptual differences. Alternatively, it may demonstrate the growing convergence in preferences and expectations among modern culinary travellers, regardless of their classification (Yang et al., 2024). Situating these findings within the grand consumer behavior theory, it becomes evident that memorability in culinary tourism depends more on experiential quality, cultural resonance, and value creation than on preference categories (Carvalho et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2024). This supports the conclusion that Magelang’s culinary tourism can appeal broadly, fostering meaningful and memorable experiences across diverse tourist demographics.

4.5.8. Culinary Tourism Preferences and Revisit Intention

The results indicate no significant differences in revisit intentions among tourists with varying culinary preferences. In this sample, tourists generally expressed a similar willingness to return to Magelang, regardless of their culinary inclinations. This finding diverges from prior studies suggesting that food preferences can influence loyalty intentions, with authenticity seekers or fine-dining tourists often exhibiting stronger destination attachment (Nicoletti et al., 2019). However, it supports research showing that destination-wide factors, such as cultural authenticity, accessibility, and overall satisfaction, may outweigh specific food-type preferences in shaping revisit behavior (Seyfi et al., 2024). Thus, the findings suggest that, within this sample, culinary preferences are not a significant determinant of revisit intention. Instead, Magelang's diverse culinary offerings appear to be capable of fostering consistent loyalty across different segments of food-oriented tourists. By situating these findings within the grand consumer behavior theory, it becomes evident that revisit intention is shaped less by specific culinary preferences and more by the perceived satisfaction, authenticity, and overall experience quality of the destination (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2022). This theoretical lens reinforces the idea that Magelang's diverse and inclusive culinary offerings can cultivate loyalty across a wide range of tourists, regardless of their food-related preferences.

5. Conclusion

This study examines the differences in tourists' demographic attributes concerning their perceptions of memorable culinary tourism experiences and their intention to revisit culinary tourism in Magelang Regency, Indonesia. The findings indicate that age and culinary expenditure differentiate the perception of MCTE, with middle-aged and high-spending tourists evaluating their experiences more favorably. These results support existing frameworks on socio-demographic segmentation, consumer maturity, and the role of life cycle factors in shaping experience intensity. In contrast, sex and culinary preferences did not produce significant differences, suggesting a homogeneous perception of culinary experiences across these groups. More importantly, none of the demographic variables explored significantly differentiated the intention to revisit the destination. These findings align with attitudinal theories of consumer behavior, indicating that demographic attributes alone cannot account for post-visit intentions.

Theoretically, this study advances culinary tourism scholarship by clarifying the limited role of demographics in explaining the intention to revisit. It highlights demographics as contextual moderators of memorable experiences rather than direct predictors of loyalty. By distinguishing between experience formation and loyalty formation, this study strengthens the theoretical understanding of how tourist satisfaction develops over time and across stages of the travel experience.

Practically, the findings suggest a dual strategy for how tourist satisfaction develops over time and across stages of the travel experience. First, destinations should design memorable and emotionally engaging experiences through heritage storytelling, cooking workshops, and curated culinary events to stimulate favorable perceptions across all groups. Second, marketers should shift from demographic-based targeting to psychographic and experiential segmentation and identify tourists by their motivations (e.g., novelty and authenticity seekers) rather than age or gender. For high-spending tourists, premium yet authentic offerings can be developed, while broader branding campaigns should emphasize emotional value and cultural authenticity to appeal to a universal audience. Policymakers can further support this by integrating culinary heritage into destination branding and

incentivizing small businesses to innovate while retaining their authenticity. the pathways through which tourists' perceptions evolve into their behavioral intentions. These strategies aim to attract and appeal to all tourists, regardless of their demographic characteristics. Further research is recommended to develop brand comparison studies in different Southeast Asian culinary tourism destinations for broader cross-cultural generalization and contextualization.

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