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WOMEN IN MANAGERIAL POSITIONS IN 5-STAR HOTELS IN MALTA

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Abstract

The hospitality industry is a male dominated environment and although over the past few years, the number of female employees has increased, the underrepresentation of women in senior management posts is of concern. The emancipation of women brought a wave of new opportunities, encouraged their development and increased their empowerment. But it also brought to light a number of challenges which up until now were not evident and are mostly stemming from societal gender stereotyping and patriarchy. These effects are mostly felt by women in hospitality, an industry which is still very traditional and where gender discrimination and bias still abound, albeit covert.

This dissertation aims to explore the challenges affecting career progression of women in 5-star hotels in Malta. It investigates the selection framework to attain and retain these positions. Various challenges are explored including family responsibilities, work life balance, gender discrimination and bias, amongst others. Also, the research identifies key enablers that support women's advancement for example mentorship.

A mixed methodology research approach is adopted with semi-structured interviews performed with human resources managers, and questionnaires handed out to female employees in 5-star hotels in Malta, all performed anonymously. Triangulation of data provided is interpreted in the context of

academic literature. Recommendations are also drawn up with the aim of fostering an equitable environment for women in hospitality.

This research contributes to the knowledge gap as it provides real life experiences and raw honest opinions of the interviewees helping identify practical ways to provide support to women and help them move into leadership roles



INVESTIGATING THE KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING THE TRAVELLERS' SELECTION OF AIRLINE PRIOR TO TRAVELLING TO MALTA FROM LONDON

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Abstract

The research aims to investigate key factors such as branding, customer satisfaction with in-flight entertainment, cabin comfort, in-flight meals, and other practical factors such as price, flight schedules and connections, loyalty programmes, airline safety and reputation. These factors are investigated to measure their impact on visitors flying from London to Malta's decision regarding airline selection.

The research was deemed necessary since it addresses a gap in understanding how these factors affect travellers' decision for this specific route. A mixed-method approach was employed, utilising semi-structured interviews and close-ended questionnaires as methods for data collection was employed. Two interviews were conducted with marketing managers one from a low-cost airline and the other from a full-service carrier along with the distribution of 150 questionnaires to incoming passengers from London airports.

The study overall finds that branding elements have a limited impact on airline selection. Therefore, the findings suggest that for this specific route during low-peak season, the most prominent factors affecting passengers' airline selection were price, flight availability, and airport location. This aligns well with the airline's efforts whereby during this low-peak season they adjust their brand messaging

and introduce promotional campaigns to attract several customer segments. The findings also suggest the efforts airlines place on certain branding elements such as loyalty programs, are often overlooked by travellers.

In conclusion, airlines operating this route during this season might find it difficult to upsell their premium offerings due to the importance given to price by passengers especially since it's a short flight. The implications of these results highlight the importance of pricing strategies that attract several passenger segments, including price-conscious ones, thus aiding to fill perishable seat inventory.



CULINARY FLAVOURS: EXPLORING THE CULINARY POTENTIAL OF MICRO HERBS AND THEIR IMPACT ON MODERN GASTRONOMY IN MALTA

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Abstract

Micro herbs are delicate, young seedlings of vegetables and herbs, increasingly recognised for their ability to enhance flavour, texture and presentation of a wide range of dishes from simple salads and sandwiches to refined, intricate plates in fine dining cuisine. Their subtle and concentrated flavour, along with their vibrant appearance, makes them a versatile addition to modern kitchens, particularly in fine dining environments.

This research explores the culinary potential and practical application of micro herbs within the fine dining sector in Malta. This study investigates how micro herbs can elevate the aesthetic and sensory qualities of food, while also examining the factors influencing their adoption and availability in the local context.

A qualitative approach was adopted, using semi-structured interviews with local micro herb growers while questionnaires were distributed to restaurant managers and head chefs. These methods were chosen to capture both the agricultural realities of cultivating micro herbs, as well as the gastronomic motivations for using them in professional kitchens. This research also identifies current market trends, popular varieties of micro herbs as well as the challenges that the growers and chefs face in sourcing and maintaining a fresh and consistent supply.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to a widely unexplored area of Maltese gastronomy. Through shedding light on the intersection between agricultural production and fine dining innovation, the research offers practical insights for chefs, growers and policy.



INVESTIGATING THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BY DIABETICS WHEN DINING IN CASUAL RESTAURANTS IN MALTA

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the challenges associated with accommodating the dietary requirements of individuals living with diabetes within the casual dining sector in Malta, with particular reference to culinary practice and professional kitchen operations. As diabetes continues to increase prevalence at both national and global levels, the responsibility placed on foodservice professionals to provide safe, informed and inclusive dining experiences has become increasingly significant. Despite growing awareness of food allergies and lifestyle-related dietary preferences, diabetic dietary needs remain insufficiently addressed within many casual dining establishments.

This study initially explores the medical and nutritional foundations of Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, emphasizing their implications for menu development, ingredient selection, and cooking techniques. It then critically analyses the level of awareness, training, and preparedness among chefs and restaurant staff in responding to diabetic dietary requirements. Furthermore, the research investigates the experiences of diabetic diners, identifying recurring barriers such as limited nutritional transparency, inadequate menu labelling, and inconsistent staff knowledge. These challenges often result in reduced consumer confidence, social discomfort, and, in some cases, avoidance of dining out altogether.

Finally, the study evaluates the role of culinary innovation, professional training, and inclusive menu design in improving diabetic-friendly food provision. By positioning diabetic accommodation as an integral component of contemporary culinary professionalism, this research aims to contribute to improved standards of inclusivity, responsibility and excellence within Malta's casual dining industry.



DISCOVERING TOURIST MOTIVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES IN RECREATIONAL WRECK DIVING DESTINATIONS IN MALTA

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the reasons why divers choose Malta, a Mediterranean island widely recognized for its historical wreck sites and rich marine biodiversity. The study aims to find out the major factors that make Malta a preferred wreck diving destination by divers, as well as the measures that are being put in place by the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) to market and develop the industry. The research is a viewpoint that is mixed data, in which quantitative data collected through an online questionnaire (n=80) are revealed alongside qualitative data collected through an interview with an MTA representative.

The study focuses on the individual motivation of the divers as well as the tourism policies at large carried out by the MTA. According to the findings, the most important factors that motivate people to wreck dive in Malta are adventure, exploration, the thrill of exploration, and seeing marine life. The visibility, the sites of the wrecks, and the underwater history of Malta appear to be the major reasons that make the place admirable to the divers who visit the island. The study further notes an upsurge in historical shipwrecks, especially warships, and this is essential in attracting foreign divers. The current initiatives of the MTA in solving these problems, which include the development of infrastructure, better functioning of the environment, and promotion of the diving heritage of Malta, were discussed during the interview.

The paper highlights that it is necessary to continue to invest in the areas that will ensure that Malta remains a top wreck diving destination. The study will be very useful in informing tourism operators, policy makers, and the environmental agencies, which will give them a good idea to enhance the wreck diving experience, as well as advance the image of Malta as a destination for diving.



NAVIGATING THE CLASSIFICATION OF FIVE-STAR BOUTIQUE HOTELS WITHIN MALTESE LEGISLATION

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Abstract

Tourists, both domestic and foreign, choose to stay at a chain of hotels with different star ratings according to popularity, guest budget, special offers, amongst other reasons. When choosing a hotel, most tourists neglect boutique hotels. They are not typically publicised to the general guest population, and there is no official classification that most people choose to return to. A boutique hotel remains loyal to the area and is more individual, in contrast to how most other hotel chains are perceived by the general public.

The primary focus of this study is the legal classification of Malta's five-star boutique hotels. Given that hotels are typically chosen based on their well-known identity, boutique hotels are considered a specialised form of lodging and aren't normally the first choice for visitors. This qualitative study uses two types of data collection: semi-structured interviews (N=4) and online surveys. Amongst others, an important finding from this study shows that the non-existent boutique hotel classification greatly and negatively impacts boutique hotels across the island. Moreover, the trend of evolving change in consumer behaviour towards word-of-mouth recommendations tailored to the customer has overtaken the importance of five-star.



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