

Culinary Tourism at Jakarta Fair, Indonesia

Rianto¹, Elda Nurmalinda², Pusparani³, Deivy Zulyanti Nasution⁴, Mira Maharani⁵

Trisakti Institute of Tourism

^{1,2,3,4,5}Trisakti Institute of Tourism, Jl. IKPN Bintaro No.1, Jakarta 12330, Indonesia

Abstract:

This study aims to explore and describe the dynamics of culinary tourism in the implementation of the 498th Jakarta Fair in 2025 at JIExpo Kemayoran, Central Jakarta. The main focus of the research is to understand the role of culinary tourism as a space for cultural interaction, creative economy promotion, and social visitor experiences in the annual event. A qualitative approach is used with a descriptive method, through participatory observation techniques, in-depth interviews with culinary business actors, visitors, and organizers, and written documentation. The results of the study show that culinary is one of the main attractions of Jakarta Fair, presenting more than 200 types of food from various regions in Indonesia. Business actors, mostly from the MSME sector, use this event to promote products, build branding, and expand market networks. Visitors consider culinary tourism at Jakarta Fair as a pleasant cultural experience, despite facing obstacles such as long queues and high prices. In conclusion, culinary tourism at Jakarta Fair plays a strategic role in strengthening local cultural and economic identity. It is recommended that organizers improve supporting facilities and provide intensive training to MSME actors so that the quality and positive impact of culinary tourism at Jakarta Fair are increasingly optimal.

Keywords: culinary tourism, Jakarta Fair, UMKM, culture, urban tourism

1. Introduction

Pekan Raya Jakarta (PRJ) or better known as Jakarta Fair is an annual celebration that marks the anniversary of the capital city of Indonesia. In 2025, Jakarta Fair will celebrate Jakarta's 498th anniversary, making it an important moment in the city's cultural calendar. As the largest exhibition event in Southeast Asia, Jakarta Fair not only showcases industrial and entertainment products, but also serves as a place to promote diverse local cuisine. Culinary tourism at Jakarta Fair is a special attraction for visitors, by presenting a variety of typical Indonesian dishes that reflect the richness of Indonesian culture. The culinary diversity presented not only pampers the tongue, but also strengthens cultural identity and adds to the tourist appeal of Jakarta.

Culinary tourism has been recognized as one of the effective strategies in developing urban tourism. Research by Larini and Suryawan (2018) highlighted the trend of rooftop restaurants and bars in Jakarta as a significant culinary tourism attraction. Meanwhile, research by Mularsari and Djandri (2022) examined the potential of halal culinary tourism in Kebayoran Baru in increasing tourism development in Jakarta. This second study shows that innovation in presentation and culinary diversity can increase tourist interest and strengthen the city's image as a culinary destination. In the context of Jakarta Fair the existence of various food stalls serving traditional to modern dishes reflects this dynamic, making Jakarta Fair a living laboratory for culinary tourism studies.

Another study by Khotaman (2023) examined the potential of Pasar Kue Subuh Senen as a culinary tourism attraction in DKI Jakarta, emphasizing the importance of effective management and promotion to attract tourists. In addition, a study by Situmeang et al. (2024) analyzed the culinary attractions in the Glodok area with Chinese culture as a tourism potential, showing how the integration of culture and cuisine can create a unique tourism experience. In the context of Jakarta Fair, Jakarta's ethnic and cultural diversity is reflected in the variety of culinary offerings, providing an opportunity to explore how culinary tourism can be an effective tool for cultural diplomacy and tourism promotion.

Furthermore, Kurnia (2022) research on the development of culinary tourism in Bonjeruk Village as a tourist attraction object shows that a participatory approach and empowerment of local communities are very

important in developing culinary destinations. Meanwhile, a study by Kurniawan and Lismayasari (2019) discusses digital marketing strategies in improving the performance of halal culinary MSMEs, emphasizing the importance of technological adaptation in culinary promotion. In the context of Jakarta Fair, the involvement of culinary MSME actors and the use of digital media can be key factors in increasing the visibility and competitiveness of local culinary in the wider market.

Nur and Rustini's (2022) research analyzed the push and pull factors that influence visitors' interest in coming to the Jakarta Fair event, finding that culinary is one of the main motivations for visitors. This shows that culinary tourism has a central role in attracting visitors' interest and increasing their satisfaction. Therefore, this study aims to further explore the role of culinary tourism in Jakarta Fair 2025 as a tool to strengthen cultural identity, increase MSME participation, and encourage sustainable tourism growth in Jakarta.

2. Literature Review

Culinary tourism has become an important element in the development of urban tourism in Indonesia. Sunaryo (2019) in his literature observation emphasized that local culinary not only functions to satisfy tourists' consumption needs, but also as a cultural representation that can strengthen the identity of a region. In the context of Jakarta Fair, the culinary diversity displayed reflects the cultural richness of Jakarta and Indonesia as a whole. This is in line with the findings of Putri et al. (2023) who highlighted the potential of traditional food as a culinary tourism attraction in Salatiga City, showing that traditional culinary can be a magnet for tourists looking for authentic experiences.

Research by Sultani (2019) examines the role of bir pletok as a Betawi cultural identity in Jakarta. Bir pletok, a typical Betawi drink often served at Jakarta Fair, not only offers a unique taste but also represents the history and traditions of the Betawi people. This study confirms that promoting traditional culinary in events such as Jakarta Fair can strengthen the preservation of local culture. In addition, Dewantara's research (2021) highlights the importance of developing Betawi culinary tourism in supporting DKI Jakarta tourism, with an emphasis on promotional strategies and packaging of culinary products that are attractive to tourists.

In an effort to increase the appeal of culinary tourism, Sultani's (2019) research emphasizes the importance of innovation in the presentation and promotion of traditional culinary. For example, the packaging of bir pletok in a modern form can attract the interest of the younger generation without eliminating its traditional values. This is relevant to the findings of Dewantara (2021) who suggested the use of digital media and online platforms to promote Betawi culinary specialties, so that they can reach a wider audience and increase tourist visits to Jakarta Fair.

Research by Sultani (2019) and Dewantara (2021) shows that collaboration between the government, business actors, and local communities is very important in developing culinary tourism. In the context of Jakarta Fair, synergy between various parties can ensure the desire and success of traditional culinary promotion. Thus, these studies provide valuable insights for the development of effective culinary tourism strategies in Jakarta Fair and Jakarta in general.

3. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive study type, which aims to deeply understand the phenomenon of culinary tourism in the context of the 498th Jakarta Fair celebration in 2025. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for exploring the meaning, perception, and social interaction between culinary business actors, visitors, and Jakarta Fair organizers at the JIExpo Kemayoran arena, Central Jakarta. The main focus of this study is to describe in detail the characteristics, uniqueness, and dynamics of culinary experiences that occur in a certain space and time, without intervening in the social reality being studied. This approach relies on exploratory and interpretative processes, allowing researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of culinary tourism as a medium of culture, economy, and tourism in large-scale events such as Jakarta Fair.

Data collection techniques were carried out through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out directly at the Jakarta Fair location to record the activities of visitors and culinary business actors, such as interactions during transactions, narratives of the food served,

and elements of booth design and product packaging. Interviews were conducted purposively with various key informants, such as culinary MSME owners, active visitors, traditional food booth managers, and Jakarta Fair organizers involved in organizing the culinary zone.

Data analysis in this study was conducted thematically, using the Miles and Huberman approach which includes three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. Data collected from observations, interviews, and documentation were analyzed to identify emerging thematic patterns, such as the most popular types of cuisine, the role of cultural narratives in culinary marketing, and visitor perceptions of the value and quality of cuisine at Jakarta Fair.

4. Result and Discussion

Overview of Research Location

Jakarta Fair 2025 is held in the Jakarta International Expo (JIExpo) Kemayoran area, a location that has historically and strategically become the center for national and international exhibitions. In its 498th implementation, Jakarta Fair presents more than 1,500 booths spread across indoor halls and open areas, with the culinary zone occupying a very central position. This zone is not only a place for food consumption, but also a lively social and cultural interaction space. The layout of Jakarta Fair is designed in such a way that visitors can easily access the culinary booths after watching a performance or visiting the industrial zone, making culinary the strategic meeting point of the overall visitor experience.

Jakarta Fair's culinary zones occupy semi-open and open areas, allowing visitors to experience dining amidst the lively festival atmosphere. Each culinary area is expressed based on the type of food and market segmentation, such as the traditional food zone, the international food zone, and the contemporary snack zone. This arrangement facilitates visitor navigation and encourages exploration between types of culinary. Field observations show that the culinary zone is one of the points with the highest intensity of activity, especially at night and on weekends. The lively atmosphere, the distinctive aroma of food, and the background of traditional and modern music form an atmosphere that blends with the identity of the Jakarta Fair as a celebration of the culture of a metropolitan city.

Culinary Business Actors Profile

Culinary business actors participating in the 2025 Jakarta Fair have very diverse backgrounds, reflecting the spectrum of the creative economy sector in Jakarta. The majority of them come from the MSME category that already has superior products and has gone through a curation process by the organizers. Some are regular participants in the Jakarta Fair from year to year, while others are newcomers who take advantage of the Jakarta Fair moment to introduce their products to a wider market. The range of products sold is also wide, ranging from Betawi specialties, such as soto betawi, kerak telor, and bir pletok, to modern foods such as mochi donuts, local boba drinks, and Japanese or Korean street food modified with local flavors.

In in-depth interviews, many business actors said that the Jakarta Fair is not just a sales event, but also an event to test consumer response to new products, build business networks, and strengthen their business branding. Promotional activities, innovative menus, and digital marketing strategies are an important part of their preparations for the Jakarta Fair. Several MSME actors who already have offline stores or are brave enough to also use the momentum of the Jakarta Fair to expand their customer reach and increase visibility on social media. Jakarta Fair provides exposure opportunities that cannot be obtained in normal situations, so many business people who are big investors prepare to be as attractive as possible for them.

Types of Culinary and Uniqueness of Presentation

The various types of culinary presented at the Jakarta Fair illustrate the extraordinary richness of Indonesian gastronomy. Data from observations and documentation show that more than 200 types of culinary presentations are presented, ranging from main dishes, snacks, to traditional and modern drinks. Betawi specialties dominate traditional cuisine, but are also side by side with culinary specialties from other regions such as Yogyakarta gudeg, Padang satay, Palembang pempek, and Lombok taliwang chicken. Uniquely, it is not only local cuisine that attracts attention, but also modern and fusion dishes that combine Indonesian

flavors with foreign presentation styles such as corndog sambal matah or rendang ramen.

One of the interesting characteristics of the culinary presentation at the Jakarta Fair is the emphasis on visual elements and cultural narratives. Many booths display ethnic decorations, traditional costumes, and even direct storytelling by waiters explaining the origins of the food. In some cases, the presentation is complemented by interactive elements such as cooking demonstrations or sample testers that make visitors more emotionally involved. The emphasis on stories and cultural values makes the dining experience at the Jakarta Fair not just a consumptive activity, but also a means of education and cultural preservation. This phenomenon shows that culinary tourism is now developing from mere gastronomy to an integral part of the local identity narrative.

Visitor Behavior and Perception

The results of interviews with Jakarta Fair visitors show that most of them come with the main motivation of enjoying typical food that is difficult to find outside of this event. They consider Jakarta Fair as an “impromptu culinary heaven” that presents a variety of food choices in one place. Several respondents said that the biggest attraction of Jakarta Fair is not music concerts or industry exhibitions, but food exploration. Visitors come not only to eat, but also to subscribe, document, and share their culinary experiences on social media. This activity has even become the main agenda of young visitor groups and food enthusiasts.

However, perceptions of comfort and price are also a concern. Many visitors complained about long queues at popular stands, limited seating, and food prices that were considered expensive compared to the quality or portions provided. On the other hand, stands that have a fast service system, maintained cleanliness, and a clear menu display tend to get positive reviews. This criticism and praise show that the aspect of service quality has a big influence on the visitor experience. This also reflects that the development of culinary tourism in the context of large events must combine elements of taste, aesthetics, and superior service.

Dynamics of Social Interaction in the Culinary Area

The Jakarta Fair culinary zone has proven to be a public space that facilitates social interaction across classes, ages, and backgrounds. In direct observation, researchers found a friendly atmosphere between sellers and buyers who often have light dialogues, exchange stories, and even joke about food or childhood experiences related to traditional food. The stalls become a fluid culinary meeting point, a place where the boundaries between local visitors and tourists from outside Jakarta are blurred in the common taste experience. Food becomes a universal language that unites, and the Jakarta Fair culinary zone provides a stage for such social encounters.

Interactions also occur between communities of visitors who do not know each other but share a common dining space. Visitors from outside the city sit with Jakarta residents at a long table, exchanging information about the most delicious stalls, the most delicious menus, and even sharing tips on queuing for favorite foods. This kind of interaction shows the social function of public dining spaces in a large event. In a broader context, this dynamic reflects how culinary tourism in large-scale events such as the Jakarta Fair is not only about food, but also about building social networks and strengthening urban cultural cohesion.

Culinary Promotion and Branding Strategy

Digital promotion plays a very important role in the success of culinary booths at the 2025 Jakarta Fair. Almost all interviewed entrepreneurs rely on social media platforms, especially Instagram and TikTok, as their main promotional medium. They use attractive visual strategies, such as uploading videos of the cooking process, customer testimonials, and collaboration with local food bloggers who are specially invited to cover the event. Hashtags such as #PRJkuliner2025 and #kulinerJakartaFair are widely used to expand the reach of promotional content. Entrepreneurs who are able to take advantage of this digital momentum have succeeded in attracting more visitors to their booths.

In addition to bold promotions, branding strategies are also implemented through booth visual design, color selection, traditional symbols, and unique product naming. Many MSMEs create a consistent brand image through employee uniforms, creative banners, and environmentally friendly food packaging with

distinctive logos. This strong brand awareness has proven effective in attracting the attention of visitors who tend to be impulsive and visually oriented. The success of this strategy shows that in the context of modern culinary tourism, product quality needs to be balanced with narrative packaging and communicative visuals.

Operational Challenges and Adaptation of MSMEs

Participation in the Jakarta Fair is certainly not without challenges for business actors, especially MSMEs. Some of the obstacles that are often faced are high booth rental costs, competition between business actors, limited manpower, and difficulty in maintaining food quality amidst the number of visitors. On the other hand, limited stock of raw materials and high daily logistics needs are also problems that often arise, especially for business actors who do not have experience in participating in large-scale events. Many of them stated the need for event management training support before participating.

Despite facing many obstacles, the actors also showed high adaptability. Some of them implemented a pre-order system to regulate production flow, used a digital payment system to speed up transactions, and hired additional daily workers. They also adjusted the menu to be more efficient and easy to serve in crowded conditions. This adaptation shows that large events such as the Jakarta Fair are an effective learning space for MSMEs to test their business resilience and improve managerial and operational capacity.

Reflection on the Role of Culinary Tourism at the Jakarta Fair

Culinary tourism at the Jakarta Fair is not just a supporting main entertainment, but has become the heart of the visitor experience. From a cultural perspective, the food served is able to represent the collective identity of the multi-ethnic and multicultural society of Jakarta. The Jakarta Fair becomes a stage for cultural diplomacy through food, where visitors from various backgrounds can learn about other cultures through taste. This phenomenon strengthens the theory that food is part of a complex symbol system in social interaction and expression of identity.

From an economic perspective, culinary tourism at the Jakarta Fair encourages the growth of the MSME sector and the creative industry. Many business actors stated that after participating in the Jakarta Fair, they got regular customers, distribution partners, and even investment partnership opportunities. This means that this event is able to provide a sustainable follow-up impact beyond the implementation period. Therefore, culinary tourism cannot be viewed as a marginal activity, but rather as a strategic sector in the development of inclusive and highly competitive urban tourism.

5. Other recommendations

This study concludes that culinary tourism in the implementation of the 498th Jakarta Fair in 2025 in Kemayoran has a very strategic role in strengthening cultural identity, encouraging cross-group social interaction, and increasing creative economic activities through the active participation of MSMEs. The variety of culinary delights displayed not only represents the richness of Indonesian gastronomy, but also presents an in-depth cultural experience for visitors through narratives, visualizations, and direct interactions. Digital promotion strategies, visual branding, and story packaging are important factors that determine the success of business actors in attracting visitors. Meanwhile, challenges such as high operational costs, competition, and limited facilities do not reduce the spirit of adaptation and innovation of business actors. Therefore, culinary tourism at the Jakarta Fair can be categorized as a cultural and economic ecosystem that is effective and has a real contribution to the development of tourism in the city of Jakarta.

Based on the research results, it is recommended that the organizers of the Jakarta Fair in the future optimize the role of culinary tourism as a main asset by providing adequate infrastructure support, such as a digital queuing system, comfortable dining areas, and clean sanitation facilities. The local government together with the private sector are expected to strengthen training and coaching for MSMEs, especially in the fields of digital marketing, operational event management, and product innovation based on local culture. In addition, the presence of culinary curation based on historical and ethnographic narratives can be further strengthened in order to increase educational and cultural values. Further researchers are expected to expand the scope of the study with a participatory approach or culinary ethnography, as well as further explore the relationship between food, local identity, and the formation of collective memory in urban cultural events.

References

1. Dewantara, Y. F. (2021). Analisa Potensi Wisata Kuliner Khas Betawi dalam Pengembangan Pariwisata DKI Jakarta. *Jurnal Studi Pariwisata*, 6(1), 22–30. Retrieved from <https://journal.polteksahid.ac.id/index.php/jstp/article/view/156>
2. Larini, C., & Suryawan, I. B. (2018). Trend Rooftop Restaurant and Bar Sebagai Daya Tarik Wisata Kuliner di DKI Jakarta. *Jurnal Destinasi Pariwisata*, 6(2), 1-10. DOI:10.24843/JDEPAR.2018.v06.i02.p27
3. Mularsari, A., & Djandri, M. Z. (2022). Potensi Wisata Kuliner Halal di Kebayoran Baru Dalam Meningkatkan Pengembangan Pariwisata di Jakarta. *Syntax Literate: Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*, 7(9), 1-15. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36418/syntax-literate.v7i9.14747>
4. Putri, J. A., Rahayu, E., Risyanti, Y. D., & Maryani, T. (2023). Potensi Makanan Tradisional sebagai Daya Tarik Wisata Kuliner di Kota Salatiga. *Jurnal Manajemen Pariwisata dan Perhotelan*, 6(1), 1–10. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.23887/jmpp.v6i1.54032>
5. Khotaman, A. N. (2023). Potensi Pasar Kue Subuh Senen Sebagai Daya Tarik Wisata Kuliner di DKI Jakarta. *Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia*.
6. Situmeang, B. U., Septiano, S. N., & Abiansyah, N. (2024). Daya Tarik Kuliner di Glodok dengan Culture Tionghoa Sebagai Potensi Pariwisata. *Journal of Social and Economics Research*, 6(2), 1-12. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54783/jser.v6i2.704>
7. Sultani, Z. I. (2019). Cita Rasa Kuliner Lokal Bir Pletok sebagai Identitas Budaya Betawi di Jakarta 1970–2000-an. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Sejarah*, 143–150.
8. Sunaryo, N. A. (2019). Potensi Wisata Kuliner di Indonesia: Tinjauan Literatur. *Seminar Nasional Inovasi dalam Penelitian Sains, Teknologi dan Humaniora - InoBali*, 1–10. Retrieved from <https://e proceeding.undwi.ac.id/index.php/inobali/article/view/168>
9. Kurnia, M. D. (2022). Pengembangan Wisata Kuliner Desa Bonjeruk Sebagai Objek Daya Tarik Wisata. *Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram*.
10. Kurniawan, P., & Lismayasari. (2019). Wisata Kuliner Halal: Suatu Tinjauan Strategis Pemasaran Digital Terhadap Peningkatan Kinerja UMKM. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Islam*, 16(1), 1-10. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34001/jdeb.v16i1.978>
11. Nur, W. N., & Rustini, R. (2022). Analisis Faktor Pendorong dan Faktor Penarik yang Memengaruhi Minat Kunjung Pengunjung (Studi Kasus Event Pekan Raya Jakarta 2022 di JIExpo Kemayoran). *Destinesia: Jurnal Hospitaliti dan Pariwisata*, 6(1), 1-15. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31334/jd.v6i1.4701>