



FOOD IS GREAT

BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND



Research Briefing



VisitBritain®



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Introduction

In March 2017, VisitBritain and DEFRA commissioned market research to benchmark current awareness and gain a deeper understanding of perceptions of Britain's food and drink in key markets.

This was carried out online with 4,000 international travellers across 8 markets: France, Germany, USA, China, Australia, Gulf (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar), India and Japan.

This summary sets out the key findings and identifies several benchmark scores that could be tracked over time to assess changing perceptions and the success of efforts by both organisations through the Food is GREAT campaign to promote Britain's food culture abroad.

Key research objectives

- *What is the role of food in tourism generally?*
- *What is the awareness of the UK's food and drink offering?*
- *What are the perceptions of UK's food and drink – both in general and in terms of the offer for tourists?*
- *Is food a reason to visit the UK?*



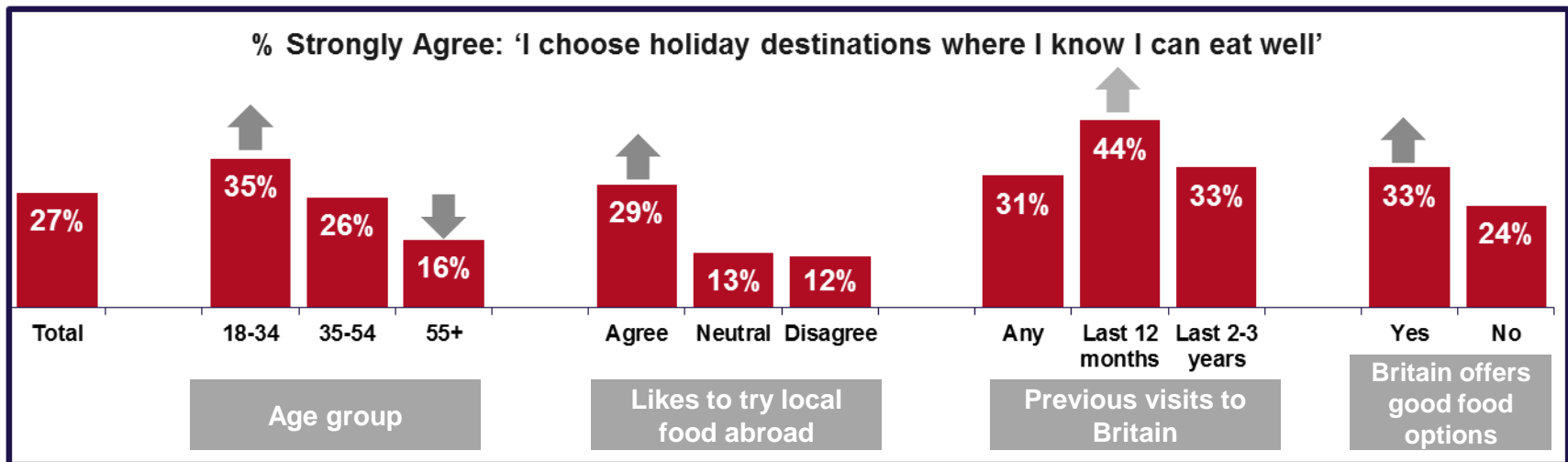
Food and tourism

Although food features in most people's holidays abroad, it is only a decisive factor in planning for a minority.

People who factor food into their travel decisions tend to be younger, more adventurous and have better views of British food.

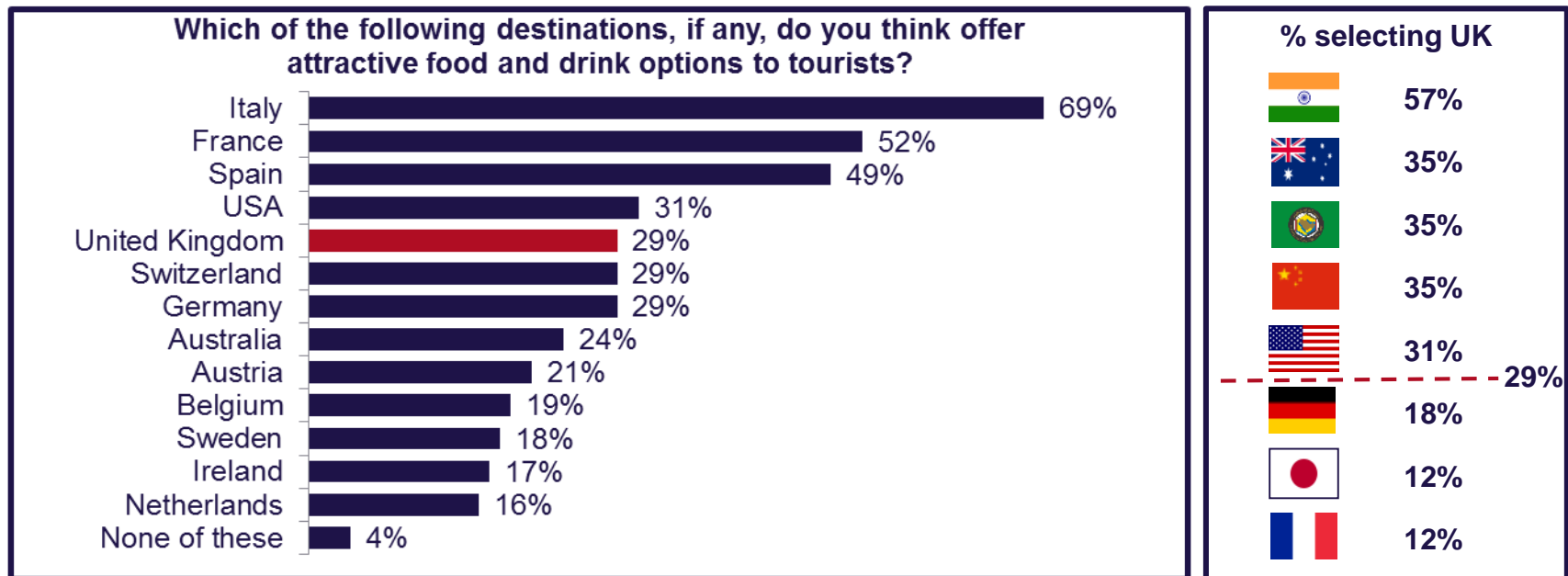
“For many of the world’s billions of tourists, gastronomy has become a central part of the tourism experience”

– Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General, UNWTO



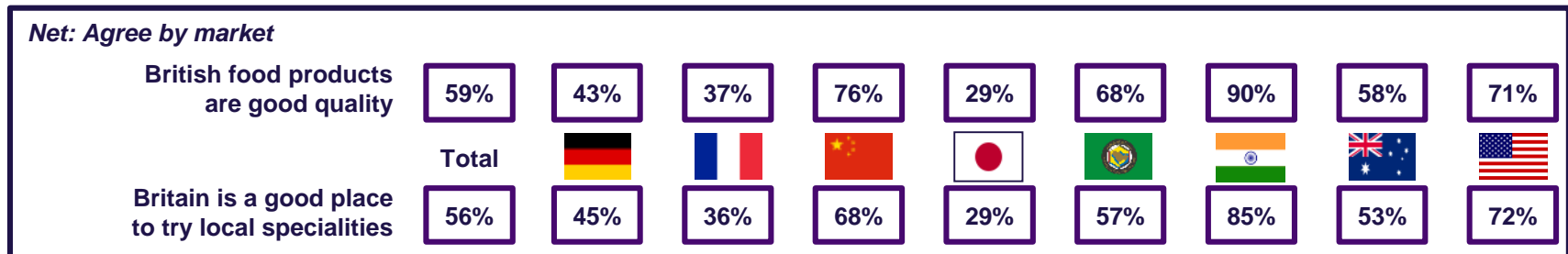
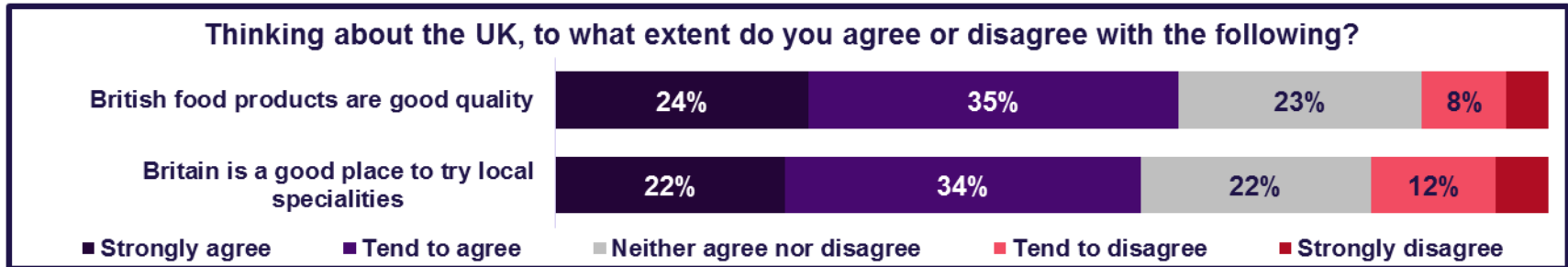
Awareness of food and drink offer

When asked to rate countries on whether they offer “attractive food and drink options to tourists”, 29% of respondents chose the UK. This score can serve as a benchmark of perceptions of Britain’s food offer. When placed amongst competitor markets, the UK is ranked joint 5th with Switzerland and Germany, behind Italy, France, Spain and the USA.



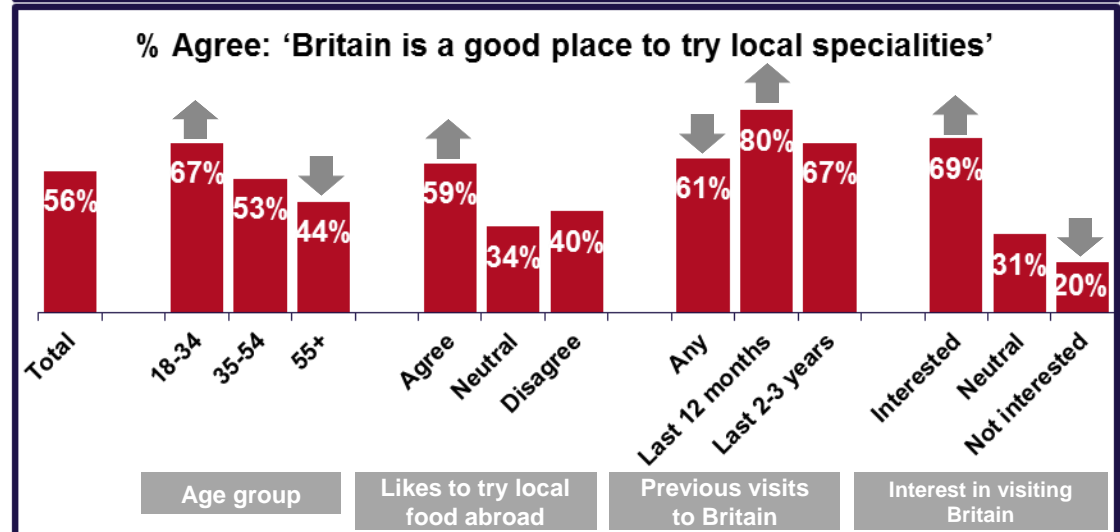
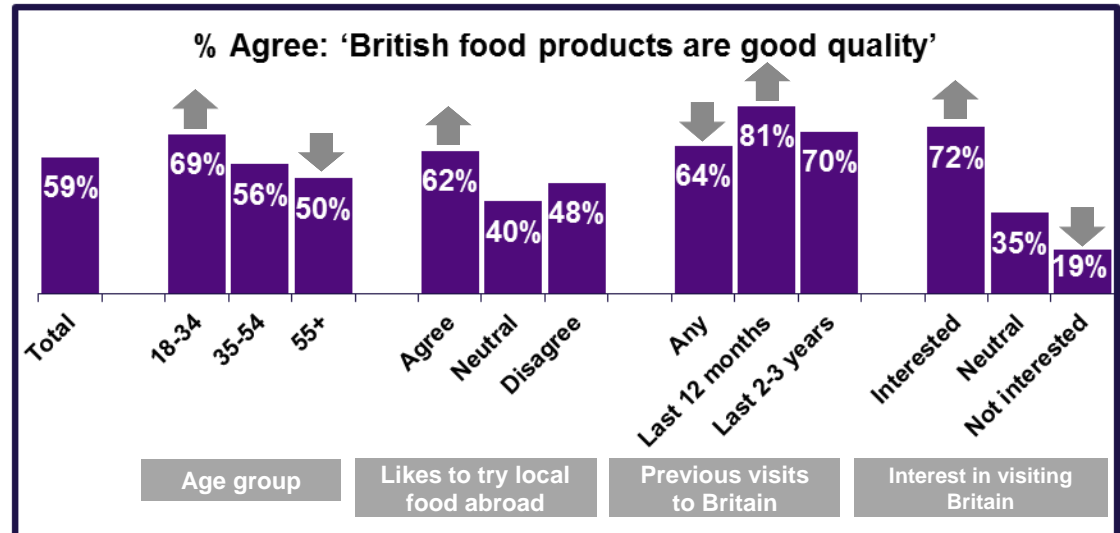
Perceptions of British food

Perceptions are relatively positive on aspects such as quality and local specialities. **Whilst nearly 60% of respondents agree that “British food products are good quality”** (a second benchmark to track), perceptions are higher in India, China, USA and Gulf and lower in Japan, France and Germany. A smaller number, 41%, agree that “British cuisine is part of what attracts tourists to the UK”. Another benchmark is the diversity and regional variation of Britain’s food offer; **56% believe that Britain is a good place to try local specialities.**



Opportunities among specific groups

Perceptions of British food are higher among younger respondents and those who are interested in visiting Britain. The proportion who agree that “British food products are good quality” are strongest amongst 18-34 year olds (69%, vs. 59% among the total sample), and also those who are interested in visiting Britain (72%). The same pattern is also true for local specialities.

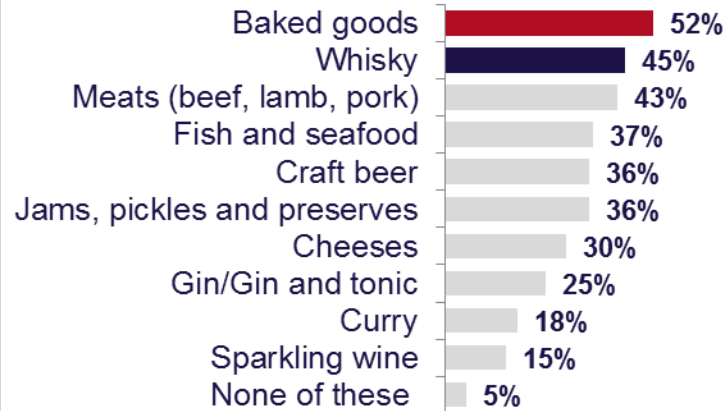


Awareness of British products

Britain is best known for its baked goods (52%), whisky (45%) and meats (43%). More recent visitors (in the last 12 months) have a broader view of British food products overall, and were more likely especially to be aware of fish and seafood, cheeses, curry and sparkling wine.



Food and drink items associated with the UK



Top pick by market



Interest in trying British varieties of...



Highest interest



Q6. Which, if any, of the following food and drink items would you associate with the UK?
 NB. Codes mentioning alcohol were removed for GCC, and the reference to pork was removed.
 Base: All respondents (4,003)



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