



The Food Truck Phenomenon
Paul Galvani October 2013



On Food Trucks



"I think of it as the antidote to fast food; it's the clear alternative to the king, the clown and the colonel. It's faster, and chances are it's healthier than something at a traditional fast food restaurant. I would much rather give my money to a neighbor or an individual than to a gigantic corporation that owns half the world. Maybe it's naïve of me, but I prefer food made by an identifiable human that's actually cooking."



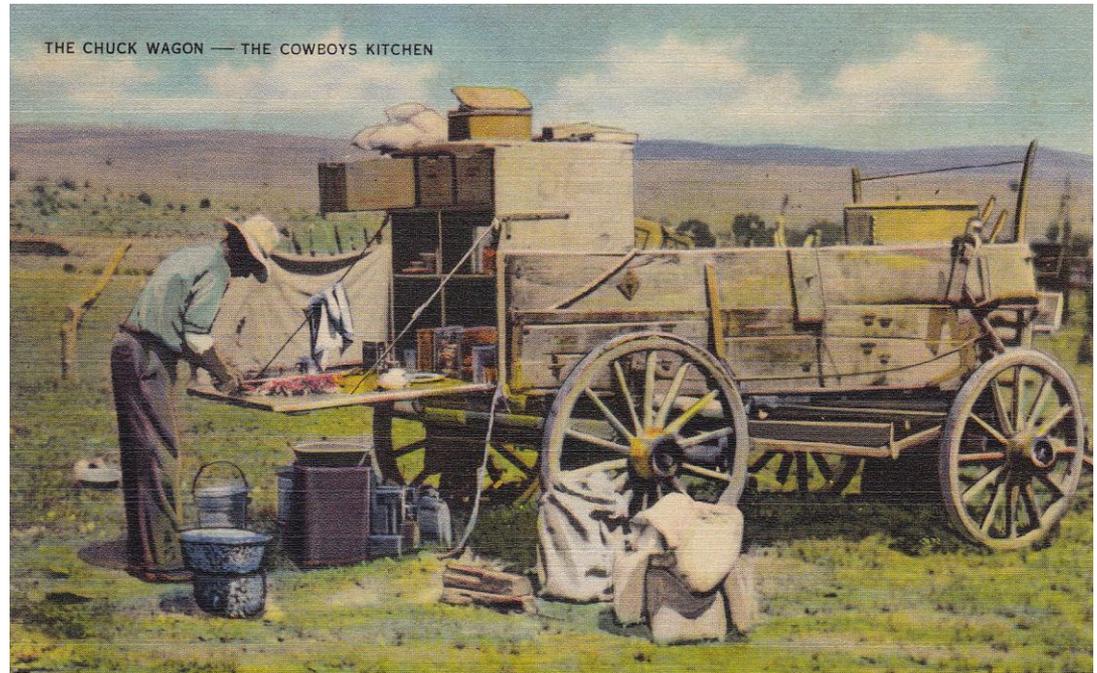
Chef, author and TV personality Anthony Bourdain



Mobile Food Units – Not a New Idea

Texans Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving are credited with inventing the chuck wagon in 1866

This Postcard is from the 1930s



So important was the chuck wagon to Texas that in 2005, it was designated the official state vehicle of Texas



In 1920, Harry Burt of Youngtown, Ohio, invented the “Good Humor Bar”. It was the first chocolate-covered ice cream bar on a stick. He sold them from a fleet of twelve trucks equipped with freezers.

Evolution of the Food Truck

1970s
 First "hot" trucks
 launched to serve
 construction workers

1970s - 2008
 "Hot" trucks
 proliferate in major
 cities -
 Estimated 9,000
 trucks and carts in
 Los Angeles

Nov 2008 Roy Choi's
 Kogi BBQ Taco
 Truck launches
 Uses Twitter and
 Facebook

Nov 2008 - Current

Hundreds of modern food trucks hit the streets in major cities nationwide

Restaurant chains begin to enter space

Major publications begin to cover and feature gourmet food trucks

1970s



2008





The modern mobile food movement was born in Los Angeles, in November 2008, when Roy Choi opened his first Kogi Korean BBQ truck.

His business model was both pure genius and simplicity itself: the combination of fun, ambitious food with Twitter® and a truck. In Kogi's first year of operation, Choi racked up sales revenue of \$2 million — without the cost of a brick-and-mortar restaurant. These days, he operates five Kogi trucks and has more than 100,000 Twitter followers and has branched out into two brick and mortar restaurants as well.



Food Trucks Around The Nation

Approximately **30,000** MFUs nationwide

Los Angeles **9,000**

New York 3,000

(limited number of medallions which trade for high sums: \$20k/yr)

Houston **1,400**

Austin 1,400

Houston's trucks are **90%** Mexican "Taco Trucks"

10% Chef-Driven or Gourmet Trucks

Food Trucks in Houston are all about ethnic cuisines. If there is an ethnic group represented in Houston, chances are there's a food truck that represents them.

Countries/areas covered with Houston Food Trucks include:

Nigeria	Honduras
Venezuela	Portugal
Vietnam	Japan
Korea	China
Mexico	India
The Middle East	Greece
Colombia	El Salvador
Thailand	Guatemala
South Africa	The Philippines
The Bahamas	Italy
Cuba	France
Texas	New Orleans
Chicago	



Brick & Mortar to **Food Truck**



- Extends restaurant brand with catering option
- Takes restaurant to the people
- Great exposure at special/community events



Brick & Mortar to Food Truck

- Fast to respond to changing needs
- Can try out new menu items





Brick & Mortar to **Food Truck**



High end grocery
stores are also
going mobile





Food Truck to Brick & Mortar

Bernie's Burger Bus

**(plans to have 3 locations in 5 years
plus concession inside Reliant Stadium)**

Good Dog Hot Dog

Eatsie Boys

Green Seed Vegan

Frosted Betty

Fusion Taco



Food Truck to Brick & Mortar

Food Truck to Brick & Mortar





Food Truck to Brick & Mortar



Food Truck to Brick & Mortar



How does a city benefit from Food Trucks?

There are both tangible and intangible benefits

TANGIBLE:

- Fees
- Employment
- Sales Taxes
- Buy Local

INTANGIBLE:

Revitalization
Sense of community
Vibrancy/Excitement
Sense of living in a great place



Houston Restrictions on Food Trucks

No propane downtown or Medical Center

Trucks can't be stationed closer than 60 feet from each other

No signage other than that which is attached to truck

No tables or chairs

Must be within 500 feet of restroom

Must have letter from landlord



What are some of the things that Houston is doing to support Food Trucks?

- **The Houston Museum of Fine Arts hosts a different Food Truck every day at lunchtime.**
- **From March until September, every Wednesday in front of City Hall there is a Farmer's Market with a number of Food Trucks**
- **In 2012, the university of Houston shut down its University Center to remodel it including all the restaurants on campus. They called in 6 food trucks to feed the students, faculty and staff**
- **HEB Montrose Market hosts a Food Truck Friday 2/month**



What are some of the things that Houston is doing to support Food Trucks?

- Haute Wheels food truck festival 2x/year
- Houston Food truck Fest 2x/year
- Food Truck Park on the Southwest edge of downtown recently opened serving lunch daily and dinner on weekends
- Local bars ask Food Trucks to show up to provide food for their patrons. This eliminates the bars from having to have a kitchen
- One bar got rid of their kitchen and now uses a Food Truck everyday
- Office building managers invite Food Trucks to add excitement and provide variety for their tenants



What can a city do to embrace Food Trucks?

- **Make it easy to open and run a food Truck while at the same time ensuring all Health Department (and other) regulations are met**
- **Pass laws that are reasonable**
- **Reduce the red tape of dealing with different City departments**
- **Ensure that all city departments are aligned (Fire, Police, Health)**
- **Create a position that is a liaison between the City and the Food Truck community – a sort of “Food Truck Czar” who can be a champion for Food Trucks**
- **Create a Food Truck incubator to educate, train and mentor Food Truck entrepreneurs**
- **Open a city-run Food Truck Park with restrooms, ATM, seating and cover/shade**
- **Temper the local Restaurant Association**
- **Promote the Food Truck scene (Eat St. filming in Houston)**



Meet the Smallest Food Truck in the World in Austin, Texas





HOUSTON'S TOP 100 FOOD TRUCKS

Paul Galvani

PUPUSAS y TACO
GORDITAS y TORTA
GUARACHES y
QUEZADILLAS y
PLATOS de LONCHE.
CALDOS de RES
y de POLLO y SODA
MEXICANAS y
BEBIDAS y CAFE y
ATAQUES de

