

Factors in the relocation of expatriate restaurateurs to Thailand: the money or the sun?

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Abstract

One consequence of the increased globalization of the modern world is the tourism-led migration of people from developed industrialized countries to less-developed and/or less-industrialized ones, where many of them open businesses that cater to other tourists and to expatriates. The motive for such migration and businesses is often lifestyle-related, and such businesspeople are termed “lifestyle entrepreneurs.” A qualitative research method gathered data from a sample of 20 expatriate restaurateurs on influences on their decision to relocate from their home country to Thailand, their prior industry experience, and their definition of success. The most important ‘pull’ factors influencing this sample of restaurateurs were “love of the country” and “strong and weak ties,” and the most important ‘push’ factor was “critical events.” While ‘pull’ factors predominated, a critical event in the informants’ lifecycle largely triggered the decision to relocate. The majority of the respondents had previous relevant management and industry experience, and they defined “success” in intrinsic job success terms. Areas for further research are indicated.

Introduction

Increased human mobility is one of the characteristics resulting from the globalization of the modern world. Some of this mobility takes the form of traditional migration from poor countries to rich ones by both unskilled (Yamanaka, 1993)

and skilled migrants (Aminuzamman, 2007). Some of it is in the form of migration from relatively rich and developed societies such as Australia, Japan and New Zealand to other Western societies where there is more perceived opportunity (Hooks, Edgar, Inkson, Carr, Franks, Jackson, Thorn, and Allfree, 2007; Hugo, Rudd and Harris, 2003) or a better lifestyle (Nagatomo, 2008; Sato, 2001). Some of this increased mobility, however, is movement from relatively rich and developed countries to ones that are less rich and developed (Drake and Collard, 2007), and it is particularly marked in the case of Europeans (*cf.*, Lardiés, 1999; O'Reilly, 2003, 2007) and North Americans (*cf.*, Croucher, 2007). Migration of this third kind blurs the boundaries between migration and tourism (Hall and Müller, 2004; O'Reilly, 1995, 2003). Many migrants of this kind first visit an area as tourists, they like what they see, and decide to settle more permanently.

What is the difference between a migrant and a tourist? Traditional definitions say a tourist is someone who spends less than a year in a place. O'Reilly (1995: 29) argued that the "grey areas between residence and visiting, migration and sojourning...need to be conceptualized if research can progress in this area." She provided a five-fold typology of migrants based on the sense of commitment and relative orientation towards host and origin countries. She categorized them as expatriates (permanent, identify with host country); residents (in terms of orientation and legal status, but seasonally visit the country of origin for 2-5 months); seasonal visitors (oriented to the country of origin, and spend 2-6 months at the destination each year); returnees (usually second home owners, who visit irregularly); and tourists (identify with the area as a holiday destination).

Shaw and Williams (2004) and Williams and Hall (2000) noted that some

expatriate-type migrants establish small-scale businesses, often ones serving niche markets (typically expatriate ones), and that lifestyle considerations may be influential in motivating this decision (*cf.*, Lardiés, 1999; O'Reilly, 2003). Snepenger, Johnson and Rasker (1995: 40) (referring to such movements within the United States) labeled this movement of existing and potential businesses into a regional economy by people who visit a region and then choose to live and do business there as 'travel-stimulated entrepreneurial migration.' The infrastructure developed for tourism supports such things as second home ownership and more permanent settlement. The regular presence of masses of tourists of the individual's own nationality prompts new migrants to settle and to provide goods and services specifically for tourists and for the later expatriate community. Eaton (1995) suggested that these businesses exclusively serve the modern package holidaymaker, and that different features affect business provision to a point where owners perceive themselves to be performing satisfactorily. Balkir and Kirkulak (2007: 7) noted an example of this form of business in Turkey:

Sometimes they serve something that the local people detest to do, such as the case of the German butcher in Alanya which sells pork. The target group of these small businesses is not only the migrant settlers but also tourists from their country during the summer.

Ateljevic and Doorne (2000) and others (*cf.*, Juutilainen and Lassila, 2005; Marcketti, Niehm, and Fuloria, 2006) use the term "lifestyle entrepreneurs" to describe such businesspeople, and they point out that such businesses are closely aligned with the personal values, beliefs, interests and passions of their owners.

This paper reports a qualitative investigation of the factors that expatriate restaurateurs identified as influencing their decision to migrate to Thailand, and how they viewed business success.

Review of the Literature

While there is a cottage industry producing books to help people establish businesses in a foreign country (see, *e.g.*, Bird and Berri, 2006; Parfitt, 2006; Whiting, 2006), there is little reported research on tourism entrepreneurship, especially on foreign entrepreneurs working in tourism and related sectors, as both Lardiés (1999) and Madden (1999) noted. The number of such self-help publications is probably larger than that of the small body of published research on such businesspeople (including expatriate restaurateurs) that has appeared in the late decade. Published research has principally been based in the entrepreneurship or business formation literature, however, rather than in the hospitality and tourism literature. The published research, moreover, has a Eurocentric bias in that it largely investigated the movement of expatriates from Northern Europe to France and Spain, which is where much of the migration from rich countries to poorer ones has occurred. For example, Williams and Hall (2000: 31) pointed out “there are large numbers of British and other foreign entrepreneurs in most major tourism destinations in Southern Europe, serving not only the tourists but also the resident expatriate communities.”

Herring (2001) remarked of this form of migration: “Expatriation — the condition of being a white, middle class, migrant (economic or purely climatic) — can be a strangely addictive thing.” The available research evidence on this point is inconclusive, however. Mowl and Blackwood (1999) used a questionnaire to survey 36 owners of small licensed premises within the main mass tourist resorts of southern Spain’s Costa del Sol. Part of their study focused on the motivations of such expatriate small business owners, which they compared with the motivations of other small business owners in the tourism and hospitality sector. They found that non-economic motives were the predominant drivers for this group of respondents, who were prepared to work incredibly long hours

in order to reap other intrinsic rewards. Similarly, Lardiés (1999), in a questionnaire-based study of 169 entrepreneurs running tourism-related businesses in Catalonia (Spain) and Languedoc (France), found that the migrants were motivated less by the need for work than by lifestyle considerations. Madden (1999) interviewed 42 British and Irish business owners on the Costa del Sol, of whom 26 were married couples, seven were living with partners of the same or opposite gender, seven were single, married or divorced males, and two were single females. When asked why they moved, the informants listed “climate,” “quality of life and change of lifestyle” before “business opportunities” (Madden, 1999: 28). She reported, “To many of the business owners, opening a business in the Costa del Sol is also a way of funding a different lifestyle: in other words, of ‘making money in the sun’” (Madden, 1999: 33). Murphy (1999) studied 16 expatriate American and Canadian entrepreneurs (including six bar and two Internet café owners) in Quepos, Costa Rica. He found that many of his subjects were people who were “living the dream,” people in search of “the perpetual vacation.”

Wilson-Edwardes and Hoecht (2008) interviewed a total of 22 expatriate entrepreneurs (13 British and nine German, though one expatriate in the second grouping actually was a Spanish national who had grown up, been educated and had worked in Germany before returning to Spain). Eleven of their respondents (six British and five German) were females, and the remaining eleven were males. Four of the British respondents were married couples. As part of their study, they investigated the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors that influenced their sample of migrant entrepreneurs, and concluded:

What emerges from our research is a very rich picture, with a complex interplay of push and pull factors that can only really be understood at the level of the individual and his/her family, sometimes migration decisions remaining very delicately balanced. Pull factors predominate, but we consider the push trigger of a critical life event to

have emerged as the primary motivator (Wilson-Edwardes and Hoecht, 2008: 14).

The common pull factors they identified were love of the destination country; strong and weak ties (*i.e.*, friends or family who had previously retired there or established businesses, *etc.*); fortune seeking in a global marketplace; and opportunism (*i.e.*, criminals who earned their living by defrauding their countrymen. The common ‘push’ factors were critical events (*i.e.*, divorce or bereavement, redundancy or losing a required license to operate a business), and value rejection (*i.e.*, negative perceptions of quality of life and future prospects in the home country).

Mowl and Blackwood (1999) also examined the behavioral characteristics of their sample of expatriate small business owners, again comparing them with the characteristics of other small business owners in the tourism and hospitality sector. They found that these expatriate owners were more likely than other owners of small tourism firms to possess relevant management and industry experience.

Hoecht and Wilson-Edwardes (2007) and Wilson-Edwardes and Hoecht (2008) reported on their comparative qualitative study of entrepreneurship and risk attitudes, risk perception and risk mitigation strategies of British and German entrepreneurs who had established and run enterprises in Spain. They categorized migrant entrepreneurs to Spain into six categories: “professional prepared,” “artisans,” “trades people,” “accidental tourists,” “drifters,” and “grifters.” Of these six groups, they found that the “professional prepared” and the “artisans” were the most likely to succeed. The reasons these two groups tended to succeed were: (1) they had sufficient assets to support their business for the first two to three years, (2) they were pursuing a line of business where they had

experience, and (3) they made good use of business networks.

Stone and Stubbs (2003, 2007), on the other hand, focused on entrepreneurship associated with lifestyle-induced migration among expatriates from northern Europe in rural areas of southern France and Spain. They investigated self-employment in a sample of 41 expatriate households operating some 70 business ventures, and found that most expatriates had no prior experience of entrepreneurship and typically established their business opportunistically and some time after arrival. For this group of expatriates, who varied greatly in their skills, experience, and resources, self-employment was the most effective available mechanism for supporting their lifestyle objectives.

Blackwood and Mowl (2000) noted that expatriate-owned tourism service sector businesses have acquired a reputation for economic instability and relatively high rates of business failure. They examined factors influencing the success or failure of these businesses but noted the difficulty of defining and measuring success. Murphy (1999) similarly noted the lack of success among his respondents, though many of them actually owned a business only in order to have something to do.

In conclusion, the published research literature suggests that different ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors motivate and influence expatriate entrepreneurs’ decision to migrate, that some entrepreneurs pursue a line of business in which they have relevant knowledge and experience while others begin a business opportunistically, and the difficulties of defining success in such expatriate business enterprises.

Purpose of the Study

Though not a major study, this investigation aimed to contribute to the wider issue of expatriate businesspeople in tourism and related sectors by investigating the reasons why expatriate restaurateurs had relocated to Thailand. Herring's (2001) comment, noted earlier, influenced the overarching research question: "Did white, middle-class, restaurateurs migrate to Thailand primarily for economic or climatic reasons (*i.e.*, the money or the sun) or primarily for other reasons?" Informed by the findings of the literature review, the study gathered information to address the following questions, the aggregated answers to which would provide the answer to the overarching research question:

1. What 'push' and 'pull' factors influenced the respondents' decision to relocate to Thailand?
 1. A. Corollary question: Did personal or financial reasons predominate in the expatriates' decision to relocate to Thailand?
 2. Did the expatriates pursue a line of business in which they possessed relevant management and industry experience?
 2. A. Corollary question: Did they begin the business 'opportunistically'?
 3. How did the respondents define 'success' for themselves, that is, did they define it in intrinsic or extrinsic terms?

The study, therefore, was not concerned *per se* with whether or not the business was financially successful. It was also not concerned with the influence of independent variables such as nationality, age, gender, educational level, or marital status. The emphasis in this research, moreover, was on the factors influencing the restaurateurs' decision to become expatriates rather than on their characteristics as restaurant owners.

The research may be distinguished from other work in the field by the specificity of its subject group (*i.e.*, restaurateurs), and by its geographic focus (*i.e.*, Thailand).

Theoretical framework

Investigating the factors that influenced expatriate restaurateurs to migrate to Thailand drew on the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ theory of motivation to travel. Though this approach originated in migration theory (see Bogue, 1969, 1977; Lee, 1966; Thomas, 1941), researchers in the fields of migration, expatriation, tourism, and tourism-relocation (see, *e.g.*, Oigenblick and Kirschenbaum, 2002) use this theoretical approach to address the question of “why do people move?”

Within tourism research, the ‘push-pull’ framework provides a useful approach for examining the motivations underlying tourist and visitation behavior (Crompton, 1979; Dann 1977, 1981; Iso-Ahola, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1990; Klenosky 2002). In tourism research, ‘push’ factors as a motivation “refer to the tourist as subject and deal with those factors predisposing him to travel” (Dann, 1977: 186) (*e.g.*, escape or nostalgia). ‘Pull’ factors, on the other hand, are motivators “which attract the tourist to a given resort...and whose value is seen to reside in the object of travel” (Dann, 1977: 186) (*e.g.*, sunshine, sea, or other setting opportunities). ‘Push’ motivations are related to internal or emotional aspects, such as the beneficial experiences desired. ‘Pull’ factors are connected to external, situational, or cognitive aspects. ‘Push’ and ‘pull’ factors have been characterized as relating to two separate decisions made at two separate points in time — one focusing on whether to go (‘push’ associated with travel motivations), the other on where to go (‘pull’ of setting attributes) (Klenosky 2002). Prior to Crompton’s (1979) study (in which he identified seven socio-psychological, or ‘push,’ and two cultural, or ‘pull,’ motives through in-depth interviews with 39 individuals), ‘push’ motives were seen as responsible only for establishing a desire to travel, and ‘pull’ motives then were held accountable for the choice in destination. His study was among the first to conjecture that general, non-destination-specific push motives are often the major driving

forces in a person's selection of not only when but also where to travel.

The 'push-pull' factor approach is used in studies in the fields of migration (see, *e.g.*, Schoorl, Heering, Esveldt, Groenewold, van der Erf, Bosch, de Valk, and de Bruijn, 2000) and expatriation (see, *e.g.*, Cox, 1988; Hooks *et al.*, 2007), where it suggests that, because of some socio-economic imbalances in regions, certain factors 'push' persons away from the area of origin, and others 'pull' them to the area of destination (Jansen 1969). A 'push' factor here is a forceful factor that relates to the country from which the person is migrating, and it is generally a problem that results in people wanting to migrate. A 'pull' factor is something concerning the country to which a person migrates, and it is generally a good thing that attracts people to a certain place (see, *e.g.*, International Organization for Migration, 2004). In this framework, 'push' factors combine with 'pull' factors in a complex manner to determine who relocates. The framework is straightforward, although the analytical distinction between 'push' and 'pull' can blur. What is a 'push' factor in one context may be either neutral or a 'pull' factor in another. Factors such as lifestyle choices or job opportunities may simultaneously be both 'push' and 'pull' factors. For example, limited job opportunities in the home country might push someone while perceived greater opportunities in another land might pull that person. Moreover, the migration process is selective in that differentials such as age, gender, and social class affect how persons respond to 'push-pull' factors.

Lee (1966) stated that there are four factors that enter into the decision to migrate and the process of migration: factors in the place of origin, factors related to the place of destination, intervening obstacles (such as distance and physical and political barriers) between the place of origin and the place of destination, and individual factors (such as educational level, family ties and

knowledge of the potential receiver population). Lee (1966: 50) noted:

In every area there are countless factors which act to hold people within the area or attract people to it, and there are others which tend to repel them... There are others... to which people are essentially indifferent.

As the set of favorable and unfavorable factors is differently defined for each migrant (or potential migrant), researchers have to classify people by their reaction to the same general sets of factors at origin and destination in migration analyses. Thus, any factor could produce different effects on different people. Moreover, as Lucas (1981) remarked:

Migration is comparable to a flow of water or electricity — an adjustment flow responding to pressure differentials at opposite ends of a pipeline. This view suggests that it is neither the absolute level of push nor pull factors which matters, but the existing difference in relative attraction elements.

Both the decision to migrate and the decision to travel rely on the element of the ‘fantasy’ world (see Dann, 1977). Lee (1966) noted that the migration decision is emotional as well as rational, however, and is based on the potential migrant’s imaginings about life in another country as well as the personality of potential migrants. Recent research by Gervais-Aguer (2004, 2007) supported this contention. She found that in the case of both would-be and actual migrants, the pull of the new lifestyle — imagined or real — dominated all other factors behind the decision to migrate.

This study was concerned with investigating only with two of the four factors identified by Lee (1966) as entering into the decision to migrate and the process of migration, that is, factors in the place of origin and factors related to the place of destination.

Investigating how the expatriate restaurateurs defined success drew on the concept of subjective business success. There has been much debate in the small

business and entrepreneurial research on the question of how to define business success (e.g., Blackwood and Mowl, 2000; Gadenne, 1998; Kuratko, Hornsby, and Naffziger, 1997; Paige and Littrel, 2002). The notion of success ranges from a business that is making a large profit to a business that is surviving at a loss (but that has not yet gone bankrupt). To date, however, there is no accepted typology of success and, within this range, success is operationalized by means of many different measures including profit, sales, community awareness, and the business owner's own perceived success. Recent research has focused on the concept of subjective success, that is, on an individual's self-evaluation of success using subjective criteria (e.g., Nabi, 2001; Peluchette, 1993). Nabi (2001) identified two underlying dimensions of subjective success: *intrinsic job success* (that includes enjoyable work, respect, and support) and *extrinsic job success* (that includes financial rewards and promotional opportunities). In this study, 'success' was investigated by asking respondents what the term meant for them, *i.e.*, in subjective terms.

Definitions

This study followed O'Reilly's (1995) five-fold typology of migrants based on their sense of commitment and relative orientation towards host and origin countries, and used the terms "expatriate" and "migrant" as synonyms. Lee (1966: 49) had broadly defined migration as a "permanent or semi-permanent change of residence," while Medlik (2003: 67) defined an expatriate as "A person living voluntarily away from his/her country of citizenship, not necessarily permanently but relatively long-term." The terms mean here, "The permanent or semi-permanent movement of business owners towards the area in which they have 'settled' to open a business" (*cf.*, Madden, 1999: 20).

The term "restaurateur" can mean either the owner/proprietor or the manager of

a restaurant. *Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary* (1913: 1228), however, defined a "restaurateur" as "the keeper of an eating (*sic*) house or a restaurant," with related words being "owner" and "proprietor" as well as the alternative "restauranter." As this study was concerned with expatriates who had relocated abroad and then opened a restaurant, the term was limited to mean restaurant owners/proprietors, where ownership was either single or joint.

Research method

The following section explains in detail issues connected with the research method used in this study.

Data gathering approach

Previously published research has used qualitative research designs, *e.g.*, Stone and Stubbs (2007) used interviews, and Wilson-Edwards and Hoecht (2008: 12) reported that they used "a qualitative research design that relied on loose, semi-structured interviews." Murphy (1999) used an ethnographic approach involving semi-structured interviews, while Madden (1999) used semi-structured in-depth interviews as part of her data gathering. A qualitative research approach is intended to generate a deeper understanding of complicated behavior, rather than to quantify, generalize, or predict it (see, *e.g.*, Walsh, 2003). Such approaches are suitable when the primary focus of a study, through interpretation and translation, is to examine and describe the characteristics of the factors underlying a certain phenomenon. This approach allows in-depth observations of a smaller number of individuals, which is favorable when seeking to answer research questions such as "How?" and "Why?" rather than when focusing on generalizing findings beyond the studied subjects (see, *e.g.*, Yin, 1994).

Snepenger *et al.* (1995: 43) recommended that the use of in-depth interviews in

future research on the entrepreneurial migration process “would yield valuable information” about such issues as the entrepreneurs’ behaviors and attitudes. Depth interviews are a suitable methodology for understanding ‘fuzzy’ research issues (Kwortnik, 2003) thus enabling the researcher to generate a deeper understanding of the research area. The underlying aim of the research is to obtain rich, detailed data reflecting the respondents’ language and experiences in depth (Kwortnik, 2003).

This study adopted a qualitative approach, and gathered information through semi-structured interviews. The bulk of the interviews were held at the place of business of the restaurateur in question. A general interview guide ensured that the same general areas of information were collected from each interviewee. Participants were asked the following standard question during the interview:

- When and why did you come to Thailand?
- What did you do before you left your home country?
- How did you end up running a business here?
- When did you start your business?
- Do you have any partners?
- How do you define ‘success’ for yourself?

This provided focus but still allowed freedom and adaptability in getting information from the interviewees, because the interview was a purposeful dialogue between the researcher and the participant. The interviewer became a student and tried to get the respondents to describe their experiences in their own terms. As the informants spoke freely, in this study each interview ran for approximately one hour because the researcher “let the interviewee talk...let him (*sic*) run with the ball” (Morrissey, 1970: 111). Following Silverman (1997), the interviews were treated as a social encounter in which knowledge was constructed and as the site of (and occasion for) the production of reportable knowledge, rather than simply as a neutral conduit. The conversations were not

taped, as it was felt that the use of a tape recorder might inhibit the respondents. The main method of recording, therefore, was through field notes compiled as and when the opportunity arose or after the end of the conversation. These notes were primarily written into a field notebook or onto unobtrusive materials such as letter paper or postcards. The broken nature of the conversations facilitated this form of note taking.

Location of the Study

Pattaya was selected as the location for this research for two reasons. First, it is an important destination for foreign tourists and it also has a large population of resident expatriates. Thus, Pattaya has many businesses that cater to their needs; Gray and Ridout (2001: 187) noted that, “The scores of expat restaurateurs in Pattaya have made Western food the resort’s primary dining option.” Second, both its size and its tourism-oriented infrastructure made it easier to identify and access potential respondents.

The target population

Expatriate tourism service providers are present in a wide range of businesses in Pattaya, including but not limited to pool halls, bars, restaurants, guesthouses, food preparation services, car rental services, scuba diving operations, tourist-oriented publishing, and accommodation rental agencies. In this study, however, the target population comprised white middle-class expatriates who (a) had relocated to Thailand, and who (b) then opened and legally operated a restaurant. These limitations on the target population meant that many well-known Pattaya restaurateurs who had worked for many years in either restaurants and/or hotels in Thailand before retiring in the country and opening their own enterprises were ineligible for consideration as part of the sample, as were some who commuted between Pattaya and overseas locations.

Three factors influenced the decision to select restaurateurs as the target population in this study. The first factor was Herring's (2001) comment concerning expatriation as "the condition of being a white, middle class, migrant." Second, the study followed Eaton's (1995) choice of British entrepreneurial migrants operating the restaurants (and bars) serving mainly British tourists in the Costa del Sol as identifying a potential target market. Third, Madden (1999: 20) followed O'Reilly's (1995) argument that the 'grey area' between "business owners who are legal and those who are illegal, between those who are visible and other who are invisible, and other disparities" needed to be conceptualized. She provided a typology of expatriate business owners (legal visible business, legal invisible business, illegal visible business, illegal invisible business, and illegal and clandestine business). She attempted to use semi-structured in-depth interviews with "both visible and invisible business owners, and both legal and illegal business owners," but she decided that

Those with an illicit or criminal character, however, were left out of the research design for obvious reasons. In practice, invisible businesses also proved to be impossible to include because of the problem of non-response (Madden, 1999: 24).

In this study, the targeted respondents were legal visible business owners because, as Bernard Trink (1991) (the renowned former, longtime, nightlife columnist of the *Bangkok Post* who devoted at least a part of his column every month to a section on Pattaya) stated, "honest restaurateurs and tradesmen, hoteliers and publicans" are among the people "attracted to the resort" of Pattaya.

Sample size and sampling method

Identifying potential interviewees and finding volunteers for the interviews proved time-consuming and required a significant amount of flexibility from the researcher. A list of potential participants in the study was compiled from restaurants advertising in tourist-oriented publications such as *The Pattaya Guide*

(2006), *Pattaya Expat* (2007) and *Pattaya Food, Shopping, Entertainment, and Accommodation* (2007).

Purposive non-probability sampling was used to select respondents. Although this sampling approach contradicts some of the assumptions underpinning conventional notions of sampling (and thus does not lead to representative samples), it is an appropriate applied social research approach where it is infeasible, impractical, or theoretically not sensible to do random sampling. The approach is used in the collection of exploratory data from an unusual population and in qualitative studies to study the lived experience of a specific population (*cf.*, Zikmund, 2002). In this sampling approach, the sample is selected with both a purpose in mind and one or more specific predefined groups are sought. The general advantages of the approach are that typicality of subjects is aimed for, and it permits exploration. The general disadvantage is that it is unrepresentative, *i.e.*, it is likely to overweight subgroups in the population that are more readily accessible.

Goldstein (2002: 669) noted that many factors are important in conducting high quality interviews, *e.g.*, “researchers must be well prepared, construct sound questions, establish a rapport with respondents, know how to write up their notes, and code responses accurately and consistently.” He pointed out, however, that these skills are useless if the researcher does not get the interview. As Wilson-Edwardes and Hoecht (2008) reported, however, “cold calling” was found to be most successful way to recruit participants. That is, individuals who met the specified criteria were approached directly, either in person at their business premises or by telephone, and asked for an interview opportunity at a convenient time.

The informant sample for interpretive research should be relatively small and not random as this method aims to get a deeper understanding of the subjects' opinions and behavior. Kwortnik (2003: 122) stated:

The decision about how many informants are needed for depth interviews is not pre-determined, but instead flows from the research process. Analysis of interview data usually occurs early in the data-collection stage — sometimes after the first interview. Findings from initial interviews are provisional and help to shape subsequent interviews. These new interviews are conducted up to the point when the researcher feels that redundancy or *theoretical saturation* (sic) has been achieved, where no new insights emerge from the analysis of an additional case. This might occur after interview number 10, 20, or 50.

The final sample size in this study totaled 20, as data gathering ceased when further interviews were not uncovering new information. Eighteen respondents were male and two were female. Participants varied in terms of their nationality, though: six of those interviewed (including one woman participant) were British; three were German (including the other woman respondent), two each were American, Belgian and Italian and the remainder comprised one Dane, one Frenchman, one Irishman, one Swede, and one Swiss. In terms of marital status, two of the British respondents (one male and one female) formed a married couple, and the other female informant was single. Of the other seventeen males, four were single/never married, three were single/divorced and two were married to Thai women after their divorce from their first wife, one was a widower while another was a remarried widower, and the remaining six were married to Thai women who were their first spouse. It may be true that, as 'Brian' remarked, "A chef makes the worse husband as it is very difficult to have a personal life when you are always working." Appendix 1 reports other relevant demographic data.

The timing of data gathering

Data gathering occurred in both high (*i.e.*, the Christmas and New Year period) and low (*i.e.*, August to September) seasons during both 2006 and 2007, and the low season of 2008.

Data analysis

Larson (1982: 812) commented that,

“We could probably define ‘research’ generally as the seeking out of information new to the seeker, for a purpose, and we would probably agree that the researcher usually has to interpret, evaluate, and organize that information before it acquires value.”

Analysis of the qualitative data in this study, therefore, was oriented towards interpreting, evaluating and organizing the subjects’ answers to the interview questions so that the information collected acquired value.

If this report is to effectively communicate its findings, however, it must a) be in a form that meets some accepted scientific criteria, b) meet ethical standards such as confidentiality and respect, and c) be readable and usable for its intended audiences. As Rubin and Rubin (1995: 2) stated, “The qualitative researcher’s philosophy determines what is important, what is ethical, and the completeness and accuracy of the results.” There must be an appropriate balance between just quoting a few entertaining stories that happened to appeal to the researcher and endless quotations that will bore readers. Therefore, the information gathered during the depth interviews was analyzed and categorized according to the themes investigated in this study. For the purpose of reporting and discussing results for this paper, however, extracts from individual interviews are used to illustrate key points.

Findings

Appendix 1 reports biographical data on the 20 participants and information on

the type of restaurant they operated. Respondents are identified by pseudonyms to allow the identification with a specific individual of the extracts from individual interviews that are used to illustrate key points. The following sections address the three main and two corollary questions posed for this study.

What ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors influenced the respondents’ decision to relocate to Thailand?

The analysis of the information gained in the interviews showed that three ‘pull’ factors influenced the respondents in this study. The most influential of these ‘pull’ factors was *Love of Thailand*. This was the strongest and most consistent pull factor identified. Of the 20 respondents in the study, only ‘Charles’ and ‘Hazel’ had never visited Thailand before they chose to relocate there. The remaining respondents had a love for the country, engendered in most cases by multiple visits in previous years. For example, ‘Ian’ first visited Thailand twenty-two years before he relocated to the country, on an incentive trip paid for by a Japanese electronics company, and paid many subsequent visits. ‘Alec’ first visited Thailand in 1984 with the US Navy, went to the US Defense Language Institute in Monterey in 1986 to learn to speak Thai, and visited the country 13 times before retiring to Pattaya so he could be near the sea. A typical comment was that uttered by ‘Niklas,’ who said, “Pattaya is the best place to live for a long time. There is a kind of international flair here.”

A less influential ‘pull’ factor was *Strong and weak ties*. A small number of respondents relocated to Thailand because of the existence of friends or family there. In some instances (*i.e.*, ‘Brian’) it was a family member, and in other instances a friend (*i.e.*, ‘Charles’) who had previously established businesses there. For some of the informants, however, it was because of the person had existing Thai relatives by marriage (*i.e.*, ‘Niklas,’ ‘Stefano,’ ‘Torsten,’ and ‘Uri’)

or because the person was going to marry a Thai woman (*i.e.*, ‘James’) whom he had met on previous visits. In the case of ‘Geoffrey’ (and, by extension, ‘Hazel’) the decision to relocate was aided by the existence of long-established friendships that gave rise to a business opportunity.

The final ‘pull’ factor was “*Seeing a business opportunity*,” which influenced only two respondents. Following his retirement in the United Kingdom, ‘Geoffrey’ identified a strong business opportunity in Thailand when his friends in Pattaya told him there was a big call for English-style sausages and pies if someone could make them locally. He and his partner (and now wife) ‘Hazel’ set up a business making such products that expanded into a restaurant that specializes in breakfasts and lunches.

Two ‘push’ factors dominated the reasons why the respondents moved from their home countries to Thailand. The most important ‘push’ factor’ was *Critical events in their life cycle*. This was the primary motivator for a majority of the informants in this study. There were differing ‘trigger’ events, however, including bereavement, birth of a child, divorce, remarriage, retirement, loss of an existing business, and professional burn-out. For example, both ‘Ian’ and ‘James’ (partners in a restaurant serving English cooking) left Great Britain and moved to Thailand following the death of their wives. ‘Niklas’ and his Thai-born wife relocated to Thailand when they became first-time parents and wanted to spend time raising their daughter. ‘Charles,’ ‘David,’ ‘Frank’ and ‘Stefano’ each relocated following the dissolution of their marriages. ‘Ricardo,’ who was already divorced, moved to Thailand when his two children were no longer dependent on him. The critical event for ‘Brian’ was the compulsory demolition of his restaurant in San Francisco because it no longer met building and industry code standards. ‘Margaliese,’ who had spent almost two decades

as a professional musician, reached the stage where she experienced no further professional development. ‘Torsten,’ who had been a senior executive for Microsoft, turned his back on his previous job in favor of relocating to Thailand because “The money was there, big time, but I was getting tired of the long work hours, and of the traveling and weekend activities.” ‘Geoffrey’ moved after his retirement and his marriage to ‘Hazel,’ for whom it was a second marriage. ‘Uri,’ whose mother died while he was a child, decided to relocate to Thailand after his father died and he felt that “there was no real reason to remain in Switzerland any more.” For most of the other respondents, the trigger event was retirement.

A small group of respondents relocated because of the ‘push’ factor *Value rejection of aspects of their homelands’ lifestyle and culture, i.e.,* such things as its quality of life, its weather or its moral standards, and their own future prospects there. ‘David,’ ‘Louis’ and (particularly) ‘Margaliese’ relocated to Thailand because they felt that the lifestyle in their homelands (Belgium, France, and Germany respectively) was both sad and claustrophobic. Typical statements were, “Here, everyone is happy; there is a good atmosphere, better than in Europe where everyone is a little bit sad. Even in France, we look like that too” (‘Louis’), and “Belgium and Europe are so small. They are not the whole world” (‘David’). ‘Niklas’ and his wife decided to relocate from Germany (where they owned and operated a seven-restaurant chain) to Pattaya because they felt that the long working day required to be successful restaurateurs in Germany would interfere with raising their daughter. ‘Edward’ left Great Britain because he could no longer tolerate its weather, its cost of living, or its declining standards of personal safety.

This ‘push’ factor, however, most influenced ‘Margaliese,’ who said that she

chose Thailand over Germany because

I want to be accepted the way I am. I don't want to be judged, or changed or restricted. The moral standards you have in Europe and the moral standards they live by in Thailand are very different. It all comes down to having a 'live and let live' attitude like the Thais. Germans generally have a narrow, correct, and proper outlook, whereas Thais are interested in *sanuk* [a Thai word usually translated as 'fun' or 'a good time.'].]

Corollary question: Did personal or financial reasons predominate in the expatriates' decision to relocate to Thailand?

The analysis of the information gathered in the depth interviews and investigated as the influence of the 'push' and 'pull' factors on the respondents' decision to relocate strongly suggests that personal rather than financial reasons predominated in the decision-making of the 20 participants to relocate to Thailand and then to open a restaurant. 'Stefano,' who had owned and operated a successful Italian restaurant in Macau for more than a decade, indicated that it was personal rather than financial reasons that influenced his decision when he stated: "Macau is a good place to make money but not a good place to live." In the case of only three participants — 'Charles,' 'Geoffrey' and 'Hazel' — was finance a possible reason for relocation.

Did the expatriates pursue a line of business in which they possessed relevant management and industry experience?

The biographical data presented in Appendix 1 show that 'Alec,' 'Charles,' 'Knud,' 'Oliver' and 'Margaliese' had no previous relevant management and industry experience. 'Alec' opened his restaurant with a friend because he had always had a love of cooking. For 'Charles' and 'Knud,' their relevant management and industry experience was limited and gained following their service in the Belgian and German Armed Forces respectively. 'Charles' became a restaurateur because cooking was his hobby and because he had always cooked

his own meals when he was boxing. ‘Knud’ first opened a bar with two friends because they decided that they spent so much time, when they were not at sea, sitting around drinking they should spend the money in their own place, which they then ran for ten years. ‘Oliver’ also had no restaurant management or industry experience before he and three friends opened a German restaurant in Bangkok that they ran for two years, and which he described as “more of a drinking experience for us and a complete disaster for me.” Although ‘Margaliese’ had worked as an entertainer for almost twenty years, she had no hand-on experience in running restaurants and nightclubs. She stated, however, that she had done a great deal of work researching both running a small business and establishing one in Thailand but, “Even so, it was a fast learning curve.”

‘James’ had considerable management experience in the manufacture of commercial cooking equipment but not in managing a restaurant *per se*. When he heard that the others were looking for another partner he decided to join them because he thought the place could benefit by business and accounts management. ‘Torsten’ had formal qualifications in business management (a Master of Business Administration degree) and many years of experience in management as a senior executive for major international information technology and software firms before he retrained as a chef. He opened and operated two cooking schools before beginning his restaurant business.

Each of the other respondents had either formal college/university qualifications, or had received training in either a restaurant or hotel milieu (either as chefs or in hotel management), and/or had spent several years working in the industry before relocating to Thailand. Several had owned and operated restaurants in their home or in third countries before relocating to Thailand.

Corollary question: Did they begin the business ‘opportunistically?’

Stone and Stubbs (2007) found that most expatriates in their sample of households had no prior experience of entrepreneurship and typically established their business “opportunistically” and some time after arrival. The economist Oliver Williamson (1975: 26) defined “opportunism” as “self-interest seeking with guile.” An opportunist, therefore, is someone who takes advantage of any opportunity to achieve an end, often with no regard for principles or consequences.

There was no evidence in the information gathered in the depth interviews that any of the 20 respondents in this study began their businesses opportunistically. On the other hand, as the biographic data in Appendix 1 and the interviews cited earlier show, the respondents did begin their businesses opportunistically, *i.e.*, the business opportunity was suited or right for a particular purpose, and it occurred at a fitting or advantageous time. For ‘Ian,’ the opportunity came when he first visited the restaurant in which he is now a one-third partner, met the man who started it and who was looking for a partnership with someone, and jumped at the opportunity to do something he loved doing in a place he loved doing it. The opportunity for ‘Patrick’ came when he saw the restaurant’s location (on the top floor of a major resort hotel in South Pattaya). He stated that he had sworn never again get involved in the hospitality business — but that was before he saw the restaurant’s location!

How did the respondents define ‘success’ for themselves, that is, did they define success in intrinsic or extrinsic terms?

The great majority of the respondents described success in intrinsic terms, such as being able to live in beautiful places while also being able to move somewhere to learn new things, new cultures and to be creative (*e.g.*, ‘Brian’), or as feeling comfortable or happy with themselves (*e.g.*, ‘David’ and ‘Ian’) and with

their present lifestyle (e.g., ‘James’) without having to pretend to be someone (e.g., ‘Ricardo’). ‘Alec’ and ‘Geoffrey’ defined success as “Personal happiness,” and “Being content with oneself.” A statement by ‘Oliver’ summed up this view of success: “Having at least one baht more than I need and an easy life with not too much work.”

Others, however, described it in terms of making others happy by serving them food and good hospitality (e.g., ‘Charles,’ ‘David,’ and ‘Knud.’). For ‘Louis,’ success revolved around his restaurant and being a *bon vivant*: “If you can make other people happy, something like a roomful of diners where everyone is happy, that is success.” ‘Niklas’ saw success as “When you can give to others, being generous in fulfilling their needs, giving them help. And smiling!”

‘Margaliese’ saw success in terms of self-actualization: “Having your own dream or idea, being able to bring it to reality, and having it accepted in the market,” while for ‘Hazel,’ on the other hand, success was learning from past mistakes and not regretting them.

‘Edward,’ on the other hand, defined success in extrinsic terms, that is, his definition of success was tied to doing well in business — but it was so his wife and family could live comfortably. Success for him was wrapped up in the business and greeting his regular customers, whom he saw as ‘Number One’ and needing to be looked after. “But I still like cooking, and I can’t stop working. I work hard. I want to do well because I want a comfortable life with my wife and family.” ‘Frank’ also defined success in extrinsic terms, saying he was successful “Because I work hard.” He added:

Success is doing things and achieving my aims and ambitions. That makes me happy. My main concern is making the business really successful because, if you have a suc-

cessful business, then the money follows.

He also said, however, “I like the life here and I’m happy. This is where I plan to stay.”

The answers indicated that this sample of respondents largely defined success in intrinsic terms, *i.e.*, in terms of personal satisfaction, self-respect, and self-actualization. Only two respondents — ‘Edward’ and ‘Frank’ — answered in extrinsic terms of financial success, the former because he wanted a comfortable life with his wife and family and the latter because achieving his aims and ambitions made him happy.

The overarching research question was “Did white, middle-class, restaurateurs migrate to Thailand primarily for economic or climatic reasons (*i.e.*, the money or the sun) or primarily for other reasons?” The answers to the subsidiary questions indicate that the respondents in this sample relocated to Thailand principally for reasons other than economic or climatic ones.

Discussion and Conclusion

This paper has presented evidence illustrating the factors that influenced the respondents into leaving their home countries and moving to Thailand. The ‘pull’ factor reported by most respondents in this study that influenced their decision to relocate was “love of Thailand,” which derived in the majority of cases from many previous visits to the country. The second most-reported ‘pull’ factor was “previous ties with Thailand,” followed by “seeing a business opportunity.” The most-reported ‘push’ factor in the respondents’ decisions to move from their home country was “critical events,” followed by “negative perceptions about their homeland.” These findings complement those of Wilson-Edwards and Hoecht (2008) in their study of migrants who operated businesses

in Spain, except that no respondent in this study reported relocating for the purpose of earning a living by defrauding or cheating their compatriots.

It was noted earlier, in the discussion on the theoretical framework adopted for this study, not only that ‘push’ factors combine with ‘pull’ factors in a complex manner to determine who relocates, but also that the analytical distinction between ‘push’ and ‘pull’ can blur. It was also noted that different factors can act as either ‘push’ or ‘pull’ factors for different people but will have a neutral effect on others, so that the set of favorable and unfavorable factors is differently defined for each migrant (or potential migrant), as any factor could produce different effects on different people. The results of this study are consistent with the findings reported by Wilson-Edwardes and Hoecht (2008: 14), who concluded that their research uncovered

A complex interplay of push and pull factors that can only really be understood at the level of the individual...Pull factors predominate, but we consider the push trigger of a critical life event to have emerged as the primary motivator.”

It is clear in the findings that critical events in the informants’ lifecycle, such as bereavement, divorce, becoming a first-time parent, professional burn-out, or retirement triggered the decision to this sample of expatriate entrepreneurs to relocate to Thailand.

This paper has shown that reported personal, rather than financial, reasons predominated in the respondents’ decision to relocate to Thailand, as indicated both by their espoused reasons for relocating to Thailand and by their statements about what constituted ‘success’ for them, which they stated largely in intrinsic rather than extrinsic terms. The majority of respondents in this study, moreover, were pursuing a line of business in which they possessed relevant management and industry experience. Several of the respondents had operated successful restaurants — or in one case a chain of restaurants — before selling them in

order to relocate to Thailand. Where respondents lacked hands-on hospitality industry experience, they often possessed complementary skills learned in other industries that could be applied in their present operations. Unlike respondents in Stone and Stubbs' (2003) study, moreover, none of the respondents in this investigation began their business 'opportunistically,' though they did so opportunistically. Further, the paper has also shown that the great majority of respondents defined 'success' for themselves in intrinsic rather than in extrinsic terms, that is, they were more concerned with being happy than in making money. In fact, the restaurateurs in this sample were similar to the "professional prepared" group identified by Wilson-Edwardes and Hoecht (2007).

One finding from the research reported in this paper is that there is no literature available on expatriates who migrate from rich western countries to establish and operate tourism related businesses in Southeast Asia. As noted earlier, Lardiés (1999) and Madden (1999) commented on the paucity of literature on tourism entrepreneurship, especially on foreign entrepreneurs working in tourism and related sectors in what Eaton (1995) term "expatriate service provision." The published literature focuses mainly on intra-European 'travel-stimulated entrepreneurial migration' (*cf.*, Snepenger *et al.*, 1995:40) or on the migration of Canadians and United States' citizens to countries in Central America.

A further finding is that, unlike the research reported by Madden (1999), Wilson-Edwardes and Hoecht (2007) and others, where women comprised an important part of the sample of informants running tourism-related businesses, being an expatriate restaurateur in Thailand (as represented by the informants in this study) is overwhelmingly a "male thing." There was only one married couple among the expatriate respondents and only one other woman restaurateur.

Moreover, nine of the 20 respondents were either single/never married, or widowed or divorced and not remarried. There are at least three possible explanations for this. First, about one-third of the restaurateurs in this study trained as chefs, many at a time when being a hotel or restaurant chef was regarded as man's work because of such job-related activities as the heavy lifting involved and the hazing that used to be endemic in such workplaces. Second, it may be that male restaurateurs are less intimidated by cultural distance (*i.e.*, the degree to which cultures differ on dimensions of language, social status, religion, politics, economic conditions, and basic assumptions about reality) (*cf.*, Stahl and Caligiuri, 2005) than female ones. Third, it may be that men who reach retirement age are either more adventurous or have fewer ties in their homelands and are thus more likely to relocate overseas in search of a better lifestyle than women of the same age.

The final conclusion reached in this paper was that this sample of expatriate restaurateurs operating legal businesses migrated to Thailand neither for the money nor for the sun but from other motives. Herring's (2001) remark, which provided the basis for the overarching research question ("Expatriation — the condition of being a white, middle class, migrant (economic or purely climatic) — can be a strangely addictive thing"), was not accurate for this group of white, middle class, migrant tourism-related business owners. Neither economic nor climatic reasons featured large in the decision to relocate of the informants in this study.

Further Research

Obvious further areas for research are investigations of the relative magnitude or strength of the various 'push' and 'pull' factors, whether respondents were most influenced by 'push' or 'pull' factors in their decision to relocate, and the

reciprocal relationship between the two sets of factors clear (see, *e.g.*, Uysal and Jurowski, 1994). As a qualitative study, this research did not investigate these areas as qualitative research cannot either objectively measure the strength of one 'push' or 'pull' factor compared with another, or compare the relative strengths and/or weaknesses of 'push' and 'pull' factors, or examine the reciprocal relationship between the two sets of factors. Additional research, such as that of Baloglu and Uysal (1996) who used a canonical correlation approach to determine the reciprocal relationship between these two motivations for overseas pleasure travel in a German sample of respondents, could yield further insights into expatriate restaurateurs' reasons for relocating to Thailand.

There are certainly research-rich opportunities among expatriate business owners in Thailand, for example, confirming by means of large-scale surveys the full range of motivating factors to relocate and then to open a business. Moreover, unlike Madden's (1999) research, the investigation reported here focused only on restaurateurs and only on those who operated legal businesses in Pattaya. Further research on this topic, both on other categories of business owners mentioned earlier and on expatriate business owners of different nationalities (*e.g.*, business owners of Arab or Eastern European origin) (many of whom have recently opened businesses in Pattaya and other resorts in Thailand) would add to the available research information on this group of migrant businesspeople.

Males were the majority in the sample in this study. Further areas for research include whether or not male restaurateurs who relocate to a foreign country and then open a business are less intimidated by cultural distance than female ones, and whether or not men who reach retirement age are either more adventurous or have fewer ties in their homelands and are thus more likely to relocate over-

seas in search of a better lifestyle than women of the same age. Further research could also examine the influence of intervening variables (such as age, marital status, socio-economic status and the various trigger events noted earlier in this paper).

Appendix 1: Respondents' biographical data

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Brief biographical data</i>	<i>Type of restaurant enterprise</i>
American "Alec"	Aged in late 50s. Previously spent 22 years in the US Navy. Hobbies are riding Harley Davidson motorcycles and playing golf. No previous business experience	Partnership serving Mexican-style food, opened in 2001.
American "Brian"	Aged in late 50s. Trained as a chef in French, Mexican and Thai cuisine. Operated own restaurants and also worked as chain restaurant vice-president	Partnership with his cousin serving Mexican-style food, opened in 2000.
Belgian "Charles"	Mid 40s. Trained originally as a plumber before serving in the Belgian Armed Forces, when he was also a Belgian amateur boxing champion. Following this, he worked in bars and then as co-owner of a Belgian guest-house. Hobbies are skydiving and boxing.	Sole proprietorship serving Belgian cuisine. Opened in 1991.
Belgian "David"	Aged in early 50s. Trained in hotel management, cooking and as a <i>sommelier</i> . Operated restaurants before becoming wine importer/exporter. Member of <i>Confrérie de la Chaîne des Rôtisseurs</i>	Partnership serving Belgian cuisine.
British "Edward"	Early 50s. Hotel-trained as a chef and had over 30 years experience working in top hotels and restaurants across the UK.	Joint-partnership with Thai spouse serving British and international cuisine. Established 1999.
British "Frank"	Late 40s. College-trained as a chef. Worked for 10 years in London hotels, restaurants, and clubs, then operated his own restaurant for seven years. At one time was executive chef to London TV franchise. Moved to Pattaya in 1997. Formerly operated two sports-themed restaurants serving British food in partnership with father and business partner.	Joint partnership between two Britons. American-themed steakhouse opened in 2006.

British "Geoffrey"	Early 60s. Originally a Master Butcher until arthritis forced his retirement. Moved to Thailand in late 1998.	Joint-partnership with wife (see below). Restaurant emphasizing English-style breakfasts and lunches. Opened in 1999. Also has traditional English-style butcher's goods available.
British "Hazel"	Late 50s. Trained as a window-dresser. Worked in small village butcher's shops before retiring to Thailand in late 1998 with present husband.	Joint-partnership with husband (see above). Restaurant emphasizing English-style breakfasts and lunches. Opened in 1999. Now added guesthouse run by informant.
British "Ian"	Mid 60s. Originally worked in hotels then operated pubs in the UK for about 30 years.	Joint-partnership with subject below and one other Briton. Restaurant serving traditional English cooking, established in 1998.
British "James"	Late 60s. Background in manufacturing commercial catering equipment	Joint-partnership with subject above and one other Briton. Restaurant serving traditional English cooking, established in 1998.
Danish "Knud"	Early 50s. Background originally in Danish merchant navy.	Joint partnership with Thai spouse. Restaurant serving Scandinavian and Danish food, established in 1992.
French "Louis"	Late 50s. Second-generation hotelier/restaurateur. Operated own restaurants in France, and also worked as consultant to other would-be restaurateurs.	Sole proprietorship serving French cuisine. Opened in 1996, relocated in 2007.
German "Margaliese"	Late 50s. Formally trained and practiced for 10 years as architect but then studied music in university for 5 years before spending 19 years as a professional musician. Retired to Thailand and opened own business premises.	Restaurant and nightclub opened in December 2000.

German “Niklas”	Late 40s. Fourth-generation restaurateur, hotel school-trained. Worked in international chain hotels for 14 years, including Bangkok, and then developed his own Asian-style restaurant chain in Germany with his Thai-born wife, who had worked as a chef for a major US hotel chain for several years and had her own television cooking programs.	Partnership between spouses. Restaurant serving Thai and German-style food. Opened in early 2003.
German “Oliver”	Early 60s. Joined German Luftwaffe at 18 and left at 29. First visited Thailand at aged 30, and opened a German restaurant in Bangkok with two friends. Moved to Pattaya in 1976 and opened own premises and well as a partnership in a beer-garden. Killed in a car accident in 2007.	Partnership with Thai spouse in restaurant specializing in German. Austrian and Swiss cuisine, and also another restaurant in Rayong province serving international cuisine.
Irish “Patrick”	Early 40s. Originally worked fulltime in a factory with a part-time night job in a hotel. Moved at aged 21 to London and worked for eight years at various hospitality industry jobs. Returned to Ireland and operated his own club for eight years.	Joint partnership American-themed bar and restaurant. Opened 2002.
Italian “Ricardo”	Mid 50s. Trained as hotelier, progressing from dishwasher to Assistant General Manager. Moved to Pattaya in 1988 and first opened an Italian bar, then three years later an Italian restaurant. Now operating another restaurant in different location.	Sole proprietorship serving homemade Italian-style food. This restaurant opened in 2002.
Italian “Stefano”	Mid 50s. Worked in restaurants from the age of 14 and then restaurant-trained as a chef in the USA and Italy. Moved to Macau in his mid-20s after his marriage to a Macanese resident and there operated a pizzeria and then an Italian restaurant. Moved to Thailand in 2001 after his divorce and opened an Italian restaurant in Bangkok before relocating to Pattaya in 2005. New premises opened in early 2007.	Italian pizzeria and restaurant specializing in Tuscan-style food served family-style, as well as Italian regional wines.

<p>Swedish “Torsten”</p>	<p>Mid 50s. Following his compulsory military service, he earned an MBA and then worked in Europe in Information Technology for a major US international semi-conductor firm before joining Microsoft from 1980-84. Discovered Thailand on visits, met and married a Thai woman. Decided to retrain as a chef, which he did partly in hotels and partly at <i>Le Cordon Bleu</i> in London. Previously operated a cooking school in Taiwan and now does the same in Thailand.</p>	<p>Restaurant specializing in <i>haute cuisine</i>, including food prepared and served in the ‘Royal Thai’ style. Began operating the restaurant in 2002. It is associated with a Thai cooking school opened in 1997 on property belong to his Thai wife.</p>
<p>Swiss “Uri”</p>	<p>Early 50s. After leaving school, worked for supermarket chain and spent 3-years as an apprentice butcher. Then spent another 2 years responsible for hotel kitchen. First visited Thailand in 1981, but married Thai woman he met in Switzerland. After his father’s death, they moved to Phuket, then Chiang Mai, where they opened (and lost money on) a hotel. Moved to Pattaya in early 1990s. Present restaurant is his third on the same street.</p>	<p>Husband and wife partnership in restaurant offering French cuisines with “Swiss quality and Swiss hygiene standards.”</p>

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