International Journal of Travel, Hospitality and Events
https://journal.polteksahid.ac.id/index.php/ijothe
E-ISSN: 2828-2590, P-ISSN: 2828-5093
Pages: 43-52

CULINARY TOURISM AND VISIT INTENTION AT KUKUP BEACH, INDONESIA

Aneke Rahmawati[1], Suci Sumbawati[2]
[1*,2] Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Ambarrukmo Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Correspondence: anekerahmawati@stipram.ac.id

Article Info

Keywords:
Culinary Tourism, Coastal Tourism, Destination Management, Kukup Beach, Visit Intention

Received:
December 16, 2025
Approved:
January 14, 2026
Published:
January 31, 2026

Abstract

Culinary tourism has become an increasingly important component of tourism development, particularly as a core tourism product that shapes tourists' experiences and behavioral intentions in coastal destinations. In Indonesia, coastal culinary experiences based on seafood play a strategic role in shaping tourists' perceptions and consumption patterns. This study focuses on culinary tourism and examines its influence on tourists' visit intention at Kukup Beach, Gunungkidul Regency, Indonesia. A quantitative associative research design was employed using a survey method. Data were collected from 35 tourists through structured questionnaires measured on a five-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistical analysis, Pearson correlation, and simple linear regression were applied to analyze the data. The results show a positive and statistically significant relationship between culinary tourism and tourists' visit intention ($r = 0.579$; $p < 0.05$). Culinary tourism explains 33.56% of the variance in visit intention, indicating that food quality, variety, hygiene, service quality, and price fairness are important determinants of tourists' intention to revisit and recommend the destination. This study contributes empirical evidence to culinary tourism research in coastal destinations and provides practical implications for destination managers in integrating local culinary products into sustainable tourism development strategies.

How to cite:
Rahmawati, A., & Sumbawati, S. (2026). Culinary tourism and visit intention at Kukup Beach, Indonesia. *International Journal of Travel, Hospitality and Events*, 5(1), 43-52. https://doi.org/10.56743/ijothe.v5i1

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has undergone a profound transformation over the past two decades, evolving from a product-oriented industry into an experience-based system in which tourists actively seek meaningful, memorable, and value-laden encounters. In contemporary tourism, consumption is no longer defined solely by physical attributes such as landscapes, infrastructure, or iconic attractions, but increasingly by experiential elements that engage tourists emotionally, culturally, and sensorially. This shift has been widely discussed in tourism literature, emphasizing that experiences play a central role in shaping tourist satisfaction, behavioral intentions, and destination competitiveness (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Richards, 2018).

Within this experience-based paradigm, culinary tourism has emerged as one of the most influential components shaping travel behavior. Food is not merely a physiological necessity during travel, but a medium through which tourists encounter local culture, identity, traditions, and everyday practices of host communities. Culinary experiences allow tourists to interact directly with local environments and social systems, making food a powerful conduit for cultural exchange and experiential value creation. As noted by Hall et al. (2003), food consumption in tourism contexts represents an intersection of culture, economy, and place, positioning culinary tourism as a strategic tourism product rather than a supplementary service.

The growing academic attention to culinary tourism reflects its increasing importance in destination development and tourism management. Ellis et al. (2018) conceptualize food tourism as a multidimensional phenomenon that integrates sensory pleasure, authenticity, social interaction, and place-based meaning. Similarly, Okumus et al. (2018) highlight that research on food and gastronomy has expanded rapidly due to its relevance for destination branding, differentiation, and competitiveness. Destinations that successfully develop distinctive culinary offerings are more likely to strengthen their destination image, enhance tourist satisfaction, and foster revisit intention.

Culinary tourism is particularly significant in destinations where local food products are closely linked to natural resources and traditional livelihoods. Coastal destinations represent a critical context for culinary tourism development, as seafood-based cuisine reflects both ecological characteristics and cultural practices of coastal communities. In such settings, culinary tourism functions not only as a consumption activity but also as an expression of local identity and heritage. Studies by Kivela and Crotts (2006) and Sims (2009) demonstrate that authentic local food experiences contribute significantly to tourists' perceptions of uniqueness and authenticity, which in turn influence visit intention and destination loyalty.

At the global level, international tourism organizations have increasingly recognized gastronomy as a strategic element of tourism development. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2017; 2019) emphasizes that gastronomy tourism contributes to destination competitiveness by linking tourism demand with local production systems, supporting small-scale enterprises, and fostering sustainable and inclusive development. According to UNWTO (2019), food-related experiences are among the most memorable aspects of travel and play a crucial role in shaping tourists' overall evaluation of destinations.

In Indonesia, culinary tourism holds particular relevance due to the country's rich cultural diversity and maritime character. As an archipelagic nation with extensive coastal areas, Indonesia possesses abundant marine resources that underpin local culinary traditions. Indonesian cuisine is characterized by diverse ingredients, cooking techniques, and regional flavors, offering substantial potential for tourism experiences rooted in local food culture. National tourism development strategies have increasingly incorporated gastronomy as part of destination development and creative economy initiatives, recognizing its role in enhancing tourist experiences and supporting local economic growth (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2022).

Empirical data further underscore the importance of tourism and gastronomy in Indonesia. According to Statistics Indonesia (BPS, 2023), domestic tourist trips in Indonesia exceeded 734 million in 2022, with food and beverage expenditure accounting for one of the largest shares of tourist spending. This indicates that culinary consumption represents a significant component of tourism demand and highlights the economic importance of food-related tourism activities. However, despite this significance, empirical research examining the role of culinary tourism at specific destinations—particularly coastal destinations—remains limited.

Gunungkidul Regency, located in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, is widely recognized as one of Indonesia's emerging coastal tourism areas. The regency hosts numerous beaches along the southern coast of Java, attracting large numbers of domestic tourists. Kukup Beach is among the most visited coastal destinations in the region due to its scenic landscape, accessibility, and supporting facilities. Alongside natural attractions, Kukup Beach hosts a variety of local culinary businesses offering seafood-based dishes derived from local marine resources. These culinary activities form an integral part of tourists' on-site experiences, yet they are often treated as secondary elements in tourism planning and promotion.

From a destination management perspective, this situation presents a critical issue. The dominant emphasis on physical attractions may lead to underutilization of culinary tourism as a strategic asset. Without empirical understanding of how culinary tourism influences tourists' behavioral intentions, destination managers may miss opportunities to enhance competitiveness, visitor satisfaction, and loyalty. Visit intention—commonly defined as tourists' willingness to revisit or recommend a destination—is a key indicator of tourism sustainability, as repeat visitation contributes to stable demand and long-term economic resilience.

The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding visit intention, suggesting that behavioral intentions are shaped by attitudes, perceptions, and evaluations of experiences. In tourism contexts, culinary experiences can significantly influence these evaluations by contributing to perceived value, satisfaction, and emotional attachment. Empirical studies consistently report a positive relationship between culinary experiences and visit intention. Kim et al. (2019) show that food quality, authenticity, and service quality significantly affect tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention, while Björk and Kauppinen-Räisänen (2016) emphasize the multidimensional nature of culinary experiences in shaping tourist responses.

Despite these insights, existing studies tend to focus on urban destinations or internationally recognized gastronomic regions, leaving coastal destinations—particularly in developing tourism areas—underrepresented in the literature. Moreover, limited attention has been given to small-scale coastal destinations where culinary tourism is closely intertwined with local livelihoods and community-based tourism development. This gap highlights the need for empirical research that examines culinary tourism as a core tourism product in coastal destination contexts.

Addressing this gap, the present study focuses on culinary tourism and its influence on tourists' visit intention at Kukup Beach, Indonesia. By positioning culinary tourism as a central element of destination experience, this study seeks to balance theoretical and applied perspectives. Theoretically, it contributes to the growing body of culinary tourism literature by providing empirical evidence from a coastal destination in Indonesia, extending existing models of culinary experience and behavioral intention to a new geographical and cultural context.

Practically, it offers insights for destination managers and policymakers on how culinary tourism can be leveraged as a strategic tool to enhance destination competitiveness and support sustainable tourism development.

Based on the above discussion, the purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of culinary tourism on tourists' visit intention at Kukup Beach, Indonesia. Specifically, this research aims to examine how key culinary attributes—including food quality, variety, hygiene, service quality, and price fairness—affect tourists' intention to revisit and recommend the destination. By achieving this objective, the study seeks to provide evidence-based insights for integrating local culinary resources more effectively into coastal destination management strategies.

However, despite the growing recognition of culinary tourism as an experiential tourism product, empirical studies examining its impact on tourists' behavioral intentions in Indonesian coastal destinations remain limited. Most existing research focuses on urban or well-established gastronomic destinations, leaving coastal tourism contexts underexplored. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between culinary tourism and tourists' visit intention at Kukup Beach, Indonesia, and to highlight the strategic role of culinary tourism in supporting sustainable coastal tourism development.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative associative research approach to examine the relationship between culinary tourism and tourists' visit intention. The research was conducted at Kukup Beach, Gunungkidul Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in 2025. The study focused on tourists who were visiting the destination and consuming local culinary products during their visit. Due to the absence of an official visitor list and the dynamic nature of tourist arrivals, the sampling technique applied was accidental sampling. A total of 35 respondents participated in the study, which is considered adequate for exploratory quantitative research at a single destination.

The research instrument consisted of a structured questionnaire designed to measure two main variables: culinary tourism and visit intention. The culinary tourism variable was operationalized through several indicators, including food quality and taste, menu variety, hygiene and cleanliness, service quality, and price fairness. The visit intention variable was measured using indicators such as intention to revisit, willingness to recommend the destination to others, and overall satisfaction related to culinary experiences. All indicators were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Prior to data analysis, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the measurements.

Data collection was carried out through direct distribution of questionnaires to tourists at Kukup Beach. Respondents were approached after they had consumed local culinary products to ensure that their evaluations were based on actual experience. The data collection process followed standardized procedures to minimize response bias, including clear explanation of the research purpose and assurance of respondent anonymity. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness before being included in the analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistical techniques to summarize respondent characteristics and variable distributions. Pearson correlation analysis was applied to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between culinary tourism and visit intention. Furthermore, simple linear regression analysis was employed to assess the extent to which culinary tourism influences tourists' visit intention. Statistical significance was determined at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). The analytical procedures were designed to ensure that the study can be replicated by other researchers using similar instruments, sampling techniques, and analytical methods. The sample size of 35 respondents reflects the exploratory nature of this study, which aims to provide initial empirical evidence on culinary tourism behavior at a single coastal destination.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the empirical findings of the study and provides an in-depth discussion of how culinary tourism influences tourists' visit intention at Kukup Beach. In accordance with journal standards, tables and figures are used to summarize the main observations, while the textual discussion focuses on interpreting the meaning, importance, and implications of the findings rather than repeating numerical values already presented.

RESULT

The analysis of respondent characteristics demonstrates that visitors to Kukup Beach originate from diverse generational backgrounds, with a dominance of Generation Z tourists. This demographic profile indicates that the destination attracts younger tourists who are generally more experience-oriented and sensitive to experiential value, including food quality, atmosphere, and authenticity. The generational composition, as summarized in Table 1, suggests that culinary tourism plays a particularly important role for younger tourists, who often seek memorable and shareable experiences during travel. Rather than reiterating the distribution figures, this finding highlights the relevance of culinary tourism as an experiential product aligned with the preferences of contemporary tourist segments.

Descriptive analysis of the research variables reveals that tourists perceive the culinary offerings at Kukup Beach positively. As presented in Table 2, the culinary tourism variable achieved a relatively high mean score, indicating favorable evaluations of food quality, freshness of seafood, service, and price fairness. The visit intention variable also shows a high average score, reflecting tourists' strong willingness to revisit and recommend the destination. These descriptive results confirm that culinary tourism constitutes an important component of the overall destination experience and provides an initial indication of its potential influence on behavioral intention.

Correlation and regression analyses further clarify the relationship between culinary tourism and visit intention. The correlation results indicate a moderate and positive association between the two variables, suggesting that improvements in culinary attributes are accompanied by higher levels of visit intention. The regression analysis demonstrates that culinary tourism explains a substantial proportion of the variance in visit intention, confirming the research hypothesis that culinary tourism significantly influences tourists' behavioral intentions. Figure 1 illustrates the positive linear relationship between culinary tourism and visit intention, emphasizing the consistency of this association across respondents. The regression analysis indicates that culinary tourism explains approximately 33.56% of the variance in visit intention, confirming its substantial influence on tourists' behavioral responses.

To further contextualize these findings, additional analysis was conducted by examining the relative contribution of culinary attributes to tourists' overall evaluations. Although the regression model treats culinary tourism as a composite variable, qualitative interpretation of respondent responses indicates that food quality, hygiene, and service consistency are perceived as the most critical attributes shaping tourists' impressions. These attributes function as minimum quality thresholds that determine whether culinary experiences enhance or detract from the destination experience.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide strong empirical evidence that culinary tourism functions as a core tourism product that significantly shapes tourists' visit intention at Kukup Beach. The positive and statistically significant relationship between culinary tourism and visit intention confirms that food-related experiences are not merely complementary services but integral components of destination consumption. This finding directly addresses the research objective and reinforces the argument that culinary tourism plays a strategic role in influencing tourists' behavioral intentions in coastal destinations.

From a theoretical perspective, the results align with the experience-based tourism paradigm, which emphasizes that tourists evaluate destinations holistically based on experiential value rather than isolated attributes. Culinary tourism contributes to experiential value by integrating sensory pleasure, cultural meaning, and service encounters into a single tourism experience. The significant influence of culinary tourism on visit intention can be explained by its ability to generate emotional engagement and memorable experiences, which are key determinants of behavioral intention within the experience economy framework. This

finding is consistent with previous studies that highlight the role of food experiences in shaping tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Ellis et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2019).

The results also support the theory of planned behavior, which suggests that behavioral intention is shaped by attitudes formed through direct experience. Positive culinary experiences enhance tourists' attitudes toward the destination by increasing perceived value, trust, and satisfaction, thereby strengthening their intention to revisit and recommend the destination. In this study, culinary attributes such as food quality, hygiene, service consistency, menu variety, and price fairness appear to play a decisive role in shaping these attitudes. When tourists perceive local culinary offerings as high-quality, safe, and fairly priced, they are more likely to develop favorable evaluations that translate into stronger visit intention.

From a destination competitiveness perspective, the findings demonstrate that culinary tourism enhances differentiation and value creation in coastal destinations. Kukup Beach competes with numerous other coastal destinations offering similar natural attractions. In such a competitive environment, culinary tourism provides an opportunity to differentiate the destination through authentic and place-specific experiences that are difficult to replicate elsewhere. Local seafood-based cuisine functions as an experiential marker of coastal identity, reinforcing authenticity and strengthening destination image. This supports previous research indicating that destinations with strong culinary identities tend to achieve higher levels of tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Kivela & Crotts, 2006; Sims, 2009).

The prominence of Generation Z tourists among respondents further underscores the strategic importance of culinary tourism. Younger tourists tend to prioritize experiential consumption, authenticity, and social sharing, making culinary experiences particularly influential in shaping their travel behavior. Culinary tourism that emphasizes freshness, local identity, and experiential dining can therefore strengthen emotional attachment and encourage repeat visitation among this dominant visitor segment.

Beyond its influence on visit intention, culinary tourism also has broader implications for sustainable destination development. The development of local culinary products supports small-scale food vendors and coastal communities, fostering inclusive and community-based tourism development. By strengthening linkages between tourism demand and local food production systems, culinary tourism enhances local value chains and reduces economic leakage. This finding aligns with international perspectives that position gastronomy tourism as a tool for sustainable tourism development (UNWTO, 2017; 2019)

Nevertheless, the influence of culinary tourism on visit intention should be understood within a broader destination context. While culinary tourism explains a substantial proportion of tourists' behavioral intentions, other factors such as accessibility, environmental quality, infrastructure, and overall destination management also play important roles. The relatively small sample size and focus on a single coastal destination represent limitations of this study. Future research is encouraged to employ larger samples, incorporate additional variables, and conduct comparative analyses across multiple coastal destinations to develop more comprehensive models of destination competitiveness.

Overall, the discussion highlights culinary tourism as a strategic pillar of coastal destination management. By prioritizing the quality, authenticity, and experiential value of

local culinary products, destinations such as Kukup Beach can enhance tourists' visit intention, strengthen competitiveness, and support sustainable coastal tourism development.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondent by Generation and Gender

Genaration	Male	Female	Total	Percentage (%)
Gen Z (18-25 years)	9	10	19	54.29
Millennials (26-35 years)	1	2	3	8.57
Gen X (36-45 years)	3	2	5	14.29
Baby Boomers (>45 years)	3	3	6	17.14
Gen Alpha (<18 years)	1	1	2	5.71
Total	17	18	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Descriptive Analysis of Culinary Tourism and Visit Intention

Descriptive statistical analysis indicates that tourists generally evaluated culinary tourism at Kukup Beach positively. The mean score for culinary tourism was 27.91, indicating favorable perceptions of food quality, freshness, and service. Visit intention also showed a relatively high mean score of 13.71, suggesting a strong likelihood of revisit and recommendation.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Culinary Tourism (X)	27.91	3.79	18	36
Visit Intention (Y)	13.71	2.36	8	19

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

Relationship Between Culinary Tourism and Visit Intention

Correlation analysis shows a moderate positive relationship between culinary tourism and visit intention ($r = 0.579$; $p < 0.05$). Regression analysis confirms that culinary tourism significantly influences visit intention, explaining 33.56% of the variance.

These findings indicate that culinary attributes play a significant role in shaping tourists' behavioral intentions. High-quality and authentic culinary experiences enhance tourists' satisfaction and emotional attachment to the destination, which in turn encourages revisit intention

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that culinary tourism plays a significant and strategic role in shaping tourists' visit intention at Kukup Beach, Indonesia, confirming its position as a core

tourism product rather than a complementary activity. Based on the research findings, culinary experiences—particularly those related to food quality, hygiene, service consistency, menu variety, and perceived price fairness—substantially influence tourists' evaluations of the destination and their willingness to revisit and recommend it to others. These findings directly address the research problem and objectives by demonstrating that culinary tourism contributes meaningfully to tourists' behavioral intentions in a coastal destination context.

The results further suggest that culinary tourism enhances experiential value by creating emotional engagement, sensory satisfaction, and perceptions of authenticity, which collectively shape positive destination attitudes. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the body of tourism literature by extending the application of experience-based tourism and behavioral intention frameworks to culinary tourism in coastal destinations, particularly within an Indonesian context that remains underrepresented in previous research. The study also advances culinary tourism research by empirically validating the role of food-based experiences as a determinant of destination competitiveness and sustainable tourism development. Practically, the findings underscore the importance of integrating culinary tourism.

This study contributes to culinary tourism literature by providing empirical evidence from an Indonesian coastal context that remains underrepresented in previous studies. Future research may incorporate additional variables such as destination image, environmental quality, and stakeholder roles to develop a more comprehensive model of coastal tourism competitiveness.

REFERENCES

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50(2), 179–211. https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T

Björk, P., & Kauppinen-Räisänen, H. (2016). Exploring the multi-dimensionality of travelers' culinary-gastronomic experiences. Current Issues in Tourism, 19(12), 1260–1280. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2013.868412

Ellis, A., Park, E., Kim, S., & Yeoman, I. (2018). What is food tourism? Tourism Management, 68, 250–263. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2018.03.025

Gheorghe, G., Tudorache, P., & Nistoreanu, P. (2014). Gastronomic tourism, a new trend for contemporary tourism? Cactus Tourism Journal, 9(1), 12–21.

Hall, C. M., & Gössling, S. (2016). Food tourism and regional development. Routledge.

Hall, C. M., Sharples, L., Mitchell, R., Macionis, N., & Cambourne, B. (2003). Food tourism around the world: Development, management and markets. Butterworth-Heinemann.

Kim, Y. G., Eves, A., & Scarles, C. (2019). Building a model of local food consumption on trips and holidays. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 79, 68–78. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.11.005

Kivela, J., & Crotts, J. C. (2006). Tourism and gastronomy: Gastronomy's influence on how tourists experience a destination. Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 30(3), 354–377. https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348006286797

Long, L. M. (2004). Culinary tourism. University Press of Kentucky.

Mak, A. H. N., Lumbers, M., & Eves, A. (2012). Globalisation and food consumption in tourism.

Annals of Tourism Research, 39(1), 171–196. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2011.05.010

Okumus, B., Koseoglu, M. A., & Ma, F. (2018). Food and gastronomy research in tourism and hospitality: A bibliometric analysis. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 73, 64–74. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.02.005

Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1999). The experience economy: Work is theatre & every business a stage. Harvard Business School Press.

Richards, G. (2018). Cultural tourism: A review of recent research and trends. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 36, 12–21. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2018.03.005

Sims, R. (2009). Food, place and authenticity: Local food and the sustainable tourism experience. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 17(3), 321–336. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669580802359293

Tsai, C. T. S., & Wang, Y. C. (2017). Experiential value in branding food tourism. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 6(1), 56–65. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2016.02.003

UNWTO. (2017). Second global report on gastronomy tourism. World Tourism Organization. UNWTO. (2019). Gastronomy tourism: The case of Asia. World Tourism Organization.

World Travel & Tourism Council. (2019). Travel & tourism economic impact report. WTTC.

Yeoman, I., & McMahon-Beattie, U. (2016). The future of food tourism. Journal of Tourism Futures, 2(1), 95–98. https://doi.org/10.1108/JTF-12-2015-0051

Yun, D., Hennessey, S. M., & MacDonald, R. (2011). Understanding culinary tourists. Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management, 20(2), 147–166. https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2011.536074

Zhang, T., Chen, J., & Hu, B. (2019). Authenticity, quality, and loyalty in food tourism. Tourism Management Perspectives, 32, 100569. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2019.100569

Zhu, H., Zhang, J., & Li, W. (2021). Culinary experience and revisit intention. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 21, 100627. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.100627

AUTHOR PROFILE

Aneke Rahmawati, S.Pd., M.Sc. Lecturer in the Undergraduate Tourism Study Program at Ambarrukmo Tourism Institute Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Research interests include tourism, culinary tourism, and gastronomy.

Suci Sumbawati, S.S., MA. Short Lecturer in the Undergraduate Tourism Study Program at Ambarrukmo Tourism Institute Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Research interests include Japanese literature and culture.