

THE PATH OF CULTURAL TOURISM OF “KHAO SOI” (NORTHERN THAI CURRY NOODLE) TO SOFT POWER

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to investigate and provide recommendations for utilizing the Khao Soi trail to enhance cultural tourism, positioning it as a tool for Thailand's soft power development in the future. The qualitative methods were used, i.e., interviews with involved persons, food experts, Khao Soi entrepreneurs, gastronomic technical officers, field study, observations, and document analysis. The results revealed that the developed path of Khao Soi can promote cultural tourism by connecting with its history and culture, e.g., famous Khao Soi restaurants, markets that offer materials for Khao Soi, and Khao Soi cooking instruction centers. Tourists get an authentic experience of making and eating Khao Soi. Simultaneously, they also learn about related activities and the background of Khao Soi. Khao Soi festivals increase tourists' interest and participation. Using online and social media to promote the path of Khao Soi can improve perception and reach the target in a broader range. The Khao Soi initiative can be utilized as a means to promote Thailand's cultural influence, showcase the importance of Khao Soi, and highlight the allure of Thai cuisine. The goal is to work with relevant organizations and businesses to expand into international markets and enhance global perception. This research mainly focuses on the significance of using gastronomy to create soft power, promote Thai culture for international recognition and acceptance, and promote Lanna gastronomy tourism for its sustainable progress.

Keywords: Cultural Tourism, Khao Soi, Soft Power

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