

## Storytelling in Thai Gastronomy: Strategic Promotion for Sustainable Global Tourism

**Suwitcha Niamsorn**

Suan Dusit University, Thailand

**Witthaya Inpongpan**

Suan Dusit University, Thailand

### Abstract:

Thailand National Strategic Plan 2018-2037 emphasizes on promoting Thailand tourism, a policy aimed at upgrading tourism products and services to generate revenue in various dimensions. It focuses on collaboration across all sectors, including government agencies, the private sector, educational institutions, and the general public. Thailand's tourism initiatives are designed to meet the diverse needs of travelers while maintaining the country's distinctive identity, traditions, and cultural heritage.

This research contributes to the implementation of the National Strategic Plan, aiming to achieve its established goals. The objectives of this research were: 1) to explore the tourism behavior and Thai food consumption preferences and style of both domestic and international tourists and 2) to distill strategic approaches to promote and present Thai food to quality tourist. This study employs a mixed-method approach. Quantitative research, utilizing online and paper-based questionnaires, aims to comprehend the overall experiences and behaviors of tourists. Samples are 726 domestic and international tourists who have traveled in Thailand. Qualitative research, involving multi-disciplinary 13 experts brainstorming sessions, seeks to gain in-depth understanding and develop strategies for promoting Thai cuisine. This comprehensive methodology allows for a holistic exploration of the subject, combining broad insights from tourist surveys with specialized knowledge from industry experts to formulate effective strategies for enhancing the global recognition of Thai food.

Surprisingly, the survey results reveal that tourists prioritize food safety and hygiene over other aspects such as taste, presentation, or dining atmosphere. This finding underscores the paramount importance of health and cleanliness considerations in tourists' food preferences and choices. Furthermore, the research findings indicate that tourists show greater interest in the history, origin, narratives and sustainable aspects associated with the food than in its ingredients, preparation methods, or pricing. This highlights the significance of cultural storytelling and heritage in enhancing the culinary experience for tourists. Additionally, the study emphasizes the potency of electronic media as a powerful tool for effectively promoting and disseminating information about Thai cuisine. These digital platforms not only enhance the efficiency of promotional efforts but also significantly increase the appeal and engagement of the content being shared.

This study concludes that the meticulous arrangement of Thai food sets, emphasizing the dishes' origins, production processes, and the harmonious composition of flavors within cultural contexts, represents a significant culinary cultural asset. This gastronomic wisdom, embodying intergenerational lifestyle transmission, along with the dissemination of balanced meal composition and cooking techniques, forms the essence of Thai food culture. These elements, combined with effective storytelling, constitute an excellent strategy for showcasing Thai identity and taste to a global