

Cassava Product Innovation to Improve Culinary Tourism Appeal in Sukoreno Sentolo Kulonprogo Tourism Village

¹Lulut Budiyo, ²Setyo Prasiyono Nugroho

^{1,2}Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata “AMPTA” Yogyakarta

¹denmas.lulut@yahoo.co.id

²g4n.tiyo@gmail.com

KEYWORDS

cassava products;
culinary
innovation;
culinary tourism;
economic
empowerment;
Sukoreno tourism
village

ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify and develop innovations in cassava products that can increase culinary attractiveness in the Sukoreno Tourism Village, Kulonprogo. As one of the abundant local commodities, cassava has great potentials to be processed into various culinary products that are interesting and have high selling value. The methods used in this research include field observations to understand the condition and potential of cassava, in-depth interviews with local culinary entrepreneurs to gain insight into market needs, and experiments in processing cassava into more creative and innovative culinary products. The research results show that various innovations such as cassava chips with various unique flavors, cassava brownies which give a modern touch to traditional ingredients, and fermented cassava with various flavors, can become a new attraction for tourists. These products not only increase the economic value of cassava but also enrich the culinary choices at Sukoreno Tourism Village. In addition, this innovation plays an important role in empowering the local community's economy through the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which ultimately helps increase community income. The implementation of effective marketing strategies, such as branding and the use of social media and attractive product packaging has also proven to be an important factor in increasing the competitiveness and visibility of cassava products in the wider market. Thus, cassava innovation has a significant role in strengthening the attractiveness of culinary tourism in the Sukoreno Tourism Village and has the potential to become a main commodity in developing sustainable local tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Culinary tourism has great potential in supporting the local economy, especially in tourist villages that have unique culinary specialties. One type of food product that has the potential to be developed in tourist areas is cassava. Cassava, as a local food ingredient that is often found in Indonesia, has potential that can attract tourists (Nehe, 2023: 130-135). The tourist village of Sukoreno, Sentolo, Kulonprogo, which is known for its rich natural and cultural potential, also has the opportunity to develop cassava as a culinary tourism attraction that can increase tourist visits.

The development of processed cassava as a culinary specialty of tourist villages can have a positive impact in increasing the attractiveness of tourist villages (Purwati, et. al., 2024: 132-140). The use of simple but innovative local food ingredients can become a characteristic that differentiates a tourist destination from other places (Wachyuni, Wardhana, and Priyambodo, 2024). According to the previous researchers, cassava-based culinary delights have been proven successful in increasing the economy and tourist attraction in several areas (Samtono and Supriyadi, 2023: 84-93). However, even though cassava has a lot of potential, innovation in its processing in the Sukoreno Tourism Village is still limited and not optimal in attracting tourists' attention.

The importance of innovation in processing cassava as a culinary appeal in this tourist village can be seen from the culinary tourism trend which is increasingly developing in various tourist destinations in Indonesia (Bintari, et. al., 2023: 23-28). A number of studies show that culinary tourism is not only a complement, but also the main factor that attracts visitors to come to an area (Habibah, 2024: 1-10). Therefore, innovation in ways of serving and processing cassava can contribute significantly to attracting tourists to visit Sukoreno Tourism Village.

Furthermore, to develop cassava-based culinary tourism attractions, a cooperation between the village government, local business actors, and the local community are needed (Dewi, et. al., 2024: 563-572). The involvement of all parties is important so that cassava products are not only consumed by tourists, but also become a source of sustainable income for the community. A study conducted by Wirawan and Putu (2021: 1880-1891) states that the success of developing culinary tourism products really depends on collaboration between the government, business actors, and local communities in creating a mutually supportive tourism ecosystem.

This research aims to explore the potential for innovation in cassava products as an effort to increase the appeal of culinary tourism in the Sukoreno Tourism Village. It is also hoped that this research can contribute to designing a strategy for developing culinary tourism based on local food ingredients that is sustainable and has a positive impact on the economy of the local community. This research focuses on innovations in processed cassava products that can create unique culinary experiences for visiting tourists.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore innovations in cassava products in increasing the culinary tourism appeal in Sukoreno Tourism Village. This approach was chosen because it could provide a deep understanding of the local context and the dynamics that occurred among various parties involved in the development of culinary tourism. The data were collected through in-depth interviews with various sources, including village policy makers, culinary entrepreneurs, and tourists who had visited the village. Furthermore, field observation and documentation studies were also carried out to complete the data obtained.

The data of this research were analyzed by following Miles and Huberman (1994), which includes three main stages, namely data collection, data reduction, and data presentation. In the first stage, data were collected through interviews, observations, and related documents. After that, the collected data were reduced to focus on information that was relevant to the research. This reduction process helped in eliminating unnecessary information, thereby producing more focused data. The final stage was data presentation, as the reduced data were arranged in a narrative form that was easy to understand and analyze. Conclusions were drawn iteratively, and to ensure the validity of the results, data triangulation was carried out between the sources and techniques used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Various Innovations in Processing Cassava

Innovation in cassava products in Sukoreno Tourism Village has produced various interesting products and has its own appeal for tourists. One of the superior products was cassava chips with various unique flavors, such as *balado* (chili spiced), cheese, and sweet and spicy. These cassava chips not only maintain the traditional taste, but also provide a modern touch that can attract young consumers and tourists who want to try snacks with a variety of new flavors. The flavor innovation gives an opportunity to create product

differentiation in an increasingly competitive culinary market. By using local cassava as the basic ingredient, this product is able to explore local potential while meeting diverse market tastes.



Figure 1 Cassava Chips
(personal documentation, 2024)

Besides cassava chips, another product that has been successfully processed with innovation is cassava brownies. This product combines traditional ingredients (cassava) with modern techniques in making brownies, producing a soft texture and a sweet but light taste. These cassava brownies have succeeded in attracting tourists who want a unique and different culinary experience. This innovation has also succeeded in changing the public's view of cassava, which is often considered low prestige food, into a more elegant and prestigious ingredient in the culinary world. The use of cassava as a basic ingredient in making brownies gives an added value to the product, especially in creating appeal among the millennial generation and Gen Z who tend to look for food with an attractive appearance and unusual taste.



Figure 2 Cassava Brownies
(personal documentation, 2024)

Fermented cassava (*tape*) is also an innovative product that was developed by adding various flavors, such as durian, chocolate, and vanilla. Adding flavors in fermented cassava provides a new alternative for visitors who want to experience a different sensation from the traditional fermented cassava. The perfect fermentation process combined with creative additional ingredients makes fermented cassava a more attractive snack choice for tourists. The diversity of flavors opens up opportunities for Sukoreno Tourism Village to build a strong and distinctive culinary identity, as well as increasing the attraction of tourists who are interested in tasting various local foods that are innovative and different from other places.



Figure 3 Fermented Cassava
(personal documentation, 2024)

These innovations show that cassava can be processed into various, modern, and appealing products. The innovations not only improve the local economy but also help popularize the typical culinary products of Sukoreno Tourism Village among domestic and international tourists. This success emphasizes the importance of sustainability in developing culinary products based on local ingredients which have great potential if managed properly.

Effective Marketing Strategy

Implementing an effective marketing strategy is the main key in increasing the cassava-based culinary tourism appeal in Sukoreno Tourism Village. One of the marketing strategies implemented is branding which focuses on local identity and product uniqueness. Sukoreno Tourism Village has succeeded in creating strong branding with the theme "Sukoreno's Unique Cassava Culinary". This branding successfully emphasizes the value of local wisdom and the potential of local resources, specifically cassava, which are developed into innovative products. Through this branding, tourists can identify products that not only are of high quality but also have their own characteristics, which make them easy to remember and recognize.

Besides branding, the use of social media also plays an important role in the marketing strategy of Sukoreno Tourism Village. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok are used effectively to introduce various cassava products to a wider audience. With attractive product visualizations, video tutorials on making food, and contents that encourage interaction with followers, social media becomes an effective channel to attract the interest of younger tourists. The digital campaign carried out through local influencers and visitors who shared their experiences online succeeded in increasing awareness of the existence of Sukoreno Tourism Village and its products, while expanding market reach.

Moreover, the application of experience-based marketing is also very effective in promoting cassava products. Visitors who come to the tourism village are not only presented with food products, but are also invited to take part in the process of processing cassava, from selecting ingredients to processing. This experience gives a deep impression and strengthens the appeal of culinary tourism, because tourists not only enjoy the finished product, but also directly experience the process behind making the product. This strategy is successful in creating emotional involvement between visitors and the products they taste, thereby increasing the possibility of tourists returning to visit the Sukoreno Tourism Village.

Overall, the implementation of an integrated marketing strategy among branding, social media, and experience-based marketing has shown significant results in increasing tourist visits to Sukoreno Tourism Village. This proves that effective marketing does not only rely on product promotions, but also creates unique experiences that build emotional connections between tourists and the products offered. With this

strategy, Sukoreno Tourism Village can continue to develop as an attractive and sustainable culinary tourism destination.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that innovations in cassava products in Sukoreno Tourism Village, such as cassava chips with various flavors, cassava brownies, and fermented cassava with various flavors, have great potential to increase the culinary tourism appeal. These products not only utilize abundant local food ingredients, but also combine elements of creativity that can attract the interest of tourists, especially the younger generation. By using simple but innovative products, this village can create culinary characteristics that can differentiate itself from other tourist destinations. The success of this product innovation shows the importance of developing culinary delights based on local ingredients that can support economic development and introduce unique local culture to tourists.

Implementing effective marketing strategies, including strong branding and the use of social media, is an important factor in introducing cassava products to a wider audience. Social media, especially platforms like Instagram and TikTok, play a big role in expanding market reach and attracting tourists to visit. In addition, experience-based marketing, in which tourists are directly involved in the product creation process, successfully creates an emotional attachment between tourists and the product. Therefore, to increase the attractiveness of culinary tourism in Sukoreno Tourism Village, it is important for stakeholders to continue to develop product innovation and strengthen digital marketing that is integrated with authentic tourism experiences.

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