

ABSTRACT

The research showed that most of the Thai consumers have ranked the factors related to the uniqueness or the authenticity of the food to be most important for them while selecting to dine at the ethnic restaurants. The consumers are aware that ethnic food are difficult to cook at home and ranked the factors related to the food authenticity, uniqueness and appearance of the food to be the most important factor of dining at ethnic restaurants.

The ethnic restaurants have the high scope in to maintain the product differentiation strategy by maintaining their food authenticity, food appearance and uniqueness in order to serve wide range of consumers. The consumers have ranked the factors related to the exchange of culture to be next highest important after then food authenticity. The ethnic restaurant has the advantage of consisting ethnic culture over the other restaurants. This differentiated feature of the ethnic restaurant has been useful in gaining and attracting their customers.

The consumers feel of being a part of ethnic culture while dining at the ethnic restaurants. The display of ethnic culture can be enhanced by creating the ethnic atmosphere in the restaurant, displaying cultural pictures on the walls and the menu cards, using of the physical tangibles including the eating equipments and the playing of ethnic music in the background of the restaurant. The consumers have ranked the factors enhancing the creation of ethnic atmosphere to be the next important factor following the exchange of culture

This study provides information which facilitates better understandings of Thai consumers and their behaviors in the selection of restaurants. There are several suggestions which can be drawn from the results of this study. As Thai consumers give high importance to the restaurant image, the restaurants are advised to focus in all the elements which would contribute to improve the restaurants image. The managements of ethnic restaurants are advised to maintain their product differentiation strategy by providing the authentic taste. The food authenticity, uniqueness of food and appearance of food are the most important factors that Thai consumers consider to be important while dining at the ethnic restaurants.

The research was conducted in the city of Bangkok. Further research could be conducted at the other provinces of Thailand to find out more about Thai consumers.