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Highlighting Cultural Heritage and Culinary for Mas Tourism Village: An Event of Media Promotion

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Abstract

This study explores the potential of Mas Tourism Village, Ubud, Gianyar-Bali by emphasizing its rich cultural heritage and distinctive local culinary traditions as strategic assets for sustainable tourism development. As rural tourism continues to evolve, integrating authentic cultural experiences with gastronomic offerings has become a key approach in attracting diverse tourist segments. The research highlights how community-based cultural events and curated culinary promotions can enhance destination image and visitor engagement. Through qualitative analysis and participatory observation during a media promotion event, this study demonstrates the role of cultural and culinary narratives in strengthening local identity and promoting inclusive economic growth. Findings suggest that well-organized promotional activities not only elevate the visibility of Mas Tourism Village but also contribute to the preservation of intangible cultural assets and support community empowerment. The article concludes with practical recommendations for stakeholders in tourism development to utilize heritage and culinary uniqueness as tools for strategic marketing and sustainable rural tourism initiatives.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage; Culinary Tourism; Mas Tourism Village; Media Promotion; Community Empowerment

Introduction

Tourism villages in Indonesia have emerged as a strategic model for inclusive and sustainable tourism development, particularly in rural areas rich in cultural and natural resources (hariyadi et al, 2024; Utami, et al, 2023; Safari et al, 2023; Hardjosoekarto & Lawang, 2021; Purnomo et al, 2020). Among these, Mas Tourism Village in Gianyar, Bali, stands out for its renowned woodcarving traditions, vibrant cultural identity, and rich culinary heritage (Sari, 2025; Mahendra, 2024; Mantra, 2024; Supartini et al, 2024). These elements not only reflect the living traditions of the local community but also offer unique experiences for domestic and international visitors seeking authentic, immersive travel (Khater et al,



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2025; Jing & Loang, 2024; Manley et al, 2023; Kastenholz & Gronau, 2022; Seeler et al, 2022; Carvalho et al, 2022).

Gastronomy tourism has emerged as a rapidly expanding niche within the broader tourism industry, attracting increasing scholarly and policy attention due to its potential to foster sustainable local development and support cultural preservation (Sheoran, 2025; Baysal & Bilici, 2024; Jimenez et al, 2024; Sorato, 2024; Sio et al, 2024; Gündüz et al, 2024; Azmi et al, 2023; Rivza et al, 2022). This study critically examines the dynamics of gastronomy tourism development in Bali, Indonesia, a region renowned for its diverse culinary traditions and status as a prominent international tourist destination. By integrating culinary experiences with the island's rich cultural heritage, gastronomy tourism serves not only as a medium for promoting local identity but also as a platform for facilitating authentic and meaningful interactions between visitors and host communities (Widjanarko et al, 2004; Park & Widyanta, 2022). Such integration underscores the strategic value of gastronomy tourism in enhancing destination distinctiveness and supporting inclusive, community-based tourism development.

The growing popularity of gastronomy tourism is largely driven by travelers' increasing interest in experiencing authentic flavors and culinary traditions rooted in local culture (Park et al, 2023; Hernández-Rojas et al, 2022). In response, destinations across the globe have begun to recognize the substantial economic potential of promoting gastronomy tourism, resulting in strategic initiatives aimed at showcasing local food and beverage products. Nevertheless, the effective development of gastronomy tourism necessitates a comprehensive and context-sensitive understanding of the complex interrelations among cultural heritage, economic value, and principles of sustainability (Ye et al, 2024; Azzopardi et al, 2023; Hariram et al, 2023). A holistic approach is therefore essential to ensure that gastronomic initiatives not only generate economic benefits but also preserve cultural identity and support long-term community wellbeing.

Bali, internationally acclaimed for its cultural richness and natural beauty, has increasingly embraced gastronomy tourism as a strategic avenue to promote its authentic culinary identity. However, the island's shift from a predominantly agrarian society to one centered on tourism has led to significant socio-cultural and environmental transformations, influencing not only its economic structures but also its culinary landscape (Putra et al, 2025; Suyadnya et al, 2025). This transition was notably shaped by anthropological narratives—particularly those of Clifford Geertz—who portrayed Bali as a 'Garden of Eden' from the 1970s to the early 2000s. Such idealized representations contributed to a surge in tourism development, catalyzing profound changes in the island's social fabric and traditional lifeways.

In the context of increasing global interest in cultural and culinary tourism, the integration of local heritage and gastronomy into destination branding has become a vital component of tourism promotion. According to Del Soldato & Massari (2024), cultural heritage and food tourism can serve as powerful tools for sustainable development, community empowerment, and identity preservation. However, the potential of such assets often remains underutilized without strategic promotional efforts that engage both media and market audiences.

This study seeks to highlight the cultural and culinary potentials of Mas Tourism Village through a focused media promotion event. The event is designed not only to showcase the artistic and gastronomic richness of the village but also to serve as a platform for strengthening its image in the competitive tourism landscape. By examining how media exposure and event-based promotion can amplify the visibility of local culture, this research aims to contribute to the discourse on heritage-based rural tourism marketing and sustainable destination development.

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Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach supported by elements of participatory action research (PAR) to explore and promote the cultural and culinary potential of Mas Tourism Village through a targeted media promotion event. The study was conducted in Mas Village, Ubud, Gianyar Regency, Bali, which is renowned for its traditional woodcarving, cultural heritage, and emerging culinary scene rooted in local wisdom.

Primary data were collected through field observations, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) involving key stakeholders such as local artisans, culinary practitioners, community leaders, tourism village managers, and representatives from the Gianyar Tourism Office. These methods aimed to obtain in-depth insights into local traditions, culinary practices, and community expectations regarding sustainable tourism promotion. Secondary data were obtained from local government reports, previous research studies, tourism development plans, and cultural archives relevant to Mas Village and Balinese tourism in general. These materials helped contextualize the findings and align the event with regional tourism strategies.

The study culminated in the design and implementation of a media promotion event, including culinary exhibitions, cultural performances, and live cooking demonstrations, all of which were documented and disseminated through digital platforms, including social media and local tourism websites. The evaluation of the event's impact involved informal surveys and participant feedback, which were analysed thematically to assess the effectiveness of the promotional strategies in strengthening local identity and attracting broader tourist interest. Ethical considerations were ensured by obtaining informed consent from all participants and respecting local cultural sensitivities throughout the research process.

Research Findings

Data analysis and compilation

Supplementary data visualization

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the development of gastronomy tourism in Mas Tourism Vilage, Ubud, Gianyar-Bali, Indonesia. These insights were derived through a combination of qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, participatory workshops, focus group discussions, and systematic site observations. The data collection and analysis were conducted over a defined timeframe to ensure depth, validity, and triangulation of information. The research timeline is detailed in Table 1.

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Table 1. Research Timeline.

Activity
Time Frame
Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders

March – April 2025

The research findings emphasize the pivotal role of cultural heritage and gastronomy in enhancing the attractiveness and identity of Mas Tourism Village, Bali. Through qualitative data collection methods—namely stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, workshops, and on-site observations—several key themes emerged:

1.Strong Cultural Identity as a Tourism AssetMas Village possesses a rich cultural heritage, particularly in traditional woodcarving, ceremonial practices, and local wisdom rooted in Hindu-Balinese philosophy. These cultural assets are not only integral to the community's identity but also serve as unique attractions for cultural tourism. Stakeholders agree that integrating traditional

Observational data collection through site visits (twice a month)

May – June 2025

July 2025

July 2025



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- narratives into tourism events fosters a sense of authenticity and pride among residents and enhances visitor engagement.
- 2. Untapped Potential of Local Culinary TraditionsLocal cuisine, including traditional Balinese dishes such as *lawar*, *babi guling*, and *jaja Bali* (Balinese cakes), remains underutilized as a tourism resource. While many households still practice culinary traditions, their promotion in tourism packages and village events is limited. Culinary heritage was identified as an opportunity to diversify tourism experiences and provide economic benefits to local women and home-based enterprises.
- 3. Community Participation and OwnershipActive involvement of the local community was found to be a critical success factor for tourism development. Workshops and group discussions revealed a strong willingness among residents to be involved in the planning and implementation of tourism-related events, particularly those highlighting culture and food. However, challenges such as limited capacity in event management and digital promotion were acknowledged.
- 4. Media Events as Strategic Promotion ToolsThe study underscores the effectiveness of media promotion—particularly through digital storytelling and social media platforms—as a means to elevate the visibility of Mas Village. The pilot event, which combined cultural performances, culinary showcases, and influencer coverage, succeeded in attracting media attention and increasing tourist interest. Respondents noted that such integrated promotional activities provide both short-term exposure and long-term branding value for the village.
- 5. Sustainability through Heritage-Based TourismEmphasis on authenticity and community-based approaches aligns well with the principles of sustainable tourism. Participants expressed concern about the risk of over-commercialization but also believed that by preserving and showcasing their cultural and culinary heritage, Mas Village could position itself as a model for sustainable rural tourism.

Event Background

Mas Tourism Village emphasizes the preservation and promotion of Balinese cultural heritage through its renowned woodcarving traditions, traditional architecture, and community-based art practices. The village also offers authentic culinary experiences rooted in local ingredients and ancestral recipes, allowing visitors to engage with Balinese culture through taste and tradition. By integrating cultural artistry and gastronomy, Mas Village creates a unique tourism appeal that supports sustainable development and empowers local artisans and culinary entrepreneurs. Through an event entitles "Highlighting Cultural Heritage and Culinary for Mas Tourism Village", Mas Tourism Village presents a distinctive opportunity to promote sustainable tourism by highlighting its rich cultural heritage and culinary traditions. Known as one of Bali's most prominent centres for woodcarving, the village embodies centuries-old craftsmanship that is deeply rooted in spiritual and aesthetic values. Visitors can explore traditional Balinese architecture, observe artisans at work, and even participate in hands-on cultural workshops. Complementing this artistic heritage is the village's vibrant culinary landscape, featuring locally sourced ingredients and recipes passed down through generations. Traditional dishes are prepared and served by local communities, offering immersive gastronomic experiences that reflect the region's identity and hospitality. By integrating cultural artistry with authentic culinary offerings, Mas Village not only enhances its tourism appeal but also empowers local artisans and food producers, contributing to community-based economic development and long-term cultural preservation.

The event was carried out on behalf of Indonesian Business Woman's Association that concern on cultural heritage preservation (attachment is enclosed). The Tourism Division of the Indonesian Tourism Association (IWAPI) held a tourism promotion campaign in 38 provinces across Indonesia, emphasizing IWAPI's identity as a driving force for cultural transformation through digital platforms and illustrating the continuity between tourism, culture, and digital technology. This program was also



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considered a work program in the Regional Representative Council (DPD) activity report. The objectives of this activity are:

- 1. To increase the visibility of local tourist destinations and creative economy products based on local wisdom through digital platforms.
- 2. To promote sustainable tourism and support women's creative economy.
- 3. To educate tourism businesses and MSMEs about digital marketing and ecotourism.
- 4. To increase local community involvement in tourism and creative economy promotion efforts.

Implementation Strategy & Methodology (1) Create a Themed Monthly Campaign, which includes sustainable nature tourism, Indonesian cuisine, traditional arts & culture, local creative economy Products, agribusiness (if applicable); (2) Collaboration with Influencers and Communities that is partner with travel bloggers, influencers, and tourism communities to expand the campaign's reach; (3) Digital content creation, such as video storytelling, educational reels, and live sessions with creative entrepreneurs; (4) Digital training that includes digital storytelling, workshops for tourism destination managers, tour guides, and MSMEs; (5) Utilization of e-commerce features like use Instagram shopping to support the sale of local products. (6) Digital content, such as Instagram Posts & Stories (feature top destinations and local products, reels & video storytelling (sustainable nature tourism, Indonesian cuisine, traditional arts & culture, local creative economy products, agro-business.

Event Highlight

Local Culinary Potential of Mas Tourism Village

The local culinary potential of Mas Tourism Village is deeply rooted in Balinese traditions and reflects the village's cultural identity, agricultural heritage, and community-based practices. Culinary offerings in Mas Village feature authentic Balinese dishes such as *ayam betutu* (marinated chicken steam), *lawar* (spiced vegetable and chicken meat mix), and *sate lilit* (minced chicken meat satay), often prepared using fresh ingredients sourced directly from local farms and home gardens. These dishes are not only rich in flavour but also carry symbolic meanings tied to religious rituals and social customs. The communal preparation and serving of food during ceremonies exemplify the strong social cohesion and hospitality of the local community. With the growing interest in experiential and culinary tourism, Mas Village holds significant potential to develop its gastronomy as a key attraction, offering visitors participatory experiences such as cooking classes, food tours, and cultural dining events. Leveraging this potential can strengthen the local economy, preserve intangible cultural heritage, and support sustainable rural tourism development.



Figure 1. Local culinary potential of Mas Tourism Village

Independent Local Community for Developing Mas Tourism Village

Management of the Mas tourism village through the application of a tour-cooperation system by local travel agent have promoted the tourism village. Tour guides are suggested to follow a fixed schedule for all handling event activities in the tourism village. Tour guides, as supporters of the local culture, are very keen to get the opportunity to attend if at any time there is a cultural heritage event. This cultural event is part of the life of the Balinese people, who are predominantly Hindu. Even tourism developed in Bali is cultural tourism based on Balinese culture inspired by Hinduism.

Starting from the development of sustainable tourism related to the management of the Mas tourism village together with a tour guide returned to the village to develop the tourism village. One of the tour guides is I Made Mendra Astawa, an English-speaking tour guide who now serves as Chair of the Tourism Village Communication Forum (Forkom Dewi). Mendra, who spoke when he was inaugurated as Chair of the Forkom Dewi for the 2019-2024 period, was committed to synergizing with local and regional governments in promoting Bali Tourism Villages and maintaining the continuity of its culture.



Figure 2. Tourism Village Communication Forum (Forkom Dewi), Bali Province

In the future, Mendra plans to revise the organization's rules of law, establish cooperation with the central/regional government, provide guidance, and synergize with universities, banks, and other stakeholders. "Continuing the 2nd Village Award work program and village economic fair, compiling tourist village guidebooks, making Tourism Village catalogs/tabloids both printed and online, and building a joint website www.desabali.com.

Regarding the strategy of Forkom Dewi to attract the tourist market, Mendra, in an interview, stated as follows:

"Tourism is like a double-edged sword, if managed properly it will be able to provide community welfare and maintain, preserve culture and creativity as a tourist destination of choice. If mismanaged, will be able to damage a nation's cultural fabric in a short time. Therefore, implementation of community empowerment through community participation and important

elements (stakeholders) in the corridor of good village governance, which operationally must reach the sides of increasing institutional capacity aimed at building themselves together (togetherness in collective action), strengthening capital in the "village building" paradigm (Interview, July 02, 2025).

The essence of developing a tourist village is the empowerment of local communities so that the community is actively involved in tourism development in their own villages, especially with the Russian tourist market as an emerging market, as stated by Mendra in the following interview excerpt.

"So far, the European market that stays is dominated by French, German, Italian and Polish tourists. In the future, efforts will be made to attract more Russian tourists to spend two or three days of vacation apart from staying at luxurious hotels in the Nusa Dua area. Usually, these Russian tourists mostly only do village tours through tours sold by travel agents with foreign representatives. If the tourism village marketing strategy is successful, equity will be realized from the corridor of sustainable tourism development (Interview, July 02, 2025).

Mendra's statement is a potential that can be developed in the future for the Russian tourist market share. Collective action in a climate of togetherness in welcoming Russian tourists to the village involving residents as political entities are expected to foster a "new solidarity," which then strengthens social capital in rural communities through "social learning" activities. This stage of the social learning process, according to Habermas (2007), can be arranged according to the logic of development and which institutionalizes new stages of the community learning process. The process of empowering rural communities to achieve these goals can be done in various ways, one of which is through the tourism sector with its four pillars which include destinations, industry, promotions, and institutions, as shown in Figure 3 below.

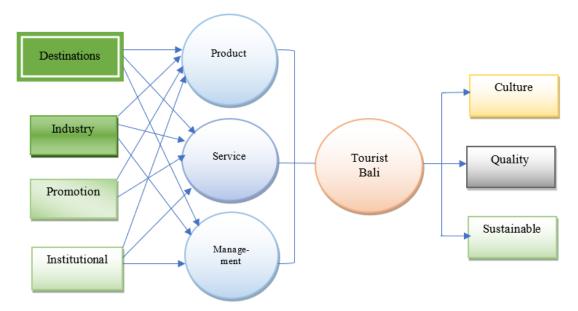


Figure 3. Four Pillars of Tourism in Tourist Village Development

In addition to the formation of Forkom Dewi under the auspices of the Bali Tourism Council or Disparda, the Tour Guides who are members of the Bali Russia Guide Division under the auspices of the tour guide association or DPD HPI Bali have established themselves as an association of tour guides with Russian language specialists under the name Giddy Bali (in Russian which means Bali tour guide). Giddy Bali has formed a WhatsApp group to get Russian tourists by contacting tourists who have been handled

to conduct tours and stay in tourist villages. This is a very good synergy between Forkom Dewi and Giddy Bali for the development of sustainable tourism through empowerment and participation of local communities. Some of the activities that can be done in tourist villages such as trekking, farming, dancing, and reading the Balinese alphabet as shown in Figure 4 below.



Figure 4. Activities that Tourists Can Do in Tourist Villages

Conclusion

This study highlights the strategic potential of integrating cultural heritage and culinary assets in the promotion and development of Mas Tourism Village, Bali. The findings demonstrate that the village's rich artistic traditions and diverse culinary practices can serve as powerful tools for sustainable tourism development, particularly when supported by effective community engagement and media promotion strategies.

By organizing a media-focused promotional event, the village was able to showcase its unique identity to a wider audience, strengthen local pride, and stimulate interest among tourists seeking authentic cultural and gastronomic experiences. Moreover, the study affirms that such initiatives, when grounded in community participation and cultural sensitivity, not only enhance tourism appeal but also contribute to the preservation of intangible heritage and the economic empowerment of local residents.

The results further underscore the need for capacity building, strategic collaborations, and long-term planning to ensure that tourism development remains inclusive, culturally rooted, and environmentally sustainable. As a model of community-based tourism, Mas Village offers valuable insights for other rural destinations aiming to leverage their heritage and local cuisine in a competitive and sustainable tourism landscape.

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