

Exploring marketing strategy of culinary tourism development assignment

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This study focuses on Hong Kong and Singapore, and aims to explore the relationship between food and culinary tourism development strategies, their arresting strategies and contents, and analyze the framework for marketing strategies of developing culinary tourism from an RIB perspective. The methodology is mainly through in-depth interviews with strategy planners in tourism boards, and assisted with content analysis of academic documents and official publications on tourism to explore the marketing strategy of culinary tourism in Hong Kong and Singapore.

The result shows that although Hong Kong and Singapore do not have abundant natural resources to develop more diverse tourism experiences, they do have a diverse food and culture background, and with the combination of tourism ND creativity, they can forge a culinary tourism which is innovative, diverse, and attracts people's attention. Meanwhile, public and private sectors can form strategic alliances to enhance tourism attractiveness through different marketing strategies, and present the image of the destination's culinary culture.

In the final part, this study proposes suggestions on culinary tourism marketing strategies and practices based on the findings above. Key words: Resource-based theory; marketing; strategy; culinary tourism; Hong Kong; Singapore. INTRODUCTION Countries, areas and regions have been zealously devoted to the placement of tourism to Improve their national economy and national Images. Therefore, it is now an important issue to exert natural and cultural resources as bases for tourism planning and strategic development, and connect all forces in social, cultural, and political aspects.

The product portfolio of a tourist destination consists of various visible and invisible products and services, and food is a burgeoning element for the destination to develop tourism (Oakum's, Oakum's, & Impeacher, 2007; Quant & Wang, 2004). Consequently, culinary tourism is not only a to gain a competitive edge (ACTA, 2009). Resource-based theory (RIB) is a concept combining economic theory and strategic theory. It describes that the long term competitiveness of an industry stands in the endowment of its unique resources.

And the resources should be enduring, and hard to imitate or replace (Barney, 1991; Barney, Wright, & Kitchen, 2001; Grant, 1991; Apter, 1993; Porter, 1991; Parallax & Hammer, 1990). A nation is also like a company, and the main resources needed to develop culinary tourism are food and culture (Long, 2004). It is essential to connect the resources with the strategies of tourism development, maximizing the multiplier effect of culinary tourism, and enhance the competitiveness of the nation's culinary tourism development (Fox, 2007; Too & Change, 2000).

And tourism strategies should be market-led (I. E. Tourist demand focused) and product-led (based on the resources of the destination) so as to create a sustainable tourism development (Weaver, 2000; Stokes, 2008). It is the one and only way to create and sustain the competitiveness of a nation's tourism economy. In researches related to resource-based view (RIB) or RBV, many of them tend to focus on the fields of human resource management, economics and finance, entrepreneurship, and international business (Barney et al. 2001; Espies-Rodriguez & Patron-Robbing, 2005). But so far there is no study

conducted to explore the marketing strategy of culinary tourism development from the RIB perspective. Hence it is the main motive of this study. For many countries in Asia, cuisines have become major pull factors to attract tourists, like the situation in Hong Kong and Singapore (Enrich & Newton, 2005; Hong Kong Planning Department, 2008; Singapore Tourism Board, 2007).

Taking Hong Kong as an example, its cuisine is key focus of the travel experience it provides, and also the most important category of the tourist service and products that Hong Kong provides (Skived & Crofts, 2005). As a result, Hong Kong has been dedicated to the marketing and promotion of the cuisines (Oakum's et al. , 2007). Singapore, similar to Hong Kong, proposed the slogan " Singapore: the Food Capital of Asia," and it also treats " food" and " dining out" as major factors in its tourist marketing.

With its unique framework, Singapore crafted related policies to stimulate culinary tourism development (Henderson, 2004). It is evident that culinary tourism has great influence on the tourism development; therefore, this study has three main purposes: (1) to explore the relationship between food and tourism development strategies in Hong Kong and Singapore, (2) to explore Hong Kong and Singapore marketing strategies and contents of culinary tourism, and (3) to analyze the framework for marketing strategies of -2- developing culinary tourism from the RIB perspective.

LITERATURE REVIEW Applied resource-based theory in culinary tourism In The theory of the growth of the firm, Penrose (1959) mentioned that for a company to profit, the company must not only main resources, but also

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effectively exert the distinctive competence of the resources. This can be said to be the pioneer of resource-based theory (Montgomery, 1996). And in the strategic management field, Heartfelt (1984) followed Penrose theory and first proposed the term RIB (resource-based view). He pointed out the usefulness of analyzing firms from the resource side rather than from the product side.

In his view, with proper use of resources and proper management to enhance the efficiency of other competitors cannot have, and create a long-term sustaining competitive advantage. Afterwards, Barney (1986) furthered Wrestler's thesis and proposed that different companies, with different strategic resources, will have different future values, so their performances are affected not only by the competition in the product market, but also by the different resources they hold. As a result, a company should analyze its unique technologies and capabilities before adopting any strategy.

Grant (1991) replaced the term RIB with RIB (resource-based theory) to emphasize that if a company can hold strategic resources that others can't imitate, it can achieve reference higher than its opponents, and that also means holding a sustainable competitive advantage. According to the analysis of Acted, Barrows, and Galvan (2006, p. 621), RIB commonalities could be found its widespread dissemination in academic literature and in management practices and reputation as a mainly strategic management approach.

Therefore, this study has adopted the term RIB instead of just treating it as a view. The focus of strategic management lies in exploring and understanding

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what the companies' competitive advantages are, and how to craft strategies and bring out bright performance accordingly. Barney (1991) pointed out that RIB assumes that resources are heterogeneous in nature and not perfectly mobile, and resources can transform the competitive advantage into a real performance. Also, resources can be categorized into physical capital resource (e. . Technology, equipments, geographic location, material), human capital resource (e. G. Training, experience), and organizational capital resource (formal structure, planning, control, coordination, and informal group relationship). Based on the issues above, Grant (1991) proposed a five-step strategic analysis framework (see Figure 1): first to identify a firm's resources and capabilities, then appraise the firm's rent-generating potential, select a strategy, and then augment and upgrade the firm's resource base.

This will also be the analytical bases of this study. -3- Figure 1 A resource-based approach to strategy analysis: A practical framework Resource: Grant R. M. (1991). The resource-based theory of competitive advantage: Implications for strategy formulation. *California Management Review*, 33(3), p. 1 15. However, from the RIB perspective, for any nation, area or region, food is not only an important resource for culinary tourism development, but also a feature which can come the value-added for the destination (Handsaws, 2000; Teller & Wall, 1996).

Besides, food can also be a sustainable competitive advantage of the destination (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). In order to compete with other popular destinations and to understand or improve culinary tourism planning, it is

important to learn from the best practices, and make one's national planning a benchmark for global best practices (Wolf, 2002; Hall & Sharpies, 2003). Through dynamic marketing activities, tourists can be motivated to purchase local food.

But this will require specific marketing strategies to appeal to potential and target tourists. For example, the planners can have a strategic alliance of food producers, handlers, sellers, hotels, (Teller, 2000). Based on the information above, if we are going to analyze the marketing strategy of culinary tourism development from the RIB perspective, first we have to identify and categorize different resources, evaluate the advantage and disadvantages each competitor holds, and make sure of the opportunities to effectively utilize all resources.

Second, we have to identify the capabilities of the public sectors to make sure that, compared with our competitors, we can be more effective and more devoted in terms of the resources utilized. At the same time, we have to evaluate the potential of the resources and capabilities, of the sustainable competitive advantages, and of being exclusive. Also, we have to check external opportunities, threats, resources, and capabilities, so as to identify the resource gaps which must be filled.

And last, we have to fill the resource gaps to strengthen the resource base. -

4- Culinary tourism In recent years, there is a new form of tourism which regards food- tasting as the major or only purpose, like food and wine tourism, culinary tourism, astronomy tourism or gastronomic tourism, food festival and other related-food activity (Hall & Sharpies, 2003; Hashish's & <https://assignbuster.com/exploring-marketing-strategy-of-culinary-tourism-development-assignment/>

Teller, 2006; Henderson, 2004; Ignition & Smith, 2006; Skived & Crofts, 2005, 2006; Long, 2004; Quant & Wang, 2003; Richards, 2002; Sandwich, 2004). Culinary” and “gastronomy” are often viewed as synonyms, which both mean the cooking skills, food materials, and food preparation skills that can enhance a country or region’s feature cuisine. And in 1998, the term “culinary tourism” was proposed for the first time, referring to the concept that tourists can experience other countries’ cultures or exotic local cultures through tasting their foods (Long, 2004), and the term also generally means that the purpose of traveling is to explore and enjoy the special foods which show the characteristics of the destination, and try the unforgettable delicious cuisines (Wolf, 2002).

After reviewing many definitions in past bibliographies, Ignition and Smith (2006) pointed out that culinary tourism may be defined as “tourism trips during which the purchase or consumption of regional foods (including beverages), or the observation and study of food production (from agriculture to cooking schools) represent a significant motivation or activity” (p. 238). Therefore, the uniqueness of the cuisine of the destination has become the major factor that makes the destination popular and attractive, and it also enhances the country image of its cuisine culture.

METHODOLOGY Documents collection and analysis procedure A few studies on related-food tourism employed approach of content analysis (Boone & Hall, 2004; Boone et al. , 2003; Froth, 2003; Haggler & Corralling, 2000; Oakum’s et al. , 2007). In order to compare and explore marketing strategy of culinary tourism development in Hong Kong and Singapore, this study

used content analysis that was a technique for gathering and analyzing the content of text, and the content refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated (Neumann, 2003, p. 19). According to the protocols identified by Finn, Elliot-White, & Walton (2000) and Neumann (2003), first of all, the aims and objectives stage, up-to-date print and electronic brochures and booklets in English and Chinese were collected from the HOOK and the Singapore Tourism Board and their respective official websites. Videos attached to websites and materials produced officially by national tourism offices were also content analyzed. In the third stage, content-analysis was used to identify and explore marketing strategy of culinary tourism development.

In stage four, the initial results were compared and, when disparities arose, they were analyzed until a consensus was achieved. In the final stage, the results were refined and the research findings were finalized. -5- Major directions of interviews For doing cross check, this study conducted 2 semi-structured interviews with Regional Directors of Hong Kong and Singapore tourism road in Taiwan involved with policy planning and international marketing in tourism destinations.

A list of semi-structured questions ?? informed by the frameworks proposed by food-related tourism literature (e. G. Du Rand et al. , 2003) but more focused in marketing strategy and development?? was drawn up and used as an interview guide. In order to obtain and ensure validity and reliability of data, a letter stating the objective and the interview questions of this study

was then sent to each Director, followed by personal phone calls to schedule the date and time for interview.

Interviews were conducted by the researchers at the interviewees' office and either face-to-face or conducted by telephone, involved both researchers and were taped and transcribed to ensure reliability (Eisenhower, 1989; Wang & Fastnesses, 2007). The interview transcripts were coded and analyzed by each one of the authors separately following RIB (Grant, 1991); however, many codes were derived from the interview guide and thus from the authors' theoretical pre- understanding of the situation (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Building upon the RIB on which this study was based, the participants answer and document literature were coded and classified. Reliability and validity In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the analysis procedure and content, four researchers who are doctoral graduates and majored in tourism and hospitality management carefully reviewed and discussed each text, and then categorized according Hong Kong and Singapore marketing strategies and events based on RIB.

Next, an outside researcher was invited to review all the data and categorize them. The results were compared for consistency. The results show a consistency of 92% between the two reviews, indicating a reliability of over 80 percent (Lethal & Sara', 1984). Meanwhile, three culinary tourism professionals were invited to evaluate content reliability (Standardizing & Gaur, 2004). Researchers and all three professionals worked together to

compare and negotiate the results with which they disagree, and categories were finalized when agreement was reached.

Finally, according to the evaluation results, all three professionals agreed the present study includes all current marketing strategies for culinary tourism, and therefore that it has considerable content reliability. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION Identify and classify the country culinary resources
Gastronomy and food culture For countries lack of natural resources needed for culinary tourism activities, the key point is to make the best choice for the food available.

And the choices can show the composition of the geographical position, -6- Hong Kong and Singapore lack the natural resources, and their agricultural development is restricted. But also because of their geographical position, they have unique and multivalent food cultures, which become the core resource for these two places to develop culinary tourism. On the level of products for culinary tourism, food cuisine is the physical products exemplifying culinary culture, and the content of culinary culture is the brand story formulating culinary identities.

For example, in Hong Kong, "tea restaurant" culture, can be said to be the representing cuisine exemplifying this integration and creation. Yum Chaw and "Dim Sum" are definitely not original "traditional" cuisines, but they surely set an identification mark for Hong Kong cuisines. Similarly, Singapore culinary culture reflects the influences of each, but also integrates them into one, to make Singapore culinary culture special and different. Hong Kong cuisines are basically exotic and diversified (2-H-45)... Hong Kong is a

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metropolitan, it has exotic food from all over the world, along with its local and Chinese dishes.

Therefore, the culinary culture in Hong Kong is rich and abundant (2- H-17). Dim Sum, for example, is a major culinary culture (2-H-57). Thinking of Singapore distinguishing feature, I think its cuisine is a major one (I-S-4). Tourists can experience our culture through our food (I-S-13). Every cuisine has its special way of cooking. Take the famous Singapore Alaska for example, Malay and Indian cook it differently (I-S-25). The culture and cuisine of Partaken can also be used to develop and promote tourism (I-S-89).

Of course, national, regional, local and ethnic cuisines can show their identifications, and are also tools to preserve and prove their cultures. Famous cuisines can also be symbolic representations of different places (Henderson, 2004). The most famous Singapore cuisines are Hanna Chicken Rice, Back Gut The, and Chill Crab, which can be the feature cuisines that the local residents feel proud of, and also the important themes for Singapore to promote its culinary tourism, and attract tourists to enjoy his classic must-eats.

From the cultural aspect, food is a part of culture, a distinguishing element of different regions and communities, and an important cornerstone of cultural identity. In 2004, ten cuisines were chosen to be the top 10 representative food of Singapore: Stay, Back Gut The, Chill/Pepper Crab, Hanna Chicken Rice, Root Canal & The Atari, Alaska, Curry Fish Head, Fried Key Two, Rajah, and Carrot Cake (I-S-33)!

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Facilities To develop culinary tourism, in addition to software resources like cuisines and culinary cultures, hardware resources are also needed for cuisines to present, eke food processing, food -7- stores, food-related museums, restaurants, urban restaurant districts, and food routes etc (Ignition & Smith, 2006). In Hong Kong, besides all those Chinese and exotic restaurants everywhere, there are also food districts (e. G. Causeway bay, KowLoon city, This Shah Thus et c. , effectively distributing culinary resources and providing Similarly, Singapore cuisines reflect the best part of the multivalent and multicultural interactions in the past decades on this island state. Therefore, dining is categorized into Sky Dining, Tropical Garden Dining, Waterfront Dining, Romantic Dining, etc. At the same time, there are also food stands and food centers catering prepared food. All these give the culinary experience more diversity (STAB, 2008). Previously, the Singapore government had no control over the food stands in Chinatown (I-S-133).

After re-planning, the look and services of food stands were standardized, with the original local culinary features intact. Now we can be more confident of this culinary service (1 -S-134). Night market is a characteristic of Taiwan, a must-go for tourists visiting Taiwan. Night markets are not only tourist spots of Taiwan, but also a powerful resource (I-S-135). Generally speaking, the culinary cultural context of a country is an important resource for establishing the culinary tourism destination, and also an important background for marketing the brand story of the culinary tourism destination.

At the same time, local feature cuisines should also combine with culinary facilities to build up a cooperative network, enhance the relationship among the core sources of culinary tourism, and maximizing the resource performance of culinary culture and cuisines. Identify the country capabilities for developing culinary tourism After the country ore culinary tourism resources are identified, the second step is to identify the government and related organization's capabilities in utilizing resources and getting people involved.

STAB especially established a Food and Beverage Division to take care of the marketing and development of culinary tourism. This division is in charge of the market, product and industry development, and channel management of Singapore cuisines, with the goal of establishing Singapore as a destination that combines local and international cuisines, dining experiences and night life (Henderson, 2004). Besides, STAB also collaborates with other public sectors to work out plans for famous tourist spots, providing comfortable dining environment and high-quality food that the tourists can enjoy.

Thus it can be seen that the promotion of tourism can't rely on just one -8- certain department. It is important for all related public sectors to collaborate and coordinate, making the best use of all the professions and maximizing the potential of culinary tourism. We work with many organizations (I-S-182), like Ministry of National Development, National Environment Agency, Ministry of Transport, etc (1- S-184). The responsibility to promote tourism belongs to STAB, but it requires cooperation of all related organizations (1 -S-185). Hong Kong also realized that it lives on tourism.

Therefore, the general public in Hong Kong is very cooperative in terms of government tourism promotion activities, and even the entertainers are willing to be the advertising stars for free. It is it was Cathy Pacific that first proposed programs to encourage travels and save tourism. The close cooperation between the public and private sectors in Hong Kong is the most important factor contributing to Hong Gongs success nowadays. For a long time, I think a distinguishing feature of Hong Gongs tourism is that it combines pretty well with private sectors and organizations (2-H-1).

If the government has any idea about promoting tourism, it only has to coordinate with the industry and try to reach a consensus. The private sectors usually response quickly and are willing to cooperate. Besides, they also proposed many great ideas (2-H-2)! Therefore we can know that the public sectors should set up high-level Dooms to handle the establishment and execution of strategies and policies related to culinary ours development, and coordinate other departments or the private human resource and capitals appropriately to make culinary tourism development more complete and comprehensive.

Appraising potential of resources and capabilities for culinary tourism Hong Kong and Singapore are limited in terms of natural resources, but they enjoy abundant and diverse cultural resources (e. G. Language, food culture), which become a great competitive advantage in developing cultural tourism. Hong Gongs Dooms think the diversity of Hong Gongs international cuisines has become a major competitive advantage of this city (Enrich & Newton,

2005). This concept has to be accepted by the private sectors, so that the private sectors can be the pioneers to promote tourism.

At the same time, the strategic alliance of different industries is the best way to make good use of the resources and professions. And the alliance of different sectors in the tourism industry will enhance the promotion of all products, and lower the pressure of -9- competing with each other. Being a good Hong Kong citizen and enterprise, Cathay Pacific presents this "I love Hong Kong" campaign, integrating airlines, travel agencies, restaurants, hotels and overseas partners (2-H-37).

When private companies see that the tourism is going low, they will stand out, provide most resources, and remind people this important concept that the entire Hong Kong is one community (2-H-46). Besides, the tourism boards of Hong Kong and Singapore both agree that large-scale international culinary festivals are the greatest competitive advantage in culinary tourism development. These festivals integrate local resources and professions from public and private sectors, so as to bring local cuisines onto the international stage.

The examples are the "Singapore Food Festival," which presents the food and drinks of Singapore, the "World Gourmet Summit" (WAS), which is an international cooking performance; and the annual "Best of the Best Culinary Awards" at Hong Kong. It is essential to bring those quality cuisines out of the sites and into the common creative cuisines. Singapore food festival is mainly about authentic Singapore local food culture, and actually when we talk about Singapore food, we're talking about local food (1-S-22)...

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There is another annual “ World Gourmet Summit,” held every April, introducing high class restaurant in Singapore.

The wine and dine they present will bring the tourists a totally different culinary experience (1-S-99). Therefore, we can see that in order to provide the tourists new products and services, it is essential to create new connections and cooperation, so food can link to other economic activities (e.g. Food festivals, restaurant). In other words, in order to increase the value-added of culinary/gastronomy tourism, all related activities have to be integrated to promote the value of visitor’s culinary experience.

Food might just be one factor contributing to the economy, but when food combines with restaurants, arrests, and stores, together they constitute the most important part in tourist activities. That’s the part the tourists will spend time and money on, and pay attention to. Select a marketing strategy for promoting culinary tourism Gourmet travel guidebook and brochures -10- Marketing tools can affect the tourists’ decision in choosing their destination, and the images and information in marketing media are also helpful in promoting the positive images of the destination.

Nowadays, the promotional tools used for gastronomy/culinary tourism marketing are diverse, including brochures, guides, besides, electronic media, and publications (du Rand et al. , 2003). As we can see from the choices of Hong Kong and Singapore on marketing tools for promoting culinary tourism, the publications or guides to cuisines are the most practical way of marketing, which provides handy direct reference for tourists.

Similarly, information on official sites and blogs can also provide information about culinary tourism, and this media provides images and texts side by side, which better describes the social realities and the characteristics in that culture (Bessie?? re, 1998; Froth, 2003). All these are important in marketing. We have many advertisements or travel brochures, with large percentages of culinary information included. Cuisine is one essential element of traveling in Hong Kong, so in addition to tourist spot introductions and shopping suggestions, we must also tell our readers what and where to eat (2-H-70).

It is quite effective (2-H-110). International food/gastronomy events and festivals Food events/festivals are not only a major part of culinary tourism, but also important marketing tools and activities, through which the tourists can really experience the local culinary culture (du Rand et al. 2003). Food events/festivals can also demonstrate the characteristics of local food and living culture, and promote local food heritage. In addition to local food events/festivals, Hong Kong and Singapore also hold international level food events/ festivals to appeal to both local and international tourists.

For example, STAB holds annual Singapore Food Festival (which features Chili Crab) and World Gourmet As for Hong Kong, it has the Best of the Best Culinary Awards, which aims to make creative cuisines available to anyone, so as to popularize the restaurants, and promote the chefs' status. The annual Singapore Food Festival features Chili Crab (1- S-59). The chili crab weekend is followed by the Indian food week, during which we encourage

everyone to visit Little India, and then maybe followed by the Chinatown week.

If we can have four or five weekends to feature cuisines from different districts respectively, it is enough to hold a food festival (I-S-64). Restaurants can be promoted and marketed through World Gourmet Summit (I-S-III). The World Gourmet Summit includes not only local Singapore food, but also all kinds of quality cuisines (I-S-102). Be it Japanese food or gourmet from other places, as long as it is DOD food or good wine, it can promote in World Gourmet Summit (I-S-103).

The organizer co-organizes this event with STAB, so it can invite famous chefs from all over the -11- world to join the promotion (1-S-104), and many people come specifically for these chefs' dishes (1-S-105). Advertising endorsers for promoting local/region cuisines When the destination is marketing its cuisines, in addition to stressing the characteristic of cuisines themselves, it is a fundamental marketing strategy to market through advertisements (du Rand et al. , 2003). Famous people attract consumers' attention and recognition.

Therefore, if the advertisements can find suitable endorsers, it can help to bring out favorable attitude and behavior of the consumers. Besides, if the image of the celebrity endorser fits the characteristics of the products or the image and concept of the target market, the effect is usually positive (Hawkins, Best, & Coney 2001). Hong Kong and Singapore both invite reputable celebrities (e. G. Gastronomes, actors, singers) to endorse their culinary cultures, promote the culinary cultural images, and present great

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advertisements. A characteristic of Hong Kong is that local people love this place.

Many festivals will invite performing artists as endorsers, like Karen Mock, Daniel Wwww, and Twins. They endorse for free (2-H-112), and their endorsement greatly strengthens the power of the whole promotion (2-H-113). Restaurants quality certificate for promising safety dining To ensure the tourists have high quality cuisines, Hong Kong and Singapore both have strict quality assurance certification systems. Certified restaurants can become more famous, and the tourists can enjoy the quality-assured cuisines, which give the tourists great impression on the destination and increase the possibility of their visiting again.