



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

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THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH



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BANH MI AND INTERNATIONAL TOURISM ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

Banh Mi has become the most popular food in many cities in Vietnam, and this special food has converted to a symbol of inbound tourism. The increasing of Banh Mi image has been emphasizing that bread is not just a simple dish but also a part of the Vietnamese culinary cultural experience. This research aims to explore Vietnamese bread's formation and development process that figure out the impacts on tourism and culinary culture in Vietnam. This paper conducts the quantitative research with secondary data from magazines, proceedings, theses, and dissertations specializing in cuisine and tourism at home and abroad. The result reveals that Banh Mi has contributions significantly to tourism development in Vietnam, turning bread into a culinary "ambassador" promoting Vietnam's image and culture to the world. Besides, the author also emphasizes that Vietnamese bread must be recognized as part of the intangible cultural heritage. Through the value result, this study also contributes several practical implications for tourism business in case of taking advantages special local foods.

Keywords: *Banh Mi, Vietnamese bread, inbound tourists, tourism activities, culinary culture, local cuisine*

1. INTRODUCTION

Banh mi with its delicious, unique flavor and affordable price, has become a popular street food and is loved by international tourists (Lê Thùy Trang, 2023). Not simply a dish, Banh mi is also a characteristic of Vietnamese culinary culture, contributing to the appeal of inbound tourism.

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International tourists to Vietnam are always attracted by the diversity and richness of street food (Nhu et al., 2014). Banh mi with a harmonious combination of crispy bread crust, Fragrant grilled meat, fatty pate, and fresh vegetables has conquered the tastes of diners from all over the world. Banh mi is not only delicious but also imbued with Vietnamese cultural identity. Each region has different ways of preparing bread, creating its unique flavor. From traditional grilled meat sandwiches to shumai sandwiches, fish cakes, or new creations such as pho sandwiches and ice cream sandwiches, all bring visitors interesting culinary experiences (Doan, 2023). With great potential in promoting tourism and attracting inbound tourists, Banh Mi needs further attention and development. More research is needed to effectively exploit this potential and make Vietnamese bread a famous culinary brand on the international tourism map. By improving product quality, diversifying service types, and effectively promoting the image of Banh mi, we can attract international tourists to explore and experience unique cuisine. of the country. Developing Banh mi in inbound tourism not only brings economic benefits but also contributes to preserving and promoting Vietnamese culinary cultural identity to international friends.

The main research object of the article is Vietnamese bread to attract inbound tourists. To ensure the research process is scientific and practical, the author has applied knowledge of tourism in combination with some other scientific disciplines (information technology, psychology, cultural heritage management, tourism economics, travel management, culinary management, banquet management, hotel management, restaurant management...) based on the following specific methods:

Document research method: Find all scientific articles, specialized books, and newspapers at home and abroad related to Banh mi in international tourism activities through the Google Scholar search engine (Google Scholar and cite the source according to EndNote X9 APA software).

Methods of collecting and inheriting documents, selecting information, and researching secondary documents related to the current topic such as articles, magazines, and dissertations of previous authors as a basis.



2. THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

2.1. Tourists

International tourists are people who travel from their country of residence to another country for purposes other than working or making a living. They can come to visit, relax, entertain, visit relatives, study, or participate in other activities (Reisinger & Dimanche, 2009). According to Article 10 of the 2017 Tourism Law, international tourists are defined as: "Foreigners and Vietnamese residing abroad come to Vietnam to travel."

An inbound tourism business is a business activity aimed at attracting international tourists to visit, experience, and spend in a specific country. In other words, this is a tourism industry that focuses on providing tourism services to tourists from other countries, bringing foreign exchange revenue and economic benefits to the host country (Lundberg, 1980). Within the scope of the article, the author only mentions food service activities related to bread.

Local cuisine is a collection of traditional dishes, drinks, and preparations originating from a specific geographical area. It reflects the culture, history, natural conditions, and local products of that place (Feldmann et al., 2015). In the article, although the ingredients for making Banh mi are not of local origin, the author analyzes the unique flavor and cultural identity of a traditional dish.

Banh mi, also known as Vietnamese baguette, is a popular and loved food throughout Vietnam. It is not simply a breakfast dish or a quick meal, but also a feature of Vietnamese culinary culture (Pike, 2018).

2.2. Development of Banh Mi

Origin of Banh mi

Banh mi has appeared since the early 20th century and was brought and developed from French cuisine. However, Vietnamese people have modified it to suit their taste and culture. characterize the country. Banh mi also originates from the Chinese bread maker but is modified to create the unique and rich types of Banh mi we have today. Initially, Banh mi was simply a loaf of toasted bread filled with butter, ham, and pâté (Raum, 2009). However, over time, Vietnamese people have been creative and added diverse and rich fillings such as sausages, eggs, pork rolls, grilled meat, and many types of raw vegetables. This development and evolution have created the diversity and richness of Vietnamese bread cuisine today.



You can also find Banh mi with soft and delicious smoked bacon, bread with fresh salmon and soft meat, Banh mi with crispy garlic roasted pork, Banh mi with sweet and fresh fruit filling and creamy, bread filled with cool coconut milk cream, and more (Raum, 2009). Not only do they have a variety of fillings, but Vietnamese bread also has many special types of bread such as spicy bread, grilled bread with cheese on top, and interesting-shaped bread for children. Regardless of the type of bread you choose, you'll experience the wonderful flavors of Vietnamese cuisine in every bite of fresh Banh mi. It is not only a common dish but also a symbol of Vietnamese culture and love. Therefore, Banh mi is an indispensable part of the daily life of Vietnamese people.

Vietnamese bread in F&B tourism activities

Banh mi plays an extremely important and indispensable role in our country's tourism industry. Known for its unique flavor and rich historical roots, Banh mi has attracted the attention of visitors from around the globe. Through years of development and evolution, Banh mi has contributed significantly to creating and enhancing the reputation of Vietnam's tourism industry in the international market. Banh mi is indispensable in the breakfast menu of tourists at hotels, lunch, and dinner in the local restaurants or food streets.

Banh mi has a great influence on the international tourism industry and is highly appreciated by tourists around the world. With the popularity and uniqueness of Vietnamese sandwiches, visitors from different countries not only come to Vietnam to enjoy great sandwiches but also bring with them the desire to explore the deep history and culture, identity of this country. Banh mi is not only considered a delicious dish but also a symbol of the diversity and richness of Vietnamese cuisine. Made from fresh and unique ingredients such as flour, grilled meat, pate, shrimp paste, and raw vegetables, each banh mi brings a unique flavor and a wonderful culinary experience. The special feature of Banh mi lies in the meticulousness in making it and the harmonious blend of ingredients, creating an interesting and attractive feeling for anyone who has ever enjoyed it. Not only is it a delicious dish, but Banh mi also carries special cultural values and helps attract tourists from all parts of the world to Vietnam. Banh mi is an indispensable part of the view of Vietnamese culture through its unique way of eating and enjoying food. Through Vietnamese bread, visitors will have the opportunity to learn and explore the cultural values, customs, traditions, and history of Vietnam in an interesting and lively way. Vietnamese bread is



a unique tourist image and attracts all eyes. With the continuous development of the tourism industry, Vietnamese bread is playing an increasingly important role in attracting tourists to Vietnam. Famous and traditional bread shops across the country are becoming attractive destinations for tourists who want to explore and experience the unique flavor of Vietnamese bread. Learning about the history, how to make and the stories behind banh mi has become an indispensable activity in the travel itinerary of tourists when arriving in Vietnam. In short, Vietnamese bread is not only a delicious dish but also a cultural symbol and a unique feature of the country. The perfect combination of great taste and the ability to attract tourists has helped Vietnamese bread shine in the tourism industry. Vietnam attracts millions of tourists every year for one sole reason: to rediscover the unique and unforgettable flavor of Vietnamese bread.

The development of Vietnam's tourism industry is strongly promoted by the popularity of Vietnamese bread in the world. Vietnamese bread has become a unique and characteristic symbol of the country, attracting the attention and trust of international tourists. With great flavors and diverse images, Vietnamese sandwiches bring exciting experiences and an adventurous spirit to travel lovers. Marking a turning point in Vietnam's tourism industry, Banh Mi has created many new business opportunities and promoted the comprehensive development of this industry. With the development of the bread production and distribution industry, many Vietnamese people have stable jobs and higher incomes, thereby improving their lives and contributing to the country's economy. More than just ordinary food, Banh mi has become an indispensable part of the tourism industry. Tourists from all over the world have flocked to Vietnam to enjoy and discover the delicious taste of this special bread, making an important contribution to enhancing the image of Vietnamese tourism in the world. The diversity and richness of Vietnamese sandwiches have inspired many visitors to explore more of the country's other wonderful places. With the development of the tourism industry, Vietnam has become an attractive and unique destination on the world tourism map (Chau, 2021). Not only does it have a positive impact on the tourism industry, but Banh Mi has also created great business opportunities and attracted a large number of tourists to Vietnam. By exploiting the potential of bread, many businesses have increased their presence in the tourism industry and brought special experiences to visitors.



3. DISCUSSION THE IMPACTS OF BANH MI ON TOURIST

3.1. Famous destination

The tourism mission is not simply to explore and enjoy the beautiful natural beauty but also to experience the unique culture, especially the wonderful cuisine at the destinations. Four reputable cities on the list that cannot be missed are the famous sticky rice and cake city of Saigon, the colorful ancient town of Hoi An, and the ancient and magnificent capital city of Hue.

Known as a great destination for those who love unique and rich cuisine, with the most diverse and unique Banh mi sales service, Saigon - Ho Chi Minh City has become a Banh mi paradise not to be missed in the country. Saigon Banh mi is not simply a type of bread, but it carries with it flavor and thereby represents the ego of the people of Saigon. With a delicate combination of diverse ingredients such as grilled meat, and fish balls, each banh mi here is carefully crafted to bring visitors a unique and colorful culinary experience. Among the countless unique Banh mi shops in Saigon, some famous Banh mi shops have left a special mark in the hearts of locals and tourists. Hong Hoa Banh mi, with its fragrant grilled meat filling and perfect spices with its rich and delicious flavor, has conquered the hearts of many demanding diners., has become a culinary symbol of Saigon. In particular, Banh Mi Ba Le is famous not only for its attractive aroma but also for its characteristic crispy crust, creating the perfect harmony for this dish. These bakeries are not only notable for their excellent quality and taste but also carry unique and traditional Saigon cooking secrets. Visitors to Saigon will not miss the opportunity to enjoy delicious Vietnamese sandwiches and explore the typical culinary culture of this city.

Hoi An, a widely known ancient city that attracts tourists from all over Vietnam, is also famous as a paradise for delicious traditional sandwiches. There are many bakeries in Hoi An, which not only have lovely landscapes but also impress with their novelty and special flavors. Tourists coming here can enjoy unique and attractive sandwiches such as the delicious Old Town shredded chicken sandwich, the fragrant grilled meat sandwich, and the irresistible fresh braised beef sandwich. Coming to Hoi An, you will not be surprised to be captivated by the perfect landscape and the uniqueness of the wonderful sandwiches. Open our eyes and enjoy delicious dishes in this unique and interesting ancient city - Hoi An (Hansen et al., 2023). Hoi An is not only famous for its delicious traditional Banh mi but also has many other



unique specialties that cannot be missed. If you are a fan of street food, try grilled Banh mi with delicious fillings such as pork, sausage, or fresh salmon. If you are a fan of traditional flavors, enjoy sandwiches filled with grilled meat or shredded chicken in the old town, mixed with raw vegetables and special sauce. Braised beef banh mi is also a great choice for those who like sweet flavor and soft beef. In addition, Hoi An also has special types of bread specifically for vegetarians such as vegetarian rolls or attractive vegetarian bread filled with fresh vegetables. Not unique flavors, Hoi An also attracts tourists by the beautiful landscape of the ancient city. Beautiful small streets, ancient houses lit in dim lights, and ancient bridges spanning the Thu Bon River, create a romantic and peaceful space, expanding your horizons and exploring hidden corners (Hansen et al., 2023). The beauty of Hoi An ranges from ancient temples to unique architecture and green fields. Enjoying traditional Banh mi in this space is a wonderful experience that you cannot miss. Hoi An is not only a famous tourist destination in Vietnam, but also a culinary paradise, enjoy the wonderful flavors of unique sandwiches and enjoy a slow and interesting life.

Hue is an ideal tourist destination to enjoy Vietnamese sandwiches with special types of sandwiches such as grilled meat sandwiches, fried spring roll sandwiches, and grilled pork sandwiches. Specialties here are a blend of unique spices and typical flavors of Central Vietnam, creating delicious and attractive sandwiches for visitors. When enjoying Banh mi in Hue, visitors will experience a world of wonderful flavors. Each type of bread has a sweet taste, a balanced salty taste, and a light sour taste, creating a harmonious blend of unique flavors. Grilled meat sandwiches will make you immerse yourself in the aroma of fatty meat on the outside and soft sweetness on the inside. Fried spring roll bread offers a compact serving of bread, fried crispy, and rich with a fragrant spring roll filling. And Banh mi has a unique flavor, with a smooth meat patty cooked from natural ingredients. Not only delicious but Banh mi in Hue is also delicately and beautifully decorated. These stylish cakes demonstrate the sophistication and creativity in the culinary art of the Hue people. Banh mi forms can even be decorated with bright shapes and colors, creating beautiful paintings on the surface of the cake. Coming to Hue, visitors can also participate in the bread-making process at local shops. Talented bakers will guide you step by step to create delicious but also hygienic bread. Visitors can learn how to mix dough, knead fillings, and traditionally beautify Banh mi, becoming a true baker. By enjoying and experiencing the process of making Banh mi in



Hue, visitors will have the opportunity to understand more about the rich and diverse cuisine of Vietnam. Not just a common dish, Banh mi in Hue carries special cultural and historical values.

Banh Mi Hanoi is a unique and flavorful street food that combines a crispy baguette with a variety of savory fillings. Its affordability, widespread availability, and cultural significance make it a must-try for any visitor to Hanoi. The fillings are incredibly diverse, reflecting Hanoi's street food culture. Here are some common options: grilled pork, fried fish cake, fermented pork sausage. A savory spread made from liver, pork, and spices. Eggs are often fried as *ốp la* (sunny side up) Adding a crunchy and refreshing element, like carrot, cucumber, and Fresh herbs such as cilantro assorted herbs.

3.2. Inbound tourists

Based on my experience operating hotel and restaurant business in Vietnam, we have found that inbound tourists favor the following types of Banh mi with meat and fish fillings:

Banh mi with grilled meat

Grilled meat sandwich is a special and unique type of Banh mi in the field of tourism in Vietnam. The Banh mi not only has an attractive outside appearance with a crispy crust but also has a delicious flavor inside with an extremely attractive grilled meat filling. The special feature of this dish is the combination of grilled meat with fresh raw vegetables, and spices mixed with rich fish sauce (Chau, 2021). There's nothing better than the sweetness of fragrant grilled meat mixed with the sour, salty, sweet, and spicy flavors of fresh raw vegetables and fish sauce. Grilled meatloaf is not only a traditional dish that has existed for a long time but is also one of the top favorite dishes of many domestic and foreign tourists. The popularity of this dish is an affirmation of the unique and eye-catching flavor it brings. This interesting dish can be found on every street corner and sandwich shop nationwide. When using grilled meat sandwiches to prepare poems praising Vietnam, visitors will feel the souls of those who created this dish long ago. The crispy taste of the Banh mi combined with the aromatic meat filling creates a wonderful culinary experience not to be missed. Therefore, grilled meat sandwiches are a beloved and honored culinary symbol of Vietnam, what has helped it attract attention and mark the unique and captivating speciality of the country? this family. In addition to being used as a main dish, in recent years, grilled meat sandwiches have also been transformed to



become a fast food suitable for modern life. Famous restaurants and eateries in Vietnam have created new, strange, and unique versions of grilled meat sandwiches. Visitors can find grilled meat sandwiches lying in a boiling hot pan, combined with stir-fried squid, grilled shrimp, or even fried rare beef. These variations give the traditional dish an interesting twist and a blend of many unique flavors. Come to Vietnam and enjoy this dish to experience the unique and unforgettable taste. A grilled meat sandwich is not just a dish but also a journey to discover new, delicious, and unique things about Vietnamese cuisine. Guests will begin their journey of enjoying this wonderful flavor in a truly Vietnamese environment, where they will feel the care and love of the people who make this dish, a culinary experience. Unforgettable. There's nothing better than enjoying a delicious and spicy grilled meat sandwich in the cold of winter or cooling off in the heat of summer. Visitors will feel the unique flavor and wonderful sublimation of this dish.

Banh Mi with shumai

Shumai Banh mi is a special and popular type of Banh mi in the tourism sector in Vietnam. This is characterized by its soft, smooth crust and bright yellow color, creating an irresistibly beautiful appearance. Inside Banh mi is a piece of shumai made from delicious pork cut into small pieces and combined with many rich spices. Shumai sandwiches are often combined with fresh raw vegetables, fish sauce, and suitable spices to create a unique and attractive flavor. With its special traditional culinary features and style, shumai bread has become an indispensable dish when traveling to Vietnam. Shumai bread is not only delicious and nutritious but also an interesting experience in visitors' culinary discovery journey. In addition to blending the sweet flavor of pork shumai and the rich flavor of spices, shumai Banh mi also has an eye-catching appearance with a soft, smooth crust and golden color (Chau, 2021). The special feature of shumai Banh mi is that the shumai sandwich is uniquely and delicately processed while preserving the natural flavor of pork while creating a harmonious combination with spices such as black pepper and garlic, and onions. Shumai Banh mi can be eaten directly or combined with raw vegetables and fish sauce to add flavor and richness to the dish. The combination of sweet, salty, and spicy flavors in shumai banh mi makes the dish an enjoyable and memorable experience. Shumai bread is not only a unique Vietnamese dish but also a symbol of Vietnamese cuisine.



Banh mi with braised beef

Braised beef Banh mi is a special type of Banh mi in Vietnam. It has a crispy and fragrant crust, and inside is delicious and soft braised beef, bringing an enjoyable experience to those who enjoy it. The beef is cooked tenderly in special spices such as fish sauce, sugar, cooking oil, and a variety of other delicate spices, to absorb the flavor and feel fragrant and rich. Braised beef banh mi is often served with delicious crunchy raw vegetables, aromatic spices, premium fish sauce, and rich black pepper to add layers of wonderful flavor. True to its name, braised beef bread is not only a delicious dish for visitors but also a unique Vietnamese experience. Therefore, it is not surprising that this dish is one of the most attractive and popular dishes that tourists often discover and enjoy when traveling to Vietnam. Braised beef banh mi is prepared from fresh ingredients and processed using traditional methods, ensuring excellent flavor and deliciousness. The soft and delicious beef pieces are carefully marinated, to bring a soft and sweet meat feeling when chewed. The highlight of braised beef banh mi is the delicate spices such as thinly sliced green onions, fresh green chili, coriander, and fried garlic. All of these ingredients combine to form a wonderful mixture of flavors, making braised beef banh mi an irresistible dish. When enjoying braised beef banh mi, guests will feel the perfect blend between the rich flavor of braised beef and the sweetness of crispy bread. Braised beef banh mi is truly a wonderful culinary experience, blending with Vietnam's tourist culture. Regardless of whether they are foreign tourists or locals, once enjoying braised beef bread will make them feel the specialness and difference of Vietnamese cuisine. Vietnam is famous for its rich and diverse cuisine, and braised beef bread is one of the country's most outstanding dishes. Not only is it a delicious dish, braised beef bread is also a cultural symbol and an indispensable part of the daily life of Vietnamese people.

Banh mi with Fish cake

Banh mi with fish cake is a special and traditional bread in Vietnam. The fish cake filling is made using fresh fish meat and typical spices, combined with delicate processing techniques to achieve a rich and delicious flavor. When enjoying this Banh mi, guests will feel the perfect combination of a crispy crust and soft, smooth fish filling. Usually, to add flavor to this dish, people often eat Banh mi with fish cake, fresh raw vegetables, and fatty cheese (Chau, 2021). This helps increase palatability



and provide more nutrition to the meal. Besides, fish sauce and pepper are also used to create a wonderful spice mixture.

4. RESULT AND RECOMMENDATION

Bánh mì, Vietnam's ubiquitous bread, transcends food. It's a cultural symbol, blending local ingredients with French influence for a symphony of flavors. Each region boasts unique fillings, captivating locals and tourists alike. Found everywhere, bánh mì is an immersive culinary experience. Beyond taste, it fuels tourism's economic growth. Its rising fame strengthens Vietnam's brand and opens doors for food and tourism businesses. Bánh mì, a cultural ambassador, beckons visitors to explore Vietnam's culinary tapestry. This ingenious street food embodies Vietnamese adaptability. A testament to cultural exchange, it's a unique creation on the world's culinary map. Preserving and promoting its value safeguards heritage fosters Vietnam's image and bolsters its vital tourism industry.

To promote the value of Vietnamese bread in the development of tourism in Vietnam, representatives of several associations and promotional organizations suggest creating websites about bread in multiple languages to introduce not only to Vietnamese people but also to international friends. At the same time, production and business units must actively participate in research activities and enhance promotion through images to bring visitors closer to street bread in famous cities. In terms of management, efforts should be made to bring bread closer to Vietnamese in oversea and international visitors through travelling and culinary programs on foreign television channels. Particularly, to ensure the safety of tourists when consuming food and beverages like bread during their travels in Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam in general, it is necessary to strengthen management in this area. Some tours can offer sandwiches as a convenient meal option for guests to replace dining at restaurants, saving time and preventing guests from getting tired of waiting for long periods when using the service.

The article has several limitations such as it hasn't interviewed inbound tourists and related stakeholders yet. That could be limited to empirical research when the study lacks the qualitative data that is surveyed through visitors. Besides, the main theory to support for this research has still not been mentioned in this paper. These drawbacks might motivate further researchers to conduct the empirical study to measure dimensions that affect revisit intention of visitor through the local food.



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