

## Legendary Culinary Tourism in Jakarta, Indonesia

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### Abstract

This research explores legendary Jakarta culinary delights reflecting local traditions, global influences, and the city's cultural identity. The study aims to identify and analyse iconic restaurants such as Ragusa Es Italia and Nasi Goreng Kebon Sirih. The methods include semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document collection to understand culinary delights' experience, history, and social impact. The results identified eight legendary restaurants, each significantly contributing to Jakarta's culinary culture. The culinary experience at these places is not just about the food but also strengthens social interactions between diners, creating connected communities. Analysis shows that the restaurant is a custodian of cultural and historical values, connecting different generations. The conclusion is that the culinary legend not only serves delicious food but also builds the city's identity. Means for preserving culinary heritage include collaboration between government, communities, and entrepreneurs and training programs for the younger generation to maintain traditional cooking techniques. Hopefully, this research will become a reference in developing culinary studies and preserving cultural heritage in Jakarta.

**Keywords:** legendary culinary delights, Jakarta, cultural identity, social interaction, heritage preservation

## A. Introduction

This research focuses on the legendary culinary tourism in Jakarta, Indonesia, to identify and analyse several restaurants and stalls that have become culinary icons in the capital city. In this context, several locations that will be researched include Ragusa Es Italia, Nasi Goreng Kebon Sirih, Gado-Gado Bon Bin, Bakmi Gang Kelinci, Mie Ayam Gondangdia, Soto Betawi H. Ma'ruf, Pempek Megaria, and Sate Tegal H. Sadjim. These places serve food and provide a rich cultural experience, creating a unique attraction for locals and tourists. By reviewing these places, it is hoped that we can provide deeper insight into the culinary dynamics in Jakarta and how culinary heritage can contribute to the city's identity.

As Indonesia's economic and cultural centre, Jakarta is a rich melting pot of culinary diversity that reflects tradition and innovation. Amid the rapid development of modern culinary delights, which are often influenced by global trends, many eating places still persistently maintain traditional recipes and serving methods (Prabowo et al., 2022). Culinary tourism offers a unique gastronomic experience and creates social and cultural connectivity between Jakarta residents. This legendary culinary delight illustrates how urban communities can stay connected to their cultural roots while enjoying delicacies that have been around for a long time. This research is essential to explore the role of legendary eating places in a broader social and cultural context.

This research examines the legendary culinary places' characteristics, history and social influence. This research is necessary because it seeks to preserve culinary heritage that has the potential to be lost amidst changes in the lifestyle of an increasingly urban society. Apart from that, by understanding the values contained in legendary culinary delights, it is hoped that we can provide relevant recommendations for tourism development and preserving culinary culture in Jakarta. This culinary legend isn't just about the food; it holds stories connecting generations and providing context for the social changes in this city.

This research will raise several questions to dig deeper into this culinary phenomenon. The first question is: (1) What makes these restaurants considered legendary by the people of Jakarta? (2) What are the history and culinary traditions of each location?; (3) What is the social and economic impact of the existence of this legendary culinary delight on the local community? Through these questions, in-depth answers can be found that reflect the complexity of the relationship between food, culture, and society in Jakarta.

The existence of legendary restaurants in Jakarta impacts the preservation of culinary culture and positively contributes to the local economy. This is based on the notion that eating places that have existed for decades function as food providers and as social spaces connecting people from various backgrounds. In other words, the existence of this legendary culinary delight not only provides economic value but also contributes to the formation of the collective identity of the people of Jakarta.

Research conducted by Untari et al. (2017) entitled "Traditional Betawi Culinary; Reflections on the History of Jakarta (formerly known as Batavia)" discusses how Betawi cuisine reflects Jakarta's history through a blend of flavours from various cultures, including Dutch, Chinese, and Arabic. Dishes such as Soto Betawi and Kerak Telor demonstrate the rich culinary heritage, reflecting the identity of the people of Jakarta and the traditions embedded in everyday life.

Then, research conducted by Arciniegas et al. (2021) entitled "The Foodscape of the Urban Poor in Jakarta: Street Food Affordances, Sharing Networks, and Individual Trajectories" discusses street food among poor communities in Jakarta, highlighting access to food as an economic opportunity and strengthening social networks. Through "foodscape" mapping, this research shows food's important role in meeting nutritional needs and strengthening communities among disadvantaged urban groups.

The research entitled "Indonesian culinary history and values: an exploratory study in the city of Solo, Indonesia", conducted by Djono et al. (2023), examines the history and culinary values of Indonesia, with a focus on the city of Solo. This research highlights how culinary traditions in Solo reflect cultural heritage, local identity, and social interaction. By exploring typical dishes, such as nasi liwet and serai, this article shows the importance of culinary arts in preserving culture and connecting generations, such as cooperation and compassion in food practices in Solo society.

Hajarrahmah and Daniels-Llanos (2017) conducted research entitled "Developing Culinary Tourism to Support Local Tourism Development and Preserve Food Heritage in Indonesia." The article discusses the potential of culinary tourism to support local tourism development and preserve food heritage. By attracting tourists through culinary experiences, the article emphasises the importance of collaboration between government, industry, and communities. The aim is to create sustainable tourism packages that increase income and preserve traditional Indonesian culinary recipes and practices.

Wijaya's (2019) research entitled "Mapping Indonesian Food Culture: An Initial Contribution to Promoting Indonesian Culinary Tourism" discusses the importance of mapping Indonesian food culture as a first step in promoting culinary tourism. This research highlights the variety of dishes and culinary traditions in various regions, which can attract tourists. By mapping local culinary delights, this article aims to increase awareness of Indonesia's food diversity, support the local economy, and strengthen cultural identity. Hopefully, this mapping will become the basis for developing a sustainable and attractive culinary tourism promotion strategy.

From the discussion of the five previous studies discussing culinary delights in Indonesia, no studies focus on legendary restaurants with substantial historical and cultural value. This research offers a new perspective on aspects of tradition and innovation in culinary arts, as well as highlighting the social role of these eating places amidst the dynamics of modern society. Thus, this research is hoped to contribute to developing culinary studies in Indonesia and encourage public awareness to maintain the existing culinary heritage. Through a deeper understanding of this legendary culinary delight, we aim to appreciate better and preserve the traditions that have shaped Jakarta's character as one of Southeast Asia's most critical culinary centres.

## **B. Literature Review**

Various previous studies provide a strong foundation for further analysis of Jakarta's legendary culinary tourism phenomenon. A study by Lin et al. (2021) highlights the importance of culinary delights in building a region's cultural identity. They found that traditional cuisine serves as a symbol of cultural heritage that attracts tourists and strengthens the sense of pride in local communities.

Meanwhile, research by Királ'ová & Malec (2021) examines the economic impact of local culinary delights on tourism in the local area. They found that restaurants catering to local cultural aspects significantly contribute to the local economy by attracting visitors and creating jobs. This research shows the relevance between culinary delights and economic growth and provides a basis for the importance of preserving legendary culinary delights as part of a tourism development strategy. However, despite understanding the financial impact, this research does not highlight the social aspects of culinary experiences.

In addition, research by Polat & Aktas-Polat (2020) discusses how local culinary transformation can influence traditions. In their study, Polat & Aktas-

Polat show that even though many modern culinary delights have emerged, regional culinary delights still attract attention because of their uniqueness and authenticity. This research provides the perspective that local or legendary culinary delights have the potential to survive amidst change but needs to discuss in depth how these culinary experiences shape social interactions between residents of a region. This creates a gap that needs further research in the context of social relations in society.

Another study by Widjanarko et al. (2024) explored how social media promotes local culinary delights. Widjanarko et al. (2024) show that digital platforms allow local culinary delights to reach a wider audience. However, this research focuses more on marketing and promotion without exploring how social media can create a new narrative or identity for local culinary delights. In this case, it is essential to consider how social media functions as a promotional tool and as a space for discussion about the cultural values contained in these culinary delights.

The studies above show that although there is a lot of research discussing culinary aspects in Jakarta, gaps still need to be filled, especially regarding the social impact of legendary culinary delights on local communities. This research attempts to answer these questions more holistically, considering economic and cultural dimensions and the social interactions that form therein. Therefore, this research contributes to enriching existing literature and provides new insights into the importance of preserving legendary culinary delights as part of Jakarta's identity and cultural heritage.

### **C. Research Methods**

This type of qualitative research aims to understand individuals' or groups' experiences, perspectives, and meanings. This research focuses on exploring legendary culinary delights in Jakarta. This city is not only known as the economic centre of Indonesia but also as a gathering place for various culinary traditions. Jakarta's culinary scene reflects local traditions and innovation inspired by global influences. This research aims to identify and analyse several restaurants and stalls that have become culinary icons. These places, such as Ragusa Es Italia and Nasi Goreng Kebon Sirih, not only serve delicious food but also provide a rich cultural experience, creating an attraction for locals and tourists alike. By examining these locations, this research seeks to provide deeper insight into Jakarta's culinary dynamics and the critical role of culinary heritage in shaping the city's identity.

Data collection methods used in this research include semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and collection of related documents. Interviews were conducted with various parties involved in the culinary ecosystem, from restaurant owners to visitors, to understand their perspectives and experiences regarding the food, history and social impact produced by these places. Meanwhile, participatory observation allows researchers to directly witness interactions between diners, the restaurant atmosphere, and the food serving process, thus providing a more affluent social context. Additionally, collecting documents such as news articles and reviews on social media offers valuable additional viewpoints, helping to create a comprehensive picture of this legendary culinary scene.

Data analysis was carried out through a systematic thematic analysis approach. First, the interviews will be transcribed verbatim, allowing the researcher to identify themes and patterns that emerge from the informants' responses. A coding process was then carried out to group the information into main themes relevant to the research questions. After coding, the themes were organised and explained further to understand the relationship between themes and their relevance to the research objectives. To increase the validity of the data, researchers apply triangulation by comparing information from various sources, ensuring that the findings obtained are accurate and reliable. With this approach, this research can provide an in-depth and comprehensive perspective on culinary phenomena in Jakarta.

Apart from focusing on gastronomic aspects, this research also seeks to reveal the social and cultural values contained in legendary culinary delights. The existence of restaurants that have existed for decades shows how food functions as a link between generations, strengthening social connectivity in an increasingly modern urban society. By examining each location's history and culinary traditions, it is hoped that this research can provide a deeper understanding of how the people of Jakarta maintain their cultural heritage while adapting to changing times. Apart from that, the economic impact of the existence of this legendary culinary delight on local communities is also an important highlight, as these eating places function not only as food providers but also as social spaces that connect people from various backgrounds.

## D. Result and Discussion

### Legendary Restaurant Locations

Eight legendary restaurants have been identified as the main focus of this research, each with a long history and significant contribution to Jakarta's culinary culture. Table 1 below provides comprehensive information about each restaurant, including the year it was founded, the types of specialities offered, and the reasons underlying its legendary status in the eyes of the public.

Table 1. Information on Legendary Culinary Tourism in Jakarta

Restaurant Name	Year Founded	Typical food	Legendary Reason
Ragusa Es Italia	1932	Es Krim	Known for its nostalgic, solid atmosphere and traditional recipes that have survived over the years.
Nasi Goreng Kebon Sirih	1970	Nasi goreng	The warm social interaction and authentic taste make this place a local favourite.
Gado-Gado Bon Bin	1975	Gado-gado	Preserving family heritage recipes that represent Indonesia's culinary riches.
Bakmi Gang Kelinci	1950	Mie ayam	Has a solid historical background regarding the migration of the Chinese community in Jakarta
Mie Ayam Gondangdia	1980	Mie Ayam	Consistent quality and taste, creating loyal visitors who return.
Soto Betawi H. Ma'ruf	1950	Soto Betawi	Serving authentic flavours and serving traditions that are still maintained today.
Pempek Megaria	1990	Pempek	The use of traditional ingredients and family recipes maintains the authenticity of the taste.
Sate Tegal H. Sadjim	1980	Sate	Traditional cooking methods and incomparable delicious flavours make this place highly sought after.

Source: Author (2024)

### **Culinary Experience and Social Relationships**

This legendary restaurant's culinary experiences are varied and often involve a deep social dimension. Through observations made at each location, it can be seen that each restaurant creates a different atmosphere, impacting interactions between visitors. For example, at Nasi Goreng Kebon Sirih, the atmosphere is always busy and full of intimacy, creating opportunities for visitors to share stories and experiences. In these interviews, many visitors emphasised that they came to enjoy delicious dishes and feel the warmth of their social interactions.

Research conducted by Stone et al. (2021) explored the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and the memories generated from those experiences. By illustrating how food and culinary experiences can trigger memories and emotions, this research shows that food functions as part of the tourist experience and as a bridge to connect tourists with local culture and specific moments in their lives. The methods often include interviews and observations, which help reveal how culinary experiences shape identity and memory and contribute to the tourism experience.

Research conducted by Kristanti et al. (2018) showed that culinary experiences play an essential role in shaping the behavioural intentions of domestic tourists in Solo and Bandung, Indonesia. Tourists often seek authentic and unique culinary experiences that reflect local culture and regional traditions. The food quality, server service, and restaurant atmosphere can increase customer satisfaction, encouraging them to return or recommend the place to others. Therefore, restaurant owners and tourism industry players must focus on culinary innovation and satisfying service to attract more tourists and improve their experience.

### **Visitor interaction**

Diner interactions at legendary restaurants often create unique experiences and strengthen a sense of community. At Nasi Goreng Kebon Sirih, visitors enjoy delicious dishes and share menu recommendations and stories of their experiences, thereby building a sense of collective ownership. Something similar happens at Ragusa Es Italia, where families gather to celebrate special moments, making the restaurant an essential part of their social rituals. At Gado-Gado Bon Bin, visitors often find tips on how to enjoy the most delicious gado-gado, creating a friendly atmosphere among them. Bakmi Gang Kelinci is where

visitors comment on the taste and uniqueness of the noodles on offer, strengthening relationships between visitors with the same preferences.

Meanwhile, at Mie Ayam Gondangdia, many visitors come regularly to get to know each other, making their visit a meal and a social gathering. At Soto Betawi H. Ma'ruf, customers often share memories and nostalgia to make their dining experience more meaningful. Then, Pempek Megaria becomes a gathering place for pempek fans who enjoy the dish and discuss the best pempek variations, creating a warm and friendly atmosphere. Finally, at Sate Tegal H. Sadjim, visitors often spend time with friends or family, sharing stories while enjoying delicious satay, thus creating precious moments worth remembering.

Chua et al. (2023) discussed the relationship between immersive dining experiences and customer satisfaction levels in modern restaurants. This research explores various elements of the culinary experience, such as atmosphere, interaction with staff, and innovation in food presentation, that can increase diner satisfaction. By analysing current trends in the restaurant industry, this research aims to understand how unique and engaging experiences can influence customer perceptions and impact restaurant loyalty and recommendations.

Research conducted by Adesina et al. (2022) explained that the dining experience at fine-dining restaurants in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria, significantly impacts customer satisfaction and loyalty. Quality food, friendly service, an elegant atmosphere, and attention to detail contribute to the overall experience. When customers are satisfied with every aspect of their knowledge, they are likelier to return and recommend the restaurant to others, creating strong loyalty. Thus, restaurant management must improve the dining experience to build a loyal customer base.

### **Historical and Cultural Relevance**

The historical and cultural relevance of legendary restaurants such as Nasi Goreng Kebon Sirih, Ragusa Es Italia, and others truly reflects the richness of Indonesia's culinary heritage. At Nasi Goreng Kebon Sirih, the fried rice dishes served are not just food but also reflect Jakarta's rich culinary history. The recipe has been around for a long time, combined with local spices, symbolising a unique cultural fusion. Then Ragusa Es Italia became an icon, serving delicious ice cream and preserving historical memories from colonial times. This

restaurant is a gathering place that brings together various generations celebrates special moments and preserves culinary traditions that have existed for decades.

Meanwhile, Gado-Gado Bon Bin serves gado-gado as a typical food full of meaning. This dish reflects the diversity of Indonesian culture, where fresh vegetables and peanut sauce create a harmony of flavours. It is a symbol of the meeting of various tribes and traditions. Meanwhile, Bakmi Gang Kelinci presents the story of the migration of the Chinese community in Jakarta. Apart from serving famous chicken noodles, this restaurant is where visitors can feel the presence of Chinese culture, which is integrated into the local community. After that, Gondangdia Chicken Noodles have an authentic taste that reflects the culinary traditions maintained. Many visitors come to feel nostalgia and reminisce, making this place a meeting space for the community.

Soto Betawi H. Ma'ruf also offers dishes rich in Betawi traditions. This soto is not just food but also a representation of local culture presented in every bite, taking visitors on a journey to learn about Jakarta's history. Apart from that, Pempek Megaria is also a symbol of Palembang's culinary heritage. The iconic pempek dish is enjoyed and tells the story of the rich culture and traditions of the people of South Sumatra.

Sate Tegal H. Sadjim serves satay with recipes passed down from generation to generation, creating an authentic taste that has become part of Tegal's culinary identity. Diners often bond over memories of enjoying satay, making it more than just food. In this way, each of these restaurants offers delicious food and serves as a living custodian of history and culture, creating a more profound experience for diners.

According to research conducted by Praditai (2023), traditional foods often have significant historical and cultural relevance, reflecting the identity and heritage of a region. These dishes tell the story of the community, showcasing local ingredients, cooking techniques, and practices passed down from generation to generation. Many traditional foods emerged from specific historical contexts, influenced by migration, trade, and cultural exchange, which enriched their meaning. Additionally, traditional foods can strengthen a sense of togetherness and community, as they are often associated with family gatherings, festivals and rituals. By preserving these culinary traditions, people maintain their cultural heritage and provide insight into their values, beliefs and way of life.

Trichopoulou et al. (2007) research shows that traditional food is essential in bridging aspects of science and society. From a scientific perspective, traditional foods are often nutrient-rich, using local ingredients and time-tested

cooking techniques. Research shows that conventional recipes, such as improved nutrition and reduced disease risk, can benefit health. On the community side, traditional foods serve as cultural identity, strengthening social ties and enriching community experiences. Through culinary celebrations, younger generations can connect with their cultural heritage while preserving traditional recipes to support culinary diversity. Thus, studying traditional food includes scientific aspects and profound social and cultural values.

### **Cultural Aspects discovered**

The cultural aspects found in various legendary restaurants reflect the richness of their well-preserved culinary heritage. Many restaurant owners proudly share stories of traditional recipes from generation to generation in their families. They explain how each recipe is not just about ingredients and seasonings but also holds values and traditions that have existed for years. In facing the onslaught of often tempting modern culinary trends, the owners are committed to maintaining the authenticity of the flavours and cooking techniques passed down. This shows how important it is to preserve their culinary identity, even though the world around them is constantly changing. With every bite, diners can experience a depth of flavour that satisfies the taste buds and connects them to the rich history.

Additionally, many restaurants hold special events to celebrate cultural festivals, such as Chinese New Year or other Holidays. This activity enriches the culinary experience and is a valuable moment for visitors to experience the nuances of living traditions. Through these celebrations, restaurants become centres of social interaction where communities can gather, share stories and celebrate their cultural heritage together. These events create a sense of togetherness and solidarity, strengthening bonds between community members. By organising these artistic activities, restaurants function as places to eat and spaces where local traditions and values can live and be passed on to future generations.

Rinawati et al. (2023) research discusses how legendary foods reflect various profound cultural aspects. This study examines the relationship between certain foods and traditions, identity and social values in society. Through analysis of ingredients, cooking techniques, and the stories behind dishes, this research reveals how food not only functions as nutrition but also as a symbol that connects individuals to their history and communities. Thus, legendary foods have become an essential means of preserving cultural heritage.

Nyarota et al. (2022) research shows that preserving cultural heritage through recognising traditional cuisine is increasingly essential in globalisation and social change. Traditional food not only reflects the history and values of a community but is also a symbol of cultural identity. Claiming and celebrating indigenous cuisine helps preserve the knowledge and cooking skills passed down from generation to generation. Apart from that, this recognition can increase public awareness about the importance of culinary diversity as part of cultural heritage. By supporting traditional culinary delights, we preserve traditions and create economic opportunities for local communities through tourism and food products. This effort requires collaboration between the government, community and industry players to develop a platform that supports and is unique in the culinary delights of each region.

### **Economic Impact**

The economic impact of the existence of this legendary restaurant is very significant, especially in terms of job creation. Many of these restaurants pay residents, provide valuable economic opportunities and contribute to improving the welfare of local communities. Employees who work at these restaurants earn income and gain valuable skills and experience in the world of culinary and service. Additionally, by recruiting workers from local communities, these restaurants help strengthen social ties in their neighbourhoods, creating a sense of community and support among residents. This is a clear example of how culinary businesses do not only focus on profits but also on empowering the local community.

Apart from creating jobs, this legendary restaurant also has a strong appeal as a tourist destination for visitors from outside the city and abroad. Many tourists come to experience authentic Jakarta culinary delights, and these restaurants are often their first choice. When visitors flock to watch the signature dishes, this contributes to improving the local economy through a growing tourism sector. Visitors spend money on food, accommodation, transportation, and shopping around the restaurant area. Thus, these legendary restaurants provide a rich culinary experience and play a vital role in driving broader economic growth in the area.

This research concludes that legendary restaurants in Jakarta are essential in building the city's identity as gastronomic centres and social spaces that strengthen relationships between residents. They not only provide delicious food but also create an environment that supports social interaction, strengthening

connectivity within the community. With restaurants and stalls that have survived for decades, this research shows that food can unite people, create collective memories, and preserve existing cultural values.

To encourage the preservation of this culinary heritage and ensure its future desirability, it is essential for all stakeholders, including governments, local communities, and entrepreneurs, to work together to support this legendary culinary legacy. It is hoped that this research can become a reference for the development of culinary studies in Indonesia and highlight the importance of preserving the cultural heritage that has shaped Jakarta's character as one of the leading culinary destinations in Southeast Asia.

Research by Abriani et al. (2022) examines how managing tourism centres can affect the local economy. This study analyses the economic contribution of culinary tourism activities, including job creation, increased income for local entrepreneurs, and domino effects on other sectors such as agriculture, transportation, and hospitality. By explaining effective management strategies, this research aims to show how the development of culinary centre tourism can stimulate economic growth, strengthen the attractiveness of destinations, and promote culture and the environment. In addition, this research highlights the importance of collaboration between stakeholders to maximise the economic benefits of culinary tourism.

Bain's (2024) research shows that culinary tourism significantly impacts local economic development in South Africa by improving various sectors, including agriculture, hospitality and cultural heritage. As tourists seek authentic culinary experiences, local farmers and producers benefit from the growing demand for regional ingredients, encouraging sustainable practices and increasing incomes. Restaurants and food markets are growing as visitors explore local cuisine, creating jobs and stimulating the hospitality sector. Additionally, culinary tourism encourages cultural exchange and helps preserve traditional cooking methods, enriching community identity. By investing in culinary tourism initiatives, South Africa can harness culinary diversity to drive economic growth while celebrating its rich culinary heritage.

#### **D. Conclusion**

This research suggests that legendary restaurants in Jakarta play a vital role in building the city's identity as gastronomic centres and as social spaces that strengthen relationships between residents. They not only provide delicious food but also create an environment that supports social interaction, strengthening

connectivity within the community. With the existence of restaurants and food stalls that have survived for decades, this research shows that food can unite people, create collective memories, and preserve existing cultural values.

To encourage the preservation of this culinary heritage and ensure its future desirability, it is essential for all stakeholders, including governments, local communities, and entrepreneurs, to work together to support this legendary culinary legacy. It is hoped that this research can become a reference for the development of culinary studies in Indonesia and highlight the importance of preserving the cultural heritage that has shaped Jakarta's character as one of the leading culinary destinations in Southeast Asia.

Training programs specifically designed for the younger generation have great potential in preserving traditional cooking techniques and culinary history. With this program, participants will learn how to cook classic dishes and understand the cultural background behind each recipe. They can learn about local ingredients and cooking methods through interactive training and interact directly with experienced chefs and culinary artisans. In addition, promoting legendary culinary spots as part of cultural tourism packages in Jakarta can increase the number of visitors and awareness of the importance of preserving culinary heritage. Integrating culinary delights into tourism experiences allows visitors to experience the authenticity of local culture while supporting the local economy. These promotional activities can include culinary festivals and special events highlighting Jakarta's rich culinary traditions, creating immersive tourist experiences. Thus, this effort will strengthen Jakarta's tourist attraction and our commitment to preserving its valuable culinary heritage for future generations.

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