

Conference report

Ian Seymour Yeoman

Symposium – The Future of Food Tourism and Gastronomy

Date: 27th May 2025

Location: NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences, Leeuwarden, Netherlands

URL: <https://creatingwhatsnext.com/online-symposium-27-may-what-is-the-future-of-food-tourism-and-gastronomy/>

For the launch of a new book, *2075: The Future(s) of Food Tourism* by Kim *et al.* (2025), the editors organized an online symposium to explore the future of food tourism and gastronomy. Our present understanding of food tourism is focused on the concept of authenticity and culture, which is shaped by history, landscapes and people. But what if the future wasn't this because of climate change? The editors explored the scenarios of the book, and contributors discussed futuristic concepts of innovation set in 2075.

Webinar 1: meet the editors

The webinar “meet the editors” introduced the team behind the book *2075: The Future(s) of Food Tourism*, a forward-looking exploration of how food tourism may evolve in response to climate change, technological innovation and shifting cultural values. Editors Una McMahon-Beattie (Ulster University), Ian Yeoman (Hotel Management School Leeuwarden), Sean Kim (Edith Cowan University) and Eerang Park (Edith Cowan University) reflected on their motivations for the book, noting that their earlier work lacked foresight regarding environmental and technological disruptions. This new volume uses scenario planning to imagine multiple futures for food tourism, emphasizing the need to think beyond traditional concepts like localism and authenticity. The editors discussed four key themes: climate change and innovation, cultural roots and identity, exclusivity and political discourse and well-being and sustainability.

The conversation highlighted how food tourism is increasingly central to travel experiences and cultural expression while also being deeply entangled with global challenges. The editors emphasized that food tourism is not just about consumption but also about storytelling, identity and activism. They discussed how gastronomy fits into the book as a multidisciplinary lens and how the scenarios can be used by educators, destination planners and policymakers to inspire innovation and resilience. The session concluded with reflections on the book's creative process and its potential to reshape how we think about food, travel, and the future.

Webinar Recording: <https://weblectures.nhstenden.com/P2G/Player/Player.aspx?id=eCdNam>

Webinar 2: scenarios for the future of food tourism

The webinar introduced the four future scenarios developed in the book *2075: The Future(s) of Food Tourism*. The editors, Ian Yeoman and Una McMahon-Beattie, explain that the book was created in response to the limitations of their earlier work, which took a linear view of the future. Using scenario

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planning methodology, they developed four distinct futures based on two key drivers: access to food tourism (community vs. exclusivity) and tourist identity (hedonism vs. bohemianism). These drivers formed the basis for four scenarios: Roots (community + bohemianism), Dr Spock's Restaurant (community + hedonism), Royal Mayfair (exclusivity + hedonism) and La Natura Food Trail (exclusivity + bohemianism). Each scenario explores different responses to climate change, technological innovation and cultural shifts, offering diverse pathways for the future of food tourism.

The session emphasized how these scenarios serve as tools for strategic thinking, innovation and education. They help students and professionals alike to imagine multiple futures, understand the implications of global trends and develop adaptive strategies. The editors highlighted how storytelling and design challenges bring these scenarios to life, encouraging creativity and critical thinking. The discussion also touched on the role of gastronomy in shaping cultural identity and community and how entrepreneurs can use these insights to develop niche, sustainable food tourism experiences. The session concluded with reflections on how the book might evolve in a second edition, with greater emphasis on AI and rapid technological change.

Webinar Recording: <https://weblectures.nhlstenden.com/P2G/Player/Player.aspx?id=ZsSqr>

Webinar 3: futuristic innovations in gastronomy and food tourism

The third webinar of the symposium focused on innovative responses to future food tourism scenarios, with contributions from leading researchers. Dr Anke Arts and Ben Wielenga (European Tourism Futures Institute) envisioned a futuristic floating sea farm restaurant in the Dutch Wadden Sea, where climate change, scientific food production and robotization redefine food tourism. Dr Eunice Tan (Singapore Institute of Management) explored the preservation of cultural identity through Peranakan cuisine in Singapore, emphasizing storytelling, nostalgia and multimodal dining experiences as a counterpoint to homogenized global food systems. Dr Felipe Koch (University of Paris-Est Créteil) presented a provocative scenario in which wine becomes a rare, restricted luxury, turning each bottle into a “liquid jewel” and highlighting the social and economic implications of scarcity, blockchain authentication and experiential exclusivity.

Dr Francesc Fusté-Forné (University of Girona) and Dr Alicia Orea Giner (Universidad Rey Juan Carlos) introduced a vision of home hospitality in remote rural areas, where regenerative tourism and ancestral food practices become central to future food experiences. Their scenario emphasized slowness, deep human connection, and the rejection of technological saturation in favor of authenticity and sustainability. The panelists collectively underscored that innovation in food tourism must go beyond novelty – it should foster cultural preservation, inclusivity, and ecological responsibility. The session concluded with reflections on how these speculative futures can inspire real-world strategies for entrepreneurs, educators and policymakers, encouraging a shift from reactive to visionary thinking in the face of climate and societal change.

Webinar Recording: <https://weblectures.nhlstenden.com/P2G/Player/Player.aspx?id=dz71ty>

Working the scenarios

An in-house workshop held on May 27 at NHL Stenden with attendees from across the Hotel Management School Leeuwarden, the Academy of Tourism & Leisure and the Economic Board Groningen, participants explored the future of food tourism and gastronomy, drawing upon the morning's symposium and the contents of *2075: The Future(s) of Food Tourism*. Issues included authenticity, globalization, climate change and technological advancement.

Participants discussed the tension between standardization and diversity in food culture, emphasizing the need for a balanced approach that avoids extremes. Scenarios like “Dr Spock” highlighted the potential of technology to enhance food production and personalization while also raising concerns about the loss of food knowledge and cultural identity. The “Roots” scenario focused on preserving individuality and heritage through policies like agritourism, drawing

inspiration from countries like Italy. The group stressed the importance of education, storytelling and pride in local cuisine to maintain cultural richness.

Further discussions revolved around the “Royal Mayfair” and “Natural Food Trail” scenarios, which emphasized the value of treating food with respect and rediscovering forgotten local ingredients. These ideas aim to elevate everyday food experiences while ensuring inclusivity and sustainability. The workshop also generated research questions addressing the societal, environmental and economic impacts of future food systems. Suggestions included integrating these themes into education, supporting local entrepreneurs and fostering collaboration among chefs, policymakers and researchers. The overarching goal was to create a resilient and culturally rich food future for the northern provinces of the Netherlands, grounded in awareness, innovation and community engagement.

References

Kim, S., McMahon-Beatte, U., Park, E. and Yeoman, I. (2025), 2075: *The Future of Food Tourism*, Channel View.

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