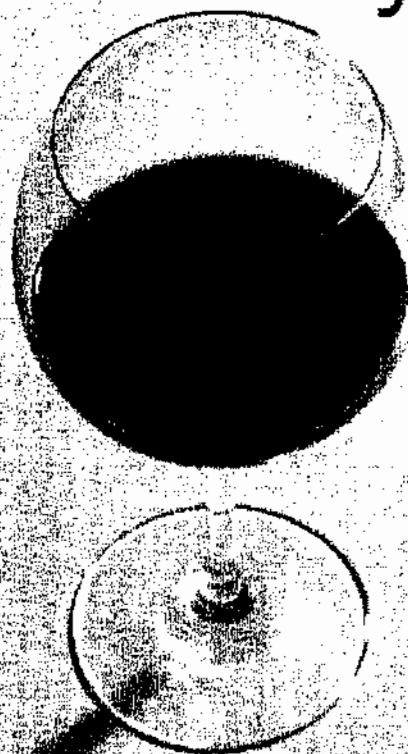


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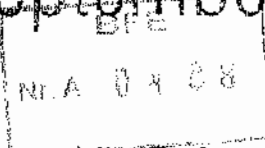
A sense of Identity

European Conference
on Sensory Science
of Food and Beverages



Florence

September 26/29 2004



Villa La Pietra

Via Bolognese 120, Florence - Italy



Università degli Studi di Firenze

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N.A. 0488

Nutrition and ambience: influence factors during a meal

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Objectives: In human nutrition research there are only a few studies with a focus on people eating real foods in real eating situations. The current research methods are mainly based on laboratory research to exclude as many factors as possible. Thus foods rather than meals are studied. Least is known about variables related to the ambience in which a meal takes place. To study eating behaviour in a real ambience is an extreme complex task, which is so far approached by very few scientists.

Principal results: Ambient factors, such as location, appearance of a meal, odours, colours, number of people along with others can be divided in explicit (conscious) factors, perceptible with the higher senses such as vision and audition and implicit (non-conscious) factors, perceptible with the lower senses smell, taste and touch. Many factors are perceived with the lower senses. Beside the fact that it is very hard for people to describe flavours and odours, they are strongly related to emotions. Asking people for things they perceived with their higher senses for most of them it is much easier to describe these sensations properly. With the following study design the complex interrelationship is investigated whether two different locations have an influence on the perception and the evaluation of a meal.

Conclusion: The research of ambient influence factors has a strong multidisciplinary character. The nearly infinite complex interactions within these research needs to develop new research methods and multifactor studies. We cannot hope to understand human eating without studying real eating situations with real meals. Therefore there is an evident need for further studies with a focus on ambient factors influencing human nutrition.

Keywords: nutrition, ambience, perception, evaluation, meal