

The importance of the visual aesthetics of colours in food at a workday lunch

The aim of the present study was to explore the colour-related aesthetic pleasure in food at workday lunches. First, we conducted a survey (n=188) to define how interested people are in the visual aesthetics of food and plating. Secondly, an additional questionnaire (n=105) and a qualitative interview study (n=12) were conducted to investigate the aesthetic pleasure in food in more detail and its meaning to consumers at a workday lunch. The results of the survey demonstrated that people were interested in the visual aesthetics of food and plating, and this level of interest was dependent upon gender, women being more interested than men. The questionnaire about choice between differently coloured lunch portions (image-processed pictures) showed that the most preferred lunch portions were colourful and had a wide range of colours. In the interview study, aesthetics and colours were considered important, but were not the primary argument for food choices at lunch. The determinants of aesthetic pleasure in lunch food were found to be fluency, pleasantness, functionality and tidiness. At lunch, people liked colourful food with colour contrasts and bright colours, natural and simple colours and colours typical for the foodstuff. Food should not be monotonous; a variety and diversity of colours was preferred. The colours in lunch food are typically the colours of vegetables; therefore, an increase in the number of colours means more vegetables and consequently a healthier diet. At the practical level, the results of this study can be used by restaurants and canteens for composing an aesthetic and visually attractive workday lunch.

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Understanding the customer benefits of customisation: Case surfboard

Customisation is one strategy to involve customers in the design process. However, qualitative empirical studies on customisation in different product contexts are scarce. This paper investigates the benefits customers perceive in craft customisation where they are actively involved in the customisation with the designer. The case of this study is a high involvement custom product, a surfboard. Findings derived from qualitative interviews with surfers (N=22) reveal the perceived benefits in the three distinct phases of customisation: pre-customisation, during which the decision to customise is made; customisation process, during which the product is customised; and product usage. The source of the found benefits are the product, process or customisation itself and they can be classified to functional, emotional, experiential, symbolic, aesthetic, personal, social, epistemic, creative, and hedonic. The benefits vary in occurrence during the different customisation phases. Based on the findings, we present a model for the benefits in the three phases of customisation. The model can be used when implementing craft customisation as a design strategy.

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