

Culinary Visions Panel Reveals Latest Foodie Trend Customers want variety and food markets are offering options.

As customers look for new dining experiences, food markets and festivals are piquing their interest.

Culinary Visions Panel's latest research explores consumer attitudes towards experiential-based dining opportunities such as food halls, farmers markets, emporiums and arcades.



The inspiration for this emerging market report was a recent study by Culinary Visions Panel which found **85% of consumers saying they love to attend food focused events and food festivals.** Whether permanent or pop up venues, food focused market style experiences are captivating consumers throughout the U.S. and abroad. This new 2017 study, titled **"Food Market Culture Report,"** highlights how experiential dining concepts tap into consumers' desire to explore, learn, sample and shop food.

"Consumers are looking for new and enjoyable ways to incorporate socialization, shopping and eating in their busy lifestyles," said Sharon Olson, executive director of Culinary Visions Panel. "Food experiences, such as visiting an artisanal foods market or a food truck festival, attract consumers with their variety of foods and cuisines, as well as the chance to connect with the people producing them."

The food culture in the U.S. is pervasive among consumers of all ages and consumers crave an experience when they are looking for more than a fast fueling experience. **60% of the consumers surveyed say shopping at food markets is one of their favorite types of food experiences** while 67% of the respondents wished there were more farmers markets in their local areas. 62% of consumers surveyed said they were more impressed by visiting a farmers market than a supermarket.

The food market culture provides a food experience that allows consumers to feed multi-tasking lifestyles. At food markets and food halls, consumers can have a dining experience, socialize with friends and pick up some grocery items for home all in one venue. 57% of the consumers surveyed said they enjoyed going to the market because it's **just as much a social occasion as it is a shopping trip.**

Besides shopping, consumers gravitate towards food markets because of the invigorating atmosphere found in food halls, arcades and emporiums. **60% of consumers surveyed for this report said they like to roam around with a beverage and absorb the whole environment of the market.** 62% of the consumers surveyed said that they love the collaborative energy at a food market.

Another reason for today's growing food market culture is the **consumer's desire for variety.** Consumers want relevant variety in the form of specialty food markets based around one single cuisine or specialized foods. 57% of the consumers surveyed in this study said they like to buy from artisanal food producers they find at local markets and 52% said that they are more inclined to visit a specialized vendor at a market as opposed to a deli.

There is also an equally strong desire for multicultural variety in the form of food halls where you can have tacos and ramen in the same meal. **59% of the consumers surveyed in this study said they loved going to food halls because of the variety of food vendors**, while 54% said they were inclined to start going to food halls because they had a little something for everyone.

Other factors driving consumer interest in food markets is the desire for trust and knowledge in the foods they consume. Consumers crave connection to vendors who produce the food they eat and that personal connection builds trust. **67% said they trust vendors at the farmers market because they see who grew and handled the food.** Consumers find that talking to farmers and artisan producers is a first-hand way to learn about foods they buy. 67% of consumers surveyed said they loved learning about new foods by shopping around markets while 63% agreed that they love talking to vendors who are passionate about the foods they sell.

While food experiences are the newest foodie trend, this report underscores the reasons why food market culture will push operators to rethink consumer needs. Understanding variety in the context of customer desires could provide insight for traditional food markets about how to effectively incorporate specialty food vendors into the regular mix of every day product offerings.