

Abstract

Research Title : Upgrading the Creative Tourism Route
through Local Food Promotion in Western of Thailand
Author : Ekgnarong Vorasiha et al.
Research Year : 2018

This research on upgrading the creative tourism route through local food promotion in western of Thailand intentionally focuses on the capabilities of charming tourist attractions through local food of western region and also explores tourism information for food learning in the following 8 provinces; Nakhon Pathom, Ratchaburi, Kanchanaburi, Suphanburi, Phetchaburi, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Samut Songkhram and Samut Sakhon in order to design the tourism route for potential food learning. The research methodology applied for this research consists of qualitative and quantitative ones. The qualitative one is analyzing the local food secondary data and interviewing gurus in such an area about food and lifestyle including surveying tourist attractions potential to represent their identity of food culture, tradition and indigenous knowledge based on the concept of eco agricultural, community-based and sustainable tourisms, respectively.

The result of the aforementioned analysis and on-site survey shows that each province has its own distinctive identity and characteristic that can be deployed as an tourist attractions and the identity of food culture in this western region can be divided into 2 groups; 1) a group of coastal provinces - Samut Sakhon, Samut Songkhram, Phechaburi and Prachuap Khiri Khan to be emphasized on seafood nutrient resources, and 2) a group of inland provinces - Ratchaburi, Kanchanaburi, Suphanburi and Nakhon Pathom to be emphasized on nutrient resources gained from river, hill and agricultural land. After grouping the province based on their identity and distinctive characteristic and tourist attractions, those are linked to each province' s existing tourist attractions so as to design the tourism route through local food promotion and then analyze the potential of tourist attractions of which there are 3 attractive and commercial potential tourism routes as follows:

1. "Salt Route": The purpose of this route is to avail tourists to acknowledge the lifestyle of local people and fisherman living along Thai Gulf including learning how salt incurs, salt farming and utilization in other purposes apart from being used as a food supplement. In addition, it also focuses on an activity showing how much each coastal province links to its existing natural resources that helps contribute the distinctive identity. Among those provinces, there are 3 ones related to a salt farming and processing; Samut Sakhon, Samut Songkhram and Phechaburi, and their

tourist attractions along this captioned route are the Learning Center for Indigenous Knowledge of Samut Songkhram, Khokkharm Salt Farm Learning Center, Ban Laem Salt Farmer Group, Ban Laem Agriculturist Group ,Kanghunting Sea Salt Group and Home Krateng fishermen.

2. “Jaggery Route” : The palmyra palm learning has been applied as the communication tools to link with various learning aspects; agriculture, indigenous knowledge and Thai desserts, related to palmyra palm jaggery and sugar. Petchaburi is the province absolutely related to palmyra palm cultivation and processing with constant long-term palmyra palm history. The purpose of this route is designed to learn the local people’ s lifestyle in which the palmyra palm has played a vital role in their daily living, palmyra palm climbing demonstration, jaggery boiling and dessert recipes made from jaggery. The activities have been launched to symbolize Petchaburi to be as the authentic city of desserts through the step of exploring the province’ s most popular ones, both main dish and dessert, having their unique taste in both Petchaburi District and Tha Yang District. The tourist attractions along this route are Wat Na Phrom Dessert Community – Wat Na Prom Cultural Temple Court - Phra Nakhon Khiri Historical Park (Khao Wang) – Muang Petch Popular Shop Tour – rice field – palmyra palm forest – Tha Yang Fries Noodle Thai Style – Pon Kharmwan Shop.

3. “Fish Route” : The purpose is to learn lifestyle of local people widely consuming “fish”, from both fresh water and sea, in their daily living. Thus, the activities along this route then focus on the importance of fish as the main food resources of Thai people since the old days that has created the particular identity of this local area. The tourist attractions along this route are Kaeng Krachan Dam – Sun Dried Squid in Pran Buri District – Pechnairoo Shop – Prachuap Khiri Khan Coastal Aquaculture Research and Development Center – Milkfish Processing Community Enterprise Group.

After determining the abovementioned tourism routes, the trip plan has been later set up to be used as an example model for local food learning in those 3 routes in order to be applied for tourists in a form of 2- day trip. It is expected that the commercial potential of these provinces can be applied to create a new tourism model in this western region and matched with foreign individual tourism (FIT) as well as the tourists preferring local food learning in a form of “Tour, Taste and Learn”.The above data remains require more improvement to enable the working team in each region office of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) to further develop and upgrade the creative tourism route through local food promotion.

Keyword : Creative Tourism Route, Local Food