



British Celebrity Chefs as Cultural Intermediaries: A Critical Reflection on Taste Construction

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Abstract

Purpose: In today's media-saturated United Kingdom, celebrity chefs have emerged as influential cultural figures whose reach extends far beyond the kitchen. They actively shape public conversations about health, family life, social class, national identity, and moral responsibility. This study critically examines four UK celebrity chefs as cultural intermediaries who construct, legitimate and disseminate contemporary British taste through their media presence.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Positioned as a Critical Reflection Paper, this study synthesises sociology, cultural studies and hospitality scholarship to challenge the field's predominantly managerial orientation and argue for stronger engagement with symbolic and cultural power in shaping consumption. A qualitative, interpretivist approach is employed to explore how celebrity chefs function as cultural intermediaries in shaping taste. Grounded in Bourdieu's Theory of Distinction, particularly his concepts of cultural capital, class, and habitus, the paper examines how four prominent figures (Jamie Oliver, Gordon Ramsay, Mary Berry, and Nigella Lawson) influence public perceptions of food, lifestyle, and identity. Using these British celebrity chefs as case studies, the analysis draws on qualitative textual examination of their television programs and cookbooks.

Findings: The findings demonstrate that these chefs mediate food and taste through persistent themes of class, gender, authenticity, and professionalism. They serve as moral and civic educators who simultaneously reinforce and challenge existing social hierarchies, while mirroring shifting cultural narratives.

Originality/Value: This research advances hospitality and food studies by positioning celebrity chefs as key agents in the production and legitimation of culinary taste and identity within postmodern, media-saturated society. Theoretically, it deepens understanding of how celebrity chefs critically engage with contemporary taste construction, while providing valuable insights into their roles as cultural intermediaries.

Keywords: Celebrity chefs; Taste; Bourdieu; Textual Analysis; Food culture; United Kingdom

1. Introduction

Food functions as a key marker of identity and social distinction in its symbolic, material, and aesthetic forms (Rashidin *et al.*, 2026). In contemporary Britain's media-saturated environment, food content permeates television schedules, social media platforms, streaming services, and print publishing at unprecedented scale (Hollows, 2022; Smith, 2020). Within this context, celebrity chefs have emerged as powerful cultural figures whose influence transcends culinary matters to shape discourses around health, family, class, national identity, and moral responsibility (Hollows, 2022; Zopiatis and Melanthiou, 2019). Despite growing interest in food media, hospitality scholarship has tended to treat consumption primarily as a behavioural or managerial phenomenon, often overlooking the cultural infrastructures through which taste is legitimised and reproduced. Studies published in leading hospitality journals have predominantly focused on service quality, customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, and revenue management, with comparatively limited engagement with the symbolic and cultural forces that shape what consumers value and how those values are produced (Giousmpasoglou *et al.*, 2020; Zopiatis and Melanthiou, 2019). This conceptual narrowing risks limiting the field's ability to fully explain contemporary consumption dynamics.

Taste construction (the social process through which certain foods, culinary practices, and aesthetic preferences are defined as desirable, appropriate, or legitimate within a given cultural context) is central to understanding contemporary food culture (Bourdieu, 1984; Warde, 1997). It is not simply a matter of individual preference, but a socially structured phenomenon shaped by class, gender, media, and cultural authority. The prominence of British celebrity chefs reflects broader societal shifts in how food is produced, consumed, and understood. As traditional class structures evolve, food has become crucial terrain for negotiating and displaying identity (Rashidin *et al.*, 2026). Chefs such as Jamie Oliver and Nigella Lawson extend beyond recipe instruction to promote lifestyles, embody value systems, and perform roles that intertwine entertainment, education, and advocacy. They function as "taste makers," agents who actively define and disseminate what counts as good taste, influencing both aesthetic preferences and social norms (Johnston and Goodman, 2015).

While the concepts of "taste maker" and "taste construction" are related, they are analytically distinct: taste construction refers to the broader social process by which taste hierarchies are produced and reproduced, while taste makers are the agents who participate in and animate that process. These developments must also be understood within broader frameworks of media culture and neoliberal consumerism (Johnston and Goodman, 2015). Celebrity chefs operate as cultural intermediaries, a concept central to Bourdieu's (1984) theory of taste, who structure and disseminate dominant social group preferences, reinforcing symbolic hierarchies (Lee *et al.*, 2026). However, the literature remains largely silent on the specific role of celebrity chefs in shaping taste construction and influencing food culture at both national and international levels. Existing studies (e.g. Giousmpasoglou *et al.*, 2020; Hollows, 2022; Matwick, 2017) have examined aspects of celebrity chef influence (gender; performance; civic advocacy; commodification; social media) but have not systematically analysed how these figures function as cultural intermediaries in the production and legitimation of taste as a socially stratified construct within a hospitality studies framework.

Grounded in Bourdieu's theory of distinction, cultural capital, and habitus, this paper critically explores the extent to which British celebrity chefs mediate culinary taste construction. It positions these figures as cultural intermediaries who contribute to social classification through eating practices, mobilising forms of cultural capital that both reinforce and contest

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3 traditional boundaries of class, gender, and ethnicity (Naccarato and LeBesco, 2012). Drawing
4 on sociology, cultural studies, and hospitality management perspectives, the paper examines
5 how Jamie Oliver, Gordon Ramsay, Mary Berry, and Nigella Lawson shape taste construction
6 in contemporary Britain through qualitative textual analysis of their television programmes
7 and cookbooks. The specific research aim is to examine, through Bourdieu's theoretical lens,
8 how these four chefs function as cultural intermediaries who construct, legitimate, and
9 disseminate culinary taste across dimensions of class, gender, authenticity, and civic
10 responsibility.
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13 This study intentionally concerns a work critically reflecting upon a theoretically grounded
14 synthesis of cultural intermediation and taste within hospitality scholarship. While the field
15 has traditionally prioritised operational and managerial concerns, the symbolic and cultural
16 forces shaping consumption remain comparatively under-theorised. By critically revisiting
17 Bourdieu's framework in the context of a media-saturated food culture, the paper identifies
18 important blind spots (particularly the limited attention paid to cultural authority, symbolic
19 capital, and mediated influence) and advances a conceptual agenda for integrating cultural
20 sociology more centrally into hospitality management research. In doing so, it deepens
21 understanding of how celebrity chefs engage with contemporary taste construction while
22 providing critical insight into their broader role in shaping food culture and social meaning.
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26 27 **2. Theoretical Context**

28 29 *2.1 Taste Theories and the Social Construction of Taste*

30 Taste, in the sociological sense, refers to more than sensory pleasure. It denotes the socially
31 acquired dispositions, preferences, and judgements through which individuals and groups
32 distinguish themselves from others, particularly in relation to food, aesthetics, and lifestyle
33 (Bourdieu, 1984; Warde, 1997). Taste construction, therefore, describes the ongoing social
34 process by which certain preferences are produced, valorized, and naturalised as legitimate
35 within a given cultural field, while others are marginalised or stigmatised. Taste encompasses
36 physiological, aesthetic, and sociocultural dimensions. Anthropological and structuralist
37 perspectives conceptualise food as a symbolic system of communication with culturally
38 constructed codes, while materialist approaches examine external forces shaping taste
39 (Mintz, 1996). Conversely, postmodern approaches argue taste is increasingly fluid and
40 individualistic, shaped by consumer identity and lifestyle rather than stable class markers, with
41 individuals constructing identities through omnivorous consumption combining highbrow and
42 lowbrow elements (Naccarato and LeBesco, 2012).
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46 Despite postmodern perspectives, Bourdieu's (1984) work remains central to understanding
47 taste as social differentiation. He theorizes taste as a manifestation of habitus (the
48 internalized, durable dispositions shaped by an individual's social conditions and class
49 position) (Figure 1). Habitus is not simply a set of conscious preferences but an embodied, pre-
50 reflective orientation to the world that generates consistent patterns of perception,
51 appreciation, and action (Bourdieu, 1984). It is acquired through socialisation, reproducing
52 class-based ways of seeing and valuing that feel natural to the individual but are, in fact,
53 socially structured.
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56 Taste is acquired, not innate, and its expression through food, fashion, and aesthetics reflects
57 and reproduces social hierarchies. Bourdieu distinguishes three forms of capital (economic;
58 social; cultural) with cultural capital, in its institutionalised (credentials), objectified (material
59 possessions), and embodied (manners and preferences) forms, playing a particularly
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3 significant role in shaping taste. Cultural capital is the accumulated knowledge, skills, and
4 cultural competencies that confer social advantage; in the culinary domain, this manifests as
5 familiarity with ingredient provenance, cooking techniques, food histories, and aesthetic
6 conventions associated with legitimate or prestigious taste (Bourdieu, 1984; Naccarato and
7 LeBesco, 2012). Warde (1997) applied this to Britain, identifying culinary antinomies (novelty
8 versus tradition, health versus indulgence) structuring food choice and underscoring taste's
9 performative nature. Bourdieu also introduces the concept of symbolic violence, the process
10 by which dominant class tastes are naturalised as universal standards of excellence, rendering
11 social hierarchies invisible and making them appear to be matters of personal preference
12 rather than structural power (Bourdieu, 1984). In the culinary domain, this explains how the
13 tastes of privileged social groups (for artisanal, organic, or "authentic" foods) come to be
14 treated as objectively superior through media, education, and gastronomic institutions. While
15 critiqued for overemphasizing class versus gender, ethnicity, and other identity axes,
16 Bourdieu's framework remains influential. His emphasis on social life's relational nature offers
17 robust analysis of how culinary distinctions are reproduced and challenged, illuminating why
18 certain practices are valorized while others stigmatised (Kamphuis *et al.*, 2018).

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22 The social construction of taste, as synthesised from Bourdieu's framework and applied in this
23 study, involves the interplay of several key elements: habitus (embodied dispositions); field
24 (the social arena in which competition over cultural legitimacy takes place); cultural, social,
25 and economic capital (resources that confer advantage); and symbolic violence (the
26 naturalisation of dominant tastes as neutral or universal). Together, these elements explain
27 how taste functions not merely as individual preference but as a mechanism of social
28 distinction and reproduction (Figure 1). When applied to celebrity chef media, these concepts
29 illuminate how culinary authority is produced through the intersection of class background,
30 media performance, and narrative framing rather than culinary skill alone.

33 **Figure 1: The Social Construction of Taste**

34 *Please insert Figure 1 here*

35 **Source:** Adapted from Bourdieu (1984)

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38 Bourdieu's (1984) framework has been applied across a range of fields beyond sociology,
39 including education (Reay, 2004), health (Kamphuis *et al.*, 2018), and consumer culture
40 (Warde, 1997), demonstrating its versatility as an analytical tool for understanding social
41 distinction. Within food studies, Naccarato and LeBesco's (2012) concept of "culinary capital"
42 extends Bourdieu's framework to examine how food media and celebrity culture generate
43 new forms of cultural prestige, making it particularly applicable to the study of celebrity chefs.
44 However, Bourdieu's (1984) framework has been insufficiently mobilised within hospitality
45 management, where research has largely remained functionalist and managerially oriented.
46 This limited engagement risks obscuring how cultural authority and symbolic capital structure
47 contemporary consumption. Without deeper dialogue with cultural theory, hospitality
48 scholarship may struggle to adequately interpret the increasingly mediated and symbolic
49 nature of food practices. In hospitality and culinary studies, Bourdieu's theory deconstructs
50 taste's seemingly neutral domain to expose socio-political underpinnings. His insights
51 challenge individual choice myths by revealing structural forces guiding consumption.
52 Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence explains how culinary standards are legitimised
53 through media, education, and gastronomy institutions. This grounding is pertinent for
54 analyzing celebrity chefs who, through media personas and culinary outputs, actively
55 participate in legitimating and disseminating certain tastes (Giousmpasoglou *et al.*, 2020). As
56 cultural intermediaries, they reflect and shape dominant taste hierarchies, reinforcing
57 Bourdieu's argument that taste concerns power, status, and identity, not merely food.
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2.2 Celebrity Chefs and Cultural Intermediation

The emergence of the celebrity chef reflects the convergence of gastronomy, media, and consumer culture, corresponding with shifts in public relationships with food from necessity to lifestyle and entertainment (Chen *et al.*, 2017; Yang *et al.*, 2025). Celebrity chefs are unique cultural figures serving as both media industry producers and products, acting as conduits communicating culinary knowledge, values, and aesthetics to mass audiences (Huo *et al.*, 2022).

Academic research spans several themes. These themes are interconnected in that they each illuminate a different dimension of how celebrity chefs operate as cultural intermediaries, that is, figures who occupy a mediating position between the field of cultural production (professional cuisine, food media) and the field of consumption (public taste, domestic cooking). Gender and performance studies interpret Nigella Lawson's media persona through postfeminist domesticity, where pleasure, sensuality, and self-care coexist with traditional gender roles, while Gordon Ramsay's hyper-masculine style reinforces aggressive professionalism and authority (Giousmpasoglou *et al.*, 2020). Another focus examines civic roles: Jamie Oliver's campaigns for healthy school meals frame him as a moral entrepreneur promoting culinary literacy and blurring entertainment, advocacy, and pedagogy boundaries (Talbot, 2007). These civic interventions are themselves acts of taste construction, framing certain food practices (fresh; home-cooked; nutritionally informed) as morally responsible and socially desirable.

Culinary expertise commodification is significant. Television chefs sell lifestyles, brands, and ideologies alongside recipes. Nigella Lawson's authoritative tone resonates with order, reliability, and accessibility values, while Mary Berry evokes middle-class refinement and tradition, often appealing to nostalgic sensibilities while reinforcing taste norms (Rashidin *et al.*, 2026). The celebrity chef-class relationship is particularly salient. Bourdieu's (1984) cultural intermediaries concept (those influencing taste by shaping symbolic goods) directly applies to celebrity chefs who mediate between cultural production and consumption fields, translating elite culinary practices into accessible formats (Johnston and Goodman, 2015) while constructing moral hierarchies: fresh over processed, local over global, artisanal over industrial. Social media has expanded celebrity chef influence, enabling direct audience engagement and para-social relationships (Zopiatis and Melanthiou, 2019). Platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube allow brand extension, authenticity cultivation, and real-time taste influence, providing more intimate and spontaneous connections than traditional television's edited performances (Carroll *et al.*, 2024).

Across these themes, a key insight is that different media formats from instructional television to travel documentaries, and lifestyle programming to social media, produce distinct registers of culinary authority and taste. Instructional formats position the chef as technical expert or pedagogical guide, while travel and lifestyle formats invite audiences into an aspirational world structured by cultural capital. Understanding how format shapes taste representation is therefore central to the analysis that follows.

Despite cultural ubiquity, tensions exist. Critics argue influence may be overstated, with limited evidence that media consumption alone translates to sustained behavioural change (Joya and Orth, 2025). This is an important caveat: while celebrity chefs clearly shape discourse and aspiration around food, the mechanisms by which media representations translate into actual changes in consumer behaviour remain under-evidenced, and this study focuses on the representational and symbolic dimensions of taste construction rather than

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3 claiming direct behavioural effects. Aspirational messages may alienate or marginalize
4 audiences lacking resources to replicate portrayed lifestyles, while concerns also exist about
5 cultural exoticization and appropriation, particularly in travel-based shows (Mejia and Wilson,
6 2024). Nonetheless, celebrity chefs offer valuable lenses for examining late modernity taste
7 dynamics, since they embody contemporary food culture contradictions (tradition versus
8 innovation; elitism versus accessibility; health versus pleasure) with cultural work extending
9 beyond entertainment to shape how food is understood, valued, and consumed. Celebrity
10 chefs therefore function as complex cultural agents participating in taste construction,
11 operating at media, market, and morality intersections to shape public food and identity
12 discourses (Mejia and Wilson, 2024).
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15 16 17 **3. Methods**

18 This study adopts a qualitative, interpretivist research design to examine celebrity chefs as
19 cultural intermediaries shaping taste. Qualitative methods are appropriate for analyzing
20 complex social phenomena like identity, class, and representation (Altinay *et al.*, 2016),
21 particularly when framed through Bourdieu's sociology of taste. The study is positioned as a
22 critical reflection paper, a genre that employs theoretically grounded analysis of existing
23 cultural texts to generate conceptual insight rather than to produce statistically generalisable
24 findings. This positioning means the media materials function as theoretically generative cases
25 that illuminate broader cultural processes, rather than as a representative empirical sample.
26 While the analytical procedures share features with qualitative research (including systematic
27 coding and thematic interpretation) the primary aim is conceptual development and critical
28 synthesis.
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31 Primary data consists of television programmes and associated cookbooks, selected for their
32 capacity to enable multimodal textual analysis capturing visual and linguistic dimensions of
33 celebrity chefs' media outputs. Television programmes and cookbooks were chosen as the
34 primary data sources because they represent the most sustained, carefully crafted, and widely
35 consumed articulations of celebrity chef identity and culinary philosophy. Unlike social media,
36 which is ephemeral, fragmented, and algorithmically mediated, television programmes and
37 cookbooks are intentionally authored cultural artefacts that offer rich multimodal texts
38 (combining narrative voice, visual aesthetic, mise-en-scène, and rhetorical framing) through
39 which chefs construct and communicate their culinary authority and taste ideologies. These
40 formats also reflect the historical period in which the four chefs rose to cultural prominence
41 and built their lasting influence on British food culture. While social media represents an
42 important and growing dimension of celebrity chef influence (and is acknowledged as a
43 significant area for future research) it falls outside the primary focus of this study. Together,
44 these formats reflect the diverse ways audiences engage with culinary media in contemporary
45 Britain.
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49 As presented in Figure 2, four British celebrity chefs serve as case studies: (i) Jamie Oliver, (ii)
50 Gordon Ramsay, (iii) Mary Berry, and (iv) Nigella Lawson. While other prominent figures could
51 have been included, such as Marco Pierre White (whose fine dining authority and proto-
52 celebrity status shaped the field), Heston Blumenthal (whose molecular gastronomy
53 represents a distinct and intellectually inflected form of culinary capital), Hugh Fearnley-
54 Whittingstall (whose food activism parallels Oliver's civic entrepreneurship), Madhur Jaffrey
55 and Ken Hom (whose diasporic perspectives introduce questions of ethnicity and cultural
56 translation absent from the four selected chefs), this selection was guided by four criteria:
57 sustained and continuous public visibility across multiple media platforms; significant and
58 documented cultural influence on British food discourse; diversity of media strategies and
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genre conventions; and embodiment of distinct, contrasting gendered and class-based narratives that are directly legible through Bourdieu's framework. The four selected chefs together span working-class and middle-class habitus, male and female culinary authority, domestic and professional cooking contexts, and reformist and conservative ideological orientations, offering maximal analytical contrast for examining taste construction as a socially differentiated process. These four chefs represent a broad spectrum of culinary authority and media performance, offering insights into taste's symbolic construction within contemporary British society.

Figure 2: Celebrity chefs discussed in this study

Please insert Figure 2 here

Picture sources:

For Jamie Oliver: Britannica (2026). *Jamie Oliver*. Available from: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jamie-Oliver> (Accessed 28/3/2026)

For Gordon Ramsay: Olusegun, D. (2023). "Gordon Ramsay: From Humble Beginnings to Culinary Stardom". *The Creators Blueprint*, Available from: <https://www.creatorsblueprint.co/p/gordon-ramsay-from-humble-beginnings> (Accessed 28/3/2026)

For Mary Berry: Penguin (2026). *Mary Berry*. Available from: <https://www.penguin.com.au/authors/mary-berry> (Accessed 28/3/2026)

For Nigella Lawson: Mosqueda, S. (2022). "Food writer and cooking show host Nigella Lawson comes to Irvine". *Daily Pilot*, Published 2nd November, Available from: <https://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/entertainment/story/2022-11-02/food-writer-and-cooking-show-host-nigella-lawson-comes-to-irvine> (Accessed 28/3/2026)

The coding process was iterative rather than linear, with themes repeatedly reviewed and refined through ongoing movement between the empirical material and the theoretical framework. Particular attention was paid to recurring narrative patterns, visual symbolism, affective performances, and forms of cultural positioning across the media texts. As this study is interpretivist and critically reflective in orientation, the aim of coding was not quantitative measurement or inter-coder reliability, but theoretically informed interpretation and conceptual coherence. Following Riley (2019), the study employed thematic textual analysis. Thematic textual analysis is a qualitative method for identifying, interpreting, and reporting recurring patterns of meaning within cultural texts. In this study, it involved close, repeated engagement with each media text to identify motifs, narrative structures, visual codes, and rhetorical devices, followed by systematic coding and interpretation guided by the theoretical framework. The process followed these steps:

- (i) Familiarisation, involving multiple viewings of all programme episodes and thorough readings of each cookbook.
- (ii) Generation of initial codes, documenting visual and verbal tropes, camera angles, mise-en-scène, voiceovers, editing patterns, narrative arcs, and rhetorical devices.
- (iii) Theme development, organising codes into broader thematic patterns.
- (iv) Review and refinement of themes against the theoretical framework and the data corpus.

Analysis was guided by a theoretical framework focusing on themes including class, gender, cultural capital, habitus, identity, lifestyle, professionalism, ethnicity, authenticity, and civic responsibility. These themes correspond directly to the elements of Bourdieu's framework outlined in Figure 1, ensuring analytical coherence between the theoretical context and the empirical analysis. A coding system employed both deductive (theory-driven) and inductive (data-driven) themes, allowing structured yet flexible data engagement to identify expected and emergent patterns. The coding was conducted by the lead author, with themes and interpretations subsequently discussed and reviewed by all co-authors to establish analytical consensus and reflexive scrutiny. The researcher maintained a reflexive stance throughout,

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3 critically reflecting on social positioning, assumptions, and potential biases, essential given the
4 research's interpretive nature.
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6 The full data corpus is detailed in Table 1. In total, the analysis drew on six television episodes
7 per chef (with the exception of Gordon Ramsay's Great Escape India, which comprised three
8 episodes), each viewed five times, yielding approximately 3,210 minutes of total viewing time
9 across the four programmes. Each associated cookbook was read in full on at least two
10 occasions. Selected media texts span genres from instructional and documentary to lifestyle
11 and travel formats, each framing chef personas and culinary messages distinctly (Table 1).
12 Analysing varying formats captures how celebrity chefs mediate taste across contexts, since
13 genre conventions shape the registers of culinary authority available to each chef:
14 instructional formats foreground pedagogical expertise and accessible technique, travel
15 formats generate cosmopolitan and adventurous cultural capital, and lifestyle formats
16 construct affective and aspirational identity. Ramsay's travel-based series performance differs
17 markedly from Berry's traditional instructional tone or Lawson's emotive, sensual domesticity,
18 enriching comparative analysis. Cookbooks were analysed as cultural artefacts beyond
19 recipes. Layout, photographs, typography, and narrative voice contribute to taste and
20 legitimacy construction. These books extend chefs' television personas, reinforcing brand
21 identities and value systems. Paratextual elements (forewords; endorsements;
22 acknowledgements) were also examined to understand how authority and authenticity are
23 framed.
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28 **Table 1:** Data collection sources

29 *Please insert Table 1 here*

30 **Source:** Authors' own work

31
32 This methodology enables engagement with culinary media's symbolic power beyond surface
33 description, deconstructing how certain tastes are valorized while others are marginalized and
34 how these dynamics reflect broader social hierarchies. Following Bourdieu's framework, the
35 analysis reveals how celebrity chefs operate within cultural production fields, contributing to
36 social distinction's reproduction or transformation. While qualitative and exploratory, the
37 study seeks analytical depth rather than statistical generalizability. The aim is interpreting how
38 meaning is produced, circulated, and contested in culinary media, acknowledging cultural
39 texts' complexity and diverse audience decoding possibilities, though reception is not the
40 primary focus. Ethical considerations were minimal, as data consisted of publicly available
41 materials. Analysis respected intellectual property with scholarly responsibility in representing
42 chefs' work. All media sources are cited appropriately with interpretations supported by
43 textual evidence. The empirical material is therefore used as theoretically generative cases
44 that support critical reflection rather than as a basis for statistical generalisation.
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49 **4. Findings**

50 The findings are organised around the seven key themes that emerged from the analysis
51 (cultural intermediation; class; gender; authenticity and affect; civic and moral discourse;
52 media format and culinary authority; and national identity) and are illustrated through close
53 textual analysis of each chef's media texts. For each chef, the discussion demonstrates how
54 their media performance constructs taste as a socially positioned, value-laden practice,
55 drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, cultural capital, and symbolic capital.
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58 **4.1 Jamie Oliver**

59 Jamie Oliver's representation in *Jamie's Italy* (Optomen Television, 2005) exemplifies culinary
60 moral entrepreneurship and civic masculinity, constructing identity rooted in democratic food

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3 access, working-class sensibility, and reformist ethos framing cooking as social responsibility.
4 In a characteristic scene from episode two, Oliver sits with an elderly Italian farmer preparing
5 hand-rolled pasta dough, emphasising tactile craft and generational knowledge: "This is what
6 real food is about; it's not fancy, it's just proper." He positions himself as a traveller-learner
7 who discovers Italian foodways through respect and empathy, foregrounding the stories of
8 local producers while constructing an "authentic" Italy that privileges rusticity and tradition.
9 Mediated through his British lens, Italian food is reinterpreted for British audiences with a
10 moral clarity that emphasises community, sustainability, and provenance.
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13 Oliver mobilizes hybrid class identity blending working-class Essex background with middle-
14 class culinary sophistication through informal mannerisms and populist discourse referring to
15 "proper" and "real" food, resonating across class boundaries while critiquing industrialized
16 food systems (Naccarato and LeBesco, 2012). His cookbook *Jamie's Italy* reinforces this
17 through a vernacular visual aesthetic: unposed photographs of market stalls, rough wooden
18 tables, and hands-on cooking, accompanied by recipes framed as stories rather than
19 instructions. This editorial style translates Italian culinary capital into an accessible,
20 democratic register. This is what Bourdieu (1984) would describe as the conversion of cultural
21 capital into a form legible across class habitus. His affect-infused performative style (cooking
22 with hands, enthusiastic eating, rustic visual aesthetics) enhances genuineness impressions
23 through media conventions strategically blending intimacy, authority, and lifestyle branding,
24 exemplifying the "mediatised moral entrepreneur" where cooking becomes pleasurable
25 experience and civic duty.
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28 Unlike Ramsay's assertive masculinity, Oliver enacts care, empathy, and community
29 engagement, embodying post-traditional masculine identity where emotional expression and
30 moral concern coexist with culinary authority. His persona challenges traditional culinary
31 expertise hierarchies by reframing taste as moral and emotional capacity (Naccarato and
32 LeBesco, 2012). As cultural intermediary, he bridges global food heritage with local practice,
33 performing cosmopolitan yet grounded Britishness, modeling culinary citizenship situating
34 food at social identity and moral action's heart. Through the lens of Bourdieu's framework,
35 Oliver's habitus, rooted in working-class origins but refined through professional culinary
36 training and media exposure, allows him to occupy a hybrid field position that grants broad
37 symbolic legitimacy. His taste construction democratises culinary capital while simultaneously
38 reinforcing moral hierarchies around "real" and "proper" food. More broadly, this raises
39 questions about the extent to which hospitality scholarship may inadvertently reproduce
40 middle-class taste hierarchies by treating dominant culinary norms as culturally neutral.
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44 4.2 Gordon Ramsay

45 Gordon Ramsay's persona in *Gordon Ramsay's Great Escape* (Optomen Television, 2010)
46 articulates culinary authority blending cosmopolitan masculinity, technical expertise, and
47 adventurous sensibility, positioning himself as global explorer seeking authenticity through
48 non-Western cuisine engagement. His mediated identity combines professional rigour and
49 affective intensity as both master chef and cultural ambassador. Traveling through India, Sri
50 Lanka, and Southeast Asia seeking "real" food, Ramsay frames himself as intermediary
51 translating foreign cuisines into Western-accessible forms. In one representative episode,
52 Ramsay joins fishermen on the Kerala coast before preparing a spiced fish curry with local
53 women, narrating: "I want to understand why they cook this way. It's not just technique, it's
54 a way of life." His physical and emotional immersion (fishing with locals, cooking in village
55 homes, engaging street food culture) produces affective audience bonds while reinforcing
56 culinary capital. This aligns with Bourdieu's (1984) cultural capital conversion: Ramsay
57 transforms embodied experience into symbolic authority legitimizing taste through global
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3 immersion. Yet this reinforces colonial knowledge hierarchies; while ostensibly celebrating
4 non-Western cuisines, he presents himself as value arbiter evaluating dishes and positioning
5 his expertise as quality's final measure, valorizing cultural difference while reinforcing a
6 Eurocentric culinary gaze, a cosmopolitan masculinity that is adventurous yet authoritative
7 and hierarchical.
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10 In the domestic sphere, Ramsay targets home audiences with simplified recipes, reshaping
11 into pragmatic teacher. His hyper-masculine intensity from restaurant shows (e.g., *Hell's
12 Kitchen*) subdues for instructional mode framing cooking as achievable, rational skill,
13 positioning him as egalitarian mentor bridging professional expertise and everyday cooking
14 through "cosmopolitan paternalism." His cookbook *Gordon Ramsay's Great Escape* employs a
15 markedly different aesthetic from Oliver's: clean white pages, precise technical photography,
16 and recipes structured as step-by-step procedures, reflecting a masculine, efficiency-oriented
17 habitus that frames domestic cooking as mastery rather than pleasure. Ramsay negotiates
18 gendered boundaries by bringing masculinity into traditionally feminized domestic space,
19 reframing domestic cooking as masculine competence site rather than emotional labour
20 through minimalist aesthetic, direct language, and technical precision appealing to viewers
21 seeking mastery and efficiency.
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24 These dual personas (adventurous global seeker and domestic guide) enable appeal to diverse
25 audiences. His performative versatility contributes to symbolic authority allowing taste
26 construction across multiple registers. Ramsay's media texts reinforce Bourdieu's (1984)
27 insight that taste is social construct shaped by position, capital, and performance. His
28 transnational mobility, elite training, and media charisma converge to produce powerful
29 culinary legitimacy, performing taste across cultural and domestic frontiers to assert not only
30 what is good to eat but who has the right to say so.
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33 4.3 Mary Berry

34 Mary Berry's taste construction in *Classic Mary Berry* (BBC Studios, 2018) centres on nostalgic
35 domesticity, tradition, and middle-class respectability, offering reassuring, stable British food
36 culture grounded in home-cooked values and social propriety. Her taste leadership derives
37 from British culinary heritage preservation rather than experimentation, representing
38 conservative yet emotionally resonant authority. This is consistent with Bourdieu's (1984)
39 notion of embodied cultural capital: Berry's authority is not claimed through institutional
40 credentials alone but through the naturalised performance of middle-class culinary
41 competence, the appearance that correct taste is simply known, practised, and felt. Berry's
42 performative style features calm instruction, politeness, and gentle encouragement reflecting
43 her institutional background (Le Cordon Bleu qualification and former BBC cookery
44 demonstrator), reinforcing pedagogical authority rooted in traditional culinary education. The
45 show's aesthetic (rural homes, floral settings, classically British dishes) reflects idealized
46 English middle-class domestic space, reproducing what Bourdieu (1984) describes as
47 embodied middle-class cultural capital: modesty, tastefulness, and decorum. In *Classic Mary
48 Berry*, episode three, Berry prepares a Victoria sponge, remarking: "There's nothing
49 complicated here. It's about doing the simple things properly." This framing naturalises
50 middle-class domestic taste as timeless and obvious, enacting what Bourdieu (1984) calls
51 symbolic violence: the dominant group's taste presented as universal common sense. Her
52 cookbook emphasizes consistency and reliability through clear, practical recipes framing food
53 as achievable and comforting, presenting domestic cooking as care, routine, and order
54 expression promoting moral and aesthetic values: punctuality, cleanliness, gratitude,
55 discipline.
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3 This persona aligns with the historical feminisation of British domestic culinary labour. Unlike
4 Lawson's postfeminist sensuality, Berry's maternal and conservative femininity embodies the
5 "ideal homemaker," drawing upon nurturing mother and well-mannered lady tropes. Her
6 emphasis on manners, family values, and simple pleasures resonates with older and
7 conservative audiences, offering continuity amid cultural change. Berry's affective cues (calm
8 presence; modest voice; warm smile) generate comfort and familiarity, deepening symbolic
9 capital as audiences trust her for emotional stability alongside recipes. As Matwick (2017)
10 notes, affective trust centrally establishes culinary authority for female chefs whose legitimacy
11 rests on perceived warmth and authenticity.
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14 Through her long career (from *The Great British Bake Off* [BBC Studios, 2010] to BBC solo
15 programmes) Berry has become emblematic of "Britishness" in food. Her promotion of
16 traditional recipes, seasonal ingredients, and table etiquette contributes to a nostalgic cultural
17 imaginary where national identity stabilizes through culinary routines. Her continued
18 popularity signals the enduring appeal of culinary conservatism and domestic ritual. Berry's
19 authority lies in naturalizing taste as obvious, timeless, and proper (British), with simple dishes
20 serving profound symbolic functions linking eating to family, place, and tradition. In Bourdieu's
21 terms, she converts cultural capital into symbolic capital by aligning performance with
22 dominant middle-class norms, making her taste legitimate and aspirational. Mary Berry
23 mediates taste through emotional resonance, pedagogical clarity, and cultural continuity,
24 exemplifying traditional domestic femininity's enduring power in food and hospitality's
25 symbolic economy.
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29 4.4 Nigella Lawson

30 Nigella Lawson's taste construction in *Simply Nigella* (BBC Studios, 2015) foregrounds
31 sensuality, affect, and lifestyle-oriented femininity. Unlike traditional figures like Berry,
32 Lawson's postfeminist, cosmopolitan persona roots in performative mastery of pleasure,
33 aesthetic style, and emotional resonance rather than formal expertise (Smith, 2020),
34 positioning domestic cooking as an indulgent, self-affirming act, a source of well-being and
35 personal expression rather than duty.
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38 Lawson eschews fast-paced energy for a slower, intimate aesthetic employing soft lighting,
39 close camera angles, and domestic settings creating a quiet pleasure atmosphere. She often
40 appears alone, cooking for herself or loved ones, suggesting calm, control, and self-care. In
41 episode one of *Simply Nigella*, preparing a golden turmeric milk and a bowl of miso-dressed
42 noodles, she narrates: "I cook because it makes me feel good, not because I should." This
43 frames cooking as therapeutic and emotionally restorative, echoing postfeminist discourses
44 valorizing self-improvement through lifestyle practices. Featured recipes (health-conscious
45 globally inspired dishes alongside indulgent treats) reflect this ethos. Lawson navigates
46 between restraint and indulgence, constructing complex femininity combining sensual
47 gratification with emotional intelligence and cultural sophistication, modelling balanced,
48 affective food relationships that feel empowering rather than obligatory.
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51 Lawson's culinary authority emerges through a blend of self-presentation and narrative
52 performance. Speaking directly to audiences conversationally with personal anecdotes and
53 emotional reflections, her authority is affective and narrative-based rather than institutional,
54 challenging traditional domestic versus professional cook binaries through a hybrid model
55 where emotional authenticity and aesthetic pleasure are central (Smith, 2020). The *Simply*
56 *Nigella* cookbook reinforces this: its design foregrounds warm photography, intimate prose,
57 and recipe introductions framed as personal essays, positioning the reader as a confidante
58 rather than a student. This format encodes a specific form of cultural capital (one rooted in
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3 cosmopolitan lifestyle, emotional intelligence, and aesthetic sensibility) which resonates with
4 audiences who value self-expression over culinary mastery. Her performance reconfigures
5 traditional food media gender roles, rejecting disciplinarian tones for softer, personalised
6 approaches. Her unapologetically sensual yet intellectual femininity combines tactile
7 engagement with cultural capital, reclaiming the kitchen as pleasure and autonomy space. Her
8 polished yet accessible presentation, cooking in casual clothing without heavy makeup,
9 reinforces naturalism and approachability, resonating with audiences seeking emotionally
10 connected, less prescriptive cooking models.
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13 Lawson's "feel good food" embodiment aligns culinary practice with emotional self-regulation
14 and self-care, turning cooking into personal identity affirmation. She invites audiences to
15 engage with food as sensory joy, cultural exploration, and emotional balance, messaging
16 resonating in media environments attuned to wellness, authenticity, and mental health. Yet
17 Lawson's taste construction is not politically neutral. Her style reflects privileged access to
18 global ingredients, leisurely cooking time, and conducive home environments. Her culinary
19 authority presumes certain cultural and economic capital, even while downplaying them
20 through informal presentation. This contradiction is central to her appeal: making elite taste
21 seem accessible, reinforcing Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital disguised as natural
22 preference. Nigella Lawson mediates taste through affect, sensuality, and emotional
23 narrative, representing a postfeminist, cosmopolitan culinary figure reframing domestic
24 cooking as empowerment, care, and aesthetic pleasure. Her contribution to food's symbolic
25 economy lies in making taste personal, pleasurable, and emotionally resonant.
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30 **5. Conclusion**

31 This study explored how British celebrity chefs function as cultural intermediaries in culinary
32 taste construction. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1984) framework of habitus, field, and cultural
33 capital, the research examined media texts and public personas of Jamie Oliver, Gordon
34 Ramsay, Mary Berry, and Nigella Lawson through close textual analysis of their television
35 programmes and cookbooks, illuminating how these chefs shape, reflect, and contest
36 narratives of class, gender, national identity, and morality through food, performing complex
37 social roles influencing how audiences engage with taste, identity, and lifestyle
38 (Giousmpasoglou *et al.*, 2020). Each chef contributed uniquely to culinary taste's symbolic
39 economy: Oliver's civic reformism positioned him as moral entrepreneur navigating public
40 health and social responsibility; Ramsay's globalised masculinity articulated elite culinary
41 authority while tapping working-class sensibilities; Berry's nostalgic domesticity preserved
42 traditional middle-class values reinforcing culinary competence norms; Lawson's postfeminist
43 persona reimaged the domestic kitchen as female empowerment space through pleasure,
44 intellect, and aesthetic expression.
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48 The study revealed that these chefs function not only as educators and entertainers, but also
49 as powerful cultural figures who construct symbolic meanings around food and shape public
50 perceptions of taste. Their personas operate through affective labour, aspirational narratives,
51 and stylistic authority, influencing how audiences encounter, internalise, and contest culinary
52 taste. Rather than prescribing behaviour directly, they repeatedly model classed and
53 gendered identity scripts that normalise certain culinary dispositions as desirable, responsible,
54 or sophisticated. Culinary authority is therefore both performative and affective, embedded
55 within broader structures of class, gender, and national identity (Cooper *et al.*, 2017).
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58 Food media also functions as a site of ideological work, moral regulation, and the reproduction
59 of cultural hierarchies. Through storytelling, affective performances, and carefully constructed
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3 media texts, these celebrity chefs act as “taste leaders,” influencing dietary perceptions while
4 framing broader social values related to health, sustainability, family, and national belonging.
5 In doing so, they play a critical role in the mediatisation of hospitality and the symbolic
6 economy of contemporary food culture (Hollows, 2022). Ultimately, hospitality management
7 and food studies cannot be fully understood without acknowledging their cultural, symbolic,
8 and affective dimensions. Examining how taste is constructed, performed, and mediated
9 therefore offers deeper insight into hospitality as both a professional practice and a significant
10 cultural force.
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13 This study critically reflects the need for what might be described as a cultural turn within
14 hospitality research. While the field has generated substantial insight into operations, service
15 quality, marketing, and consumer behaviour, it has paid comparatively limited attention to
16 the symbolic systems through which value, legitimacy, and taste are socially constructed.
17 Celebrity chefs illustrate how cultural authority increasingly operates through media visibility,
18 narrative performance, and affective engagement rather than technical expertise alone.
19 Recognising these dynamics requires hospitality scholars to engage more directly with
20 sociology, cultural studies, and critical theory. Doing so would expand the field's analytical
21 capacity beyond managerial logics and enable richer interpretations of how consumption
22 practices are shaped by class, gender, identity, and mediated forms of influence. A stronger
23 cultural orientation would not replace managerial research but complement it, positioning
24 hospitality as a socially embedded practice rather than solely an economic activity. Such a shift
25 is essential if the discipline is to remain theoretically responsive to the complexities of
26 contemporary consumption.
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29 30 31 *5.1 Theoretical Implications*

32 This study advances theoretical understanding across hospitality, food studies, and cultural
33 sociology by situating celebrity chefs within Bourdieu's (1984) cultural production theory,
34 demonstrating how chefs operate as cultural intermediaries across overlapping fields
35 (gastronomy, media, education, and commerce) accumulating and converting symbolic
36 capital. These figures construct and legitimise taste as a performative, socially stratified
37 construct shaped by narrative, personality, media convergence, and affect rather than
38 culinary expertise alone (Hollows, 2022).
39

40 Focusing on four British chefs, this research refines cultural intermediation concepts for
41 contemporary food and media cultures. These chefs extend their influence beyond food
42 preparation, offering aspirational and affective identity models engaging audiences across
43 class, gender, and morality lines (Başaran, 2025). Culinary authority is revealed as not only
44 gastronomic but deeply symbolic, moral, and emotional, offering viewers lifestyle scripts,
45 pedagogical cues, and cultural values through which they negotiate social positions (Johnston
46 and Goodman, 2015). The analysis illuminates Bourdieu's habitus notion, showing how
47 embodied dispositions are shaped through media representations. Each chef performs
48 distinct habitus modes: Oliver's civic engagement, Ramsay's cosmopolitan masculinity, Berry's
49 nostalgic domesticity, Lawson's sensual post-feminism provide performative models of
50 classed and gendered identity. These personas demonstrate how food media negotiates
51 contemporary femininities and masculinities, enriching feminist discourse by revealing how
52 traditional and transgressive gender norms are maintained, challenged, or hybridized within
53 culinary performance.
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57 Seven key themes emerge (Figure 3): First, all chefs function as cultural intermediaries
58 translating cultural capital through media, shaping perceptions of "good" food, "authentic"
59 cooking, and "appropriate" taste. Second, class remains the dominant structuring force. Oliver
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and Ramsay mobilise hybrid class identities merging working-class personas with middle-class ideologies, while Berry represents traditional middle-class authority and Lawson articulates fluid, cosmopolitan cultural capital. Taste is relational practice shaped by social positioning and mediated through cultural performance (Cappellini *et al.*, 2016). Third, gender plays a critical role. Female chefs navigate postfeminist sensibilities within frameworks both subverting and reinforcing normative femininity, while male chefs assert expertise through performance, adventure, and mastery. Domestic cooking feminisation and professional cuisine masculinisation remain operative binaries (Matwick, 2017), though increasingly blurred through hybrid performances. Fourth, authenticity and affect underpin performances (Koufodontis and Gaki, 2025). These chefs deploy affective labour creating authenticity and relatability, contributing to multi-sensory taste pedagogy where feelings equal technique importance. Fifth, civic and moral discourses are integral, linking food to responsibility, discipline, and social cohesion, cooking becomes a civic act, and these chefs engage in moral interpellation, positioning audiences as responsible citizens (Giousmpasoglou *et al.*, 2020). Sixth, media format shapes culinary authority. Genre conventions produce distinct affective and epistemological registers influencing taste representation. As multi-platform figures, these chefs exemplify contemporary media convergence culture (Proesmans *et al.*, 2023). Finally, these chefs participate in national identity negotiation, invoking traditions and aesthetics contributing to culinary "Britishness" construction. Food becomes medium through which collective identity is imagined, challenged, and reasserted.

Figure 3: Key themes in the social construction of taste

Please insert Figure 3 here

Source: Authors' own work

Celebrity chefs perform complex cultural work, constructing taste not merely through recipes but through narratives, aesthetics, and values. Their influence is contingent upon broader media structures, social inequalities, and historical narratives framing food as both sustenance and symbol. They serve as moral entrepreneurs, educators, entertainers, and brand ambassadors (Giousmpasoglou *et al.*, 2020), shaping how food is discussed, practiced, and valued. Through media texts, these chefs shape consumption's social meanings, reinforcing and transforming taste's symbolic economy in contemporary Britain. They are central figures in food culture mediatization, exemplifying how personal style, public discourse, and structural power converge in everyday taste making.

5.2 Practical Implications

This study has significant practical implications for hospitality professionals, culinary educators, food media producers, and policymakers. From an educational perspective, findings underscore incorporating media literacy and cultural analysis into curricula. Given celebrity chefs' expanding influence shaping public taste perceptions, training programmes should equip students with technical skills and critical tools to understand how food narratives, visual aesthetics, and symbolic capital shape consumer behaviour and brand identity. Embedding modules on food media, narrative construction, and service's affective dimensions could help future professionals navigate mediated hospitality landscapes effectively.

From an industry standpoint, the study highlights affect and storytelling's strategic value in customer engagement (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024). How celebrity chefs connect with audiences through authenticity, emotion, and value-laden narratives can inform branding strategies for restaurants, hotels, and culinary experiences (Rodrigues *et al.*, 2023). Understanding how figures like Oliver or Lawson frame taste and lifestyle could help businesses develop resonant marketing messages appealing to consumers' identities and emotions beyond functional

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3 needs. Aligning brand communications with values like sustainability, heritage, or wellness
4 through emotionally compelling narratives may enhance consumer loyalty and perceived
5 authenticity (Naccarato and LeBesco, 2012). For food media producers, the research provides
6 insight into hybrid chef identities' enduring appeal. Successful food programming increasingly
7 blends instructional content with lifestyle branding, emotional intimacy, and cultural
8 discourse. Multi-platform storytelling is key to building strong culinary brands transcending
9 individual shows or cookbooks.
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12 At the policy level, celebrity chefs can be powerful health messaging agents, with caveats.
13 While figures like Oliver have demonstrated effectiveness in food-related advocacy, their
14 symbolic authority must be contextualised within broader structural dynamics, namely
15 inequality, access, and cultural fit. Campaigns should be designed in partnership with
16 communities and educators to avoid moralistic or exclusionary framings. The gendered and
17 classed nature of culinary authority must be acknowledged to ensure diverse health
18 communication representation.
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21 Finally, hospitality institutions and cultural organisations may benefit from leveraging
22 celebrity chefs in heritage and tourism projects where national identity and food culture
23 intersect. Chefs' influence framing Britishness through food suggests potential for destination
24 branding, cultural festivals, and museum exhibitions enhancing visitor engagement (Yang *et*
25 *al.*, 2020). However, care must represent diverse cuisines and voices, avoiding narrow or
26 nostalgic culinary identity portrayals. This study highlights how hospitality education and
27 industry practice can no longer be separated from media and culture. As celebrity chefs
28 increasingly shape public understandings of taste, responsibility, and identity, the hospitality
29 sector must develop more nuanced, interdisciplinary approaches to engaging these cultural
30 forces.
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32 33 *5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research*

34 While this study offers rich theoretical and empirical exploration of celebrity chefs' role in
35 taste construction, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the sample was limited to
36 four British chefs, albeit highly influential ones. Broader comparative analysis including chefs
37 from more diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds could yield more nuanced insights into
38 how intersecting identities shape culinary authority. The exclusion of diasporic voices such as
39 Madhur Jaffrey or Ken Hom is an important limitation, as their work raises different questions
40 about authenticity, cultural translation, and the politics of representation in British food media
41 (Watson, 2015). Second, the study relied on textual and media analysis, leaving audience
42 reception and interpretation unexplored. Future studies might include ethnographic fieldwork
43 or audience research to understand how consumers engage with culinary media in everyday
44 life. Third, the media landscape continues evolving rapidly, particularly with digital influencers
45 and user-generated food content. More longitudinal or platform-specific approaches would
46 capture ongoing taste-making evolution in digital spaces.
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50 Future research should examine how race, gender, sexuality, and age intersections influence
51 food media figures' authority and legitimacy. Significant scope exists to explore how social
52 media influencers, home cooks, or diasporic chefs construct counter-narratives to dominant
53 culinary taste models. International comparative research could illuminate how national food
54 identities are shaped through distinct media ecologies. As boundaries between professional
55 and amateur cooking, public and private spheres, and culinary education and entertainment
56 continue blurring, researchers must remain attuned to how media texts, bodies, and
57 performances co-produce symbolic kitchen value, offering insights into broader cultural
58 processes through which food, identity, and social life are made meaningful.
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Celebrity chefs are more than entertainers or culinary experts, they are powerful cultural figures shaping how society understands food, taste, and identity. Their media texts are rich with symbolic meaning, social instruction, and emotional resonance. Through their stories, styles, and performances, they help compose a shared cultural food language reflecting and reconfiguring contemporary Britain's social fabric. Understanding their role more fully enriches not only our appreciation of culinary culture but our understanding of broader processes through which everyday life is shaped by media, class, and culture.

Taken together, this reflection suggests that hospitality management must move beyond managerial reductionism and engage more seriously with cultural power, media, and symbolic production if it is to remain theoretically relevant. Understanding hospitality today requires not only analysing how services are delivered, but also how tastes are legitimised, identities are performed, and cultural hierarchies are reproduced through increasingly mediatized environments.

Declaration of Generative AI in Manuscript Preparation

During the process of preparing this manuscript, the authors employed Claude.ai for language refinement. All outputs were carefully reviewed and revised by the authors, who assume full responsibility for the final manuscript.

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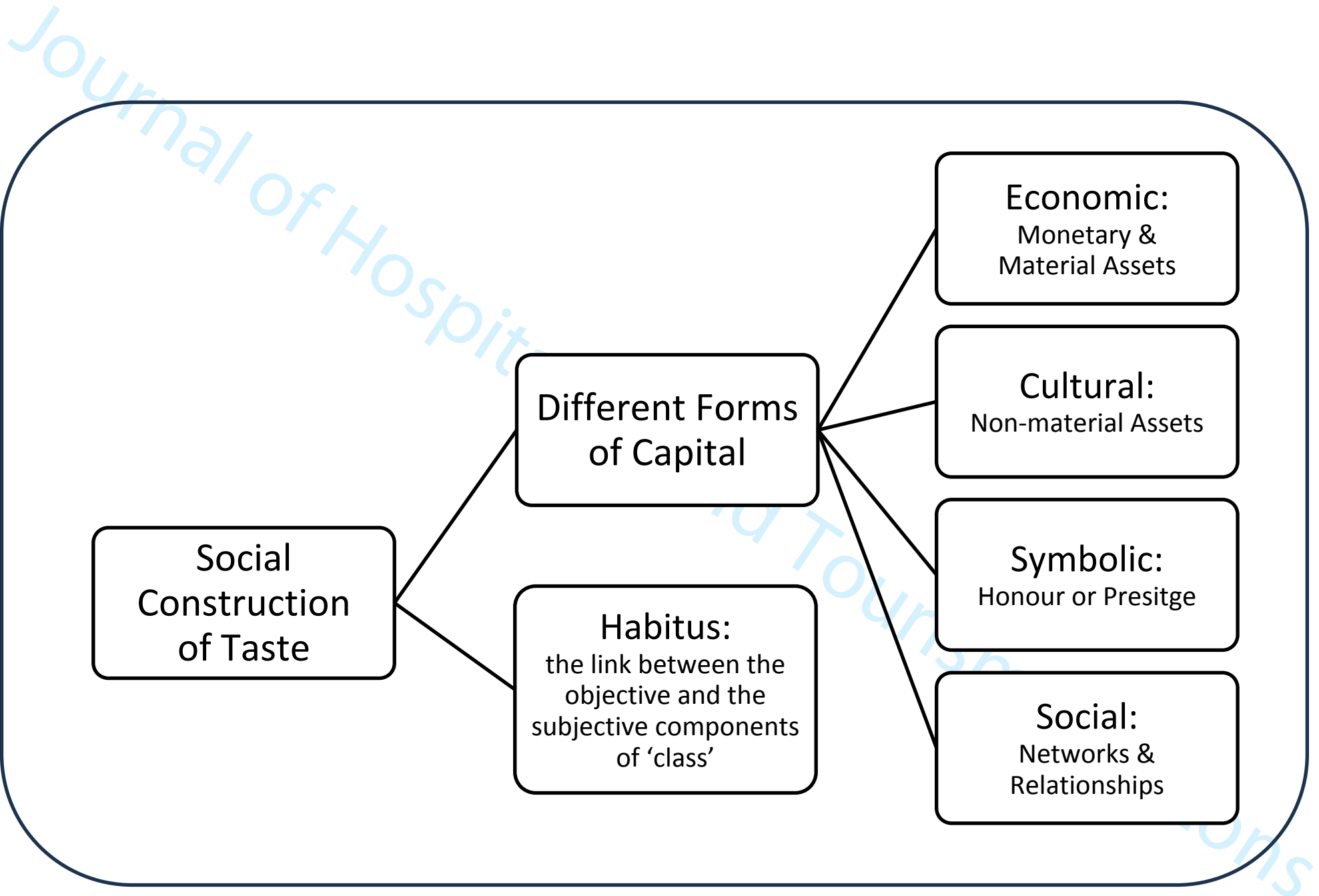


Figure 2: Celebrity chefs discussed in this study



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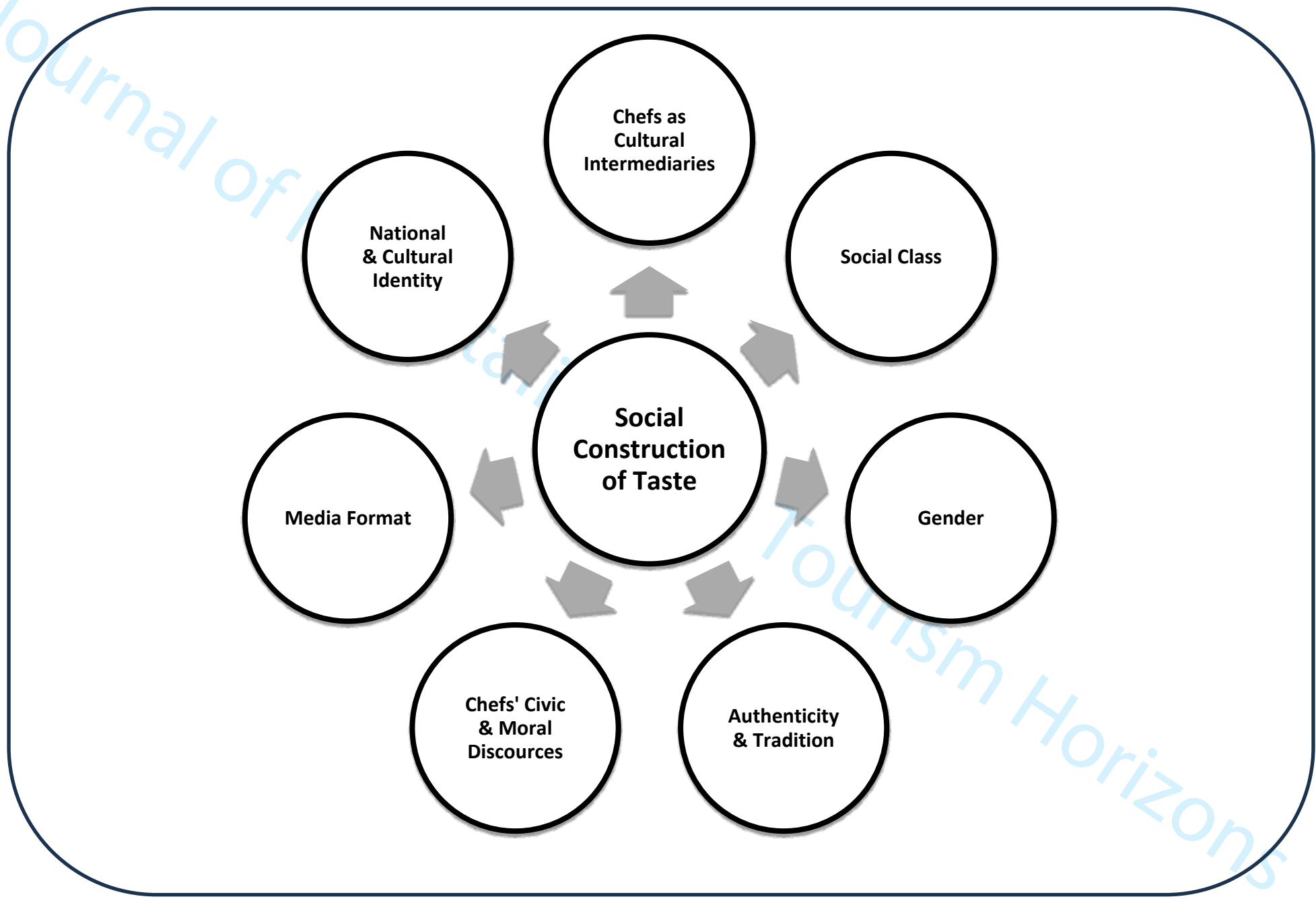


Table 1:

Celebrity Chef	Cookbook	Television Show	No. of episodes	Viewing Method	Total Viewing Time
Jamie Oliver	<i>Jamie's Italy</i> (Page count: 319)	Jamie's Great Italian Escape (2005)	6	DVD	720 mins (Episode duration: 24 minutes x 5 viewings)
Gordon Ramsay	<i>Gordon Ramsay's Great Escape</i> (Page count: 271)	Gordon Ramsay's Great Escape India (2010)	3	IMDb online	750 mins (Episode duration: 50 minutes x 5 viewings)
Mary Berry	<i>Classic Mary Berry</i> (Page count: 608)	Classic Mary Berry (2018)	6	BBC online	870 mins (Episode duration: 29 minutes x 5 viewings)
Nigella Lawson	<i>Simply Nigella</i> (Page count: 416)	Simply Nigella (2015)	6	BBC iPlayer	870 mins (Episode duration: 29 minutes x 5 viewings)

Response to the Managing Editor

We sincerely thank the Managing Editor and Reviewers for their constructive feedback and positive evaluation of our manuscript.

We have carefully revised the manuscript in accordance with all comments and journal guidelines. The current revisions address all 18 points you mentioned and include:

1. Revise your article by responding to the reviewers' comments as well as comments from one of our associate editors or myself.

R: We have carefully revised the manuscript in response to all reviewers' comments, the associate editor's recommendations, and the editor's additional observations.

2. Consider revising or shortening your title to make it more concise and eye-catching. We prefer short, engaging, and more general titles. If not necessary, you do not need to include the words "hospitality," "tourism," "hospitality and tourism," or "the hospitality and tourism industry" in your title.

R: The title has been revised to make it more concise, engaging, and broadly applicable.

3. Include a structured abstract on page 1 of the main document and ensure it includes all the required subsections, including Purpose, Methodology, Findings, Implications, and Originality, along with Keywords. Please make sure to include all these sections, including the Implications section, in your structured abstract.

R: A structured abstract has been added, including the required sections: Purpose, Methodology, Findings, Originality, and Keywords.

4. Make sure to follow JHTH author guidelines closely...

R: The manuscript has been thoroughly checked against JHTH author guidelines. Citation and referencing formats have been revised accordingly, including the use of "et al." for works with three or more authors from the first citation onward. In-text citations have been alphabetized where appropriate, and all footnotes/endnotes have been incorporated into the main text.

5. Check all your tables and figures in terms of accuracy and readability. Tables and figures should be provided in Word format. You should indicate where each table and figure should be placed within the main text. Provide a source for each table and figure. If a table or figure is developed by the authors, state "Source: Developed by authors." If developed based on previous studies, state "Developed by authors based on..." If any tables or figures are copied from another source, you must state this and provide copyright permission.

R: All tables and figures have been reviewed for accuracy and readability. Placement indicators have been included in the manuscript, and appropriate source statements have been added for each table and figure.

6. If your submission is an empirical study involving human (or animal) participants, you should provide a statement within the Methods section confirming that your research

1
2
3 received institutional and national (or international) ethical approval and complies with all
4 relevant guidelines and regulations. You should also include a statement explaining the
5 study's informed consent protocols, including whether participants were informed of (a) the
6 purpose of the study, (b) how their anonymity/confidentiality was protected, (c) how their
7 data were stored and used, and (d) any associated risks.
8
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10 R: The Methods section now includes statements regarding ethical approval, compliance
11 with relevant guidelines, and informed consent procedures, including participant information,
12 confidentiality, data handling, and risk considerations.
13

14 7. Revisit the Discussion and Conclusions sections to better address the "So what?"
15 question. Consider organizing this section into four subsections: (1) Conclusions, (2)
16 Theoretical Implications, (3) Practical Implications, and (4) Limitations and Future Research.
17 Your study should offer strong and original theoretical and practical implications.
18
19

20 R: The Discussion and Conclusion sections have been substantially revised and reorganized
21 to better address the study's contribution. Separate subsections on Conclusions, Theoretical
22 Implications, Practical Implications, and Limitations and Future Research have been
23 included.
24

25 8. Cross-check all references within the text with your reference list. Ensure that all cited
26 references are included in the reference list and remove any uncited references. Each
27 reference must be genuine, verifiable, accurate, and complete, including authors' names,
28 title, volume, issue, pages, and publisher details. You may consider removing secondary and
29 outdated references.
30
31

32 R: All in-text citations and reference list entries have been cross-checked for consistency,
33 completeness, accuracy, and relevance. Uncited references have been removed, and
34 outdated or secondary sources have been reconsidered where appropriate.
35
36

37 9. Keep your article below 9,000 words, including references, tables, figures, and
38 appendices. If your article exceeds this limit, consider submitting supplementary materials.
39 Name the file "Supplementary Materials" and refer to it appropriately in the text (e.g., "see
40 Appendix 1 in Supplementary Materials"). Do not include core sections (e.g., literature
41 review, method, results, references) as supplementary materials. All tables and figures must
42 be submitted in Word format (not as images or PDFs).
43
44

45 R: We have made every effort to reduce the manuscript length and keep it under the word
46 limit (Final word count: 8472).
47

48 10. Improve your article's readability and flow. Avoid long and overly complex sentences. We
49 also discourage very short paragraphs (1–3 sentences) and overly long paragraphs (more
50 than half a page). Ensure that your title is concise and engaging.
51
52

53 R: The manuscript has been edited throughout to improve readability, coherence, paragraph
54 structure, and overall flow.
55

56 11. Proofread your article carefully. You may consider using a professional copy editor or
57 technical writer. After acceptance, no further changes can be made.
58
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2
3 R: The manuscript has been carefully proofread to correct grammatical, stylistic, and
4 formatting issues.
5

6 12. Include all acknowledgments, tables, figures, and supplementary materials in your
7 submission. Ensure that the order of authors, their full names, affiliations, and email
8 addresses are accurate. No changes can be made after acceptance.
9

10 R: All required submission components, including acknowledgments, tables, figures, and
11 supplementary materials (where applicable), have been reviewed and included. Author
12 details have been verified.
13

14 13. Please do not thank the editor, guest editors, or reviewers in the acknowledgments.
15

16 R: The acknowledgments section has been checked to ensure that no editor, guest editor, or
17 reviewer is acknowledged.
18

19 14. Pay very close attention to Emerald's originality policy. Your manuscript must be original,
20 demonstrate minimal similarity to previously published work, and utilize relevant and
21 accurate references throughout. You must also pay close attention to Emerald's policies on
22 the use of generative AI or large language models (LLMs).
23

24 R: We have carefully reviewed Emerald's originality, similarity, and AI-use policies and
25 confirm that the manuscript complies with these requirements.
26

27 15. Verify that all authors' names, affiliations, and email addresses are correct in the
28 ScholarOne system. If there are any errors, please inform us. You cannot add a new co-
29 author at this stage. Per COPE guidelines, we cannot change an author's affiliation at this
30 stage.
31

32 R: All author names, affiliations, and email addresses have been verified in the ScholarOne
33 system.
34

35 16. Submit a clean version of your paper. You do not need to highlight changes in the
36 manuscript.
37

38 R: A clean version of the revised manuscript has been prepared and submitted.
39

40 17. In addition to responding to reviewers' comments, please submit a brief report explaining
41 how you have addressed both the reviewers' and associate editor's comments, as well as
42 the above points.
43

44 R: This response document provides a detailed explanation of how the reviewers', associate
45 editor's, and editor's comments have been addressed.
46

47 18. When submitting your revised article, you should NOT include any author-identifying
48 information in the response document or under the "Author Response" section. Doing so will
49 result in the manuscript being returned and may delay the review process.
50

51 R: No author-identifying information has been included in the response document or Author
52 Response section, in accordance with the journal's double-anonymized review requirements.
53 We appreciate the Editor's guidance and believe the revised manuscript has been
54 significantly strengthened.
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Response to the Reviewers

Reviewer 1

Reviewer 1 Comments:

Thank you for an excellent job on this revision and addressing the comments thoroughly. This is an excellent piece of interdisciplinary work that is well-written and presented. The sections and ideas flow much more smoothly and the methodology and results greatly improved to provide necessary information and insights. There are 3 small things that I think need to be addressed still before suitable for publication...

Response: We sincerely thank Reviewer 1 for the very positive evaluation of our manuscript and for recognising the contribution and improvements made in the revised version.

R1-C1: In the introduction, this sentence requires some citations...what studies? "Existing studies within a hospitality studies framework"

Response: Additional citations have now been included in this section to support the statement and strengthen the positioning of the study within the existing literature.

R1-C2: For Table 1, it may be useful to have the number of content pages for each cookbook.

Response: The number of pages for each cookbook has now been added to Table 1 to improve transparency and methodological clarity.

R1-C3: Who is Delia Smith? Mentioned twice in the results in comparison to Berry and Lawson. I would suggest removing these two mentions or expounding on why this comparison is necessary.

Response: The references to Delia Smith have been removed, as advised by the reviewer, to improve clarity and maintain the analytical focus of the discussion.

Additional Questions:

Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify publication?: See below

Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any significant work ignored?: See below

Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?: See below

Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?: See below

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3 Practicality and/or Research implications: Does the paper identify clearly any implications
4 for practice and/or further research? Are these implications consistent with the findings and
5 conclusions of the paper?: See below
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7

8 Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the
9 technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has
10 attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure,
11 jargon use, acronyms, etc.: See below
12
13

14 Abstract: Does the abstract relate to the article? Does it provide an adequate summary of
15 the content? Is the language easy to understand and clear for the reader?: See below
16
17

18 **Authors' Response to additional questions:** all comments and recommendations from R1
19 have been addressed
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21

22 **Reviewer 2 (R2) Comments:**

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24 Thank you for the authors' efforts in revising the manuscript. The revised version has
25 improved and presents a clearer theoretical focus and analysis.
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30 **R2-C1:** I only suggest that the authors provide slightly more clarification on the coding and
31 theme development process
32

33 Response: We thank the reviewer for this helpful suggestion. The methodology section was
34 significantly strengthened during the previous revision round, particularly regarding the
35 coding procedure, thematic development, and analytical process. Given the conceptual
36 nature, scope, and length constraints of this critical reflection paper, the authors believe that
37 the current level of methodological detail is appropriate and sufficient. Nevertheless, minor
38 clarifications and refinements have been incorporated to further improve transparency and
39 readability: "*The coding process was iterative rather than linear, with themes repeatedly*
40 *reviewed and refined through ongoing movement between the empirical material and the*
41 *theoretical framework. Particular attention was paid to recurring narrative patterns, visual*
42 *symbolism, affective performances, and forms of cultural positioning across the media texts.*
43 *As this study is interpretivist and critically reflective in orientation, the aim of coding was not*
44 *quantitative measurement or inter-coder reliability, but theoretically informed interpretation*
45 *and conceptual coherence.*"
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52 **R2-C2:** and proofread the manuscript again to improve sentence flow and readability. Thank
53 you again, and good luck.
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55 **Response:** The manuscript has been carefully proofread and revised throughout to improve
56 sentence flow, readability, and overall coherence.
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3 Additional Questions:
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5 Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify
6 publication?: The paper shows reasonable originality by applying Bourdieu's concepts to
7 examine British celebrity chefs as cultural intermediaries in culinary taste construction. This
8 hospitality-focused cultural-sociological perspective offers a meaningful contribution.
9

10
11 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
12
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14
15 Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the
16 relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any
17 significant work ignored?: The paper demonstrates an adequate understanding of the
18 relevant literature, particularly in relation to Bourdieu's theory of taste, cultural capital,
19 habitus, and cultural intermediation. It also engages with relevant work on celebrity chefs,
20 food media, gender, class, authenticity, and hospitality scholarship. The literature base is
21 generally appropriate and sufficient for supporting the study's theoretical framing.
22
23

24 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
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28 Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or
29 other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based
30 been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?: The methodology is
31 appropriate and well aligned with the study's aim. The theoretical framework, case selection,
32 and use of thematic textual analysis are generally well designed and suitable for examining
33 celebrity chef media. A little more clarification on the coding and theme development
34 process would further strengthen the methodology.
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37 Response: please see our earlier detailed response.
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42 Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions
43 adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?: The results are generally
44 presented clearly and analysed appropriately. The findings are well connected to Bourdieu's
45 theoretical framework and show how the four celebrity chefs participate in culinary taste
46 construction. The conclusions adequately bring together the main arguments of the paper
47 and are consistent with the study's theoretical focus.
48
49

50 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
51
52

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54 Practicality and/or Research implications: Does the paper identify clearly any implications
55 for practice and/or further research? Are these implications consistent with the findings and
56 conclusions of the paper?: They are appropriate and consistent with the findings and
57 conclusions of the paper.
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60 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.

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5 Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the
6 technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has
7 attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure,
8 jargon use, acronyms, etc.: The manuscript is generally well written and demonstrates a
9 good level of language quality. However, possibly due to the revision process, some
10 sentences are not smoothly connected. Therefore, the authors may consider proofreading
11 the manuscript again to further improve clarity and readability.
12
13

14 Response: The manuscript has been carefully proofread and revised throughout to improve
15 sentence flow, readability, and overall coherence.
16
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20 Abstract: Does the abstract relate to the article? Does it provide an adequate summary of
21 the content? Is the language easy to understand and clear for the reader?: The abstract is
22 clear and adequately reflects the content of the article. It provides a good summary of the
23 study's purpose, theoretical focus, and main contribution, and the language is generally easy
24 to understand.
25

26 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
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31 **Reviewer 3 (R3) Comments:**

32 Authors clarified the manuscript's positioning as a critical reflection paper. In addition, the
33 authors clarified the themes presented in the findings with the theory's connection to the four
34 chefs chosen for the analysis.
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37 Emerald Publishing author guidelines state use of APA 6th Edition. Authors state that JHTH
38 requests Harvard as the applied citation format, which may be a stated direction to authors
39 from another section of the website. The journal can certainly address this discrepancy
40 during the formatting stage of this manuscript. In addition, editors should ensure all areas of
41 the website are consistent for future use by authors and reviewers. (This comment has been
42 sent to the authors and the editors).
43
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45 Authors greatly improved the total number of citations, paying attention to the addition of
46 more references that are more recent than 2015. This reviewer's definition of 'recent'
47 sources is more focused on the last five years. However, due to the topic of taste
48 construction and the dates of the media analyzed in the manuscript, the updated reference
49 list is more than sufficient.
50
51

52 All feedback from the reviewer was adequately addressed by the authors.
53
54

55 **Response:** We appreciate the reviewer's recognition of the improved conceptual positioning
56 and theoretical clarity. In addition we would like to thank Reviewer 3 for acknowledging the
57 strengthened and updated literature base.
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3 Additional Questions:
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5 Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify
6 publication?: Yes
7

8 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
9
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11

12 Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the
13 relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any
14 significant work ignored?: Yes
15
16

17 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
18
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20

21 Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or
22 other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based
23 been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?: Yes
24
25

26 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
27
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30 Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions
31 adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?: Yes
32

33 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
34
35
36

37 Practicality and/or Research implications: Does the paper identify clearly any implications
38 for practice and/or further research? Are these implications consistent with the findings and
39 conclusions of the paper?: Yes
40
41

42 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
43
44
45

46 Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the
47 technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has
48 attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure,
49 jargon use, acronyms, etc.: Yes
50

51 Response: Thank you for the positive feedback.
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