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GASTRONOMIC TOURISM STRATEGY IMPLICATION FOR THAILAND

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pannee Suanpang

Faculty of Science & Technology, Suan Dusit University, Dusit, Bangkok, Thailand

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*Corresponding Author

Pannee Suanpang

Abstract

Gastronomic tourism is becoming popular as alternative tourism especially in Thailand that has legendary of food to become 'kitchen of the world'. Gastronomic tourism is an intentional, exploration, and travel experience of tourists including the consumption of local food, cuisine, meal systems and eating styles together with learning with culture, life styles, ethos religion and joining the cooking classes. The aim of this paper is to study the gastronomic tourism strategy implication for Thailand. The qualitative data was collected from interviewing government officials who are involved with Thailand's tourism policy, the tourism business sector and tourists. The results found by SWOT and the BCG matrix analysis found that the gastronomic tourism of Thailand was on 'Star' (+4.08, +4.15) and had a strategy vision that was "The hub of gastronomic tourism in ASEAN". There are four strategies including (1) develop the capacity of tourism and food business in order for Thailand to become the hub of gastronomic tourism in ASEAN, (2) research and create new knowledge about gastronomic tourism in ASEAN, (3) support and promote the marketing of Thailand's gastronomic tourism and (4) develop co-ordination between the government, business and community in order to develop gastronomic tourism. Finally, they were 12 projects of gastronomic tourism for implementation.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is becoming a popular global leisure activity. The number of tourist is increasing around the world. In ASEAN countries where the total number of international arrivals in 2010 was about 73.7 million people, ranking Malaysia at about 24.5 million (growth 3.94%), Thailand about 15.9 million (growth 12.30%), and Brunei Darussalam about 0.2 million (growth 36.09%) respectively, (ASEAN Secretariat, 2012). Tourist behavior is also looking for the more generic types of experience, especially in authentic experiences, which involve a possibility of participation in local culture and way of life. The authentic experience is close to 'food' and gastronomic tourism'. ASEAN countries are the land of food, and kitchen of the world. There are five countries that are famous for 'food' in the travel destinations, Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam, Philippines and Cambodia [1].

Thailand is one of the ASEAN country members that has a high potential of the tourism industry. The number of international tourist arrivals in Thailand between 2000-2014, the trend is increased from 9.58 million people in year 2000 to 24.78 million people in 2014 [2].

Food has become an important factor for tourist because it is a basic need and influential travel experience. A significant expenditure of tourists is involved with food and the consumption of food and beverages when travelling and has become a key role of an economy based on tourism [3]. In recent times, the food related- tourism is becoming important and linked closely with the term 'gastronomy' which means a wide range of food which can

include the cultural practice related to food and the peasant food typical of the regional and local cuisine [4]. Consequently, the term 'gastronomic tourism' has been developed to focus on the local food in tourism.

Thailand has a high potential for gastronomic tourism in ASEAN that is involved with gastronomy heritage resources based on tourist destinations, which can be generated from the long history of Thailand's gastronomy heritage resources. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to study the development of gastronomic tourism strategy implications for Thailand.

GASTRONOMIC TOURISM

✚ The history of gastronomy

The history of the word 'gastronomy' is derived from the Greek 'gastros' which mean stomach and 'nomos' reference to knowledge [5], [6],[7]. Santich (2003) [6] noted that in the twelve century, the Greek-Sicilian Archestratus wrote a book called Gastronomica, which explained the pleasure of taste or delight of the belly.

Brilliant-Savarin (in [5]) described gastronomy as being related to the method by which food is produced, its economic implication, its treatment, storage, transport and processing [6][7]. It also touched on its preparation and cooking meal decorum and manners, the chemistry involved, digestion and the sociological effect of food, customer and tradition and also there is the connected relationship between the food menu and the appropriated choice of wine to accompany the food, as well as general guidance on hospitality and tourism [6][7].

The aim of gastronomy was discussed by Brillan-Savarin [5] who stated that

- a) " the aim of gastronomy is to obtain the preservation of man by mean of the best possible nourishment;
- b) its obtain is giving guidance, according to certain principles, to all who seek, provides, or prepare substance which may be turned into food;
- c) these figure are ultimately economic industries: Gastronomy, in fact, is the motive force behind farmers, winegrowers, fishermen, and huntsmen, not to mention the great family of cooks, under whatever title that may disguise their employment as person of food"

The broader dimension of gastronomy was discussed particularly in the area of psychology, sociology and anthropology [6][8][9]. Gastronomy is associated with the social, cultural, and historical aspect of food and eating, encompassing cruising, restaurants, dining and food culture and tourism [6][7].

✚ Gastronomic tourism

There are many authors that define the concept of gastronomic tourism. The Encyclopedia Britannica [10] defines gastronomy as: 'the art of selecting, preparing, serving, and enjoying fine food. The International Culinary Tourism Association defines gastronomic tourism as "the pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experience" [11].

Figure 2 demonstrates the basic concept of gastronomic tourism Long [12] stated it was involved with culture, region, time, ethos/religion, and socio-economic class. Hall & Mitchell [12]; Hall & Sharples [13] and Jalis & Salehunddin [7] defining gastronomic tourism as a need to different between tourist who consume food as a part of travel experience and those tourists whose activities, behaviors and, even destination selection are influenced by an interest in food.

However, in this study gastronomic tourism means, the travel experience, the enjoyment of prepared food, beverages, and other related food activities resulting in a great and memorable gastronomic experience including consumption of local food, cuisine, meal system and eating styles together with a tourism experience of learning with gastronomy tourist attraction, culture, life styles, ethos, religion and joining a cooking class.

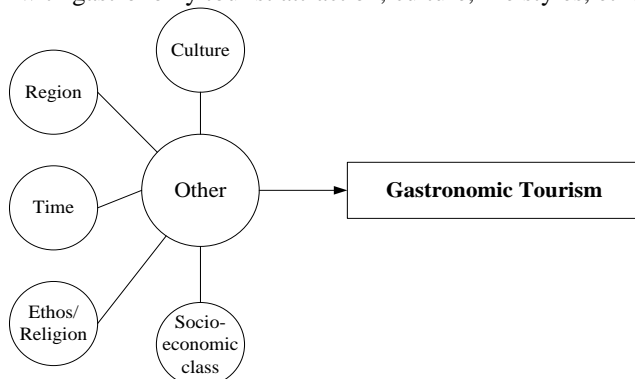


Figure 1 Basic concept of gastronomic tourism Source: [12]

The gastronomic tourism experience does not necessarily only involve food and location, however Hall [15] discusses the role of food and tourism during the various stages of travel including pre-visit (eating at home and in a restaurant prior to the trip), travel to the destination (during this phase, local products are encountered on the way to the destination such as on airline), at the destination (focus on gastronomic tourism and consists of culinary and tasting experience at the destination), travel from the destination (local product are encountered from the destination) and post-visit (eating at home or in a restaurant after the trip).

Richard [4] discusses the related consumption and production in gastronomy tourism experience as in Figure 3

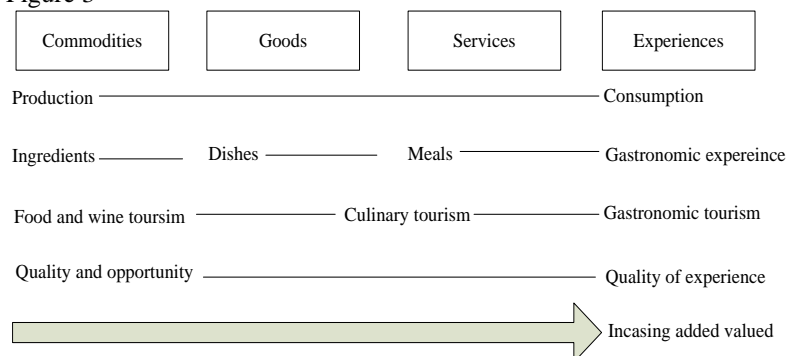


Figure 2 Relating consumption and production in gastronomic tourism experience
Source: [4]

Figure 2 shows the relationship of consumption; production and gastronomic experience by the transfer commodities that become goods, services and experience. Moreover, Gastronomic experience was delivered from good ingredients that become dishes and finally become meals. Gastronomic tourism is the experience of food and wine tourism to become culinary tourism that delivers a quality experience and incases value added to the tourists.

Gastronomic tourism policy and strategy

Gastronomic tourism strategy and policy development involves the stakeholders including government, tourism business and community. Hall & Mitchell [13] discussed the local food system in Australia and New Zealand as in Figure 3. The components of the local food system were input, the local food system and strategies to create demand. There were several factors of input from the local food system such as agricultural production subsidies, production standards and regulation, promotion, shipping, transportation, tourist interest in food, etc. The local food system was composed of policy, economic, technology, culture and environment. Finally, the strategies to create demand including promoting products and foods locally, developing strong brands and local campaigns, creating a local producers network, developing farmer's markets, using new technology and developing organic and heritage products.

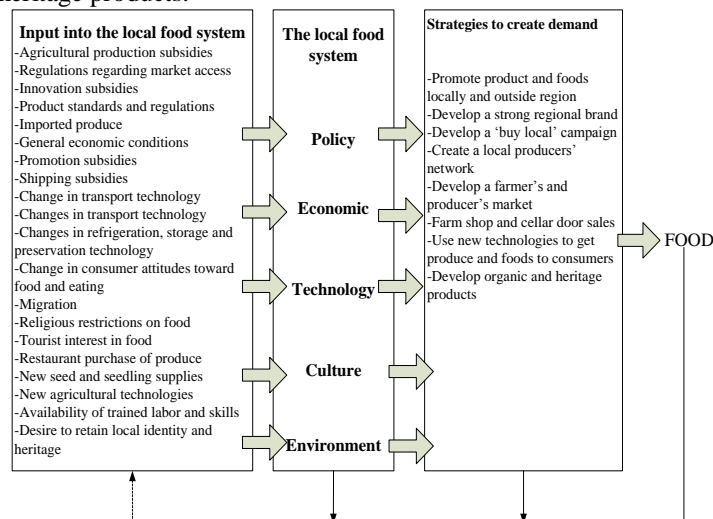


Figure 3. The local food system
Source: [13]

Another good practice is Singapore's gastronomic tourism policy. The Singapore Government has taken several steps to promote gastronomy in Singapore [16]. The drive for the policies was when Singapore decided it wanted to be 'a world class tourist destination'. It recognized that in order to be a world-class tourist destination, it needed to build and develop the infrastructure to achieve its goal, tourism attraction, accommodation, and restaurants[16]. The two main approaches were to develop its culinary education and to understand and better promote its food through the Singapore Tourism Board and the Singapore International Culinary Exchange (SPICE).

RELATED WORK

This paper was part of the research of 'Strategic of Gastronomic Tourism in ASEAN' [17]. There were three research programs including 1) study tourist behavior towards local food in ASEAN 2) develop gastronomic tourism routes in ASEAN 3) develop information systems for gastronomic tourism in ASEAN. The integrated research methodologies were implemented with quantitative research, qualitative research, and innovation development and synthesized knowledge from three research programs and finally to develop a strategic plan. The research results are as follows:

✚ The study of tourist behavior towards local food in ASEAN

It was found that, domestic tourists have an overall attitude towards local food in ASEAN of above average $\bar{X} = 3.98$ (, by product $\bar{X} = 4.14$ (, place $\bar{X} = 3.93$ (and promotion $\bar{X} = 3.93$ (respectively, and last the price $\bar{X} = 3.71$ (. The motivation to consume local food in ASEAN by domestic tourist was by popularity (57.23%), local food that represented the identity of the local community (42.77%) and lastly local food (41.74%) respectively. The local food menu in ASEAN that is known well is: Satay (78.93%), Hainanese Chicken Rice (77.27%) and Cha Gio /Spring rolls 67.77 respectively. International tourists have an overall attitude towards local food in ASEAN of above average $\bar{X} = 4.09$ (, by product $\bar{X} = 4.36$ (, price $\bar{X} = 4.07$ (, place $\bar{X} = 4.02$ (and finally promotion $\bar{X} = 3.88$ (respectively. International tourist motivation for choosing ASEAN food was firstly local food (67.36%); the taste of new food (62.69%), food famous/local restaurant atmosphere (49.74%) and the last one was advertisement (3.63%) respectively. The most popular ASEAN food menu was item Tom Yam Goong -Thailand (86.27%), Noodle Pad Thai-Thailand (76.47) and Amok-Cambodia (49.67%) respectively [18].

✚ The development of gastronomic tourism in ASEAN

The results found that the gastronomic tourism route in ASEAN were 7 routes selecting One-Day-Trips to World Heritage or the important cultural tourist attractions as follows:

- 1) Luang Prabang (Lao) -> Early morning donate food to the monks with sticky rice -> Morning market in the city and have breakfast at Phachaniyom coffee -> Luang Prabang Palace -> Wi Chunaarat temple -> Cheng Tong temple -> Lunch (Papaya salad, sticky rice) -> Afternoon Prabattai temple -> Poo Sri market -> Poo Sri Mountain -> Evening dinner (Luang Prabang salad, Aolam, Fish Amok) -> Night market
- 2) Hanoi (Vietnam) -> Breakfast (Pho, French toast) -> Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum -> One Pagoda -> 36 Roads -> Lunch (Spring rolls, pork grill, Vietnamese coffee), Lake of the Returned Sword -> Ngoc Son Temple -> Temple of Literature -> Water Puppet Show -> Night -> Night market
- 3) Siem Reap (Cambodia) -> Breakfast (Rice Congee, French toast) -> Angkor Wat -> Prasat Bayon -> Lunch (Amok, pickled fish, Curry) -> Prasat Bantaisri -> Prasat Tarprom -> Sunset At Phnom bakeng -> Dinner and watch Ausara Show
- 4) Melaka (Malaysia) -> Breakfast (Nasi Lemak, Bak kut the) -> Melaka Walking street -> Cheng Hoon Teng Temple -> Lunch (Chicken rice) -> Dutch Square -> Ruins of St. Paul's -> A' Famosa -> Dinner Roti Mataba
- 5) Rangoon (Myanmar) -> Breakfast at Scott Market -> Kyak Htat Gyi -> Botataung -> Bo bo Gyi -> Buddha Tooth Relic Temple -> Lunch (Shrimp, Soybean fired) -> Yele Praya -> Dinner and Kalaweak show -> Shwedagon Pagoda
- 6) Singapore -> Breakfast (Hók-gián noodle) -> Guan Yin Temple -> Thian Hock Keng Temple -> Tooth Relic Buddha Temple -> Lunch (Singapore Chicken rice) Merlion -> Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles -> Sun Tech city -> Orchard Road -> Dinner at Clarke Quay
- 7) Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya (Thailand) -> Breakfast Hua Rao market -> Wat Chai Watthanaram -> Wat Phananchong -> Old floating market Tha Nok Rong Temple -> Lunch (Noodle) -> Wat Yai Chaimongkol -> Wat Mahatha -> Wat Mongkol Bophit -> Dinner (Tomyom Shrimp, River Shrimp roast) [19].

✚ The development of information system for gastronomic tourism in ASEAN

The results found that:

- 1) Develop a database of gastronomic tourism which contains information about travel attractions, food and accommodation in a website <http://foodasean.org>
- 2) Develop VDO, Gastronomic tourism routes in ASEAN
- 3) Develop a mobile application “ASEAN Food” [20].

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology used qualitative data by syntheses from three research programs and interviews. There were 20 key informants who are involved with government, tourism business and the local community. Afterward, SWOT analysis of the gastronomic tourism situation of Thailand. Finally develop a strategy and implementation plan.

RESULT

SWOT Analysis

The result of SWOT analysis found that

Strength

- Tourism resources in Thailand are linked with local wisdom, cultural, historical and way of life and beauty with national tourism resources such as beautiful beaches. Although, there are many UNESCO world heritage sites including Ban Chiang Archaeological Site, Historic City of Ayutthaya, Historic Town of Sukhothai and Associated Historic Towns, Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex and Thungyai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- National policy focused on tourism and creative economy by conducting a National tourism strategy plan 2013-2016.
- Plentifully food, fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices and has an image of the ‘kitchen of the world’.
- Prompt Tourism infrastructure including accommodation, restaurants, transportation and tourism facilities.
- Strong tourism National brand image and winning several International tourism awards.
- Strategic location that is located at the central of ASEAN so it is convenience to travel to other countries in Asia.

Weakness

- Lack of cooperation and integration between government and the business sector in gastronomy tourism.
- Not sufficient budget to operate a project about gastronomy tourism.
- Local people lack understanding about gastronomy tourism.
- A lack of information and promotion of gastronomy tourism.

Opportunity

- The opening of ASEAN in 2015 to increasing opportunity linking tourism routes in ASEAN including GMS, IMT-GT, ACMECS and BIMSTEC.
- The increase of low coast airlines, increasing the number of tourists.
- Thai food is famous and has a good image of ‘the kitchen of world’
- Trends of tourist want to learn about local food wisdom and culture.

Threat

- There are competitors for gastronomic tourism in ASEAN such as Malaysia and Lao.
- The new generations lack of knowledge about the transfer of the food cultural of Thailand.
- The world economic crisis that affects tourism.

BCG Matrix

The BCG matrix analysis found that the position of gastronomic tourism in Thailand was ‘star’ (strength: +4.08, opportunity: +4.15). Therefore, the strategy should develop on strengths and opportunity.

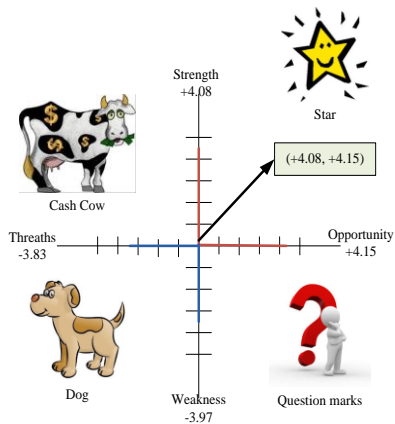


Figure 4 BCG matrix analyses

Gastronomic tourism strategy

Figure demonstrates the relationship between national, regional and local strategy.

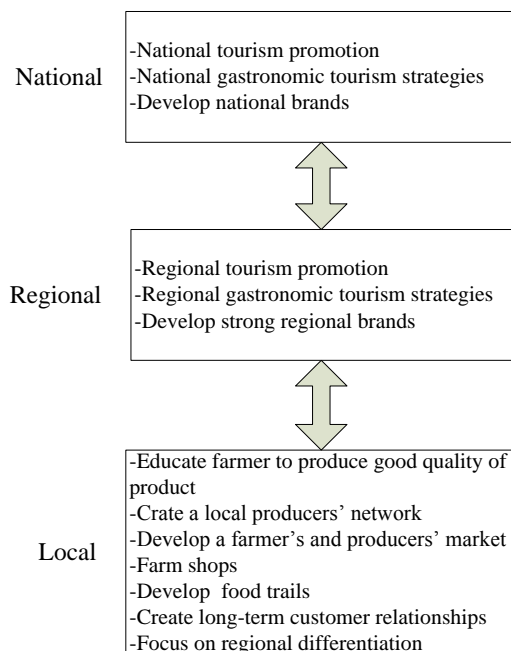


Figure 5 Relationship between national, regional and local strategies

Source: Applied from Hall & Mitchell [13]

There were three levels of gastronomic strategy, which were applied from Hall & Mitchell [13]. The national strategy should focus on developing national gastronomic tourism strategies, support tourism promotion and develop national gastronomic tourism brands. The regional strategy should develop gastronomic tourism strategies, develop regional branding and develop regional tourism promotion. The local strategy focuses on educating farmers or local people to produce good quality products, create local networks, develop a farmer's and producer's market, open farm shops, develop food trails, create long term customer relationships and focus on regional differentiation.

Strategy map

Figure 6 demonstrates the strategic map of gastronomic tourism in Thailand. There were four dimensions of strategy map following the concept of the balance scored card.

1. Learning & growth focuses on human capital by educating farmers or producers who produce gastronomic tourism products to gain new knowledge and innovation in order to produce a good quality of service. Moreover, they should provide information and knowledge about gastronomic tourism to tourists, local people and stakeholders to perceive about food and tourism. Finally, tourism businesses should be organized and manage the gastronomic tourism product to be more effective.

2. The internal product should focus on improved management of the tourism business to be more efficiency, customer focused, develop innovation and law which is related to gastronomic tourism.
3. Customers should focus on products and services with good quality, low price and variety of product. Therefore, they should focus on customer relationship management to deliver excellent management and services.
4. Finance, should focus on marketing strategy and value added strategy. Marketing strategy consists of effective gastronomic tourism marketing and promoting gastronomic tourism in every media. Valued added strategy consists of value creation for gastronomic tourism product and developing gastronomic tourism routes.

Finally, the aim of the strategy is a competitive advantage for gastronomic tourism in Thailand.

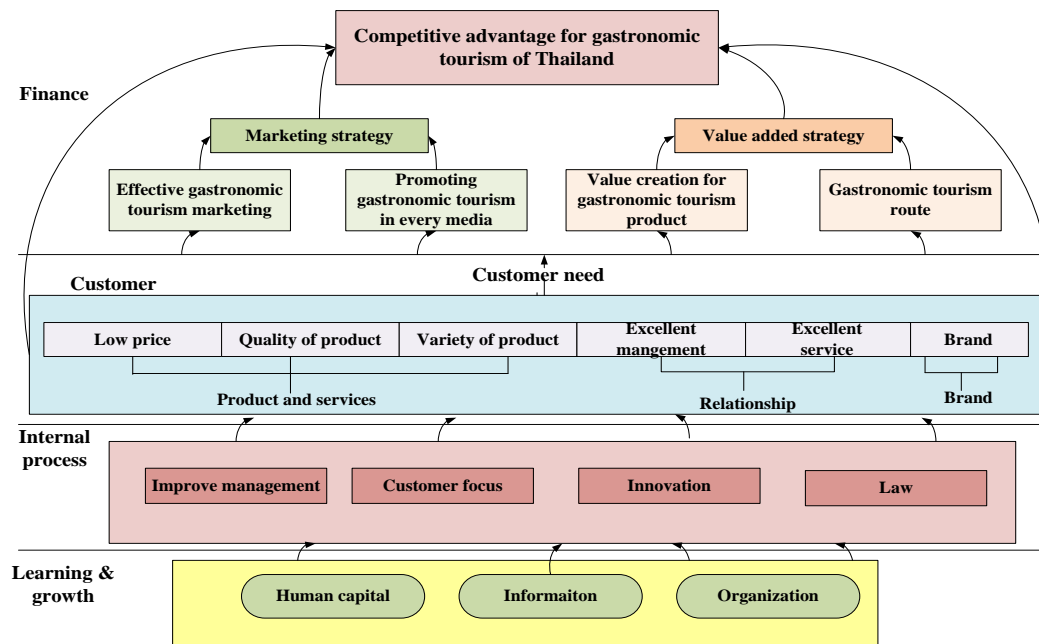


Figure 6 Strategy map of gastronomic tourism in Thailand

✚ Strategy of gastronomic tourism implication for Thailand

The vision of gastronomic tourism in Thailand was 'The hub of gastronomic tourism in ASEAN'. There were 4 strategies consisting of:

Strategy 1. Develop the capacity of tourism and food business in order for Thailand to become the hub of gastronomic tourism in ASEAN. This strategy focuses on educating gastronomic tourism businesses especially to develop food innovation, defined the history of food and products, improve management in business, focus on the customer, develop local strong brands and develop business networking.

Strategy 2. Research and create new knowledge about gastronomic tourism in ASEAN. In order to create new knowledge about gastronomic tourism, research should be conducted and developed especially at universities using local wisdom.

Strategy 3. Support and promote the marketing of Thailand's gastronomic tourism. This strategy is the integration between national policy, regional policy and local policy together for promoting and marketing gastronomic tourism in every level. Moreover, they should develop gastronomic tourism brands at national, regional and local levels and promote them to become strong brands.

Strategy 4. Develop co-ordination between government, business and community in order to develop gastronomic tourism. Gastronomic tourism is the collaboration between stakeholders including government officers, tourism businesses, and the local community to work together as a network to develop gastronomic tourism to become more effective and efficient.

There were 12 projects in the strategy plan

1. Training in the gastronomic tourism business
2. Develop the gastronomic tourism role

3. Training in the gastronomic tourism business, for business management, support for English, so Thailand can become the hub of gastronomic tourism of ASEAN
4. Support Thai cooking classes/ Thai cooking schools
5. Develop innovation from information to support gastronomic tourism
6. Promote innovations in gastronomic tourism
7. Research for new knowledge to develop gastronomic tourism
8. Develop an integrated marketing plan to support Thai gastronomic tourism
9. Proactively promote gastronomic tourism by using social media marketing
10. Proactively promote Thai cooking schools for International tourists
11. Promote gastronomic tourism by brand ambassadors
12. Develop a gastronomic tourism community model

CONCLUSION

Gastronomic tourism is a travel experience, the enjoyment of prepared food, beverages, and other related food activities resulting in a great and memorable gastronomic experience including the consumption of local food, cuisine, meals and eating style together with a tourism experience of learning with gastronomy tourist attraction, culture, life style, ethos religion and joining a cooking class. The trend of gastronomic tourist is increasing therefore the strategy to support should be developed. This paper illustrated the strategy of gastronomic tourism for Thailand and the vision of 'the hub of gastronomic tourism in ASEAN' There were four strategies including (1) develop the capacity of tourism and food business in order for Thailand to become the hub of gastronomic tourism in ASEAN (2) research and create new knowledge about gastronomic tourism in ASEAN (3) support and promote the marketing of Thailand's gastronomic tourism and (4) develop co-ordination between the government, business and community. There were 12 projects in the strategy plan to implement in order to gain a competitive advantage for gastronomic tourism in ASEAN. Moreover, after implementing the strategy plan it should be evaluated for continuous improvement.

CONCLUSIONS

We can say that for 1m³ M20 grade of concrete consumption of fine aggregate is 775.96 kg. Here in specimen M-3 we replace fine aggregate by 24.62 kg of crumb rubber for 1m³M20 grades of concrete. So, we can say that up to 15% foundry sand utilized for economical and sustainable development of concrete. Uses of crumb rubber in concrete can reduce the harmfulness to the environment and produce a 'greener' concrete for construction. An innovative supplementary Construction Material is formed through this study.

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