

## **New Online Survey Investigates U.S. Food Blog Usage**

*Consumers crave participation but still utilize traditional food media.*

Over 1800 adult food blog readers in the U.S. in January 2008 participated in this research which explores consumer food blog usage and its effects on print food journalism. The survey was part of Leena Trivedi-Grenier's Masters Thesis in Gastronomy.

Within the survey, the average food blog user was a younger adult, typically female. 42% of respondents fell between the ages of 25 and 34, and over 72% of the respondents were female. Most participants (61%) were married or in a domestic partnership. The majority (71%) did not have children and were affluent, with 32% of participants making more than \$100,000 a year.

A majority of respondents felt food blogs had equally reliable information as print food journalism. They also tended to read food blogs more often than print food journalism. For example, 69% of respondents consulted print food journalism monthly while 37% consulted print food journalism websites weekly. But 79% of respondents consulted U.S. food blogs at least daily, if not multiple times a day, crediting their increased usage to a food blogger's candid writing style, diverse voice and range of topics, as well as their approachable personalities.

However, most respondents still believe that print food journalism plays a valuable role in the U.S. A majority did not feel that reading food blogs decreased their time spent with print food journalism. In fact, 14% indicated that they now read more print food journalism because of food blogs.

Food blogs are great at building a feeling of community among their users. Over 83% of participants felt that a food blog builds a better community than print food journalism. Some respondents attributed this to a food blog's comment section, which allows all users and the food blogger to interact and communicate.

But the survey revealed that a majority of readers rarely left comments on food blogs, typically once a month or less. This suggests that respondents prefer to be "passive participants" within a community that thrives on participatory communication.

**About the survey:** The U.S. Food Blog Reader survey is one piece of Leena Trivedi-Grenier's Masters Thesis research on the impact of U.S. food blogs on U.S. print food journalism. The thesis was written as part of her MA in Gastronomy from the University of Adelaide, Australia and Le Cordon Bleu.

The survey was originally promoted on 10 wide-ranging U.S. food blogs but eventually appeared on at least 21 websites through word of mouth. It consisted of thirty-eight questions, two open ended and thirty-six multiple choice, and was completed by 1832 food blog-using adults who reside in the United States.

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The full results and analysis of the survey as well as additional arms of the research project (including an analysis of the evolution of food writing and blogging, and a study of top U.S. food publications' web and blog presence) are currently being finalized and will have a limited availability upon completion by request only.

**About Leena Trivedi-Grenier:** Leena is currently a freelance food writer in Chicago and the principal for Leena Eats: Gourmet Communications. Leena received her B.A. in speech communications with a minor in creative writing from Bradley University, her A.A.S. in culinary arts from Joliet Junior College, and is a candidate for the M.A. in Gastronomy from the University of Adelaide in coordination with Le Cordon Bleu.

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