



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Duck Meat Culinary: Local Food and Tourism Experiences in Madura Indonesia

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Apr 24, 2024	<p>The need and interest in tourism research with local food themes are growing as local food plays an important role in the overall tourist experience and the equality of tourist destinations. However, research on local food as a culinary heritage has not received adequate attention, especially in relation to an understanding of local food consumption in tourist destinations. Given the dearth of research on local food as a tourist attraction, this study attempts to explore the role of duck meat menu servings as local food in Madura. The study was conducted using Husserl's phenomenological approach. The results showed that there were several themes in the culinary experience of tourists in Madura, namely culinary tourism as a means to seek something new, as a means to acquire sensory pleasure, as the peak of the tourist experience, as a symbol of authenticity, as a symbol of prestige and as a medium for cultural exploration. The study also found that Madurese local cuisine as a source of culture constitutes an example of a good travel experience.</p>
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### INTRODUCTION

Food is not only a fundamental biological need for humans, but also a cultural site that becomes a battlefield for power, identity, and social class. Food rarely becomes the main reason to visit tourist destinations, but it is closely related to the overall tourist experience. Food is an important element in the tourist experience since most of the tourist experience is associated with the experience of food consumption (Richards, 2020). However, many of these culinary experiences are taken for granted and this eating experience is considered a necessity that tourists need to find while travelling. In fact, food is not merely about eating as a primary need for tourists. Consuming food in tourist locations has various meanings whereas food itself has various meanings for tourists (Bessiere, 1998).

First, in addition to the main function of meeting physical needs, food is highly expected when travelling. Trying different types of local dishes is a major travel destination. Eating at a local restaurant can be a fun and memorable part of the holiday experience for most travelers (Chang et al., 2011). Second, food plays a key role as a channel for socializing (Dixit, 2019; Rashid et al., 2023). Local restaurants offer an opportunity for tourists to meet other tourists and the local community. According to Murphy's (Murphy, 2001) study of backpackers' social lives, kitchens inside local restaurants are the most common areas where backpackers interact with other tourists.

Tasting local food is an important aspect in understanding a new culture since food is a cultural product and is connected to the people's lifestyle. Some researchers identify cultural differences through serving food, i.e., cooking, serving, and eating. In relation to the statements above, food

becomes an important medium for cultural expression (Chang et al., 2010; du Rand & Heath, 2006). During a trip to a new place, travelers can gain new knowledge of local cuisine by eating what the local people eat and exploring new foods that they are unlikely to eat in their home region. In this sense, tasting local dishes can be one of the best ways to learn a new culture.

Food plays an important role in the development and marketing strategies. Food is seen as the main source of income. Several studies on the economic impact of food in the tourism industry found that spending on food contributes largely to society in tourist sites. According to the Restaurant and Foodservice Market Research Handbook, 50% of restaurant revenues is generated from tourist visits (Graziani, 2003). In popular culinary destinations such as Hong Kong, international tourists are increasing since the restaurants in the country have many culinary varieties (Graziani, 2003). In addition, a country's food can be a critical dimension of the image of tourist destinations in increasing competitive values in the global market since each country has its own characteristics (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006; Henderson, 2009; Lin, 2009; Pavlidis & Markantonatou, 2020). Since the mid-1990s, governments and tourism researchers have explicitly recognized the strong link between food and tourism. As a result of the increasing need and interest in food-related tourism, several studies have been conducted in the field of tourism research. These studies include; food safety and hygiene issues (Larsen et al., 2007), the role of local and regional food as a marketing tool (Boyne, Steven; Hall, Derek; Fiona, 2003) (du Rand & Heath, 2006) (Lee & Arcodia, 2011) (Okumus et al., 2007) the role of local cuisine in regional or national identity (Bessiere, 1998; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Renata Fox, 2007) factors in travelers' trips to enjoy local food on holidays (Ryu & Jang, 2006; Sparks, 2007), segmentation of the culinary tourism market (Ignatov & Smith, 2006; Sparks et al., 2003), and the importance of food service in tourist satisfaction (Nield et al., 2000).

Empirical studies of the role of local food in tourist experiences have been very limited. Cohen and Avieli (Cohen & Avieli, 2004) argue that there is almost no study of travelers' actual eating practices. In addition, there is a lack of literature examining how and why travelers experience certain types of food. There is no academic literature on the role of local food as a tourist attraction. Therefore, given the scarcity of research on local food consumption by tourists, the main purpose of this study is to explore the culinary role of processed duck meat as a Madurese local food through the tourist travel experience. Tourism research must involve senses such as sense of taste and sense of vision by enjoying the scenery.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Local Food and Cultural Identity**

Traditional food or local food is one of the identities of a community group that is very easy to find and recognize. Every region in Indonesia has culinary wealth which is the characteristic or identity of the region. Traditional food or local cuisine is a type of food that is closely related to a region and passed down from generation to generation as a part of tradition (Pieniak et al., 2009). Typical local foods in Indonesia have been around for a long time and still survive to date thus highly valued as a cultural heritage. The recipes have also been passed down from generation to generation and the cooking procedures remain on maintaining and using the old ways. Although there have been modifications or variations, the main ingredients and cooking procedures have not changed. Being part of a region, traditional foods are very easy to find and become tourism icons in the region. These traditional foods are Madurese duck meat rice, pempek from Palembang, Gudeg from Yogyakarta, and Selat Solo from Solo.

According to Guerrero (Guerrero et al., 2010), traditional or local food is a food product that is often consumed by a community group or served in certain celebrations and at a certain special time. This kind of food is usually passed down from generation to generation, made according to recipes for generations, made without or with a little engineering, and has certain characteristics that

distinguish it from other regional culinary (Guerrero et al., 2010). Traditional food can be categorized as a local identity because its existence is part of the culture of the community. The culture of the community includes certain procedures in processing its foodstuffs, its role in community culture and celebratory arrangements, and its recipes that are maintained for generations. Miller describes cultural identity as a condition in which every individual accepts and appreciates local differences and wisdom as well as recognizes the right to be different (Gearon et al., 2009). People who have a strong cultural identity are willing to accept cultural diversity and can make contact with other cultures without eliminating their own culture.

### **Duck Meat: Madura Culinary Tour**

One of the most sought-after culinary mainstays when visiting Bangkalan is Nasi Bebek (duck meat rice). It looks like duck meat rice becomes a culinary icon of the city at the western end of Madura Island. In Bangkalan, there are many kinds of restaurants and stalls whose main menus are duck meat rice ranging from black spice duck, spice fried duck, to cetar duck meat which is one of the favourite menus. When entering one of the restaurants in Bangkalan for the first time, visitors will be spoiled with the atmosphere of a place to eat in Madurese style. Starting from the building, ornaments installed in it, places to eat, drinking places, handwashing to clothing worn by employees display the impression of Madurese culture. For those who like to eat in a place with a beautiful natural atmosphere, this restaurant is perfect for you to try. The backyard of this restaurant is directly faced with a very beautiful green rice field. You can enjoy duck meat rice while sitting on the floor with a breeze of rice fields. Although the ingredients are the same as most other restaurants in Bangkalan, the way of processing and seasoning is different and unique such as Bebek Cetar which tastes sensationally spicy. Not only is the spicy taste so strong and delicious but also the savoury taste and concoction of Madurese spice ingredients that blend with the duck meat are. All processed duck meat tastes very soft especially when it is eaten with sambal (a hot sauce made from spices and chilli peppers) which is guaranteed to be addictive in a positive sense.



### **Materials and Methods**

To identify the role of local food in the culinary experience, interviews with informants were carried out. The informants are tourists who visited Madura and enjoy Madurese duck meat. Some previous research has found that travel blogs can be a useful source of data in travel research (Li & Wang,

2011). Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2008) suggested that travel blogs are useful for a more complete understanding of the travel experience from a traveler's point of view (Volo, 2010).

The specific research question that guides this research is about the culinary experience of tourism during a vacation in Madura. The research approach used is Husserlian phenomenology because it reveals the important qualities of the culinary experience during travel. Phenomenology provides insight into what people feel about certain phenomena (Ryan, 2000; Kanval et al., 2024). Through phenomenological research, insights are gained in the sense of experience from people's perspectives who have undergone that experience (Creswell, 1998). A review of phenomenological studies in tourism by Pernecky and Jamal (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010) invites tourism researchers to identify the phenomenological perspectives that they adopt as the specific methods used in the study.

Husserl, a German philosopher, described the process of phenomenology as a tool for better understanding the essence of phenomena. Husserl emphasized that to understand phenomena one must examine phenomena as they are. Therefore, one must temporarily save or isolate the assumptions, beliefs, and knowledge that have been possessed to be able to see the phenomenon as it is or to perform the bracketing process (Husserl, 2013). Husserl believed that the phenomenon resided in the consciousness of a person to whom the phenomenon manifests itself in its original form. Husserl states that every phenomenon always consists of subjective activities and objects as focus.

Subjective activities always lead to objects. Subjective activities interpret, give identity, and form the meaning of the object. Therefore, subjective activities and objects as the focus cannot be separated. Thus, to be able to understand the object one must return to the subject. In other words, phenomena can only be observed through people experiencing the phenomenon (Crotty, 1996; Spiegelberg, 1971).

Husserl developed his phenomenology into pure phenomenology in which objects from phenomenology are pure phenomena. According to Husserl, pure phenomena are phenomena that are free from the process of rationalization. Pure phenomena are genuine data that can be captured by human consciousness (Crotty, 1996). According to Husserl, phenomenological data is different from data in empirical sciences that are limited to physical data. According to Husserl, everything that can be captured by human consciousness deserves to be accepted and recognized as a phenomenon. In other words, pure phenomena include all things experienced by humans both physically and non-physically. Carpenter (Speziale et al., 2011) tried to provide structured steps that were easy to follow by using Husserl phenomenology and phenomenological elements according to Spiegelberg as a basis.

The steps are first to determine the phenomenon you want to study and the role of the researcher in the study. Determining the phenomena on which research is focused requires several considerations, including the effectiveness of Husserl's phenomenology to produce a better understanding of the phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Furthermore, the role of the researcher must also be clear. In accordance with Husserl's phenomenological philosophy, researchers are those who are able to transform data from participants into a pure and complete picture of phenomena. Second, the data collection process includes the process of selecting participants or samples and data collection methods. In general, phenomenology uses purposeful sampling techniques, in which anyone with experience of the phenomenon being studied is eligible to be a participant (Carpenter, 2010). A frequently used data collection technique is interviewing. Interviews can be done in the form of open or semi-structured interviews. The interview process is recorded and generally done more than once to complete or validate the necessary data. Third, data analysis is preceded by the process of transcription of interview results verbatim or as is. Each transcript is identified, checked for accuracy, and analyzed. There are various analytical procedures that are considered suitable and appropriate,

such as the Colaizzi method (Colaizzi et al., 1978) which includes reading transcripts over and over again to be able to blend with data, extracting specific statements, formulating the meaning of specific statements, formulating themes and theme clusters, formulating a complete description of phenomena and validating complete descriptions by providing descriptions to participants. Fourth, after completing the data analysis process, researchers conduct an in-depth literature study to find out the relationship and position of this research results to existing research results. The fifth is to maintain the truth of the research results. Like quantitative research, qualitative research also demands validity and reliability. Generally in qualitative research, validity and reliability are known as credibility, auditability, and fittingness (Guba Lincoln, Yvonna S., 1981; Morse, 1994; Streubert et al., 1995). Sixth, ethical considerations that must be considered include providing information about the nature of the research, voluntary participation, permission to record interviews, the confidentiality of participants' identities both on the recording, transcripts, or in full description.

The phenomenological approach which focuses on the study of life experiences has been used in tourism studies to gain a broader understanding of tourism experience (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010; Ritchie & Hudson, 2009). Research such as 'Visitor experiences at heritage sites: A phenomenological approach' (Masberg & Silverman, 2017) and 'Sacred site experiences: A phenomenological study' (Andriotis, 2009) has used phenomenology to better understand the tourist experience. This study is focused on the experience of eating local food during a trip.

To understand the experience of eating local food during the holidays, we need to better understand the traveler's perspective on this phenomenon. The phenomenological research described here is designed to uncover the meaning of the experience of eating Madurese local food while travelling, from adult travelers of all ages who travel. The type of phenomenology carried out in this study is Husserlian phenomenology because the purpose of this study is to reveal the important structure of an experience (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010). This study is built on the previous research by interviewing tourists and seeking to broaden our understanding of the experience of consuming local food during travelling. The entire literature cited above highlights various aspects of eating local food that can be explored in the context of tourism, including destination, factors that affect local food consumption, the process of consuming experience.

## **RESULTS**

This study focuses on the experience of eating local food during a trip in Madura and is analyzed through a phenomenological approach. Theoretical ideas are set aside during data collection and analysis to allow data to emerge from an informant's perspective. However, after the analysis data is completed, the previous research is explained with references to interpret the results.

### **Travel Experience**

The tourist experience is obtained when tourists use or receive a tourist service product. Pitana and Diarta argue that tourists do tourist activities to find an impressive journey from the visited tourist destinations. In other words, what is needed from the travel search is an impressive experience (Pitana & Diarta, 2009). The experience of tourism is a kind of accumulated psychological phenomenon as seen from a psychological perspective which follows expectations before travel, perceptions during travel, and memories after travel (Sheng & Chen, 2013). An understanding of experience in tourism leads to the subject of individuals or tourists. Walter et al (Walter et al., 2010) define consumer experience as an experience obtained directly or indirectly that includes service processes, companies, facilities and how a consumer interacts with the company and other consumers. This in turn creates cognitive responses, emotions, and consumer behaviour that leave consumers' memories of the experience during and after visiting a destination. The tourist experience occurs based on the process of activities experienced by themselves or other individuals.

## **Local Food as a Travel Experience**

The travel experience has been conceptualized in a variety of ways. Over time, the understanding of experience has shifted. Experiences used to be considered absolute truth, but now experiences are considered diverse and subject to various interpretations (Eugenia Wickens, 2002) (Falk, 2016) (Uriely, 2005) (Uriely et al., 2002). Many scientists note the lack of literature in this field of tourism (Beeho & Prentice, 1997; Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Quan & Wang, 2004; Ritchie & Hudson, 2009; Uriely, 2005). In addition, the work of Pine and Gilmore (Pine et al., 1999) has highlighted the importance of understanding the consumer experience during travel. Experience is now considered as the dominant economic offering, replacing goods and services. Pine and Gilmore (Pine et al., 1999) argue that there is increasing demand for unique and challenging experiences during travel. Ritchie and Hudson (Ritchie & Hudson, 2009) note that one of the main challenges facing tourism planners is the design of the tourism experience for tourists. Tourism providers should develop a clear understanding of the local food consumption experience that tourists are looking for.

There are six themes of culinary tourism experiences during tourist travel in Madura, i.e., as a means of finding something new, a means of sensory pleasure, a means of a culmination of culinary tourism experience, as a symbol of authenticity, as a symbol of prestige, and as a medium for cultural exploration.

### **As a Means of Finding Something New**

Tasting a variety of local food can be seen as a new experience because local dishes are different and unexpected compared to home meals in terms of ingredients, cooking methods and food presentation (Williams, 2004). Although most travelers need a level of familiarity to enjoy their travel experiences, they are excited about new experiences especially when travelling outside the area accompanied by new and exotic food tasting activities (Fields, 2003). Therefore, sampling unknown local food can be a fun way of looking for new things.

The Madurese processed duck meat is famously delicious. Culinary in Madura has always been the target of tourists who are on vacation in Madura. Cuisine with basic ingredients of duck meat has become a prima donna in Bangkalan Regency, Madura, East Java today. Various food stalls provide processed duck meat menus with a variety of typical processes such as fried duck meat, roasted duck meat to steamed duck meat.

Typically, tourists travelling to new places tend to have bolder eating behaviors and they are willing to engage in new eating experiences. Whether they enjoy food or not, some informants state that processed duck meat dishes provide gas-trophic pleasure because of their delicious taste and texture. It is considered a fun and exciting experience.

Bebek Sinjay is a typical food of Bangkalan. Not only this dish is special but is also phenomenal. The Bebek Sinjay food stall located on Jalan Raya Tanjung, Burneh Subdistrict, is always filled with no less than 1,000 buyers. The majority are from outside Bangkalan. The stall is famous among foodies. The mainstay menu is fried duck meat with young mango chilli sauce. Savoury fried duck meat in dried fry with mango chilli sauce and lalapan (a vegetable-based dish) as a compliment makes tourists crave to taste it again. The processed duck meat is tender, easy to cut from the bones, and does not smell fishy. The aroma of spices is very tempting. The stall has been open since the morning, and visitors have been queuing at the booking counter. Many people are willing to cross the Suramadu bridge and queue to taste the duck meat rice. Visitors from other regions arrive and do not hesitate to stop by the stall that is strategically located. Food lovers ranging from children to the elderly also visited the stall and enjoyed the duck meat menu available. (Informant 1)

### **Local Food as a Means of Sensory Pleasure**

Consumption of food as a sensory pleasure is supported by previous research (Kim et al., 2009; Sparks et al., 2003). In addition to its basic function as a fulfilment of physical needs, eating at tourist sites can be a fun multi-sensory experience. As emphasized by Kivela & Crofts, 2006, unlike other forms of travel activities, tasting local food on vacation is an art form that satisfies all of the five human senses – sight, listening, taste and smell. Whether or not trying Madurese typical food is the main destination of travel, the experience of eating typical Madurese local food gives rise to the sensory excitement for the tourists. Some informants talk about their pleasant experiences and how satisfied they are with the taste. They also provide a visual presentation of Madura's duck meat food menu.

### **Local Food as a Peak Experience when Travelling**

For tourists travelling to eat, trying local dishes can be an amazing experience. Gastronomic travelers make not only a must-visit list but also a must-eat list when they plan a vacation trip. They tend to taste new and authentic foods. Local dishes are listed as one of the most important tourist activities. Therefore, the dining experience at a Buddhist restaurant can be interpreted as the 'peak tourist' experience described by Quan and Wang (Quan & Wang, 2004).

When I read the article, I immediately wanted and promised that my trip to Madura would not be perfect without a duck culinary tour visit. Now I've eaten this good food and it's delicious. This is truly one of the most delicious meals I've ever had. (Informant 2)

For some informants, tasting local food while travelling in Madura is one of the main travel destinations. Enjoying the Madurese duck food menu becomes an impressive part of the vacation experience. Madurese local food plays a key role in the formation of impressions for tourists who visit Madura. Some informants displayed photographs taken at a Madurese duck food menu restaurant to show their culinary activities as an impressive experience.

### **Local Food as a Symbol of Travel Authenticity**

Finding a genuine taste of local food is considered the main motivation in the tourist experience (Turner, C., 1988). One of the most important reasons for tourists to taste local food is the desire to prove the authenticity of the culinary tourism experience. One way to prove that someone ever visited a tourist destination is to try its typical culinary and this is done by tourists who come to Madura. Some informants assume that trying local food is an experience. As an example, a female informant described interacting with the locals as an act that made her culinary experience feel even more authentic.

I came here to try the famous Madura duck culinary; I wondered how it tasted, how it was presented and why it was so famous. I'm waiting for the sambal (a hot sauce made from spices and chilli peppers) menu while observing some of the visitors and the surrounding community who are speaking the local language here; I don't know what it means, but I feel there is a new experience that I cannot explain; it is really a long journey but paid off with this culinary. Awesome. (Informant 5)

### **Local Food as a Symbol of Prestige**

Local delicacies are a symbol of social status and prestige. Alcoholic drinks like champagne and caviar are strong identity markers for the upper social class group. The study of the culinary experience of Chinese tourists in Australia found that some travelers tend to assert their status by eating gourmet cuisine from tourist destinations and seek prestige by exploring menus at tourist sites (Chang et al., 2010). Fields also explained that eating in a fancy restaurant could be considered as a means of showing prestige. Food plays a role as a social symbol of social status (Fields, 2003).

### Local Food as a Medium for Cultural Exploration

Tasting local food is an important aspect in understanding a new culture because food is mixed in the culture and connected to the lifestyle of its people. The food people eat become a symbol of who they are (Robin Fox, 2003). Some researchers identify cultural differences through the way food is prepared, cooked, served and eaten. Food is an important medium as an expression of culture (Chang et al., 2010; du Rand & Heath, 2006). Tourists acquire new culinary knowledge, new ingredients, and different cooking methods while travelling in other regions (Kim et al., 2009).

“We had lunch at a traditional restaurant that served duck meat food, although this restaurant is not very famous, it tastes fantastic and we eat sitting on the floor. The food is very delicious, different from anything I’ve found anywhere else.” (Informant 4)

### CONCLUSION

This study attempts to explore the role of duck meat menus as local Madurese food by understanding how tourists perceive and evaluate their dining experiences during tours in Madura. The results of the analysis indicate that the local food of the duck meat menu plays a variety of roles in travel. The main roles identified in this study are the means of seeking novelty, the means of finding sensory pleasure, as the pinnacle of the travel experience, a symbol of authenticity, prestige symbol and medium for cultural exploration. It was found that the core values of each region’s local food were different. The culinary experience gives travelers a unique and new travel experience. The results of this study also showed that the duck meat menu as local Madurese food became a tourist attraction through a unique culinary experience.

### Authors’ Contributions

NS conceived the idea, designed the project and wrote the manuscript. FRA participated in the design of the study and helped in writing the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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