



# HỘI THẢO KHOA HỌC QUỐC GIA "DU LỊCH VÀ ẨM THỰC"

HỘI THẢO KHOA HỌC QUỐC GIA "DU LỊCH VÀ ẨM THỰC"



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# EXPLOITING THE CULINARY CULTURAL VALUE OF THE ISLAM CHAM PEOPLE IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN AN GIANG PROVINCE

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Nguyen Luu Diem Phuc<sup>1</sup>, Ngo An

## Abstract

*An Giang is the province with the largest number of Cham Islams living in the South. The Cham Islam ethnic group in An Giang has outstanding cultural characteristics, especially influenced by the Islamic religion, which has created unique and different Cham Islam culinary culture. It is not only meaningful to Islams, but also has the potential to contribute greatly to the tourism development of An Giang province. This article, based on the synthesis of published related research and practical observations of the author group, analyzes and proposes solutions to exploit the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people effectively in tourism development in An Giang province. Through research results, it can be seen that in An Giang, the culinary culture of the Cham Islam people has many unique values, capable of attracting tourists. The Cham Islam community in An Giang has a way of eating with dishes made from local ingredients, suitable for the living environment as well as following the culinary regulations of the Islam religion. However, it shows that developing Cham Islamic culinary tourism products in An Giang, besides opportunities and advantages, also has many difficulties and challenges. Culinary tourism products are still poor. Some proposed solutions are building and developing culinary tourism products, promotion and marketing, training and capacity building for local people, preserve and promote cultural values, developing tourism infrastructure and services.*

**Keywords:** *Culinary culture, Cham Islam culinary culture, Cham Islam An Giang people*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Culinary culture, in a broad sense, is a part of culture that is a whole, complex of physical, mental, emotional and intellectual features, depicting some basic and unique features of the family, community, village, region, country. It governs a large part of the community's behavior and communication, creating the characteristics of that community. On the spiritual cultural level, culinary culture is the way of behaving and communicating in eating and the art of food preparation, the meaning and spiritual symbolism in that food. In a narrow sense, culinary culture is human habits and tastes, human behavior in eating and drinking; Taboo customs in eating, cooking methods, food presentation and how to enjoy food, etc. Understanding and properly using dishes that are beneficial to the health of your family and you is the goal for each person (Trần Thị Thùy Trang, 2019).

Some cultural researchers have shared the same opinion: each nation's diet is a cultural phenomenon when it carries the values of truth, goodness, and beauty. For Vietnamese people, eating is an art, it not only meets basic human needs but also has a close relationship with the lifestyle and traditions of the nation (Đình Gia Khánh, 1995).

Culinary tourism or Food tourism is an activity to explore cuisine for tourism purposes. According to the World Food Travel Association (WFTA), culinary tourism is the discovery and enjoyment of unique and memorable food and drink experiences (Trần Ngọc Thêm, 1999).

The concept of culinary tourism shows that this is a type of tourism aimed at many interesting experiences and discoveries about cultural identity and community activities associated with the destination's cuisine (Lê Anh Tuấn, 2017). Through the process of enjoying delicious and unique dishes and drinks with unique artistic and cultural features of the locality, region, and country. Culinary tourism not only helps enjoy specialty dishes, but also connects with the culture and identity of each destination. Culinary tourism activities include promoting, marketing, organizing, and guiding tourists to tourist destinations with unique local, regional, and national cuisine. Thereby, we see that cuisine and culinary tourism interact and promote each other to develop together to introduce cultural values to international friends and bring economic benefits (Lê Anh Tuấn, 2017).

According to statistics, the entire An Giang province has 15,327 Cham people who follow Islam, accounting for 0.67% of the total population in



the area (Truong Văn Món, 2023). The Cham people of An Giang are called Hau River Cham or Islam Cham, because they follow the Islam religion. An Giang Cham people live concentrated in the upstream communes along the Hau River in An Phu, Tan Chau, Phu Tan districts, and scattered in Chau Phu and Chau Thanh districts. An Giang is the province with the largest number of Cham Muslims living in the South.

Cham Islam cuisine in An Giang is not only a part of daily life but also shows a deep connection with traditional beliefs and culture, creating a unique and special feature in culinary culture Vietnam. With a variety of dishes, Cham Islam cuisine is rich and diverse with traditional dishes such as curry, beef cakes, and dishes using unique spices. In addition, there is also a religious element (Islam), Halal food of Cham Muslims has a clear difference, capable of attracting the attention of tourists who want to experience unique religious culture and cuisine. The Cham Islam community in An Giang has a way of eating with dishes made from local materials, suitable for the living environment as well as following the culinary regulations of the Islam religion, according to the assessment of the Islam community. According to experts, there really is potential in developing culinary tourism in An Giang province.

However, through learning about Cham culture in An Giang, it shows that Cham Islam culinary tourism products in An Giang are still poor, and tourists have not really experienced the Cham cultural environment in An Giang fully. Therefore, it is necessary to promote the role of Cham Islam culture in An Giang in further tourism development.

Based on the synthesis of published related research and practical observations of the author group, identify and analyze the current situation of developing Cham Islam culinary tourism in An Giang province, and propose some solutions helps exploit the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people effectively in tourism development in An Giang province.

## **2. SITUATION OF CULINARY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN AN GIANG**

Located at the headwaters of the Mekong River, famous for the National Festival of Ba Chua Xu in Sam Mountain, An Giang is a land of intersection of many cultures, the convergence of 4 ethnic groups: Kinh, Chinese, Cham and Khmer. This place preserves many rich and diverse dishes but still carries the typical flavors of the Southwest region. An Giang



cuisine creates opportunities to help visitors have experiences and immerse themselves more in An Giang culture. The charming mountain and river scenery, rich sources of indigenous ingredients, delicious An Giang dishes with the skillful hands of talented chefs... all are creating the basic premises for developing this type of tourism.

According to Hải Nhu (2023), in 2023, An Giang province has welcomed about 8.5 million tourists (an increase of 13% over the same period) and estimated to reach 106% of the plan. Revenue from tourism activities is estimated at 5,900 billion VND (up 26% over the same period) and is estimated at 107% compared to the plan. An Giang has implemented many cooperation and tourism development activities with Ho Chi Minh City, provinces and cities in the Mekong Delta and localities with strong domestic tourism strengths. Organizing a contest "Traditional culinary culture" and other activities have also been implemented to promote An Giang tourism. The province is also building a tourism brand identity and brand communication strategy until 2025, with a vision to 2030.

An Giang province has witnessed significant development in the field of culinary tourism, especially the culinary culture of the Cham Islam community. Below are some highlights:

**Cham Islam culinary culture:** An Giang has focused on exploiting the typical culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam community, creating a highlight for the tourism industry. Traditional dishes of the Cham people, such as Tum Lo Mo, have been widely introduced at cultural and culinary festivals, attracting the attention of tourists.

**Community tourism:** Community tourism in Cham villages such as Da Phuoc and Chau Giang has been developed, bringing economic benefits and environmental protection, while preserving and promoting folk cultural values.

**Tourism product development:** There are efforts to develop independent tourism products based on Cham culture, instead of just introducing them together with other tourism products. This helps create unique and distinct culinary tourism experiences for visitors.

**Da Phuoc Cham village market:** Opened at the end of January 2024, Da Phuoc Cham village market has become an attractive destination, helping Cham culture and cuisine to form independent products, attracting tourists (Diễm Phượng, 2019).





Overall, the development of Cham Islam culinary tourism in An Giang from 2020 to 2023 has contributed to enriching the province's tourism, while raising awareness and interest in special culinary culture identity of the Islam community.

In An Giang province, there are two notable Cham villages: Cham Da Phuoc village and Chau Giang Cham village. These Cham villages are not only attractive tourist destinations but also preserve and promote the cultural values and traditional practices of the Cham community. Some information about the number of tourists coming to these two villages (Phuong Nghi, 2023):

Da Phuoc Cham Village (An Phu district): Every month, Da Phuoc Cham village welcomes about 3,000 visitors, especially foreigners. Da Phuoc Cham Village has 2 boat wharfs to serve visitors;

Chau Giang Cham Village (Tan Chau town): Chau Giang Cham Village is located about 3 km north of Chau Doc city center, upstream of the Chau Tho River and is one of 11 Cham villages following Islam in An Giang. Each month, Chau Giang Cham village welcomes about 1,000 people to visit, enjoy food and entertainment.

The goal of "Retaining tourists", increasing the number of tourists, increasing the average spending of tourists and increasing the average number of days of stay will create opportunities and be the driving force to promote the development of culinary tourism in An Giang. Looking back at the conditions for developing Food Tourism shows that An Giang has a unique indigenous culinary culture, and An Giang people are very hospitable. The An Giang provincial government in the Action Program on tourism infrastructure development for the period 2016-2020, with a vision to 2025, has determined: "Promoting products from the upper Mekong River to create fresh culinary dishes, clean, attractive, different to serve in food service establishments" (An Giang Provincial People's Committee, 2017).

According to experts, An Giang tourism industry needs to build many culinary tourism products associated with destinations, in order to create unforgettable experiences for tourists, such as: Organizing culinary tours, sightseeing tours, homestay tour, combining agricultural and rural tourism programs with exploring local culinary specialties, building street food areas or night food markets at tourist destinations, etc to enrich tourism products and tourist attractions.



### **3. HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULINARY CULTURE OF CHAM ISLAM PEOPLE IN AN GIANG**

The culinary culture of the Cham Islam people in An Giang reflects a long journey of cultural interference, religious influence and adaptation to natural conditions. Some key points in this development history (Trương Văn Món, 2023):

**Origin and migration:** Cham Islams originate from the ancient Champa kingdom in Central Vietnam, after the collapse of this kingdom in the 15th century, many Cham people migrated to other regions, including An Giang; in An Giang, Cham Islams settled mainly along rivers such as Hau River and Tien River, lands suitable for agriculture and fishing.

**Islamic religious influence:** with the acceptance and practice of Islam, the culinary culture of the Cham Islams in An Giang is strongly influenced by Halal regulations and laws, this includes a ban on the use of pork and strict regulations on how food is prepared; religious festivals like Ramadan and Hari Raya also have a big impact on cuisine, with signature dishes and parties after sunset.

**Cultural interference with Khmer and Vietnamese people:** An Giang is a land with strong cultural interference between Cham people, Khmer people and Vietnamese people, this influence is reflected in the use of unique ingredients and cooking techniques of each ethnic group; the curry of the Cham Islam people in An Giang, for example, has characteristics from Indian cuisine but also combines local ingredients and spices.

**Adaptation to local conditions:** with rich river terrain, Cham Islams in An Giang make the most of natural resources from rivers, such as fish, shrimp and other aquatic products; coconut tree, a popular ingredient in Southern Vietnam, is widely used in Cham dishes, from coconut milk in curries to grated coconut in desserts.

**Developing and preserving culinary culture:** Over time, the culinary culture of the Cham Islam people in An Giang has continuously developed and been passed down through generations, traditional dishes are still maintained and popular in the community; currently, with the development of tourism and the interest of local people and tourists, Cham Islam cuisine has become an attractive part of the diverse cultural picture of An Giang.

Briefly, the culinary culture of the Cham Islam people in An Giang is a living testament to cultural interference, religious influence and



adaptation to the natural environment. The dishes not only reflect daily life but are also an important part of preserving and developing the cultural identity of this community.

#### **4. HIGHLIGHTS OF CHAM ISLAM CUISINE IN AN GIANG**

An Giang is the province with the largest number of Cham Muslims living in the South. According to statistics, the whole province has 15,327 Cham people who follow Islam, accounting for 0.67% of the total population in the area (Trương Văn Món, 2023). The Cham people of An Giang are called Hau River Cham or Islam Cham, because they follow the Islam religion. An Giang Cham people live concentrated in the upstream communes along the Hau River in An Phu, Tan Chau, Phu Tan districts, and scattered in Chau Phu and Chau Thanh districts.

The cuisine of the Cham Muslim people in An Giang is an indispensable part of their culture and customs. Outstanding features of Cham Muslim cuisine in An Giang include (Vũ Thu Hiền, 2017; Ngọc Phạm, 2021):

- Halal ingredients: The most outstanding feature of Cham Muslim cuisine is strict compliance with Halal regulations in Islam. All food ingredients, from meat to spices, must be processed according to Halal regulations.

- Signature dish:

Curry (Cari): Curry is a popular dish in Cham Muslim cuisine, often cooked with beef, goat or chicken, combined with many spices such as turmeric, ginger, lemongrass, chili and coconut;

Nasi Goreng: This is a typical fried rice dish, often cooked with chicken, beef, shrimp or other seafood, combined with vegetables and spices;

Chive cake: A traditional cake made from rice flour and chive filling, often deep fried.

- Spices and preparation: Cham people pay great attention to the use of spices such as turmeric, ginger, garlic, lemongrass, chili and coconut in cooking. The preparation method is usually quite simple but thorough, with an emphasis on preserving the natural flavor of the ingredients.

- Coconut: Coconut is an indispensable ingredient in many Cham dishes. Coconut water and coconut milk are often used to cook curries, stews and desserts.



- Desserts: Cham desserts are often sweet and fatty, mainly made from coconut, sticky rice and beans. Some popular dishes include green bean sweet soup, grilled beef cakes and tapioca cakes.

- Indian and Malay cultural influence: The cuisine of the Cham Muslims in An Giang is greatly influenced by Indian and Malay culture, shown through the use of rich and rich spices.

Cham Muslim cuisine in An Giang is not only a part of daily life but also shows a deep connection with traditional beliefs and culture, creating a unique and special feature in culinary culture.

## **5. SOME TYPICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CUISINE CULTURE OF CHAM MUSLIM PEOPLE IN AN GIANG**

The culinary culture of the Cham Muslim people in An Giang, especially in the Chau Doc area, is imbued with unique religious, cultural and historical imprints. Below are some typical features (Ánh Nguyễn, 2020; Diễm Phượng, 2019):

Comply with Halal regulations: All ingredients and processing methods must comply with Halal regulations, prohibiting the use of pork and other non-standard products; Food must be prepared and cooked by people who have been confirmed to have sufficient knowledge of Halal rules.

Use typical spices: Dishes often use many spices such as turmeric, ginger, garlic, lemongrass, chili and coconut, creating a rich and rich flavor; Curry is a typical dish, clearly showing the influence of Indian and Malay culture with a rich combination of spices.

Natural ingredients: Cham people often use fresh ingredients, mainly from local sources such as fish, chicken, beef, goat, vegetables and seafood; Coconut is an important ingredient, not only used in cooking but also in desserts and drinks.

Traditional food: Curry, Nasi Goreng, Grilled beef cake (Traditional cake made from rice flour, sugar and coconut milk).

Desserts: Cham people love sweet and fatty desserts such as green bean sweet soup, tapioca cake, grilled beef cake, often using coconut and beans.

Indian and Malay cultural influences: Cham Muslim cuisine in An Giang is strongly influenced by Indian and Malay culture, shown through the use of spices, cooking methods and typical dishes such as curry and nasi goreng.



Eating style: Cham people often eat family style, dishes are presented on large trays, and everyone enjoys them together; Festivals, Islamic New Year or important events all have their own typical dishes, demonstrating the diversity and richness of Cham cuisine.

The culinary culture of the Cham Islam people in An Giang not only reflects the richness and diversity in food preparation but also clearly shows a deep connection with beliefs and cultural traditions, creating a part of the culinary culture. indispensable part of the picture of Vietnamese culinary culture.

The characteristics of the culinary culture of the Cham Islam people in An Giang are also shown when compared with the culinary culture of the Cham people in other regions of the country. An Giang and Ninh Thuan are the two localities with the highest concentration of Cham people in Vietnam. The culinary culture of the Cham Islam people in An Giang and Ninh Thuan has its own identity and reflects the influence of religion, geography and history. In general, although there are many commonalities in the culinary culture of the Cham Muslims in both An Giang and Ninh Thuan, each region has its own unique characteristics that reflect the diversity of natural, cultural and historical conditions (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Comparison of culinary culture of Islam Cham people in An Giang and Ninh Thuan province

Culinary characteristics	Cham people in An Giang	Cham people in Ninh Thuan
1) Local ingredients	This region has rich river terrain, so the main ingredients are fish and seafood from the river, along with beef, goat and vegetables. Coconut is also an important ingredient in many dishes.	The terrain is semi-arid and hilly, so food comes mainly from livestock such as sheep, goats, and cows, along with seafood from the sea and dry vegetables.
2) Typical dishes	- Cari: A typical curry dish, cooked from beef, goat or chicken, combined with coconut milk and spices such as turmeric, ginger, lemongrass.	- Lamb dishes: Ninh Thuan is famous for dishes made from lamb, such as grilled lamb and stir-fried lamb. - Banh tet with black leaves: A typical cake during



Culinary characteristics	Cham people in An Giang	Cham people in Ninh Thuan
	- Grilled beef cake: Cake made from rice flour, sugar and coconut milk.	holidays, made from sticky rice, green beans and fatty meat, wrapped in black leaves to create a characteristic purple color.
3) Spices and preparation methods	Use lots of spices like turmeric, ginger, garlic, lemongrass, chili and coconut. Dishes often have the fatty and aromatic taste of coconut.	Seasonings often include dried herbs and spices. The dish may be less fatty and lean more towards the richness of the meat.
4) Culinary style	The cuisine has a river style, with dishes from freshwater fish and seafood, along with the influence of Khmer culture in cooking and spices.	The cuisine reflects the cultural interference between the Cham and Vietnamese people, with many dishes combining diverse cooking styles and spices.
5) Cultural influence	Strongly influenced by Khmer and Islam culture, with many dishes combining the cooking styles and spices of both cultures.	Influenced by Indian and Islam culture, but also combined and transformed to suit local conditions and customs of the indigenous Cham people.

## 6. POTENTIAL FOR EXPLOITING THE CULINARY CULTURAL VALUE OF CHAM ISLAM PEOPLE IN AN GIANG TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Exploiting the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people in developing An Giang tourism (culinary tourism) has great potential. Some specific potentials (Vũ Thu Hiền, 2020; Võ Văn Thắng & Võ Khánh Thiện, 2022):

Developing culinary tours: Organize tours focusing on experiencing Cham Islam cuisine, including visiting Cham villages, participating in the cooking process and enjoying traditional dishes such as curry, grilled beef cakes, nasi goreng; Visitors can learn how to cook Cham dishes under the guidance of local people, providing a profound and fascinating experience.



Combine culinary culture with festivals and events: Take advantage of Islam festivals such as Ramadan and Hari Raya to organize special culinary events, introducing traditional dishes and customs of Cham Muslims; These events can include parties, food fairs, and cultural shows, contributing to creating a vibrant festival atmosphere and attracting tourists.

Construction of restaurants and eateries specializing in Cham Muslim cuisine: Encourage the opening of restaurants and eateries specializing in serving Cham Muslim dishes, not only serving tourists but also local people; These restaurants should ensure compliance with Halal regulations, creating trust and appeal to Muslim tourists from other countries.

Promote Cham Muslim cuisine through media and social networks: Use media channels and social networks to promote Cham Muslim cuisine, introduce typical dishes, share recipes and stories about culinary culture; Invite food bloggers, vloggers and celebrities to experience and share about Cham Muslim cuisine, creating a widespread effect.

Combine with other tourism products: Combine Cham Muslim cuisine with other tourism products of An Giang such as visiting floating markets, historical relics, and scenic spots to create rich and diverse tourism packages; Create tours that combine culinary exploration and experience the culture and history of the Cham Muslim people and the local community.

Community tourism: Community tourism in An Giang, especially in the Cham Muslim community, can develop strongly through the introduction of local cultural and culinary features. This not only brings economic benefits to the community but also helps preserve national cultural identity.

Developing Cham Muslim culinary products as souvenirs: Producing and selling Cham Muslim culinary products such as cakes, typical spices, and prepared dishes for tourists to buy as souvenirs; Pack these products beautifully, ensuring quality and compliance with food safety regulations.

Exploiting the culinary cultural value of the Cham Muslim people in tourism development in the form of culinary cultural tourism, not only contributes to preserving and developing local culture but also brings economic benefits, creating motivation for the local community and attract tourists to An Giang. This is a potential direction to preserve and promote the unique cultural values of this community.



## **7. OPPORTUNITIES, ADVANTAGES AND DIFFICULTIES AND CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPING CHAM ISLAM CUISINE TOURISM IN AN GIANG PROVINCE**

### **7.1. Opportunities, advantages**

Exploiting the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people in An Giang has many opportunities and advantages, especially in the context of strongly developing cultural and culinary tourism. Some main opportunities and advantages are as follows:

#### **- Unique culinary cultural characteristics**

Diverse dishes: Cham Islam cuisine is rich and diverse with traditional dishes such as curry, beef cakes, and dishes using unique spices.

Religious factor: Halal food of Cham Muslims has a clear difference, attracting the attention of tourists who want to experience unique religious and culinary culture.

#### **- Geographical advantage**

Near famous tourist destinations: An Giang is located in the Mekong Delta, near many tourist destinations such as Chau Doc, Sam Mountain, Ba Chua Xu Temple, attracting a large number of domestic and foreign tourists.

Convenient transportation: The transportation system connects well with neighboring provinces, making it easy for culinary tourism development.

#### **- Potential for developing culinary tourism**

Growing interest: Culinary tourism is becoming a trend, many tourists want to explore and experience local culinary culture.

Business opportunities: Many restaurants, eateries, and tourism services can exploit Cham Islam cuisine to create a different highlight, attracting tourists.

#### **- Support from authorities and organizations**

Policies to support tourism development: Local authorities have many policies to support tourism development, including culinary tourism.

Cooperate with organizations: Many tourism and cultural organizations can cooperate to promote and develop Cham Islamic cuisine.

#### **- Raise awareness and promote**

Promotion through media: Use social networks, travel blogs, and other media to introduce Cham Islam cuisine to the wider public.





Organizing events and festivals: Organizing events and culinary festivals to introduce and promote Cham Islam culinary culture.

- Develop culinary tourism products

Culinary tours: Develop tours focusing on experiencing Cham Islam cuisine, including visiting Cham villages, learning to cook, and enjoying traditional dishes.

Culinary products: Develop packaged culinary products, such as spices and prepared foods, with characteristics of Cham Islam cuisine so that tourists can bring home as gifts.

In short, exploiting the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people in An Giang is not only an opportunity to develop the local economy but also a way to preserve and promote the unique cultural identity of the community Cham Islam.

## **7.2. Difficulties and challenges**

Exploiting the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people in An Giang to serve tourism faces many difficulties and challenges, including:

- Preserving and promoting cultural traditions

Risk of cultural oblivion: The commercialization of cuisine can lose the originality and traditional cultural value of dishes;

Preserving cooking techniques: Traditional cooking methods can be complex and time-consuming, making them difficult to teach and preserve.

- Lack of knowledge and awareness about Cham Islam cuisine

Limited knowledge of tourists: Many tourists do not understand clearly about Cham Islam cuisine and culture, leading to difficulty creating appeal and attraction;

Lack of documents and information: Information about Cham Islam cuisine has not been widely disseminated, causing difficulties in promoting and educating the public.

- Tourism infrastructure and services are not fully developed

Limited tourism infrastructure: Some areas where Cham Muslims live have undeveloped infrastructure, making it difficult to access and attract tourists;

Lack of professional services: Tourism services such as restaurants, hotels, and tour guides have not been professionally trained to serve tourists learning about Cham Islamic cuisine.



- Challenges in raw material sources and food hygiene and safety standards.

Difficult source of ingredients: Some typical ingredients of Cham Islam cuisine may be difficult to find and not popular on the market;

Food hygiene and safety standards: Ensuring food hygiene and safety according to international standards is a big challenge, especially in rural areas.

- Support from the government and community

Lack of specific support policies: Policies to support culinary tourism development are limited and not really effective;

Community participation: The Cham Islam community needs to actively and proactively participate in developing and promoting cuisine, but this is sometimes difficult due to awareness and reluctance to change.

- Compete with other cuisines

Strong competition: Cham Islamic cuisine has to compete with many other cuisines that have established brands and are more popular;

Diversification of tourist choices: Tourists tend to choose culinary experiences that are more familiar and accessible, making it difficult for Cham Islam cuisine to attract attention.

- Financial and investment challenges

Limited investment: Lack of investment capital to develop infrastructure and professional tourism services;

High promotional costs: The cost of promotional and marketing campaigns to introduce Cham Islam cuisine to international tourists is a big challenge.

- Ability to adapt to new trends

Changing dining trends: Culinary trends change continuously, requiring flexibility and creativity in preserving and developing traditional cuisine.

Dietary requirements: Tourists are increasingly concerned about diet and nutrition, needing to adjust and adapt without losing traditional culinary identity.

In summary, although there are many opportunities to develop and exploit the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people in An Giang, it is also necessary to face and overcome many challenges to achieve sustainable success.



## **8. ORIENTATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CHAM ISLAM CUISINE TOURISM IN AN GIANG PROVINCE**

Based on the identification of the current status of Cham Islam culinary tourism development in An Giang province and the assessments of opportunities, advantages, difficulties and challenges, developing Cham Islam culinary tourism in An Giang province needs to focus on exploiting unique cultural characteristics, promoting traditional cuisine, and improving the quality of tourism services. Some main directions are: create typical culinary tourism products such as Cham Islamic culinary tours, develop restaurants specializing in Cham Islamic cuisine; effectively promote and market through social and digital media and organize Cham Islam culinary events and festivals; improve the quality of culinary tourism services through training and improving skills for people, ensuring food hygiene and safety for tourists; preserve and promote traditional cultural values to preserve traditional recipes and traditional crafts; infrastructure development such as roads, transportation systems, accommodation facilities, and entertainment areas, develop travel support services to ensure a safe and comfortable travel experience for visitors.

Cooperate and link with travel companies to build tour packages that combine exploring Cham Islam culture and cuisine, link with cultural and educational organizations to research, preserve and develop Developing Cham Islamic cuisine, creating a scientific basis and enhancing cultural values.

Implementing these orientations will help An Giang province effectively exploit the culinary cultural values of the Cham Islam people, contributing to sustainable tourism development, improving economic life and preserving and promoting these values.

## **9. SOLUTIONS TO EFFECTIVELY EXPLOIT THE CULINARY CULTURAL VALUE OF ISLAM CHAM PEOPLE IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF AN GIANG PROVINCE**

To effectively exploit the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people in tourism development in An Giang province, it is necessary to implement synchronous and long-term solutions. Some proposed solutions are as follows:

*Build and develop culinary tourism products:*

Create specialized culinary tours: Design tours that combine cultural



exploration and enjoyment of Cham Islam cuisine, including activities such as visiting Cham villages, experiencing cooking and enjoying featured dishes;

Develop restaurants and eateries specializing in Cham Islamic cuisine: Encourage the opening of restaurants and eateries specializing in serving Cham Islamic dishes, ensuring compliance with Halal regulations to attract Islam tourists and tourists interested diners.

#### *Promotion and marketing*

Using media and social networks to promote Cham Islam culinary culture is very important. Marketing campaigns should emphasize the uniqueness and tradition of Cham cuisine, as well as related cultural activities.

Using media and social networks: Promote Cham Islamic cuisine through media channels and social networks, share stories about culinary culture, recipes and travel experiences. Invite food bloggers, vloggers and celebrities to experience and share;

Organizing culinary events: Periodically organize events and Cham Islam culinary festivals to introduce traditional dishes, combined with cultural activities such as dancing and ethnic musical instruments, creating the atmosphere is vibrant and attractive.

#### *Training and capacity building for local people*

Organize training courses on tourism and cuisine: Train Cham Islam people in cooking skills, restaurant management, and serving tourists, helping to improve service quality and competitiveness;

Support for startups and business development: Support people to start businesses in the tourism and culinary fields, provide capital, business consulting and market connections;

Support local people to participate in tourism activities, thereby creating stable income and improving economic life.

#### *Cooperation and association*

Cooperate with travel companies: Establish cooperative relationships with travel companies to build tour packages that combine exploring Cham Islam culture and cuisine, attracting domestic and foreign tourists;

Associate with educational and research institutions: Collaborate with universities and research institutes to research, preserve and develop Cham Islam cuisine, create a scientific basis and enhance cultural values;



Cooperation and Sustainable Development: There needs to be cooperation between local authorities, the Cham Islam community and tourism businesses to develop culinary and cultural tourism in a sustainable way, ensuring benefits for all and does not lose the cultural identity of the Cham people.

*Preserve and promote cultural values*

Preserve traditional recipes and cooking techniques: Record and preserve traditional recipes and cooking techniques of the Cham Islam people, organize seminars and discussions on culinary culture;

Encourage traditional vocational training: Create conditions for experienced artisans and chefs to teach vocational skills to the younger generation, ensuring continuity and sustainable development.

*Develop signature culinary products*

Producing and trading typical culinary products: Producing Cham Islamic culinary products such as cakes, spices, and prepared foods for tourists to buy as souvenirs;

Invest in packaging and product quality: Ensure products are beautifully packaged, high quality, and comply with food safety regulations.

*Developing tourism infrastructure and services*

Upgrading tourism infrastructure: Improve transportation systems, accommodation facilities, restaurants, and eateries in Cham village areas to better serve tourists, sightseeing and culinary experiences;

Develop support services: Expand tourism support services such as tour information, tour guides, transportation services, and medical services to ensure a safe and comfortable travel experience for tourists;

Ensuring professional and friendly service: Training tourism and restaurant staff on service skills and foreign language communication, especially English and Arabic to serve international tourists.

*Developing Cham Islam community tourism*

Based on the results and experiences of community tourism development in Cham villages such as Da Phuoc and Chau Giang that have been achieved, summarize and replicate these models for other Cham communities located along the Hau River in An Phu, Tan Chau, Phu Tan districts, and scattered in Chau Phu and Chau Thanh districts, in order to bring economic benefits, protect the environment, preserve and promote cultural values Cham Islam ethnic group throughout An Giang province.



Implementing these solutions in a synchronous manner will help effectively exploit the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people, contributing to sustainable tourism development and improving the economic life of An Giang people.

## 10. CONCLUSION

Through research results, it can be seen that in An Giang, the culinary culture of the Cham Islam people has many unique values, capable of attracting tourists. The Cham Islam community in An Giang has a way of eating with dishes made from local ingredients, suitable for the living environment as well as following the culinary regulations of the Islam religion.

Cham Islam culinary culture in An Giang has outstanding characteristics, different from Cham communities in other places such as Ninh Thuan province and really has potential in developing culinary tourism. However, through learning about Cham Islamic culinary culture in An Giang, it shows that developing Cham Islamic culinary tourism products in An Giang, besides opportunities and advantages, also has many difficulties and challenges. So, culinary tourism products are still poor, and tourists have not really experienced the Cham cultural environment in An Giang fully.

Based on identifying the current status of Cham Islam culinary tourism development in An Giang province, we propose a number of solutions related to: Building and developing culinary tourism products; Promotion and marketing; Training and capacity building for local people; Cooperation and association; Preserve and promote cultural values; Develop signature culinary products; Developing tourism infrastructure and services.

These solutions hope to help exploit the culinary cultural value of the Cham Islam people effectively in tourism development in An Giang province in order to develop the tourism industry into a key economic sector in the economic structure of the province.

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# Kỷ yếu Hội thảo khoa học quốc gia “Du lịch và Ẩm thực”

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