



## Second Global Report on Gastronomy Tourism

Affiliate Members Report: Volume sixteen

### 2.14

## The Triangle Concept of Indonesian gastronomy

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#### Background

Gastronomy has emerged in recent years as an important element in the enhancement of a destination's attractiveness and competitiveness. The blended elements of culture, local produce and lifestyle together form the gastronomy experience. These present potential for country branding, and gastronomy in particular can be used as a soft power in diplomacy.

Indonesia is an archipelago and maritime country with huge potential to develop gastronomy tourism. With more than 17,000 islands; 1,340 tribes; 2,500 species of seawater fishes; 2,184 species of freshwater fishes; 40,000 species of plants; 1,602 species of birds; and 52 types of vegetation, we can infer that about 17% of the world's species exist in Indonesia. According to The World Economic Forum (WEF) 2015, the Natural & Cultural Resources of Indonesia have occupied the highest position (#17) out of the Southeast Asian nations.

The influences on Indonesian gastronomy lie in the history of the kingdoms of Hinduism and Buddhism dating back to the 8th century, including Majapahit and Sriwijaya. Another major influence is the 18th century spice trade, when the world was dominated by Indonesian spices. Indonesian gastronomy has evolved to become both unique and distinctive while **the rituals and ceremonies have become the soul of traditional Indonesian cuisines, striving for innovation while keeping the history alive.**

Research conducted by the Academy Gastronomy of Indonesia (AGI) has shown that gastronomy elements still serve as individual attractions in various parts of the world.

As a national academy, AGI has an obligation to facilitate its stakeholders in uniting all of these elements into holistic gastronomy tourism products. **The major challenge is creating the concept as a metaphor for Indonesian Gastronomy for multiple destinations.**

The word 'gastronomy' has started to be recognized in Indonesia, where the stakeholders' solid movement in disseminating the information encouraged them in moving forward to build the industry.

#### The Triangle Concept of Indonesian Gastronomy

The concept of gastronomy tourism in its entirety is unique in that it draws from many aspects of a destination. For example, gastronomy tourism in Indonesia is influenced equally by history, culture and food, which influence each other via more specific aspects.

Figure 2.3 on the following page will depict the Triangle Concept of Indonesian gastronomy.

The main aspects of Indonesian gastronomy and their influences include:

**Food:** obviously the central aspect of gastronomy tourism, influenced by culture and history, via ritual/ceremony and spices respectively

**Culture:** governed by the food and history of Indonesia. Storytelling has kept the history alive throughout the centuries while the rituals and ceremonies involved in the cooking process allow food to remain authentic and true to traditional flavours



Figure 2.3 Triangle Concept of Indonesian gastronomy

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**History:** an ever-present influence on Indonesian gastronomy, shaped by both the mix of 16th century cultures (including the influences of the Sriwijaya, Mataram and Majapahit kingdoms) as well as the 18th century spice trade

These are the platforms in the creation of a strong narrative of the Indonesian food culture, with the main objective of achieving authenticity, locality and novelty in tourists' experiences.

Based on the above elements, a product portfolio can be developed into many types of gastronomy tours, recognizing the areas of influence and overlap. Some examples of the combinations include:

#### A. Culture & ritual/ceremony, which consists of:

1. **Royal Heritage Gastronomy Tour** highlighting the experience in royal dining and eating habits of former Indonesian kings in Solo & Yogyakarta
2. **The Soul of Balinese Gastronomy** involving local produce. Bali has every element of gastronomy tourism product including fine dining restaurants, traditional or local foods called "Warung", culinary theatres in Ubud, cooking classes, vineyards, coffee plantations, traditional markets and food festivals.

**B. History & storytelling; Spice trailing taste of Indonesia: Rendang Journey, Minangkabau-West Sumatra.** This is a good example of a product with a strong philosophy in storytelling. The name 'Rendang' has been taken from the word 'Marandang', which is a cooking process in which each ingredient represents a story. **Meat** represents

parents who give their child prosperity, while **coconut milk** represents intellectual community as an influencer and connector. **Chili** represents the religious gurus who teach the younger generations using strict methods and sharp words. **Spices and herbs** complement each other, depicting the idea that everybody in the community plays an important role.

#### Communication strategy

Meaningful taglines are useful in conveying the message of gastronomy tourism to target markets. For example, **"Indonesia Spice up The World"** is used to represent and highlight the importance of spice in Indonesian gastronomy.

#### Promotion

The powerful **"Wonderful Indonesia"** campaign placed country branding at the 47th rank in the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum 2015. This is a result of the serious commitment of the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism to promoting Indonesia's tourist destinations. It has also given momentum to the Indonesian Gastronomic Tourism movement.

#### Sales channels

Powerful digital information channels and integrated websites are part of the strategies of effective sales channels to penetrate the global market. The capacity and capability of gastronomy destinations has become a critical issue, stressing the need for taskforces in order to accelerate the process of creating the exotic gastronomic journey, through the use of the solid triangle concept to identify the various contributing aspects in the gastronomy tourism model.