

Native Specialty Foods of Selected Restaurants in Batangas City

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the native specialty foods of selected restaurants in Batangas City. More specifically, it aimed to present the specialty foods of Batangas City; to know the social and economic benefits of having Batangas City native specialty foods. This research was done through descriptive – qualitative method using interview as the main data-gathering instrument. The study revealed that the famous native restaurants in Batangas City are A&M Village Restaurant, Sawali Restaurant and The Only Place. The benefits of having native restaurants include social responsibility, more job opportunities for the residents which can improve their social condition. The promotion of Batangas City specialty foods as an attraction makes the tourism industry of Batangas Province more appealing and competitive. It awakens the people's awareness to economic and socio-cultural changes with an insight that Batangas City specialty food can be part of culinary tourism and can be a tourist attraction. Provincial Government of Batangas may have a closer coordination with its local government units to enhance culinary tourism. Likewise, promotion activities that may increase the awareness of local residents and visitors towards native specialty food may be designed. Program may be implemented as well to enhance culinary tourism in Batangas City such as promoting local products and others.

I. INTRODUCTION

Hence, to the residents of Batangas City, the study may help boost the popularity of special foods to specialty foods which may provide additional income and business opportunities for them. To the Faculty members of the College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management, the study's results would serve as additional teaching reference. To the HRA students, this study may yield knowledge in dealing with the specialty food here in Batangas. To the DOT office, this study will serve as their reference for future study most specially in assessing the different specialty foods and culinary tourism in Batangas City. Finally, to the future researchers, the findings of this research may provide some insights on Batangas City specialty food.

There are two categories of cuisine: one is that which should be sampled in its native land because the raw materials upon which they depend for their ingredients are found only in that particular country;

and the other is that national cuisine which can be successfully repeated anywhere because the style, technique and the ingenious method totals a unique gastronomy (George Lang of George Lang Corp, 2006). Generally, native cuisine is mainly based on native food ingredients with variations according to regional preferences. Its preparation is simple although the ingredients are many. It is easily adaptable to foreign culinary preferences (Laquian, 2005).

Similarly, specialty food is that which is particularly prized within a given culture. They are often rare food that are difficult to obtain or prepare and as a result may only be served for special occasions often, the variety or difficulty to prepare a dish causes it to be comparatively more expensive than other local food. In the province of Batangas, there are lots of foods which may be considered as specialty food like lechon, kapeng barako, sinaing na tulingan, dulong and maliputo. Batanguenos are skilled cooks, and fiestas around the towns and barrios will show you their competence in cooking (Lorica, et.al. 2008).

Specialty food encompasses food and beverage that cater or serve a national, cultural, ethnic or niche market. This includes organic, sustainable, locally sourced, artisanal, kosher, halal, country-specific and health foods. In classifying specialty foods, consider both the types of ingredients and the production process (Telfer, 2002).

According to Rombauer (2005), a specialty cuisine exemplifies quality, innovation and style in their category. Their specialty nature derives from some or all of the following characteristics: their originality, authenticity, ethnic or cultural origin, specific processing, ingredients, limited supply, distinctive use, extraordinary packaging, or specific channel of distribution or sale. Meanwhile, Field (2004) claims that specialty cuisine includes unique recipe from the country or region of origin and prepared from scratch with the finest ingredients by artisan chefs, with healthy and satisfying culinary creation full of original flavors.

Specialty cuisines are therefore a confidential property of a food establishment in order for them to be unique in the food industry. Some of the recipes are shared but still special ingredients are not given. Nonetheless, regional cuisines' are pride of the place and by establishing privacy to the recipe they can protect the specialty cuisines' identity (Field 2004).

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study determined the potential of the native specialty Foods of selected restaurants in Batangas City. More specifically, it aimed to present the profile of Batangas City, determine the contribution of Batangas native cuisines to its tourism industry in terms of social and economic benefits and propose a plan of action to promote Batangas City as a food specialty destination.

III. MATERIALS AND METHOD

The descriptive – qualitative method of research was used in the study. Descriptive method as a type of survey is concerned with ascertaining the condition prevailing in a group of cases. According to Buns and Grove (2003), descriptive method research is the exploration and description of phenomena in real life

situation. It provides accurate account of characteristics of particular individuals, meanings; describes what exists, determines the frequency with which something occurs and categorizes information.

On the hand other, qualitative research also known as naturalistic inquiry, is developed within the social and human experiences. The aim of this method is to investigate the meaning of social phenomena as experienced by the people themselves. The respondents of the study include the Tourism Officer of Batangas City, the Provincial Tourism Officer and three restaurant owners. The respondents were randomly selected and chosen based on the limitation of the study. The main instrument used in the study was the interview guide done by the researchers. The instrument was validated by the researchers' adviser Dr. Amada G. Banaag and Ms. Rhea Corina B. Mejia. The interview guide is composed of ten questions. In the preparation for the first draft of the interview guide, the researchers utilized library resources. When the first draft of the interview guide was made, it was presented to the research adviser for further improvement.

After gathering all materials for conducting the interview, the researchers proceeded with the interview. The researchers ensured their respondents of the confidentiality of their responses. The gathered data were then analyzed and interpreted.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Specialty Restaurants

People venture into owning a business for many reasons. Some prefer to be their own boss, for others running and operating a business might fulfill a lifelong dream, some people become entrepreneurs following a job loss; others may inherit the business; and some may have the talent in specific areas that can seize an opportunity to capitalize on that talent. Whatever the reason for opening a business, it is critical to educate oneself about every aspect of the business. The unique hospitality industry requires that those who enter it as a career be passionate about serving others. The restaurant business is a major part of that industry.

According to the three restaurant owners, they chose restaurant as a business because cooking is their passion and it is a good investment. Eating is at the top priority our restaurants offers wide range of eating or ordering options for our customers. Customers can dine-in, take-out and if one is in a hurry, he/she can just drive-thru and make an order. The lifestyles of most people are not to cook at home for convenience. Most people love to eat food but some doesn't have the time to prepare meals that is why they are going to our restaurants to buy and eat some food. Two of the restaurant owners said that they serve native cuisine, chinese cuisine and seafoods. The other one said that they only serve native food and seafood. According to the restaurant owners, their specialty food are beef kaldereta, crispy pata, native food and seafood.

Moreover, a specialty food plays an important part in a store's merchandising plan. These food differentiates ones' store from competitors. They will be responsive to the community needs and if properly merchandized, they will increase gross margins and store sales. Therefore, restaurants should create a unique, memorable dining experience to build excitement and develop a competitive advantage. In addi-

tion, unlike other travel activities and attractions; cuisine is available year-round, anytime of the day and in any weather. The restaurants' best sellers are beef kaldereta, crispy pata, patatim and nilasing na hipon, crispy pata, sisig and ginataang igat. Each of them has its own mark on customers.

The first restaurant owner said that they promote their restaurant "by word of mouth" and by having a website. The second one said that they do not promote their restaurant because their restaurant is well known. And according to the third restaurant owner, they promote their restaurant through radio and televisions advertisements and through distributing the flyers.

The purpose of advertising is to communicate available goods and services to the market place. There are many forms of advertising. Personal advertising is a business owner having the opportunity to engage others in a one- on-one conversation including speaking to guests already in the establishments, hosting chamber of commerce meetings of mixers and events, making food run to local business or apartment/condominium complex or sponsoring and attending charity events and fund raisers. Impersonal forms of advertising include newspaper, radio and television ads.

The respondents of the study consist of one (1) tourism officer, five (5) restaurant owners. The top five (5) specialty food offered in most restaurants in Batangas City namely kaldereta, pakaskas, nilupak, crispy pata and sisig. It can be concluded that kaldereta is the most commonly known delicacy in their place. Native food ranks second, as seafood third and lastly, by crispy pata and sisig. Most of the respondents said that kaldereta has its extraordinary taste that makes it known. It also guarantees the hundred percent safe and healthy ingredients. Likewise, it makes Batangas City remarkable saleability not only within the city in other places as well. As to the restaurants' crispy pata, they claim it to be is really mouthwatering. Its external part is really crispy and the inside part is very tender. The researchers believe that the way to a tourist's heart is through his or her stomach; hence, through the specialty food of a certain place.

Customers of Specialty Restaurants

There are a number of Batangas City restaurants and good food to enjoy in your trip to Batangas City. Most of them are located strategically along the major road. Also the three restaurant owners said that their usual guests are class A to C who they regard as "matataas na tao", politicians, government company and private sector employees. Furthermore, target market or target audience is a group of people that will basically need or want products and services. It is defined in terms of age, sexual orientation, gender, economic class, religion, ethnicity, or location. This socio-economic grouping process actually allows businesses to create profiles of the typical consumers who will likely buy the products of the restaurant.

As to the potential of their restaurants, the three owners said that their restaurants can be part of culinary tourism because of their competitive price. They have native food, seafood and international cuisine. Additionally, a restaurant can be part of culinary tourism by having unique food. It is about what is unique, authentic and memorable about the delicious specialty food the regions have to tell.

Contributions of Specialty Restaurant

According to the three restaurant owners, the contributions of their restaurant in social benefits are job opportunities to the residents and promotion of native specialty foods of Batangas City as a tourist attraction. While in economic benefits they can help to popularize Batangas City as a culinary destination, there will be increase in demand which is more production and investment resulting to possible economic growth of progression. They are also paying their taxes that may be used by the government in funding projects and also by attracting tourists through these local cuisines. According to the restaurant owners the economic benefit of a restaurant is it creates employment. They also stated that the existence of their business activities influences employment. It can increase income, revenue and taxes. It can also popularize Batangas City.

Restaurant brings social benefits through the government. The contribution of native restaurants in Batangas City in terms of social benefits is they can provide job opportunities to the residents. Restaurant establishments need people to work for them. Restaurants improve the quality of life. People need to work in order to survive, attend to their needs, and satisfy their wants. Restaurants contribute to a more equitable distribution of income. With more entrepreneurial activities provided to the people in the country sides, natives have more work opportunities thus, discouraging them from settling in other places.

Tourism Officers

The tourism officer of Batangas City and the Provincial Tourism Officer said that there is no culinary tourism in Batangas City. Culinary Tourism a unique food and drink experience has the power to lure tourists like museums, recreation and shopping. Culinary tourism is the hottest niche to emerge within the travel industry in years because dining is one of the best ways visitors can get to know a new and exotic locale.

The two tourism officers stated that they are planning to enhance culinary tourism in Batangas City by promoting the local products of Batangas City. Because regional foods and recipes are a major part of what makes one place different from another, restaurants should create unique and memorable food and drink experiences to build excitement and develop a competitive advantage.

Tourism officers said that they are enhancing culinary tourism by providing kalderetang kambing cooking contest during Batangas City Foundation Day. Kalderetang kambing cooking contest will help Batangas City to be part of culinary tourism. In this contest you can taste the famous specialty food of Batangas City.

According to the two tourism officers they are still planning to have culinary tourism in Batangas city. It is important to take full advantage of your region's culinary tourism opportunities by establishing itself as a unique and memorable dining destination that locals will refer visitors and tourists will want to return to again and again.

The two tourism officers said that the famous native restaurants in Batangas City are A&M Village Restaurant, Sawali Restaurant and The Only Place. They stated that famous restaurants are restaurant that

are known and recognized by many people. The name of the restaurant is recognized, perhaps because a well-known chef founded it, or it advertises a lot, or a well-known event occurred on the premises. As claimed by the tourism officer of Batangas City and the provincial tourism officer the specialty food of Batangas City that may turn into an attraction for culinary tourism are suman, sinukmani, nilupak, pakaskas, buchi buchi, sinaing na tulingan and kalderetang kambing.

Specialty food plays an important part in a store's merchandising plan. These foods will differentiate ones' store from the competitors. They will be responsive to the community needs and if properly merchandized, they will increase gross margins and store sales. The tourism officer of Batangas City and the Provincial tourism officer cited that the festivals that may attract tourists are Batangas City Fiesta, Fluvial Procession and the Sublian Festival. Meanwhile, the Batangas City tourism officer said that the percentage of tourists visiting Batangas City is not declared for security measures.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The famous native restaurants in Batangas City are A&M Village Restaurant, Sawali Restaurant and The Only Place. The promotion of Batangas City specialty foods as an attraction makes the tourism industry of Batangas province more appealing and competitive. It awakens the people's awareness to economic and socio-cultural changes with an insight that Batangas City specialty food can be part of culinary tourism and can be a tourist attraction. Native restaurants provide economic benefits to Batangas City through promoting tourism in the place. The benefits of having native restaurant include social awareness and more job opportunities for the residents which can improve their social condition.

The provincial government of Batangas may have a closer coordination with its local government units to enhance culinary tourism. Promotion activities that may increase the awareness of local residents and visitors towards native specialty food may be designed. Programs may be implemented to enhance culinary tourism in Batangas City by promoting the local products, providing contests about different specialty food of Batangas City, advertising the different native food of Batangas City, promoting different festivals in Batangas City, exporting these products to different countries and distributing sample leaflets and brochures of the different native specialty food of Batangas City to tourists and potential customers.

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