

On Consumer Experiences and the Extraordinary

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1. Goolaup, S., & Mossberg, L. (2017). Exploring the concept of extraordinary related to food tourists' nature-based experience. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 17(1), 27-43. DOI:10.1080/15022250.2016.1218150
2. Goolaup, S., Solér, C., & Nunkoo, R. (2018). Developing a Theory of Surprise from Travelers' Extraordinary Food Experiences. *Journal of Travel Research*, 57(2), 218-231. DOI:10.1177/0047287517691154
3. Goolaup, S (2018) Sharing in extraordinary experience. Submitted to *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*.
4. Goolaup, S., & Mossberg, L. (2017). Exploring consumers' value co-creation in a festival context using a socio-cultural lens. In Lundberg, E., Armbrecht J., Andersson, T.D., and Getz, D. (Eds.), *The Value of Events*, pp. 39-57, New York: Routledge.
5. Goolaup, S., & Solér, C. (2018). Existential Phenomenology: Understanding Tourists' Experiences. In Nunkoo, R (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods for Tourism and Hospitality Management*, pp. 62-71, United Kingdom: Edward Elgar Publishing



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In today's society, consumers are increasingly looking for experiences that are hedonic, positively intense, and intrinsically enjoyable, or what is called an extraordinary experience. Although, extraordinary experience as a concept has been gaining importance in consumer research, it still lacks both theoretical and empirical development. Previous work has focused on activities that are high-risk and that occur in environment that are already extraordinary in nature. However, there is a general lack of research on how mundane experiences that are inherently part of the daily life of consumers are conceived of as extraordinary when consumed within a non-ordinary context. Therefore, using the context of food in tourism and hospitality, this thesis aims to provide insight into *what constitutes an extraordinary experience*. Using qualitative methods such as existential phenomenology and grounded theory, empirical data was collected using interviews and observations of food tourists, consumers visiting an oyster bar and an oyster festival. This resulted in five papers that were framed using a variety of theoretical perspectives, such as Turner's structure and anti-structure model, Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, sharing, and value co-creation. In contrast to the current literature, this thesis offers an alternate way of theorizing extraordinary experiences. It identified elements such as profaneness, collaborative and/or limited interactions and conflict-easing situations. These elements are representative of both the ordinary and the non-ordinary. In particular, the thesis contributes to the current literature by showing the co-existence of structure (ordinary) and anti-structure (non-ordinary) as being positive and important when considering the extraordinary food experience. Since the co-existence of these elements is perceived as being positive, the term synstructure is proposed to refer to this relationship. In addition, the thesis also goes a step further and contributes to the current literature by showing how consumers with different cultural and social resources also experience the extraordinary differently.

Keywords: consumers' lived experience, extraordinary experience, food, consumer culture, value creation, mundane experience.

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