

Developing the Potential of Creative Industries in the Field of Local Wisdom-Based Culinary Tourism in Lake Toba Tourism, North Sumatra

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Abstract

This study examines the development of culinary tourism in Toba Samosir Regency, North Sumatra, as a crucial component of the creative industry sector. The region's distinctive Batak cuisine, exemplified by dishes like arsik fish, represents a unique intersection of cultural heritage and economic opportunity. Through analysis of local culinary practices, cultural traditions, and tourism development initiatives, this research demonstrates how traditional gastronomy serves as both a cultural identifier and an economic driver. The study finds significant potential for culinary tourism development in Toba Samosir, supported by the region's rich local wisdom and the Indonesian government's strategic focus through the Office of Tourism and Creative Economy. This research highlights how the preservation and promotion of indigenous culinary practices can enhance tourism development while maintaining cultural authenticity, creating sustainable economic opportunities for local communities.

Keywords: Culinary Tourism, Cultural Heritage, Local Wisdom, Economic Development, Batak Cuisine

1. Introduction

One of the most popular destinations in Indonesia is North Sumatra. One of the most important assets to promote tourism in North Sumatra is this. North Sumatra Province has sufficient resources for the implementation of international tourism standards. This can provide opportunities for tourists from other countries to visit North Sumatra. Based on research that has been conducted by several volcanologists, Lake Toba is the largest volcanic lake in the world. It is the result of a supervolcanic eruption that occurred about two thousand years ago.

This powerful volcanic emission left some remaining parts that are very beautiful in nature, including potholes with thousands of hectares of area, best-in-class viewing on the planet, and no less interesting are the towns that have a lot of social heritage that has existed for a long time. A very special cultural heritage along the shores of Lake Toba since then.

Toba Samosir has several tourist attractions that are rich in natural beauty, including nature, social, tourism, travel, city, culinary, tourism, etc. This area is one of the areas that is a favourite tourist location for visitors. This area is one of the favourite tourist locations for visitors, both local and global guests, especially during events. So far, tourists and visitors to this area are more familiar with its culture, history, and natural attractions. This tourist spot is also rich in original relics that are still well preserved and in pretty good condition. Travellers also find the singularity of the people's culture, which includes traditional dance, traditional music, traditional weaving and carving, quite interesting. There are many shops selling local mementos in a number of popular tourist destinations. Today, the travel



industry is growing so rapidly that its development generally follows the interests and inspirations of visitors to a tourist area.

Seeing the consequences of perceptions in the tourist areas in Toba Samosir, there are opportunities for the tourism industry that have not developed as expected, especially culinary tourism. We all know that the majority of visitors to the tourist areas of Toba Samosir Regency always try to enjoy local culinary and drinks. However, local residents as tourism actors, tourism officials, and even local governments have not maximised the potential of traditional culinary tourism. Whereas this type of travel industry has a considerable opportunity to be created considering that the culinary has its own flavour and variety and has its own quality.

Through a variety of culinary there are various activities that can be carried out where tourists not only work as food experts but can be taught how to make food, see the process of making spices, etc. so that it becomes an integral part of the travel industry movement. Meat or fish is commonly used in making Batak food, which is usually made with pork, chicken, buffalo, beef, or carp and various local spices such as andaliman, galangal, and citrus.

One of the backbones of this area and a location for culinary tourism is lake fish (tilapia and carp). There are lots of small stalls selling culinary fish with typical regional flavours, but the service is still traditional, so it has not provided maximum input. Unfortunately, this tremendous potential has not been properly managed, resulting in underdevelopment. Through culinary travel industry activities, some restaurants have made changes or developments with more shifting improvements so that the appearance is more attractive. It can also modify such products to reach a wider market. It is very clear that the overall purpose of culinary tourism is not only to provide alternative forms of tourism to tourists to improve the economy of the community, but also to preserve traditional cuisine by introducing and exploring new foods and drinks that have not been consumed. done more earnestly so that these food varieties are not lost in the ever-evolving times.

Based on the explanation in the background of the problem above, a problem formulation can be made related to the problems that occur related to the theme of the research proposal, namely:

- a. What are the strengths possessed in Toba Samosir Regency, North Sumatra in the field of culinary or local cuisine?
- b. What are the weaknesses possessed in Toba Samosir Regency, North Sumatra in the culinary field or local local cuisine and the obstacles faced by visitors when stopping by?
- c. What are the opportunities in Toba Samosir Regency, North Sumatra in attracting visitors when stopping by?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Creative Industries

The Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia states that creative industries are based on the use of individual creativity, skills and talents to generate wealth and employment by empowering the creative and inventive power of those individuals. As indicated by the UK DCMS Team, Individual creativity, skills and talents are the foundation of the creative industries, which have the potential to generate wealth and employment through the exploitation and production of intellectual property and individual creativity. The concept of creative industries has an impact on the economy, particularly on unemployment, regional development, and urban dynamics (Suryana, 2013). Hutton (2007) states that creative industries are industries where an organisation is innovative.

There are several orders of innovative enterprises. As indicated by UNDP and UNCTAD, it tends to be seen from the model of innovative regions as follows.

1. Looking at the UK DCMS model it consists of: Advertising, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, clothing, film and video, music, performance, art, publishing, software, television and radio, and video and computer games are examples of these industries.
2. Judging from the emblematic text model, there are several classes, namely:
 - A. The centre social business classification includes advertising, film, web, music, distribution, TV and radio, and video and PC games.
 - B. The surrounding social enterprise classification (fringe social business), incorporating innovative expressions.
 - C. The borderline cultural industry category, which includes sports, software, consumer electronics and fashion.
3. According to the Presidential Instruction on Creative Economy Development, the creative industry includes 18 subsectors, including: Innovation Works, Distribution, Programming, Television and Radio, Plan, Music, Film, Endless Games, Promotion Administration, Design, Performing Expression, Specialisation, Style, Rupiah Expression, Culinary, Data Innovation.

Based on the creative economy report, from the Indonesian Ministry of Trade, the contribution of the creative economy can be seen from several indicators both economically and non-economically as follows.

- A. Adding to GDP (Gross domestic product)

Based on information from the Department of Exchange of the Republic of Indonesia, Indonesia's creative industries contributed 6.3 billion to the country's GDP between 2002 and 2007.

- B. Job creation Creative industries have been successful in creating jobs.

Trade Report of the Ministry of Trade, Indonesia's creative industries were able to employ an average of 5.4 million people from 2002 to 2006, and the country's labour participation rate was 5.79 per cent.

- C. Increase exports

Creative industries contributed 9.1 per cent to Indonesia's exports in 2006, while the UK's creative industries export growth was 11 per cent and its contribution to exports was 4.3 per cent.

- D. Improve the business climate

Creative industries can be used as an investment, especially by developing creative cities, then developing communication and information infrastructure.

- E. Business maker

The increase in inventive businesses significantly adds to the area of assistance and creation. The expansion of creative industries resulted in the creation of various small and large industries.

- F. Effects on other sectors.

The creative industry has formed a new industry structure that opens up new business opportunities for its supporting sectors. For example, other business sectors, such as tourism and trade, have grown more rapidly due to the expansion of the culinary industry in Bandung.

- G. Influence on society

Creative industries influence other socio-economic factors. For example, to work on personal satisfaction, expand social resistance, let alone work on the image and character of the nation.

- H. Influence on cultural preservation an important non-economic role of creative industries is to build culture, cultural heritage, and local values.

Culture-based inventive enterprises make areas of strength for the social people of the neighbourhood.

2.2. Culinary Tourism

Culinary tourism is the result of unique, interesting and always memorable culinary experiences. There are a wide variety of culinary experiences that are often served on every trip, but we can also be culinary diners in our own homes. Food tourism goes beyond weekend dinners and restaurant guides and encompasses a wide variety of cuisines (Lubis, 2022). Nonetheless, the culinary travel industry incorporates several components, namely cooking courses, cooking guides and shops selling cookware, culinary excursions and local escorts, culinary media and manuals, wholesale food for parties/catering, culinary attractions such as snack celebrations. According to Hall and Gössling (2013), 'visiting primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations where food testing and or experiencing the attributes of a specialist food production region is a key motivating factor for travel' is the definition of the term 'culinary tourism', which is where the term 'culinary tourism' comes from.

Stone et al. (2018) defines culinary tourism as the search for unusual and interesting food and drinks by tourists. Thus, the culinary tourism industry is not only due to the desire to enjoy flavourful food, but what always takes centre stage is the uniqueness created after eating the cuisine in the area. Culinary tourism is a growing sector of the creative tourism industry that is often associated with cycling and walking and other cultural activities.

According to Everett (2016), culinary craft is a craftsmanship that concentrates on cuisine and drinks as well as various things related to the source of these dishes and drinks, ranging from planning, handling, service and capacity. Toba Batak speciality cuisine is an art form that looks at food and drinks that are different from the traditional cuisine served in every part of Toba Samosir. The now widely used term, culinary tourism, emerged from the culinary arts. Hall and Gössling (2013) says, "*...the culinary travel industry is neither bombastic nor selective*". It incorporates new and essential gastronomic experiences, in addition to cafés rated four stars or better, and combines both and a variety of refreshments.

Common foods from a region have qualities from a region that recognise them from different regions (Richards, 2003). According to Diarta et al. (2015), branding of tourism products must be clear and well managed. Marking that applies to the travel industry is objective marking, which is the idea of marking to work on the nature of tourist sites. Marking should be able to separate one destination from another and provide additional benefits to a destination. By recalling the culinary delights of a region or goods from the destination, it can encourage tourists to visit the destination. The priority destination set by the government is Lake Toba, which is one of the tourist destinations in North Sumatra.

Culinary, which is one of the creative industry opportunities, is no longer an exclusive form of luxury. The focus of culinary tourism is not on the glamour of the restaurant or the variety of food and drink on offer; rather, it is a unique and empowering gastronomic experience. According to the International Culinary Tourism Association (ICTA), culinary tourism is not new; it is related to agritourism but focuses more on how food and drink can attract tourists to enjoy it.

Gastronomy can provide unique and unforgettable experiences. Looking back, culinary tourism is a useful tool for fostering community and economic growth and developing intercultural understanding. There is culinary tourism in both urban and rural areas.

2.3. Local Wisdom

Local Wisdom is often known as local knowledge, local know-how, or community expertise. Thoughts about life can also be interpreted as local wisdom. These ideas are characterised by positivity, modesty, and clear reasoning. Reasoning, deep feelings, disposition, behaviour, and recommendations of human dignity are examples of local wisdom. Their souls will be more virtuous if they master local wisdom.

Local wisdom is human intelligence possessed by a particular group of people and derived from the experiences of others in a region (Rahyono, 2017). Proximate insight is a consequence of a particular provincial network through their experiences and may not really be able to be done by a different network. A particular regional community will have a strong connection to local community outcomes, and this value has continued to develop since the beginning of the community. The dominant cultural values and norms that govern the order of social life are essentially local wisdom. In socialising and interacting in social life, accepted values and norms become guidelines. Therefore, Geertz (1983) statement that local wisdom is an entity that significantly determines the dignity of humans in their community is very reasonable.

This suggests that the cultural norms and values of security and well-being contained in existing local wisdom can be a foundation for the process of community development. Cultural products with in-depth interpretation can be used to scientifically investigate local wisdom. Value systems, beliefs and religions, social norms, work ethics, and even the workings of social dynamics are all included in cultural traditions as cultural products (Pudentia, 2022). In other words, as an ancestral heritage, local community customs contain local wisdom-based values that can be utilised to the greatest extent in community development to realise security and improve welfare.

Local wisdom is the cultural identity or personality of a nation that allows it to absorb and even process foreign cultures into its own characteristics and abilities (Yumnah, 2023). Meanwhile, according to the English-Indonesian word reference, the development of the travel industry today opens the door to the progress of the culinary business in tourist attractions.

The development of local wisdom, especially in the field of food, improving the image of regional tourism, and creating new jobs are supporting factors. Tourism development that is localised will provide many benefits to local residents, namely:

- Increase residents' income
- Maintaining existing culture
- Culinary tourism is growing
- Tourism has a good image
- Creating new job opportunities

Indonesia's culinary sector is very promising as the country is home to more than 700 different tribes that each produce their own speciality cuisine. In addition, Indonesia is a culinary capital due to its rich spices, subtropical climate on the equator, and abundant natural resources.

The elevation of tribal, cultural and cultural identity, as well as the potential for natural beauty in Lake Toba, is supported by the introduction of cultural values and local wisdom in Samosir Regency, which aims to attract both domestic and foreign tourists to Lake Toba. This is to capitalise on Lake Toba's reputation as a world-class tourist destination, especially considering that the Batak community is considered a culturally rich society. In order to make tourism more attractive, these personalities are then packaged in a friendly, polite, and welcoming language.

3. Methods

The research method that the author uses or uses to collect this logical work is that the author uses a library concentration strategy, specifically by taking or collecting data information from diaries and from other writing materials that have to do with the issues discussed. The research in this review is to get more precise information. Qualitative research is descriptive research that emphasises analysis, while qualitative research is based on theory as a research guide based on facts. Qualitative and descriptive methods are used in this type of research. To support the researcher's research, literature

review is used as a data collection method to find theoretical references that are relevant to previous similar research.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Local Community

Toba is a district in the North Sumatra region of Indonesia. Balige is the capital of the Regency. Toba is one of the seven localities that comprise Lake Toba, which is the largest lake in Southeast Asia. Toba Regency covers 2,021.80 km² or 3.19 per cent of the land area of North Sumatra Province. Toba regency is located at 2°03'-2°40' North latitude and 98°56'-99°40' East longitude. The highlands of Toba Regency are at an altitude of between 900 and 2,200 metres above sea level, with a topography and land contours that are flat, gentle, sloping, and steep. The soil structure is unstable and is in an area prone to volcanic and tectonic earthquakes.

Due to its proximity to the Equator, the Toba Region is characterised as hot and humid. Toba Regency, like other regencies in Indonesia, has dry and rainy seasons. There is a transition period between the two seasons, which usually lasts from January to July and the rainy season from August to December (Nugraha & Sumardi, 2019).

Toba Samosir Regency's natural, cultural, historical, pilgrimage, village and culinary attractions are just some of the many interesting tourist attractions (Munthe & Simanjuntak, 2020). During the holiday season, this region becomes one of the most popular tourist destinations for both domestic and foreign tourists. So far, tourists and visitors to this region are more familiar with its culture, history, and natural attractions. The area is also rich in original relics that are still well-preserved and in fairly good condition. Travellers also find the singularity of the people's culture, which includes traditional dance, traditional music, traditional weaving and carving, quite interesting (Marizki et al., 2022).

The Toba Batak tribe is the general term for the indigenous tribes that make up the Toba Regency. Besides the Toba Batak, there are also other Batak tribes living in this place, namely the Simalungun Batak, Pakpak Batak, Angkola Batak, Karo Batak, and Mandailing Batak, as well as other clans such as Nias, Malay, etc.

4.2. Culinary in Toba Samosir Regency

A. Nainura

Nainura is a typical Batak food that uses fish as the main raw material in the manufacturing system. *Nainura* itself has its own speciality compared to other types of food, this dish is made without using fire. It is only seasoned with different types of spices and flavours made in the yellow Batak style and left until the meat is tender. Since it does not contain any preservatives, this dish is also considered healthy. *Nainura* used to be available only to kings, but now it can be enjoyed by everyone in society (Panggabean et al., 2020).

B. Na niarsik

Often also known as *ikan arsik*, is a typical Toba dish consisting mostly of fish and loaded with spices and herbs. *Na niarsik* refers to dry swamp. Hence, this dish is cooked for a long time until it is dry so that the fish-based spices and seasonings can be fully absorbed. Assuming the assembly system is correct, *niarsik* can last a maximum of two days without spoiling.

C. Gomak noodles

Perhaps we are familiar with *Gomak* noodles. One of the typical Batak dishes that we often encounter is *Gomak* noodles. *Gomak* noodle is eaten with an alternative sauce made using coconut milk essence. Anchovies, tofu cut into small squares, and round eggs are all on the plate. The flavour of the soup itself is comparable to that of vegetable rice cake, which usually consists of long beans and peas. Since the sauce of *Gomak* noodle is already spicy, there is no need to use *sambal*.

D. Manuk napinadar

This food seems to utilise free-range chicken. Furthermore, it is cooked with blood. Usually, this food is available on conventional occasions. For Muslims who want to taste this food, they can process it without using a mixture of blood, which will be replaced with coconut milk.

E. Sasagun

A typical Batak dish is *sasagun*. This *sasagun* uses *sago* as the base ingredient, which is roasted over medium heat and mixed with coconut and sugar. In addition, *sasagun* is often combined with pineapple, durian, peanut, or other flavours. Generally, it is available during major events such as Christmas and New Year.

F. Andaliman Sambal

Because the flavours of Batak cuisine are very spicy, the taste of this *sambal* is so unique and appetising. The food has a spicy flavour and a citrus-like aroma that makes you want to eat more. The natural product of *andaliman* for the Batak people is a mandatory seasoning in cooking. In addition to *Andaliman*, chilli and cayenne pepper also add to the spiciness.

G. Dali ni horbo

It is a buffalo milk dish made into cheese-sized lumps. Traditional processing is used instead of chemical processes for this preparation. The milk used is also freshly taken from a mother buffalo that has just given birth for one month. The food is made in a simple way: buffalo milk is cooked in low-temperature water until it coagulates. It is usually added with pineapple juice or papaya leaf juice to remove bad odours.

H. Na tinombur

One of the traditional dishes of the Toba Batak from North Sumatra is called *na tinombur*. This dish usually uses carp, catfish or tilapia in its preparation system. The way it is prepared is by drinking it and combining it with a wide variety of very distinctive flavours. Be sure to use the traditional Batak *andaliman* blend used to prepare this dish.

4.3. Local Culinary Potential

The Ministry of Tourism will increase the capacity of the community as culinary tourism actors at Lumbanbulbul Beach, Balige District, Toba Samosir Regency, North Sumatra, to maximise the potential of culinary tourism on Lake Toba. Vita Datau, Top of Service of The Travel's Culinary Improvement Speed Boost Group, revealed, there are several business entertainers and homestay owners who get extraordinary preparation. In addition, the training aims to teach participants how to serve healthy halal food and provide comfortable accommodation. Vita stated that this activity is the first step to revive the food management industry by looking at the potential of culinary tourism that has been untapped.

Vita said, as a result, the knowledge of the trainees will be utilised so that they can use it to their advantage in the future, attracting foodies from all over the world. Every visitor to Lake Toba, especially the Lumbanbulbul tourist attraction, will be able to enjoy food that tastes like a luxury restaurant thanks to the guidelines that will be implemented. Serving food to tourists is the most important thing, she said.

The natural scenery in Toba Samosir, which includes Lake Toba and the surrounding mountains, continues to amaze tourists despite accessibility issues. The fact that public facilities, particularly clean toilets, continue to be a concern is a matter of great concern. From the inspections that have been conducted, it is apparent that the menus offered to guests are currently in high demand by tourists. Hygiene and sanitation issues as well as facilities are some of the things that need attention.

The Ministry of Tourism reports that shopping tourism contributes up to 33.85 per cent to the development of local culinary tourism. It is interesting to note that the growth of the creative economy increased by 4.95 per cent in 2016. Between 2014 and 2016, its proportion to GDP varied from 7.39 per cent to 7.44 per cent. Immediate action is needed to accelerate the growth of culinary and shopping tourism around the Tourism Area. Of course, the hope is that these locations will provide greater economic value, the opportunities will be better distributed, and can have a significant effect on the surrounding population.

Toba Samosir and North Sumatra tourism stakeholders must know the concept of culinary tourism. The idea of gastronomic progress in Indonesia is influenced by 3 components, namely culinary, culture and history. For this reason, it is necessary to master the development of culinary tourism in the Lake Toba Region. Based on the description above, it can be seen that in addition to the determination of the Lake Toba area as a super need for tourism development, there is a very large opportunity for this area to become a culinary tourism destination in the Lake Toba area.

This impressive open opportunity should be expected by the local DPRD, especially the local government of Toba Samosir, to seriously foster this area. The Toba Samosir Regency Tourism Office needs to be a pioneer in developing culinary tourism destinations in North Sumatra.

4.4. Role of Local Government

The work of the local government from the results of meetings with the state and culinary entrepreneurs found that education and training related to the development of the travel industry in this area is often held by the central and territorial legislatures, but sometimes when there is actually a local government programme plan and the local government requires coordination with the municipal government and culinary entrepreneurs so that the results are not too ideal. Because in line with the times, many things are influenced by foreign cultures, including local wisdom regarding products. They claim that technological advancement is the main cause, but socially, they lack local wisdom.

5. Conclusion

Because culinary is part of cultural heritage, it is one of the creative industries that needs to be developed and preserved as a tourist attraction. Promoting regional specialities and forming associations of institutions engaged in culinary tourism are two ways to promote culinary tourism as a tourist destination. The territorial fortress that will become the culinary tourism industry in the Toba Samosir Regime generally contains spices and seasonings. Culinary tourism in the Toba Samosir area also needs support from the local government for its development process. Because this culinary tourism has a great opportunity so that it can increase the income of the local population.

To enhance culinary tourism in Toba Samosir, local restaurant owners, particularly those operating traditional Batak eateries, should focus on providing excellent service to expand their market reach and cater

to all age groups. The local government should play an active role in educating restaurant owners and the community on the importance of preserving and developing regional specialities, fostering creativity while ensuring accessibility for all. Additionally, designated business areas should be established—some serving authentic traditional Batak cuisine, including dishes made with pork, dog meat, and blood, while others offer halal Batak food options to accommodate Muslim visitors.

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