

Storytelling: Developing stories and experiences more on food tourism

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Abstract: Food tourism has become one of the main attractions in the era of globalization, especially in Indonesia, with the growth of the food tourism sector continuing to develop. However, ordinary food tourism experiences are no longer sufficient to captivate tourists who are increasingly seeking deep and memorable experiences. Therefore, this research aims to develop storytelling scripts in culinary tourism so that tourists can gain a deeper and more memorable understanding of local gastronomy. In this context, the study focuses on the development of storytelling for food tourism in Kemiriombo, Kulon Progo. The research method used was a qualitative approach with data collection techniques such as participatory observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and literature studies. The research results in a storytelling script that contains the connections between food and the culture and traditions of the Kemiriombo community, raw materials, processing methods, nutritional content, and the differences between traditional food in Kemiriombo and similar foods in other regions. This is intended so that when visitors participate in food tourism activities in Kemiriombo, they not only experience tasting traditional food but also gain knowledge about the connections between the cuisine and the traditions and cultures that develop in the community, the differences between traditional Kemiriombo food and similar foods in other areas, and also gain additional experiences through sourcing raw materials and processing the food.

Keywords: Food Tourism, Gastronomy, Storytelling, Traditional Food

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Introduction

In this era of globalization, food tourism has become one of the main attractions for tourists. Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) shows that the food tourism sector is growing in Indonesia, with a growing number of tourists seeking authentic local gastronomic experiences (BPS, 2023). According to a BPS survey in 2023, food tourism has accounted for more than 30 % of total tourism revenue in Indonesia, reflecting the importance of food tourism's contribution to the local and national economy (BPS, 2023). This is in line with the Sustainable Goals (SDGs) on point 8, namely decent work and economic growth.

The influence of globalization also plays an important role in the growth of the food tourism sector. With easier access to information and travel, tourists have more opportunities to explore and enjoy a variety of cuisines from different parts of the world (UNWTO, 2020). This phenomenon creates a higher demand for unique culinary experiences offered by destinations (Kovalenko et al., 2023). However, despite its important economic contribution and growing demand, a mediocre food tourism experience is no longer sufficient for tourists who are increasingly looking for immersive and memorable experiences (BPS, 2023). Amidst the growing competition in the tourism industry, innovation is needed that goes beyond offering delicious dishes. Storytelling has been proven to be an effective tool to "wrap" or promote a tourist destination (Solomon et al., 2022). A story can engage an audience and promise tourists' emotional experiences, and it can become a differentiator of a destination (VisitScotland, 2022).

Therefore, this research aims to develop storytelling in food tourism so that tourists get more experience about local gastronomy, not only limited to enjoying the food.

The main problem that drives this research is lack of use of storytelling in the promotion and experiences of food tourism in many destinations, including Kemiriombo, Kulon Progo. This causes the rich and unique potential of local gastronomy to be poorly conveyed to tourists. This research will focus on developing storytelling specific to food tourism, with an emphasis on enriching tourists' experiences of aspects of culture, history, and local values related to food tourism. There are a few studies that specifically explore the potential of storytelling in the context of food tourism, especially in the Kemiriombo.

This research is expected to contribute to the development of local tourism in Kemiriombo and its surroundings, as well as inspire other destinations to utilize storytelling in their promotions and food tourism experiences. More broadly, this research can also serve as a model for the development of storytelling in the context of tourism in Indonesia, which can help improve tourism attractiveness and the welfare of local communities. The main objective of this research is to develop storytelling in food tourism in Kemiriombo, Kulon Progo, with the aim that tourists get a more in-depth and memorable experience of local gastronomy. Specifically, the objectives of this research include: (1) Identify potential stories and experiences that can be integrated in the promotion and experience of food tourism in Kemiriombo; (2) Develop and implement storytelling strategies that are in line with Kemiriombo's cultural characteristics, history, and local values.

Literature Review

Authentic food experiences have emerged as a vital element in shaping how destinations are perceived, influencing tourist satisfaction and fostering loyalty. For example, research by Talita et al. (2024) revealed that the image of a culinary destination can indirectly affect tourists' intentions to visit, highlighting the significant impact that food-related perceptions can have on future travel decisions. Additionally, Setiawan et al. (2023) established a clear link between tourists' perceptions and their loyalty to a destination, further emphasizing the strategic importance of culinary experiences in promoting repeat visits.

At the heart of these food-related experiences lies the concept of authenticity. A study by Kim and Jamal (2017) has highlighted how crucial authenticity is in the selection of destinations and in enhancing tourist satisfaction, particularly within the realm of cultural tourism. More specifically, research by Fu (2019) has provided deeper insights into how tourists perceive authenticity, especially in relation to ethnic minority cultures and traditional food experiences, revealing the emotional and cultural significance that food encounters can hold.

Simultaneously, an increasing number of studies are recognizing the power of storytelling in enriching tourism experiences. Garcês (2024) demonstrated that authentic local storytelling can enhance tourists' experience, support local economies, cultural preservation, cultural identity, stimulate place attachment, and advance destination brand. These findings suggest that the coincidence between authenticity and storytelling has the potential to intensify the experience of tourists and local communities, thus stimulating tourism development.

Despite these valuable contributions, a notable gap exists at the intersection of storytelling and food tourism. While Smith (2001) explored the use of narratives in travel experiences broadly, his study did not specifically address how storytelling can be applied within the context of food tourism. Likewise, Quezada-Sarmiento & Chango-cañaveral (2025) examined the role of local dishes in reinforcing cultural identity, but did not focus directly on food storytelling. Although these studies are insightful, they tend to treat the food as part of cultural tourism rather than as a form of food tourism itself that can give a more specific experience of food. Consequently, the potential of storytelling as a means to enhance food tourism experiences—particularly regarding authenticity and cultural interpretation—remains largely unexplored.

In the field of tourism marketing, storytelling has also been recognized as a powerful strategic tool. Moscardo (2020) further elaborated on how stories influence tourists' perceptions and emotional engagement across various aspects of the tourism experience. However, even within this body of research, the specific application of narrative strategies to food tourism has not received sufficient academic attention.

To address these gaps, this study aims to advance the literature by developing and investigating a storytelling framework specifically tailored to food tourism, with a focus on the rural setting of Kemiriombo, Kulon Progo. By integrating participatory observations, local narratives, and tourists' experiential accounts, this research seeks to create a culturally rich and immersive food tourism experience through storytelling. Additionally, this study contributes to the relatively sparse research on food tourism in rural areas, which are often overshadowed by urban or highly commercialized destinations.

In doing so, this research aspires to make both conceptual and practical contributions: (1) by fostering a context-specific understanding of storytelling in food tourism, and (2) by providing insights for tourism stakeholders on how to enhance destination appeal through culturally embedded narratives. This dual focus responds to the growing demand for innovative and locally rooted approaches in tourism development and experience design.

Methodology

This research method used a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through direct observation and in-depth interviews. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the local cultural context associated with food tourism. The qualitative approach was particularly effective in heritage tourism research, as it allowed a deep interpretation of local narratives and local community understanding (Jennings, 2010). Direct observation techniques allowed researchers to be directly involved in and witness food tourism activities, rituals, and the preparation process in Kemiriombo.

Purposive sampling is employed to select research participants who have direct relevance to the study's objectives. This includes local leaders and local community members involved in tourism activities, local food production, and consumption. The sampling aimed for diversity in participant background to capture a wide range of perspectives. Through in-depth interviews, community members' perspectives on food heritage, storytelling, and their connection to rituals and tourism. Among these, the pursuit of authenticity in food experiences was explored. This approach enriched the understanding of the complex interplay between food and culture. Data saturation was reached when no new themes emerged during interviews.

The data analysis process followed thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After transcribing the interview and observation data, initial codes were generated inductively and grouped into broader categories. Themes were then refined and triangulated with insights from observation of community rituals and activities related to heritage foods. This triangulation escalated credibility and trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Results and Discussions

Based on the results of observations and interviews, there are 11 (eleven) traditional foods that have been identified as Kemiriombo's food heritage. Before diving into the storytelling narratives for the 11 traditional foods, there is a crucial first step: exploring the rich stories hidden within the community's culinary practices. This foundational phase was all about ensuring that the storytelling would be rooted in the authentic knowledge and experiences of the people who live there. To do this, the researchers used a qualitative approach, conducting heartfelt interviews with both the elders and the younger members of the community. These conversations were invaluable, allowing us to capture the wisdom passed down through generations, as well as the vibrant memories tied to traditional foods. It shows that certain dishes are woven into the fabric of daily life, seasonal changes, rituals, and community celebrations.

This research also looked at food through an agro-culinary lens, tracing the entire journey of each dish from the fields where ingredients and spices are grown, to the kitchens where the foods are prepared, and finally to the table where the foods are served. This exploration helped to create a narrative that highlights the deep connections between the land, the hard work of the people, and the flavors that define a culture. The study also emphasizes the importance of tourist participation in the food preparation process to enrich the experiential aspect of storytelling about food.

Moreover, this research examined how the community views and practices values like sustainability, health, and well-being through their food traditions. The attention is going to how local people source the ingredients in eco-friendly ways, the nutritional benefits of the traditional dishes, and how these choices contribute to the understanding of a healthy lifestyle of local people. All of these insights laid the groundwork for the storytelling scripts. The goal is to do more than just share recipes and cooking techniques, but to immerse the tourist in the deeper meanings behind Kemiriombo's food heritage—its philosophical, environmental, and cultural significance. By starting with this thorough identification phase, the storytelling model would be rich in experience and meaningful in its connection to sustainable and heritage-based tourism. The 11 traditional foods that are included in the storytelling are *Pelas*, *Sego Brongsong*, *Sego Wiwit*, *Sambal Gepleng*, *Inkung*, *Legondo*, *Nasi Ambeng*, *Geblek*, *Klemet*, *Jenang Jagung*, and *Dawet Temu Ireng*.

Pelas

One of the traditional culinary from Kulon Progo that can be found in Kemiriombo is *pelas*, a traditional food made from fish or wasps and given grated young coconut steamed using banana leaves. In general, the taste of *pelas* tends to be savory and slightly sweet to balance the taste because it is given a little sugar to complement the taste. But interestingly, there is no sweetness in *pelas* in Kemiriombo because the cooking process does not use sugar at all, so the taste that emerges is a savory blend of salt and coconut, coupled with the aroma of bay leaves and steamed banana leaves. *Pelas* generally does not have a spicy taste, but if you want a spicy taste, it can be added with Javanese cayenne pepper during the steaming process.

Pelas is one of the daily meals commonly consumed by residents, usually served with rice as a side dish. But *pelas* is also a mandatory dish during the *baritan* and *wiwitan* ceremony. The *baritan* ceremony is an annual ceremony held in order to express gratitude to the Almighty for the harvest. This traditional ritual is carried out together by the Kemiriombo community in the field in the hamlet to accommodate many residents. Meanwhile, *wiwitan* is a ritual held to begin the harvest and is an expression of gratitude for it. *Wiwitan* is carried out individually by each farmer, and in one year, more than two *wiwitan* can be held by the same family, depending on how many times they can harvest in one year. Uniquely, this ritual is held in rice fields.

The Kemiriombo community usually uses the main raw material in the form of small freshwater fish obtained from the nearest river. This is motivated by the geographical condition of Kemiriombo, which is passed by a river, so that it is easy to find freshwater fish. The process of finding fish and shrimp in the river is called "parak" by the people of Kemiriombo. Types of *pelas* found in Kemiriombo are shrimp *pelas* and wasp *pelas*. However, wasp *pelas* is more popular as wasp nests are easily found in Kemiriombo.

The process of making *pelas* is not too difficult; it requires grated coconut, wasps or fish or shrimp, salt, garlic, shallots, and seasonings. At the initial stage, it is necessary to prepare the grated coconut as well as the mashed garlic and shallots. After that, add asp, fish, or shrimp that have been cleaned. The next step is stirring all ingredients before wrapping them in banana leaves along with bay leaves, and then steaming until cooked, with an indication of a change in color on the banana leaves to yellowish green. The nutritional content listed in *Pelas is also quite a lot because it is taken from natural ingredients such as wasp, which has protein content and is good for health*, such as treating mouth ulcers and fever. *Pelas* should be consumed in balance because consuming excessive high protein may cause allergies or hives.

Sego Brongsong

Sego brongsong is processed rice cooked by putting rice into young coconut leaves (*janur*) and then boiled, where the end result is similar to the *ketupat* that we know as an Eid al-Fitr dish. The history of *sego brongsong* was originally when people in ancient times performed *wiwitan* (*miwiti*/holding *wiwitan*) and *baritan* ceremonies, which always served *sego brongsong* at each event. This dish was made for that ceremony with the aim that God always gives safety to livestock, keeps them away from crop failure, brings smooth sustenance, and, of course, to ward off disaster.

Due to the way it is boiled, *sego brongsong* can only last one day and one night at most. For Kemiriombo village itself, *sego brongsong* has various forms, including the cone shape and the most commonly used *kupat* shape. Making this dish is not too difficult; it just requires patience and accuracy. The first step in cooking *sego brongsong* is to wash the rice thoroughly and then drain it. After that, prepare *janur*, which has been knitted into a rhombus-shaped bag, which will then be filled with washed rice, then boil it in boiling water for 2-3 hours for maximum results. There are no rules in consuming *sego brongsong*, but there is a special way of serving it during the *baritan* event, namely by splitting it in half and then taking it by spooning. In addition, at the *wiwitan* ceremony, *sego brongsong* is also served with chicken *ingkung* and native chicken eggs as mandatory side dishes in a series of dishes. *Sego brongsong* is believed to contain high carbohydrates and low fat, because the processing is only boiled.

Sego Wiwit

The community of Kemiriombo Tourism Village has a traditional food that is part of a traditional event in Kemiriombo called *kenduri* or *slametan* tradition, or earth alms for the harvest done by farmers. The name *sego wiwit* is taken from the Javanese language "sego," which means rice, and "wiwit," which comes from the word *wiwitan*, which means the beginning; therefore, *sego wiwit* is the beginning of rice to welcome the beginning of the harvest period. In the *Wiwitan ritual*, there is rice called *tumpeng*, which is shaped like a cone or mountain, where the shape of *tumpeng* has a philosophy of gratitude to God Almighty.

In this case, the philosophy also has the hope that the increasing quality of human life starts from God and will return to God. The components contained in *sego wiwit* are *tumpeng* rice, *sego brongsong*, which is added with side dishes such as sambel gepeng, gubahan, pethek fish/salted fish, or *ingkung*. The components of the *sego wiwit* dish are rich in carbohydrates, protein, and fiber, which are good for the body.

When tasting *sego wiwit*, you will feel a variety of flavors in each component in it, such as savory and sweet flavors in rice, gubahan (blanched vegetable with grated coconut sambal), and *ingkung*, salty flavors that come from salted fish, and also spicy from *sambal gepleng*. Then the way to serve *sego wiwit* in a celebration event is by cutting the top rice on the *tumpeng*, then giving various condiments that have been prepared then the community will leave the rice in the rice field. Because *sego wiwit* is part of *wiwitan*, which means the beginning of the harvest period, *sego wiwit* can only be served during the celebration. To enjoy the *sego wiwit* dish, you eat the rice and side dishes on banana leaves or teak leaves made into *pincuk*, leaves that are folded so that they resemble a cone on one side. It will be more enjoyable if you enjoy this *sego wiwit* while enjoying the view of rice fields and rivers.

Sambal Gepleng

Yogyakarta people love spicy food called *sambal*, a traditional food from Kemiriombo that is part of *sego wiwit* in traditional celebrations called "sambel gepleng". The name "gepleng" itself is derived from *sregep geleng-geleng*, which means a lot of dhikrs to Allah. This food is one of the relics of the ancestors who were always present at the *wiwitan* celebration as a form of gratitude to God for the crops. *Sambal gepleng* is made from corn, soybeans, or peanuts that are fried first, then pounded with Javanese chili, curly chili, sugar, salt, aromatic ginger, garlic, lime leaves, and served together with petek fish or salted fish.

How to enjoy it is dipping *sego brongsong* in *sambal gepleng*. After tasting *sambal gepleng*, you will feel a distinctive savory and spicy flavor with a unique texture and spoil your tongue. Although *sambal gepleng* is identical to the *wiwitan* ritual, people can taste this specialty food as a daily food that can be consumed without waiting for ritual time.

Ingkung

Traditional rituals in Kemiriombo are not only *wiwitan* but also the wedding ceremony, the baby birth ceremony, the death ceremony, and the ritual to clean the village. In those rituals, *ingkung* is a mandatory complementary menu. *Ingkung* is made from the Javanese rooster, which is characterized by the fact that not any chicken can be cooked into *ingkung*. Why is it called

ayam ingkung? The word "ingkung" comes from the word *jinakung* in ancient Javanese, which means to protect, and *manekung*, which means to pray. How to cook *ingkung* is by cleaning the chicken first, then tying it according to the rules, namely with the wings and legs facing forward, then tying it using a rope made of bamboo. The next cooking process is to boil the chicken that has been tied into a pot containing boiled water that has been given spices such as coconut milk, bay leaves, galangal, lemongrass, lime leaves, salt, coconut sugar, chicken broth, and granulated sugar, and add coconut milk as a savory flavor enhancer, giving a thick texture to the chicken. Usually, *ingkung* is served with banana leaves as a container.

In the *Wiwitan* ceremony, there is a special procedure for cutting *ingkung*. The part of the *ingkung* that is cut is the head first, then the upper wings, and lower thighs, while the innards or entrails will be left in the rice fields to be blessed. After the *wiwitan* ritual, the rope used to tie the *ingkung* is used to tie a tree, which has the aim that the tree can grow thick, fertile, and bear a lot of fruit. The most unique and interesting way to taste *ingkung* is in wedding celebrations, where *ingkung* is used as an offering. At the *kuda lumping* (traditional Javanese dance, in which the dancers ride horses made from woven bamboo), people can enjoy *ingkung* after the dance is over. More than that, behind the peculiarity and uniqueness of the cooking and serving process, *ingkung* contains a good source of protein, vitamins, and iron for the body.

Legondo

One of the specialties that is currently difficult to find is *legondo*. *Legondo* is a specialty food made from sticky rice and wrapped in banana leaves and tied in the middle. There is no special rule or event to enjoy *legondo* because the food is like a traditional snack in general. The name *legondo* comes from the word *leganing kandha*, which is Javanese and means to launch a conversation. This food is often used as a treat during Eid al-Fitr or if there are visits from relatives. By serving *legondo*, the chat between relatives becomes more pleasant and comfortable. That is the meaning of *leganing kandha*.

Legondo comes from sticky rice and has a savory taste. The process of cooking *legondo* starts with soaking glutinous rice for at least 1 hour and then washing the soaked glutinous rice. After that, glutinous rice, grated coconut, and salt are mixed and stirred well, then wrapped in banana leaves with previously added banana pieces and then tied using a bamboo rope. Next, the glutinous rice mixture in banana leaves is put into boiling water until cooked. The cooking duration is approximately 2 to 3 hours. *Legondo* can be served when it has cooled down. The way to consume this specialty food is quite easy by untying the leaves and then eating it immediately. *Legondo* contains nutrients such as carbohydrates, protein, potassium, and sodium that are good for the body.

Nasi Ambeng

Another interesting specialty is *nasi ambeng* or also known as *nasi tumpeng tumpul*, a blunt cone-shaped rice. The food is served at a celebration event as a sign of gratitude. The presentation of *nasi ambeng* also has a philosophy, as a request that all parties who celebrate are given sustenance.

How to cook the food is by cooking rice in general, then after the rice is cooked, it is arranged and added with various side dishes as desired, such as fish, vegetables, tofu, and others. The unique characteristic of *nasi ambeng* is the way it is usually served on a banana leaf and then surrounded by various side dishes, depending on the event being held. There is no special etiquette for enjoying *nasi ambeng*. *Nasi ambeng* is usually eaten in groups of four to five adults by hand, without spoons and forks, which adds to the enjoyment of the dish.

Geblek

The way to make *geblek* is very easy; the cassava that has been harvested is then peeled. The peeled cassava is then cleaned and grated. After that, the cassava is squeezed and precipitated until the starch is separated from the water. The water is then discarded. Afterwards, cassava starch is mixed with flour and then kneaded with salt and crushed garlic. Thereafter, the

dough is shaped into a small number 8, and the *geblek* is ready to be fried. The process creates a savory and chewy flavor characterizing *geblek*.

Geblek is commonly consumed by the people of Kulon Progo. *Geblek* is also often found in daily activities. *Geblek* is often served at events or community meetings, of course, equipped with *tempe bacem*, *tempeh* with sweet soy sauce. Not only with interesting flavors, but *geblek* has nutritional content such as carbohydrates, 0.40 grams of protein, 3.60 grams of dietary fiber, 35 mg of calcium, 13 mg of phosphorus, 353 mg of sodium, and 125 mg of potassium, which are good for the body.

Klemet

Traditional dishes not only serve savory dishes, but there are also traditional cakes that have a sweet taste with a variety of textures and flavors. Nowadays, traditional cakes can be found in traditional markets, so people often refer to them as market snacks. One of the traditional cakes that is quite difficult to find is *klemet*. *Klemet* is a sweet dish originating from Yogyakarta, made from cassava and has a sweet and savory taste obtained from coconut sugar, which is then mixed with grated young coconut.

Klemet is a hereditary dish that is usually served as a casual snack or a hunger delay dish. It is said to be a hunger-delay dish because the basic ingredient for making *klemet* is cassava, which can fill you up for a moment. The ingredients needed to make *klemet* are simple ingredients that are easily found, namely cassava, coconut sugar, grated young coconut, salt, sugar, and banana leaves to wrap the dough. The steps for making it are quite easy. First, grate the cassava that is not too old until it becomes a smooth dough. Then add the water of the grated young coconut that has been squeezed, coconut sugar, salt, and sugar, then stir until smooth. After that, pour the dough into banana leaves, cover, and steam until the dough feels chewier.

One serving of *klemet* usually has a small amount of dough, so it is common for people to eat two to three servings if they want to be full enough. *Klemet* can also be enjoyed with tea or coffee while relaxing with family. *Klemet* is believed to contain daily nutrients such as carbohydrates, potassium, sodium, and calcium that are good for children's development. The sweetener used in *klemet* is also healthier for the long term because, in the manufacturing process, it uses palm sugar, as the vitamin content in palm sugar is higher than of granulated sugar or cane sugar. The raw materials and method of making *klemet* are also very healthy and do not contain preservatives or artificial colors, so it is very suitable for daily consumption by all ages.

Jenang Jagung

Processed corn is very familiar to the people of Indonesia, especially on the island of Java. This is based on the fact that many agricultural lands are planted with corn as their annual staple crop. Yogyakarta is one of the areas where quite a lot of people grow corn to be processed into dishes that can be used as daily dishes or traditional event dishes. One of the dishes that can be used as a daily dish and made from corn is *jenang jagung*.

Jenang jagung, which means corn porridge, is a dish made from boiled corn, mashed corn, corn flour, and so on. Kemiriombo village, located in the Samigaluh sub-district of Kulon Progo, also has a variety of processed corn. This corn is obtained from their fields, which are then processed into daily dishes, and can often be raised in other villages. These preparations are favored by various groups there because they can fill up and taste delicious; no wonder that Kemiriombo village has a variety of processed corn ranging from heavy meals to snacks. These various processed corns are *gudir*, *bongkel*, *jenang jagung*, and *jadah jagung*.

Gudir is a corn porridge whose process is by mashing boiled corn until smooth. After the corn becomes smooth, the *gudir* can be eaten directly or steamed first for a more delicious taste. The taste of this processed *gudir* is savory and sweet, which is obtained from the corn of local farmers. In the past, *gudir* was used as a staple food to replace rice, as it was considered to be more economical.

Bongkel, a corn porridge or *gudir*, is served by adding a traditional dish as a topping. Vegetable soups in Javanese are commonly referred to as *jangan*, such as *jangan gori* (jackfruit

soup dish), *jangan lombok* (chili soup dish), *jangan lodeh*, and others. Vegetable soups that are usually served with *bongkel* are vegetables made from coconut milk, which, according to the people of Kemiriombo, can be used as a flavor balancer. It is unfortunate that *bongkel* is currently less popular because people are more interested in consuming rice porridge, which is considered more delicious and has a taste that is familiar to all circles.

Jenang Jagung (sweet corn porridge), in addition to savory corn porridge, there is sweet processed corn porridge, commonly referred to as *jenang jagung*. *Jenang jagung* is made from corn flour that is cooked using boiled water. Then it must always be stirred until cooked, which is useful so that *jenang jagung* does not clot and the texture is not too liquid. In addition to always stirring, *jenang jagung* is also made over low heat with coconut sugar and pandan leaves to make it more fragrant. Despite the use of palm sugar, the flavor of *jenang jagung* is not too sweet because it does not use excess palm sugar, so it is safe for consumption by toddlers and the elderly.

Jadah jagung, besides being served directly, *jenang jagung* can also be processed into *jadah jagung*. *Jadah jagung* itself is steamed sweet corn porridge using banana leaves. The advantage of *jadah jagung* is that it lasts longer, and it is also more attractive and efficient when served to guests. In its presentation, *jadah jagung* is served with slices of about 2-3 cm to invited guests for both formal and informal events.

The content contained in corn is carbohydrates, which are used as a substitute for rice. Corn is high in fiber, low in fat, vitamins, and minerals that are good for bone and tooth growth. In addition, corn can also reduce cholesterol and maintain eye health.

Dawet Temu Ireng

As an area that has natural potential in *herbal* plants, Kemiriombo village presents a variety of *herbal* dishes. Not necessarily selling processed *herbal* medicine, Kemiriombo village is also able to innovate by presenting processed *herbal* medicine into a refreshing drink, namely *dawet temu ireng*. *Temu ireng* is a medicinal plant also known by the scientific name *Curcuma aeruginosa*. This plant is included in the Zingiberaceae family, which is still closely related to plants such as turmeric (*Curcuma longa*). The characteristic of *temu ireng* is that it has dark bluish or blackish roots, has a taste that tends to be bitter, and for the part taken for processing *dawet temu ireng*, namely the essence, which is extracted from the *temu ireng* root itself.

The ingredients used besides *temu ireng* essence are coconut milk that has been cooked with boiled water, brown sugar or commonly called brown sugar syrup, which has been given jackfruit, and salt. To make it, prepare water, which is then boiled until it is cooked. If the water is fully cooked, then add *temu ireng* essence and stir until it thickens using low heat. If the essence stew has thickened, prepare a container filled with cold water, which will be used to maintain the texture of the *dawet*. Before putting it in ice water, prepare a mold and pour the starch juice stew into the mold. Next, drain the molded essence stew, also known as *dawet*, into a separate place. For the coconut milk, we can add salt to make it taste savory and more delicious when served.

To serve it is very easy and practical, and can be adjusted to the level of sweetness according to taste. First, prepare a glass or bowl, then add about one big spoon of *dawet temu ireng*, followed by one big spoon of cooked coconut milk and ½ big spoon of brown sugar syrup. *Dawet temu ireng* can also be given ice cubes if you want a colder and more refreshing sensation.

Apart from the sweet and delicious taste, *dawet temu ireng* also has various health benefits. This plant with the botanical name *Curcuma aeruginosa* has benefits, including increasing appetite, curing skin diseases, fertilizing the womb, overcoming menstrual pain, increasing blood, and others. But keep in mind that consuming *temu ireng* in large quantities and continuously is still not recommended. This is because the toxic substances contained in *temu ireng* can be absorbed by the liver, which can cause narrowing of the lumen of the blood vessels.

The storytelling script contains not only food descriptions but also stories that enrich tourists' culinary experience. Some important points highlighted in the research are:

1. Food linkages with similar cultures and traditions. In the storytelling script compiled, it was found that Kemiriombo's traditional food has a close relationship with the traditions of the

local community. Each dish contains values rooted in the habits and customs of the community that have developed over generations. For example, *sego wiwit* is served during the *wiwitan* ritual, a ritual to start the harvest.

2. Raw materials and processing. The research also emphasizes the importance of the local raw materials used in making traditional food. The Kemiriombo community relies on natural ingredients obtained from the surrounding environment. The food processing also maintains traditional methods passed down by previous generations, such as the use of traditional kitchen tools and unique cooking techniques.
3. Nutritional content and differences with similar foods. The storytelling script also includes information about the nutritional content contained in the traditional food. Each food in Kemiriombo has nutritional value that is beneficial for health, and some of them are different from similar foods in other regions due to variations in raw materials and processing methods. This makes it a special attraction for tourists who are looking for a culinary experience that is not only delicious but also healthy.

Storytelling in culinary tourism is an approach that can provide a richer experience for tourists. Not only limited to enjoying food, but tourists are also involved in a narrative that brings them closer to local culture and traditions. In the context of Kemiriombo, storytelling emphasizes the historical, cultural, and philosophical values behind each food, thus creating a deep and memorable impression for tourists.

This research shows that a culinary experience supported by a strong narrative can create greater appeal than relying solely on the quality of the food taste. Modern travelers tend to seek holistic experiences, where they can learn the stories behind the food and the culture of the local community. Storytelling also has a positive impact on the empowerment of the Kemiriombo community. Through the narratives built, local people can share their knowledge of cuisine and culture with tourists. In addition, the involvement of local residents in food tourism activities helps boost the village's economy through the visits of tourists who are increasingly interested in the experiences presented.

Based on the results above, there are some components that develop a food storytelling:

1. Intergenerational stories: focus on bringing together voices from all generations—especially the elders, youth, and local cooks. Before crafting storytelling narratives, it was crucial to engage with the local community to uncover the cultural meanings and personal memories tied to traditional foods. Intergenerational interviews revealed that dishes like *pelas* and *sego wiwit* are more than just meals; they hold symbolic significance in community rituals such as *baritan* (a harvest gratitude ritual) and *wiwitan* (a pre-harvest celebration). This phase aligns with previous research (Kim & Jamal, 2007; Wang & Chen, 2018), which emphasizes that authentic experiences are shaped by the cultural context of food, rather than merely the act of consuming traditional dishes. The knowledge shared by both elders and youth highlighted strong processes of cultural transmission, showcasing how local food knowledge is conveyed through oral traditions, rituals, and performances. Sharing oral histories, food memories, and the wisdom passed down through the years can create narratives that celebrate the continuity of culinary traditions while also showing how they adapt over time.
2. Engaging the sense: to create unforgettable experiences, storytelling should engage all the senses—taste, smell, touch, sound, and sight—while inviting visitors to participate hands-on. Activities like harvesting ingredients, preparing food, and cooking together also highlight the experiential potential for tourism. The process of making *sego brongsong* or *sego wiwit* is highly participatory and closely tied to seasonal cycles, emphasizing the significance of time, place, and tradition in food storytelling. Our research suggests that involving tourists in these preparation activities—such as weaving *janur* for *sego brongsong* or shaping *tumpeng* rice cones—can transform their experience from passive consumption to active cultural participation, a fundamental principle in experiential tourism design (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).
3. Spatial story: involves the visitors on a physical journey (from the field to the kitchen to the dining table). By structuring narratives this way, it can enhance the coherence of the experience and strengthen the connection between the place and the story. By adopting an agro-culinary perspective, the study traced the entire food production cycle—from the

cultivation and harvesting of ingredients to cooking practices and final consumption. For instance, the preparation of pelias, made from freshwater fish or wasps caught through the traditional practice of parak (fishing in rivers), connects culinary processes with local ecological knowledge and sustainable sourcing. This supports Moscardo's (2020) assertion that place-based stories rooted in the landscape can enhance tourists' appreciation of both the environment and culture.

4. Local legend: involve the local myths, folktales, and the symbolic meanings behind ingredients and cooking practices. These narratives add emotional and philosophical depth, allowing food to be seen not just as nourishment but as a form of cultural expression.
5. Value-driven: the travelers often seek experiences that are ethically and environmentally responsible. By highlighting community values—like sustainability, social equity, and health—the storytelling can resonate with these expectations. Beyond flavor and ritual, participants highlighted the health and ecological advantages of traditional foods. Ingredients are sourced locally with minimal environmental impact, and the dishes are primarily plant-based or include sustainable protein sources like freshwater fish and insects. This reflects a circular, low-waste food system that aligns with modern sustainable tourism principles.
6. Collaborative process: the authenticity shines through when we involve local storytellers, home cooks, youth, academics, and cultural enthusiasts in the storytelling process. This collaborative approach ensures that the community has ownership over the narratives, reducing the risk of misrepresentation and fostering local pride.



Figure 1. Food storytelling model

Conclusion

The findings highlight the powerful role that storytelling plays in food tourism, particularly when it is rooted in authentic cultural experiences. It is done viewing food as a means to express local identity, promote sustainability, and enhance experiential learning. The traditional foods of Kemiriombo provide rich opportunities for creating genuine, immersive, and educational tourism experiences. This study makes a meaningful contribution to both academic discussions and practical applications by connecting narrative theory with the practice of food tourism, especially in rural and often overlooked areas. The insights gained from this research can guide future efforts in designing food tourism offerings, training local storytellers, and shaping tourism policies that recognize food not merely as a commodity but as a cultural narrative that weaves together people, places, and traditions. The insights gained from this phase informed a structured set of storytelling components that prioritize the intergenerational stories, engaging the sense, spatial story, local legend, value-driven, and collaborative process. Collectively, these components create

a holistic model that not only enhances the overall tourism experience but also empowers the local community and fosters sustainable practices that honor local cultural heritage. This integrated approach offers a replicable framework for other destinations aiming to connect the culinary heritage with meaningful, experience-based tourism. By adopting such a model, communities can effectively share their unique stories while engaging tourists in a way that respects and celebrates local traditions.

Recommendation

To fully harness the potential of storytelling in culinary tourism, it is crucial to invest in capacity building for local stakeholders, particularly through training programs facilitated by professional tour guides. These training sessions should emphasize narrative techniques, cultural interpretation, and effective visitor engagement, thereby equipping local residents with the necessary skills to share compelling and accurate stories about their food heritage.

Moreover, the storytelling model developed through this research— intergenerational stories, engaging the senses, spatial story, local legend, value-driven, and collaborative process—should be adapted and implemented in other food tourism destinations throughout Indonesia. Regions rich in culinary heritage and vibrant traditions stand to gain significantly from this approach, as it not only enhances tourist satisfaction but also reinforces community identity and economic resilience. By replicating this model on a national scale, Indonesia can cultivate a more cohesive and culturally grounded food tourism strategy that aligns with the principles of sustainability, authenticity, and inclusive development. This approach not only benefits tourists but also empowers local communities, ensuring that their culinary traditions are preserved and celebrated for future generations.

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