

*Conference Paper 2*

**GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL  
TOURISM ATTRACTION IN BAN KHUAN COMMUNITY,  
MUEANG DISTRICT, SATUN PROVINCE**

## GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL TOURISM ATTRACTION IN BAN KHUAN COMMUNITY, MUEANG DISTRICT, SATUN PROVINCE

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative research was to provide guidelines for cultural tourism development in the Ban Khuan community, Muang District, Satun Province. This study used an observational and semi-structured in-depth interview for data collection and consisted of five key informants, including a chairman, a secretary and a committee of Ban Khuan community-based tourism, a religious leader, and a village sage from the Ban Khuan community. The results showed that the Ban Kuan community has been a community for over 150 years since the reign of King Rama V, when its villagers had a culture and beliefs based on Brahmanism and Hinduism before converting to Islam. However, the villagers still maintain the culture as well as the beliefs of Brahmanism and Hinduism. There are six potential cultural tourism resources, including ancient buildings such as a 170-year-old house, an ancient mosque, and various learning centers; the local Malay language; Malay dresses; seafood processing; and local desserts. Therefore, tourists can come to study history, original architecture, language, literature, way of life, clothing, food, traditions, as well as various local cultures, etc. Accordingly, the community can be developed to become cultural tourism attractions, and the locals gain extra income through these various tourism activities.

**Keywords:** Community-based tourism, cultural tourism, community development, Thailand

### INTRODUCTION

Thailand is a country with a wide variety of races, religions, and cultures because of its long history. When Thai people from different regions move their residences, the cultures in each locality mix and develop over time. Thailand, therefore, is regarded as another country that maintains the cultural capital. The creation of Thailand's tourism is based on local cultural values by drawing on stories from long history, including different ways of life, local art, folk music, architecture, handicrafts, and local cooking in accordance with community values.

Ban Kuan Community, Satun Province, is a community with abundant natural resources, a cultural diversity of Thai Muslims and Buddhists,

and a history dating back to the reign of King Chulalongkorn, Rama V, over 150 years ago. The community therefore sees the importance of the resources available in the community to further develop cultural tourism attractions. The researcher has foreseen the potential of the Ban Kuan community; therefore, the objective of this research is to study the appropriate approaches for the Ban Kuan community's cultural tourism development. Research questions are:

1. What are the potential Ban Kuan community tourist attractions?
2. In what aspects does the Ban Kuan community want to develop cultural tourism attractions?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural tourism refers to tourism activities in which 'the visitor's essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience, and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions and products in a tourism destination' (UNWTO, 2017: 18). Cultural tourism has been seen as a major attraction, accounting for over 39% of international visitors (Richards, 2018). In Thailand, Jittangwatana (2005: 287–288) identified nine important characteristics of cultural tourism as follows: 1) giving importance to history, ancient sites, art, culture, and traditions; 2) sustainable management in economic, social, and environmental aspects; 3) maintaining a local way of life in terms of society and culture; 4) educating all parties involved; 5) local communities participate in and benefit from tourism; 6) marketing tourism services according to conservation criteria; 7) increasing the value of the tourism experience, which makes people want to revisit; 8) taking the capacity to support tourists in the area into account; and 9) concerning the safety of the life and property of tourists. Panupat, Gulthawatvichai, and Karnjanakit (2019: 240) provided the guidelines for promoting cultural tourism, which include 'participating to improve the community potentiality', 'creating harmony in the community for developing cultural tourism', 'managing cultural tourism in accordance with the area context', and 'creating a network for tourism management'. Nonetheless, it is important to note that service quality in cultural tourism is crucial to enhancing tourists' satisfaction through appraisal emotions derived from participation in tourism activities with specific cultural knowledge (Sukanthasirikul & Trongpanich, 2016).

## METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research uses the narrative research method, which is one of the best ways to examine people or society since it reflects the social context of the time in which it is told (Moen, 2006). The researchers used the in-depth interview to collect data relating to the cultural tourism development of the Ban Khuan community. Using purposive sampling, the researchers contacted five key informants, including: 1) the chairman of the community tourism group; 2) the secretary of

the community tourism group; 3) the committee member of the community tourism group; 4) a religious scholar; and 5) a tourism learning base speaker. The in-depth interviews were conducted in March 2023 and lasted about 20 minutes each. Data notes and audio recordings were taken during the interviews. The content analysis is used to understand the community context, cultural attractions, strengths, and further development of cultural tourism attractions.

## FINDINGS

### *Ban Khuan's cultural tourism*

According to the research findings, Ban Khuan's cultural attractions include a local dessert learning base, a 170-year-old traditional house visit, a local Malay language learning base, an ancient mosque, a seafood learning base, and a canal cruise to see the way of life of the community. The important cultures of the Ban Kuan community are Malay culture, Malay language, local food and desserts, and Malay dresses. The community has initiated the development of cultural tourism as follows:

- History and historical traces
- Original old architecture
- Religion includes various religious ceremonies.
- Local language and literature
- Malay way of life (e.g., clothing and food)
- Traditions, folk culture, festivals

### *Community strengths and cultural tourism development guidelines*

The findings highlight the strength of the Ban Khuan community, which is the community leaders. There are six community leaders, namely village headmen, elders in the community, government officers, religious leaders, and the chairman of the Ban Kuan community tourism group. These community leaders provide assistance to the villagers in general. The leaders support community development and create unity among the people in the community. The leaders also play an important role in helping the community develop cultural attractions for tourists.

According to the research findings, the community has promoted their cultural tourism activities through social media such as Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram. Tourism government agencies also help the community to publicize the local attractions, such as by providing tourism signs for tourists to visit the community. However, the findings find that the community needs advice on the development of cultural sites and tourism activities such as making folk costumes for tourists to experience how to dress like locals and learning the local language and way of life (e.g., how to make local desserts). Thus, stakeholders such as government agencies and tourism organizations should develop guidelines in response to these communities' requirements.

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of this study of cultural tourism development guidelines revealed that the community has extended its resources to create cultural tourism. This research is in line with Poolphiphat (2002: 38–48), who concludes that sustainable tourism includes the provision of tourism services that must be operated under the capacity of the community, customs, traditions, cultures, and ways of life, and be well aware of the participation of the community. Therefore, the community can maximize the benefits of cultural tourism and fully participate without changing their way of life (Panupat, Gulthawatvichai, & Karnjanakit, 2019).

Suggestions from the research findings:

- The culture of the community can attract tourists, but it needs support from relevant agencies in publicizing and promoting the community's cultural attractions.
- Communities and relevant agencies must pay attention to the restoration of ancient sites, local culture, and traditions to be able to further create value.

#### LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study relied on in-depth interviews with a small number of individuals. Because of the

small sample size, it can be difficult to extrapolate findings to a larger population within the community or to other communities. Combining in-depth interviews with quantitative tools, surveys, or participant observation could help future research. This method can provide more insight of the community context and improve the validity of findings. Comparative case studies combining several communities are recommended because they can reveal similarities and variances in community dynamics, providing for a more comprehensive knowledge of community issues.

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