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Strategic Planning for Dabbous' Culinary Innovation

Name : Mohammed Taqi Uddin

Student ID : 2210126

Subject : Strategic Management

Lecturer : Jayalakshmi Gopalkrishnan

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1. Introduction:

Dabbous, renowned in London's culinary sphere for its innovative cuisine and industrial-chic ambiance, embodies the essence of avant-garde dining experiences under the helm of chef Ollie Dabbous since its establishment in 2012. In today's fiercely competitive business environment, strategic planning is not merely an option but a necessity for businesses to thrive amidst uncertainty. Embracing the wisdom of management theorist Henry Mintzberg, Dabbous recognizes the importance of strategic foresight and agility in navigating the complexities of the contemporary market landscape. Mintzberg's emphasis on detecting subtle discontinuities underscores the need for a sharp, intuitive approach to strategic decision-making, aligning perfectly with Dabbous' commitment to innovation and excellence ([Mintzberg, H, 2023](#)).

This report delineates Dabbous' strategic vision to solidify its position as an industry trailblazer within the UK's fine dining scene. By leveraging its unique character and profound understanding of the culinary market, Dabbous aims to carve out a distinctive niche and stay ahead of evolving consumer preferences. Through data-driven analysis and the incorporation of relevant case studies, Dabbous seeks to refine its strategic approach, ensuring that each decision is grounded in empirical evidence and aligns with its overarching objectives of culinary innovation and customer satisfaction.

1.1 Vision Statement

Dabbous' vision is to redefine the paradigm of fine dining across the UK by spearheading a culinary revolution grounded in innovation and excellence. Our ambition is to establish Dabbous as the premier destination for gastronomic exploration, where each dining experience transcends the ordinary, pushing boundaries and setting new standards of creativity and refinement. We envision a culinary landscape where tradition intertwines seamlessly with innovation, creating a tapestry of flavors and experiences that captivate and inspire our guests.

At the heart of our vision lies a commitment to sustainability and authenticity, ensuring that every dish reflects our values of environmental responsibility and ethical sourcing. We aim to cultivate a culture of culinary exploration and discovery, where guests embark on a journey of sensory delight, guided by our passion for pushing the boundaries of gastronomy. Through our dedication to excellence and innovation, we aspire to elevate the fine dining experience, leaving an indelible mark on the culinary landscape of the UK and beyond.

1.2 Mission Statement

Dabbous' mission is to establish itself as the premier destination for avant-garde fine dining experiences, where culinary innovation meets exceptional service. We are committed to curating unforgettable gastronomic journeys that captivate the senses and transcend traditional dining norms. Our mission encompasses a relentless pursuit of culinary excellence, characterized by the use of premium, sustainably sourced ingredients and meticulous attention to detail in every aspect of our operation. We strive to cultivate enduring relationships with our patrons by delivering personalized service and fostering a welcoming atmosphere that leaves a lasting impression. At Dabbous, we embrace our role as a responsible corporate citizen, prioritizing ethical business practices and environmental sustainability in all our endeavors. Through our dedication to innovation, quality, and social responsibility, we aim to elevate the fine dining experience and inspire a new generation of culinary enthusiasts across the UK and beyond.

1.3 Objectives:

1. **Expansion:** The primary goal is to expand the restaurant's presence within the UK market by opening two new flagship locations within the next two years. This objective aims to capitalize on emerging opportunities in key cities with affluent demographics and growing demand for diverse culinary experiences, thereby enhancing the restaurant's market reach and revenue potential.

2. **Customer Engagement:** The restaurant seeks to cultivate enduring relationships with its clientele and enhance brand loyalty by implementing a comprehensive customer engagement strategy. This objective involves providing personalized dining experiences, implementing loyalty programs, and organizing exclusive events to create memorable moments for customers and strengthen their connection with the brand.
3. **Innovation:** Dabbous is fully committed to keeping its reputation as a culinary innovator by consistently developing fresh and original cuisine which will exhibit the versatility and richness of its orientation. This aim involves engaging with reputable chefs, supplying top-notch ingredients as well as including seasonal and local dishes to offer customers distinct and unforgettable dining experiences.
4. **Sustainability:** The restaurant focuses not only on ethical and sustainable practices but also on the sustainability of the business in general. The aim is to source the ingredients responsibly, make the company energy efficient, and partake in community activities that promote sustainability. By getting sustainability into its business model, the café aims at the same time to meet social and environmental duties and improve its brand image.
5. **Digital Presence:** Dabbous needs to develop its digital arts and online visibility to attract new clients and also interact with existing clients. This objective emphasizes the maximizing of the restaurant's website, social media marketing and customer engagement, and online marketing strategies like pay-per-click advertising, SEO, and content marketing to engage with the target audience. Building up its digital presence can contribute to an increase in brand awareness, drive customer engagement, and finally lead to better sales and revenue through digital footprint enhancement.

Its focus on such goals makes Dabbous a major trendsetter within the UK catering sphere not only in London. This travel expedition will be one to remember, filled with a variety of tasty treats and an intention to surpass expectations.

2. Environmental audit of Dabbous: Internal and External analysis

Effective judgments on the expansion of the restaurant's environment require a thorough examination of the external and internal factors influencing it. In this section of the report, the environment is very well analyzed. Both inner and external forces are considered, inclusive of the threat of the latest entrants and the bargaining strength of providers and consumers. External factors include the environment, politics, financial system, society, and technology. In addition, analytical techniques like Porter's Five Forces and PESTEL are employed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the external dynamics impacting the restaurant.

Factor	Specific Elements	Potential Impact
Political	Taxation and regulation, alcohol licensing laws, political stability, consumer confidence	Increased costs, decreased revenue, reduced demand
Economic	Economic growth, disposable income, interest rates, inflation, tourism, international trade	Increased demand, higher costs, wider clientele
Social	Changing eating habits, health consciousness, demand for diverse cuisines, social media, online reviews	Adaptation of menus, opportunities for unique offerings, need for online presence
Technological	Online reservations, food delivery platforms, social media marketing, influencer engagement, technological advancements in food preparation and sustainability	Improved accessibility, targeted marketing, efficiency, waste reduction

Legal	Employment laws, minimum wage, food safety, hygiene regulations, alcohol licensing laws	Increased costs, staffing challenges, brand reputation
Environmental	Climate change, sustainability concerns, rising energy costs, waste management, recycling regulations	Consumer preferences for sustainable practices, higher costs, and positive environmental image

Table 1: PESTLE ANALYSIS.

2.1 Internal Analysis

2.1.1 Dabbous' Culinary Excellence

Dabbous' reputation for culinary innovation and excellence is underscored by its recognition in the [\(Michelin Guide, 2022\)](#), where it was awarded a prestigious Michelin star. This accolade not only highlights Dabbous' commitment to culinary artistry but also positions it as a destination for discerning diners seeking unique gastronomic experiences. By consistently delivering exceptional dining experiences, Dabbous solidifies its position as a leader in the competitive fine dining landscape.

2.1.2 Operational Efficiency

Research undertook a comprehensive investigation aimed at identifying the top efficiency-boosting operational strategies in the restaurant business, with a special focus on the importance of carefully planned seating arrangements as the ultimate revenue maximizer [\(Barney, J. B, 1991\)](#). For outlets like Dabbous, handling seating capacity to the optimum level along the lines rest of the operations process should aim to maximize the profit level and delivery of a flawless service for customers.

2.1.3 Employee Expertise

(Tzeng et al, 2021) investigated the influence of employee turnover over service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitality on the effectiveness. The findings of the analysis stir up the fact that retaining the experts is one of the key factors in making the operations more efficient and better for guests. Abiding by the principle of investing in employee training and development programs, putting together competitive compensation packages, and creating a conducive workplace can assist Dabbous in reducing the defection rates and facilitating the cultivation of a highly competent workforce.

2.1.4 Dabbous' Culinary Philosophy and Innovation

The Dabbous 'reach in the culinary world is noted for its overall dedication to innovation whose exemplification can be noted in (Michelin Guide, 2022). This eminent award justifies the efforts Dabbous has put into the art of cookery as well as affirming it as a place for food connoisseurs who are auf of unique gastronomic experiences. In their study, Research emphasizes that a novelty component, specifically in the realm of culinary innovation, is an extremely crucial part of any fine dining experience, and this significantly increases its repeatability and productivity. Besides, (Gupta et al, 2020) study exposed that seasonality is also a factor that is equally as significant.

2..1.5 Financial Performance and Resource Allocation

On top of this, while being exceptionally specialized gastronomically, the restaurant has financial sustainability by productively managing the operation costs at the same time. The study points out that financial performance metrics are a very significant element of the strategy-making processes within the food and beverage sector. Financial data and performance indicators as strategic management tactics enable Dabbous revenue streams to be optimized and the cost structures to be streamlined, thus the profitability is guaranteed without compromising service quality. Additionally, the scientists (Tzeng et al, 2020) observe that employee learning and development programs contribute to effective work processes and customer satisfaction, this is very similar to what Dabbous generally says about the need to employ highly qualified and motivated staff at his restaurant.

2.2 External Analysis

2.2.1 Market Trends

([Statista, 2023](#)) is recent research that indicates a significant trend in what UK restaurants are offering—that is, ingredients sourced more sustainably and locally. This trend represents a shift in wider society that manifests in the form of concern for moral consumption and a sustainable environment. Dabbous can capitalize on this trend by featuring sustainable and locally sourced supplies that are available on their menus. The café will not only fulfill the existing customer's desires for ethically sourced items, but it also will be in line with the social values of a conscious consumer. Not only does this methodology augment Dabbous' brand picture but also helps to establish it as a leading force in the sustainable eating initiatives.

In addition, the authors ([Zeng et al, 2021](#)) provide a more detailed investigation of the competitive situation and its influence on the company by giving great weight to the rival strategies. By regularly watching the activity of competitors and being sensitive to consumer tastes, Dabbous can pinpoint unique features that the restaurant can then use to stand out for itself and the rest of the market. This dynamic approach is beneficial for the brand as it allows Dabbous to be predictive of market tendencies, always to stay ahead of the competition, and be a trailblazer in fine dining, strategically positioning itself in spaces where competitors are less active or offering unique dining experiences that differ from the rest, is the way Dabbous can maintain a competitive advantage.

2.2.2 Regulatory Environment

In the UK, however, the ([Food Standards Agency, 2022](#)) has built a regulation that provides strict regulations on food safety and hygiene in the hospitality industry. This obligation not only demonstrates their responsibility to society but also their sincerity in protecting public health and consumer trust. Dabbous must pay special attention to this area, and it should be a priority for him to introduce comprehensive food safety regulations and hygiene processes for all its facilities. The principal way to be compliant with the regulations and

maintain their reputation as champions in the field of food safety is by investing in training the employees, running regular audits, and imposing tough quality control measurements.

2.2.4 Consumer Preferences

The study of ever-changing consumer preferences in the dining sector. As consumers continue to focus more and more on eating healthier and living an experiential lifestyle, Dabbous has the opportunity to adapt its menu to fit the evolving needs of the consumer market. Introducing plant-based alternatives, featuring seasonal ingredients, and providing a unique dining experience makes Dabbous a restaurant with present-day diners who have good memories. On top of the existing technology that Dabbous is using to provide convenience, like online reservations and contactless payment, the restaurant can still satisfy the fancy tech-savvy individuals.

2.2.5 Case Study

The [\(Jiang et al, 2021\)](#) case analysis on “The Impact of COVID-19 on the Fine Dining Industry” covers the issues that were raised in the time of the unexpected situation. Similar to Dabbous, many restaurants have had to tweak their customer behavior, operational imbalance, and economic imbalance dynamics in the wake of COVID-19. Through digitalization innovations, strict safety measures implementation, and transitioning of the business to take-out and delivery, Dabbous showed an ability to be dynamic and robust in a crisis. The crisis shows the importance of adaptation and innovation in crisis management and Dabbous re-confirms his intention to provide the best quality service to his customers even in tricky situations.

Forces	Analysis
Threat of New Entrants	Low
Bargaining Power of Buyers	Moderate to High

Bargaining Power of Suppliers	Moderate
Threat of Substitute Products	Low
Competitive Rivalry within the Industry	Moderate to High

Table 2: PORTER FIVE FORCES ANALYSIS

3. Evaluating strategic options for sustainable competitive advantage

In the dynamic and constantly changing field of culinary, Dabbous acknowledges the strategic planning significance for not just coping with the uncertainties of the market but also becoming a leader in the industry. Knowing that a proactive approach to strategy is a major prerequisite for sustained success, Dabbous undertakes a review of strategic options. The analysis, which is based on different models such as BCG Matrix, Ansoff Matrix, and VRIO analysis, is aimed at creating a path that will guarantee the sustainability of the competitive advantage for the restaurant Dabbous aims to remain one step ahead by predicting market changes and embracing new prospects, thus securing its position as a front-runner in the fine dining industry.

3.1 BCG Matrix Analysis

The BCG Matrix, a strategic management tool, which is developed by the Boston Consulting Group, provides a framework for analyzing a firm's business portfolio in terms of market growth rate and relative market share. The BCG Matrix used by Dabbous in the expansion plan aids in identifying and prioritizing growth investments. Brand new restaurateurs, which settled in luxury locations with rapidly growing demographics, would appear as "Stars" in the matrix of opportunities, meaning high growth potential and solid market share. The expansion cases of Michelin-starred Nobu and Hakkas restaurants can

also be explored to get hold of successful market penetration techniques and brand differentiation strategies. An HBR case study on the growth ([Madsen, D. O, 2017](#)) gives clues on how high-end dining chains strategically steal the market to create room for expansion and employ risk mitigation strategies. Such case studies analysis is a tool that helps Dabbous to gain knowledge about the efficient market penetration tactics and brand differentiation strategies, which later contribute to revenue growth and leadership market in the competitive fine dining industry. These studies give valuable knowledge about how strategic positioning, customer segmentation, and culinary innovation bring revenue growth and leaders to the competitive fine dining industry.



Figure 1: BCG ANALYSIS (Madsen, 2017)

3.2 Ansoff Matrix Analysis

The Ansoff Matrix, a strategic planning tool, delineates four growth strategies: marketing strategies which include market penetration, product development, market development, and diversification. Dabbous' strategic planning arsenal is enriched with the Ansoff Matrix as a tool to develop goal-oriented expansion policies and investigate diverse growth paths. Such as market penetration strategies could aim to increase the efforts of menu diversification and direct promotional campaigns in the existing markets ([Loredana, E. M.,](#)

2017). Cases like the example of Gordon Ramsay's restaurant chain growth demonstrate how things like brand visibility, innovative food, and good customer engagement all matter in market penetration strategies.



Figure 2: ANSOFF MATRIX ANALYSIS (Loredana, 2017)

3.3 SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is an instrument of strategic planning that helps to identify a company's internal talent and flaws as well as external prospects and risks. In the context of Dabbous' strategic planning process, the SWOT analysis highlights the critical factors that are: either supporting or constraining the competitive position and market performance of the organization. Dabboo's culinary innovation, strong brand image, and loyal customers are in line with the prospects for growth in the rapidly increasing spectrum of sustainable dining. Examining some successful examples like Noma's great cooking influence the discovery of methods of utilizing strengths for future opportunities and preventing risks can be defined. The aforementioned case studies demonstrate how sensible allocation of resources, novelty, and efficient partnerships work together to support sustainability,

productivity, and competitiveness in the volatile fine dining context. Thanks to those elements, the restaurant can build its competitive advantages while trying to solve its issues.

3.4 Value Chain Analysis

A value chain analysis is a strategic tool that is used to perform and analyze a company's internal operations and activities in detail aiming to improve efficiency and add value. Within Dabbous' strategic planning framework, performing a value chain analysis helps spotlight the activities where the most value is created. Essentially, this is where both the weaknesses and strengths of this business lie. When studying the case studies, for instance, The learnings to fine-tune operations, improve quality, and service delivery can be improved. These case studies pointed out that operational efficiency, servicing excellence, and continuous improvements contribute largely to the profitability and competitiveness of the fine dining sector. Insights from the analyses are the key component for Dabbous to concentrate its value chain, raise customer satisfaction, and strive for the maximization of value creation, which in the end contribute to its strengths against competition.

4. Strategy implementation

The strategic management of UKVI will be applied to the staging process of Dabbous market entry and site selection in the main UK cities. The initial stage involves opening flagship shops in major cities of the UK such as Manchester which are renowned for their popular coffee culture and high disposable income. This gradual approach allows comfortable and supervised progress.

We will base on data to steer the growth. During the process of selecting the perfect places for the final steps, market research and performance data will be evaluated. This will enable

the restaurant to systematically branch out to other cities and go beyond the urban areas to those with strong development potential.

Site selection is one of the key questions that we will address during the location planning process. It will be the priority to install sites with a lot of foot traffic, easy accessibility, and good visibility. To achieve the desired location regarding each particular market, factors such as accessibility to public transport, parking availability, and the proximity of businesses will be seriously considered. This method is supposed to help food businesses gain more insight and facilitate access to the American market.

4.1 Marketing and Branding Strategy

The demanding culinary business environment sees Dabbous identifying branding and marketing strategies as some of the crucial factors required to be successful in its expansion plan. Learning from industry case studies, Dabbous, for example, like the Eleven Madison Park case study conducted ([Sullivan, 2019](#)), and The Fat Duck branding strategy, Dabbous tries to create a consistent and memorable image, and at the same time reinforces its brand identity.

4.2 Menu Development and Pricing Strategy

Developing the menu and pricing are the critical factors in meeting the customer satisfaction, revenue growth, and profitability requirements of Dabbous. Learning from cases like menu innovation ([Du, S., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S, 2010](#)) and the pricing strategy of Per Se enables Dabbous to design menus that are artistic, seasonal, and sustainable while still meeting the ever-changing tastes of the consumers. Through multiple menu options, including vegetarian and vegan dishes, Dabbous can attract a wider audience and benefit from current dietary trends. By utilizing a dynamic pricing strategy that takes into account seasonal variations, demand forecasting, and competitive benchmarking Dabbous shall be able to generate more revenue and boost profit while maintaining brand position and perceived value.

4.3 Operational Strategy

The operational strategy is of pivotal importance in the process of expansion of Dabbous and in keeping the service level unwavering throughout its restaurants. The abilities of case studies ([Murcia, N. N., Ferreira, F. A., & Ferreira, J. J, 2021](#)) operational excellence used as guides for Dabbous' operational strategy by emphasizing the need for staff training, process standardization, and customer-centric service delivery. The employee training programs, operational protocols, and operational outcomes leveraging technology solutions will contribute to efficient utilization of resources, cost-saving, and quality service across Dabbous restaurants.

4.4 Expansion Strategy

Dabbous' strategy focuses on strategic geographic expansion in the UK, particularly affluent audiences visiting high-traffic areas that bring high brand awareness and sales potential. Through the process of identifying star locations with beneficial demographic compositions and competitive positions, Dabbous aims to build a powerful business in major urban areas with its philosophy and execution of culinary excellence. Strategic partnerships with real estate developers and hospitality industry stakeholders provide Dabbous with a flexible platform that leads to smooth market entry and operational scalability, enabling it to take advantage of the opportunities that emerge and sustain long-term growth in the competitive fine dining market.

5. Monitoring Dabbous' green strategy, sustainability & CSR activities

Dabbous' ambitious move to expand to the UK will entail an in-depth monitoring system that would allow for developmental tracking, effectiveness evaluation, and guaranteeing

the business' compliance with its CSR, sustainability, and green strategies. This approach entails the use of different monitoring mechanisms for different company functions.

5.1 Environmental Performance Metrics

Regulatory standards being so important, the toolkit of the environmental performance metrics should be the essential component of Dabbous's review of sustainability choices and the environment impact. Among other things by studying energy use, water consumption, waste generation, and carbon dioxide emission, you get to know areas that can be improved. The World Resources Institute article (WRI) points out the various forms of conservation, energy-efficient practices, as well as sustainable sourcing, that could be employed to control the emission of greenhouse gases in the food sector. This reveals to Dabbous the avenue to possibly adopt that is environment friendly in the approach of business. Furthermore, in terms of the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA), the association can prepare detailed checklists for reviewing and reporting environmental performance to pave the way for a deeper understanding of the sector ([SRA, 2020](#)). This monitoring will serve as a base for Dabbous to detect the achievements it has made in fulfilling the sustainability objectives set by the brand as well as the reduction of its ecological footprint.

5.2 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):5.2 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The creation of the dashboard that contains KPIs that reflect the aims may be a decisive instrument for Dabbous in determining how efficiently the strategic goals are being translated into real outcomes. Examples of KPIs consist of financial metrics, customer satisfaction indexes, operational efficiency metrics, and market share, which make efficient KPI frameworks for these categories. From a case study done by Deloitte, it is evident that the purpose of tying up the short-term measurements (KPIs) to the long-term organizational objectives helps in the outcome of the organization's performance. Furthermore, by benchmarking against peer firms in such an adventitious industry where diverse

information can be drawn, for example, from industry reports for Dabbous, there is comparative information to get a picture of their competitive performance and development strategies ([NRA, 2019](#)).

5.3 Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback Mechanisms

Active involvement with stakeholders and reliable feedback channels are, by far; the most imperative for nurturing harmonious relationships and cultivating transparency. Utilizing social media tools such as social media surveys, focus groups, and suggestion boxes contributes to Dabbous collecting and evaluating public customers' viewpoints. According to the study of Edelman, stakeholder engagement is an integral part of the reputation-making setting where trust has been recognized as one pinpoint factor of trustworthy communication ([Edelman, 2020](#)). Furthermore, according to the Research findings from the Harvard Business Review, it is evident that using stakeholder advisory as part of the decision-making centers can move the organization forward in terms of innovation and improvement.

5.2 Compliance and Certification Tracking:5.4 Compliance and Certification Tracking

Implementing and complying with legal legislation and industry guidelines are the bases of Dabbous upon which its reputation as a Community-respectful corporate entity rests. Implementation of strong compliance tracking systems complementing regular self-audits is key to risk prevention in compliance and making it manageable. Realizing trends and regulations by following reports of the industry, such as, for example, the NRA publication will be beneficial since they provide information and guidance on emerging compliance and regulation aspects in the hospitality sector ([NRA, 2021](#)). Due to being up to date with changing requirements, Dabbous can locate compliance issues early on and monitor its integrity by showcasing an unwavering ethical practice.

5.3 Impact on the Bottom Line

Calculating the financial impact of Dabbous's sustainability and CSR initiatives is an essential business case analysis. The total economic benefits are measured through tracking waste savings, improvements in the supply chain performance, and energy efficiencies. To utilize green investments as a source of competitive advantage, the restaurant will investigate data to determine the financial payback and cost-effectiveness of these activities, including the Resource-Based View ([Barney, 1991](#)).

By determining the financial return of any sustainability projects, Dabbous can make more informed decisions about allocating resources, which in turn supports further efforts. Achieving the shareholders' support and aligning the sustainability objectives with the company's long-term performance requires an investment viewpoint.

The restaurant can evolve and thrive in a constantly changing environment by reconsidering the Green Strategy regularly, making use of new technologies, and keeping up with cutting-edge developments in sustainable sourcing and operation techniques.

6. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, our strategy for the Dabbous' expansion in the UK fine dining market has been made within the framework of a comprehensive and carefully thought-out plan, which includes the important aspects of the business environment and strategic decision-making. A comprehensive analysis was carried out, which involved the use of PESTEL analysis to determine the external factors that exist. These factors include political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal influences. Furthermore, we've employed Porter's Five Forces analysis to evaluate the competitive landscape and done an internal analysis to identify Dabbous' strengths in the areas of culinary mastery, operational success, and employee expertise. Through detailed evaluations, the research revealed the forces of the market, the consumers' tastes, and the competitors' positions, which was the base for our strategic suggestions for the future development of Dabbous.

Moreover, we are setting out a strategic plan that includes our clear vision, mission, and objectives for Dabbous that will transform the dining paradigm across the UK. With the help of effective tools such as the BCG Matrix, Ansoff Matrix, SWOT analysis as well and Value Chain analysis, we have found sustainable competitive advantages and developed actionable strategies like market expansion, customer engagement, innovation, sustainability, and digital presence. The strategic plan has already been designed, as part of the effective implementation planning and recommendations like the balanced scorecard, KPIs, and performance dashboards, we make sure that Dabbous can execute its strategic plan through precision and agility, thereby continually achieving sustainable growth and success in a dynamic culinary environment in the UK. The restaurant may reach the expected and even exceed the requirements of the choosy UK customers, so the expectations of the audience may be set higher and, as well, encourage the food culture.

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