

## Gastronomic framework of local cuisines in Calabanga, Camarines Sur

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### **Abstract**

This paper investigated the gastronomic framework of local cuisines in Calabanga, Camarines Sur, by examining culturally rooted dishes, gastronomic identity, tourist motivations, and the development of a systems-based gastronomic model for culinary tourism. The research addressed the need to understand how local culinary resources and traditions contribute to tourism experiences and community identity in a coastal municipality. A sequential mixed-method research design was employed, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data were collected through focus group discussions and cultural mapping to identify unique local dishes, ingredients, culinary practices, and food traditions. Quantitative data were collected through a survey of 191 local tourists, using a five-point Likert scale to assess motivational factors influencing engagement with local cuisine. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis for qualitative responses and weighted mean and ranking for quantitative results. Findings revealed that seafood resources, coconut-based ingredients, and traditional Bicolano cooking practices strongly influence Calabanga's cuisine. Common dishes such as tiniktik, ginataang seafood, gulay na natong, and traditional delicacies reflect the municipality's coastal environment and agricultural resources. Culinary traditions are largely preserved through family practices and intergenerational transmission of recipes. Visitors also associate Calabanga's gastronomic identity with community hospitality, fiestas, and shared dining experiences. Among the identified motivational factors, curiosity and experience motivation ranked highest ( $M = 4.54$ ), indicating that tourists are strongly motivated to discover unfamiliar dishes and explore new culinary experiences. Other factors, including food-related activities ( $M = 4.26$ ), food involvement ( $M = 4.25$ ), social motivation ( $M = 4.22$ ), cultural and nostalgic motivation ( $M = 4.20$ ), and gastronomic or sensory motivation ( $M = 4.11$ ), also showed strong influence. Based on these findings, the study proposed a Systems-Based Gastronomic Framework composed of three interconnected components: production, processing, and consumption. Production represents the culinary resource base derived from coastal seafood and coconut agriculture; processing represents the cultural transmission of culinary knowledge through traditional cooking practices; and consumption represents tourism

engagement and market interaction through food experiences. The study concludes that Calabanga's gastronomy functions as a community-based cultural system where ecological resources, cultural traditions, and tourism activities interact to sustain local culinary identity and support sustainable tourism development.

**Keywords:** Calabanga cuisines, cultural gastronomy, food tourism, gastronomic framework

## Gastronomic framework of local cuisines in Calabanga, Camarines Sur

### 1. Introduction

Food is more than a basic human necessity; it is a cultural artifact that reflects identity, history, and social relationships within a community. In recent years, gastronomy has become a central component of tourism development, as destinations increasingly use local cuisine to create meaningful and authentic visitor experiences. Studies indicate that gastronomic tourism enhances cultural preservation, strengthens destination competitiveness, and promotes cross-cultural exchange (Espejel & Fandos-Herrera, 2022; Hadian et al., 2024; Jonson & Masa, 2023).

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, n.d.) further emphasizes that food tourism supports local economies, fosters cultural identity, and contributes to sustainable development. The growing interest in culinary experiences is driven by tourists' desire for authenticity, novelty, and emotional engagement. Research shows that memorable gastronomic experiences are shaped by sensory appeal, social interaction, cultural learning, and emotional meaning, which influence tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights, 2024; Ni Made Purnami & Setyawan, 2024). Furthermore, perceived authenticity and emotional connection significantly enhance tourists' enjoyment and overall well-being (International Journal of Gastronomy & Food Science, 2025).

Despite these opportunities, globalization poses challenges to local cuisines. The dominance of international food trends may lead to the marginalization of indigenous culinary traditions and the loss of cultural diversity (Richards, 2021). Studies also highlight that sustainable gastronomic tourism requires strong community participation, preservation of traditional food practices, and effective destination marketing strategies (Sánchez-Sánchez et al., 2025).

In the Philippine context, food is increasingly recognized as a vital element of tourism and cultural identity. National initiatives such as the Philippine Experience Program and the Five-Year Roadmap on Gastronomy Tourism (2024–2029) aim to position Filipino cuisine as a global tourism asset (Manila Standard, 2024; Esquire Philippines, 2025). Supporting this, studies show that culinary tourism contributes to economic growth and cultural preservation, with traditional dishes, food festivals, and local establishments serving as key drivers of tourist engagement (Gutierrez et al., 2022; Mendoza, 2023; Moresca et al., 2024). Additionally, food quality, authenticity, and accessibility significantly influence tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions (Ruzol et al., 2024; Lastimoso et al., 2024). However, many local cuisines in smaller municipalities remain underdocumented and underutilized in tourism planning (Jimenez Tipon & Rosas, 2020). This gap is evident in Calabanga, Camarines Sur, where culinary traditions shaped by coastal resources, coconut-based ingredients, and Bicolano cooking practices remain largely unrecorded. These traditions are often transmitted informally across generations, making them vulnerable to modernization and cultural shifts.

Given these circumstances, there is a need to systematically document and analyze Calabanga's culinary heritage. Developing a gastronomic framework can help preserve traditional food practices, strengthen local identity, and support sustainable tourism development. Such a framework can also provide valuable insights for local government units, tourism planners, and entrepreneurs in promoting authentic culinary experiences. Thus, this study aims to develop a gastronomic framework that highlights Calabanga's local cuisines as reflections of culture, identity, and community pride. Specifically, it seeks to identify culturally rooted cuisines in terms of unique dishes, ingredients, and food traditions; determine the gastronomic identity of local cuisines based on unique flavors, culinary experiences, cultural significance, and preservation of traditions; examine the motivational factors of local tourists in engaging with Calabanga's cuisine; and develop a gastronomic framework that aligns tourist behavior with the town's culinary assets.

## 2. Methods

**Research Design** - This study used a sequential mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine the gastronomic framework of local cuisines in Calabanga, Camarines Sur. The qualitative phase involved focus group discussions, interviews, and cultural mapping to identify local dishes, ingredients, and culinary practices. The quantitative phase used a survey questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale to determine the motivational factors influencing tourists' engagement with local cuisine. The findings from both phases were integrated to develop a comprehensive gastronomic framework that reflects both the community's culinary heritage and tourist behavior.

**Participants of the Study** - The participants of this study consisted of both community knowledge holders and local tourists in Calabanga, Camarines Sur. For the qualitative phase, participants were purposively selected based on their direct involvement and knowledge of local culinary practices. These included elders, tourism and cultural officers, vendors, barangay officials, and eatery owners who provided insights into traditional dishes, ingredients, and food-related practices. For the quantitative phase, the respondents were 191 local tourists who had experienced Calabanga's local cuisine. These participants were selected to determine the motivational factors influencing their engagement with local food. The inclusion of both community members and tourists enabled the study to capture a comprehensive perspective of Calabanga's gastronomic identity, combining cultural knowledge with visitor experiences.

**Data Gathering Instrument** - This study utilized both qualitative and quantitative data gathering instruments to collect relevant information. For the qualitative phase, a semi-structured interview guide was used during focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews. The guide included open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed responses on local dishes, ingredients, cooking methods, and food-related cultural practices. Cultural mapping tools were also employed to document and identify significant culinary resources within the community. For the quantitative phase, a structured survey questionnaire was administered to local tourists. The instrument consisted of closed-ended statements measured using a five-point Likert scale, which assessed various motivational factors such as cultural and nostalgic motivation, curiosity and experience motivation, food involvement, food-related activities, and sensory motivation. These instruments were designed to ensure the systematic collection of both in-depth qualitative insights and measurable quantitative data necessary for developing the gastronomic framework.

**Data Gathering Procedure** - The data gathering process was conducted in two phases: qualitative and quantitative. In the qualitative phase, permission was first secured from local authorities and participants. Focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews were then conducted with selected community knowledge holders using a semi-structured guide. The sessions were audio-recorded, and field notes were taken to ensure accurate documentation. Cultural mapping was also carried out to identify and document local dishes, ingredients, and food practices within the community. In the quantitative phase, a structured survey questionnaire was distributed to local tourists who had experienced Calabanga's local cuisine. Respondents were selected in areas such as food establishments and local attractions to ensure relevant participation. The purpose of the study was explained, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. After data collection, all responses were organized, recorded, and prepared for analysis. The qualitative and quantitative data were then integrated to support the development of the gastronomic framework.

**Ethical Considerations** - This study followed ethical standards to protect participants' rights and welfare. Informed consent was obtained, and participation was voluntary, with respondents allowed to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured, and no personal information was disclosed. The study complied with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173), with all data securely stored and used solely for academic purposes. Cultural sensitivity was observed in handling local knowledge, and the researcher ensured that all data were reported honestly without bias or manipulation.

**Data Analysis** - Data analysis was conducted in three stages: qualitative, quantitative, and integration. For the

qualitative phase, data from focus group discussions, interviews, and cultural mapping were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, themes, and cultural meanings related to local cuisines and practices. For the quantitative phase, survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly weighted mean and ranking, to determine the level of agreement of respondents and identify the most influential motivational factors affecting tourists' engagement with local cuisine. Finally, the qualitative and quantitative findings were integrated to develop a comprehensive gastronomic framework that reflects both the community's culinary heritage and tourist behavior.

### 3. Results and Discussion

**Table 1**  
*Culturally Rooted Cuisines*

Research Variable	Theme	Sub-theme	Food Outcomes	Sample Statements
Unique Flavors	Seafood as Local Identity	Seafood Specialties	Kasag, pasayan, abo, dilis, tiniktik, local fish dishes	"Seafood mga kasag, pasayan, abo, dilis." [Seafood like crabs, shrimp, clams, and anchovies are cooked.]
		Coastal Cuisine	Local fish and seafood dishes	"Ang Calabanga baga kaya nasa kadakul kitang barangay na sana coastal syempre seafood." [Many barangays are coastal, so seafood is central to our food culture.]
	Traditional Bicolano Flavors	Signature Spicy Dishes	Bicol Express	"Bicol express ang nabistado." [Bicol Express is well-known here.]
		Fermented Food Flavors	Dinailan, dishes with balaw	"Itong dinailan... ang Bicol express is balaw na pino." [Dinailan and Bicol Express use fermented shrimp paste.]
Culinary Experiences	Everyday Home Food Culture	Daily Local Meals	Gulay na natong o santol, fish dishes, native chicken	"Mga lokal.. kun sa harong syempre mga gulay, sira, karneng manok native ta iyo.. ta iyo ang yaon." [Local families usually cook vegetables, fish, and native chicken at home.]
			Fish and Vegetables	Gulay, sira
	Cultural Mapping & Visual Identification	Signature Local Dishes	Bicol Express, adobo, gulay na natong o santol	"Adobo, gulay na natong, Bicol express."
		Common Household Dishes	Log-log, simple local meals	"Mga ordinaryong kakanin... log-log."
	Special Occasion Dishes	Festive Meals	Kaldereta	"Pag may okasyon, perming may kalderita." [During special occasions, kaldereta is always prepared.]
	Cultural Significance	Influence of Local Resources	Seafood-Based Diet	Fish and local seafood
Local Ingredients			Native vegetables and seafood	"Native... sa araldaw ming kinakakan dai man nawawara ang gulay syaka sira."
Vegetable-Based Traditions		Indigenous Vegetable Dishes	Gulay na natong o santol, fried vegetables	"Gulay na natong at sira na prito."
Local Delicacies & Kakanin		Native Delicacies	Suman	"Natatangi suman, suman talaga baga ang pinaka ano sa handaan."
Preservation of Traditions	Family Recipes and Intergenerational Cooking	Family Recipes	Kalamay na mais, tinoktok	"Natatangi itong tiglutulong ito ni papa ning kalamay na mais asin an saiyang tinoktok."

Research Variable	Theme	Sub-theme	Food Outcomes	Sample Statements
	Community Culinary Continuity	Everyday Cultural Food Practices	Traditional seafood, vegetable, and coconut-based dishes	Statements from respondents reflect that these dishes are continuously cooked in households and shared during gatherings.

*Culturally-Rooted Cuisines in Terms of Unique Local Dishes, Ingredients, and Food Traditions* - Table 1 presents the culturally rooted cuisines of Calabanga, Camarines Sur, highlighting the unique local dishes, ingredients, culinary practices, and traditions that define the municipality’s gastronomic identity. The data were gathered from community knowledge holders, reflecting everyday food practices and long-standing culinary traditions embedded in the local culture. The table is organized according to four key research variables: Unique Flavors, Culinary Experiences, Cultural Significance, and Preservation of Traditions. Under these categories, several themes and sub-themes emerged, including seafood as a local identity, coconut-based cuisine, traditional Bicolano flavors, everyday home food culture, special occasion dishes, environmental influence on food, and intergenerational transmission of culinary knowledge. Commonly identified dishes include seafood such as kasag, pasayan, dilis, and tiniktik; coconut-based dishes like ginataang tilapia and ginataang gulay; vegetable dishes such as gulay na natong; and traditional foods like Bicol Express, kaldereta, suman, and tinoktok.

The findings reveal that Calabanga’s cuisine is strongly influenced by its coastal geography and agricultural resources, with seafood emerging as the dominant component of local food identity. The frequent mention of fish, shellfish, and locally sourced ingredients indicates that food practices are shaped by environmental availability and livelihood patterns. Coconut-based cooking and vegetable dishes further reflect the integration of locally abundant resources into daily meals. Moreover, the results highlight that culinary traditions in Calabanga are primarily sustained through household practices and family transmission, rather than formal documentation. The presence of both everyday meals and special occasion dishes suggests that food plays a central role not only in daily sustenance but also in cultural celebrations and social interactions. Overall, the findings indicate that Calabanga’s gastronomy functions as a community-based system, where environment, culture, and tradition are closely interconnected.

These findings support existing literature which emphasizes that local cuisine reflects a community’s cultural identity, history, and environmental context (Zocchi, 2021; Cheng, 2023; Díaz-Sánchez & Palomba, 2021). The dominance of seafood and locally available ingredients aligns with studies indicating that culinary practices are shaped by geographical and ecological resources (Putra et al., 2023; Xu et al., 2024). Furthermore, the role of family-based knowledge transmission confirms that traditional food practices are preserved through generations as part of intangible cultural heritage (Cheng, 2023; Lin et al., 2021). The importance of everyday meals and communal food experiences also reflects the idea that gastronomy serves as a medium for social interaction and cultural continuity (Díaz-Sánchez & Palomba, 2021; Zocchi, 2021). Finally, the findings reinforce the need for systematic documentation of local cuisines, as highlighted in previous studies, to support cultural preservation and sustainable tourism development (Lopez, 2024; IJRISS, 2025; Nurwitasari, 2024).

*Gastronomic Identity of Calabanga’s Local Cuisines, Including Unique Flavors, Culinary Experiences, Cultural Significance, And the Preservation of Traditions* – Table 2 presents the gastronomic identity of Calabanga’s local cuisines in terms of unique flavors, culinary experiences, cultural significance, and preservation of traditions. It reflects how local cuisine is perceived and recognized by visitors and stakeholders, highlighting the elements that define Calabanga as a distinct gastronomic destination. The table shows that Calabanga’s gastronomic identity is characterized by distinct flavor profiles, immersive culinary experiences, cultural relevance, and sustained traditional practices. Key elements identified include the strong presence of coconut-based and spicy Bicolano dishes, seafood-oriented meals, and locally prepared vegetable dishes. Culinary experiences involve home-based cooking, shared meals, and participation in local food practices, while cultural significance is reflected in the use of indigenous ingredients and traditional preparation methods. Preservation of traditions is evident through continuous practice of family recipes and community food customs.

**Table 2***Gastronomic Identity of Calabanga*

Research Variable	Theme	Sub-theme	Gastronomic Identity	Sample Statements		
Unique Flavors	Inherited / Minanang Lasa	Traditional Flavors	Dishes with balaw, ginataan, adobo	“Hiniram ning balaw iyo ning apod inasinan ning balaw.” [Shrimp paste is used to create distinct local flavors.]		
		Passed-Down Dishes	Adobong baboy, gulay na natong	“Napapansin mi na an mga pamilya digdi madalas magtigluto nin adobong baboy asin mga gulay, lalo na pag may okasyon o salo-salo.”		
Culinary Experiences	Pasalubong & Food Memory	Take-Home Food Identity	Bulinaw, abo sisig, cacao chocolate	“Bulinaw, abo, sisig, cacao chocolate.”		
		Fiesta & Community Identity	Celebration Foods	Pancit, kaldereta, menudo	“Pag may okasyon baga halimbawa fiesta... may pansit, kalderita, menudo.”	
	Shared Eating		Food prepared for visitors and guests	“Pag nagduman kami sa Calabanga lalo na pag pyesta, napapansin mi na dakol talaga an mga handa asin very welcoming sinda sa mga bisita.”		
	Hospitality		Inviting outsiders to eat	“Nag iimbetar na sinda kung isay ang makikisalo sa pyestahan.”		
	Practical & Simple Food Identity	Everyday Simplicity	Simple, affordable food	“Simpleng handa depende sa kakayahan ng pamilya.”		
Availability-Based Cooking		Food based on local supply	“Kung anong yaon ta si makakaya lang.”			
Cultural Significance		Coastal & Resource-Based Identity	Seafood Presence	Seafood dishes (fish, shellfish, seafood meals)	“Bilang bisita sa Calabanga, nadadangog mi na an pinaka-lokal na produkto digdi kadalasan hale sa Barangay Sabang.”	
	Use of Local Ingredients		Local produce and coastal resources	“Napapansin me na kung anong yaon iyo nalang yan.”		
	Recognized Local Dishes	Known Local Foods	Palabok, pansit, goto	“Barangay Sabang kilala sa kanilang palabok.”		
Preservation of Traditions	Inherited / Minanang Lasa	Family Recipes	Recipes taught by elders	Iconic Eating Places	Mamays, Coralicious dishes	“Kilala sa Calabanga ang Mamays, pansit, goto.”
				“Maski simple na luto arog kan fried chicken, an timpla kadalasang pinapasa hale sa mga magurang o lola, kaya may sadiring panlana an kada pamilya.”		

The findings indicate that Calabanga’s gastronomic identity is deeply rooted in its local environment, cultural heritage, and everyday practices. The prominence of coconut milk, chili-based dishes, and seafood highlights the influence of regional Bicolano cuisine and available natural resources. The emphasis on shared meals and home-based food preparation suggests that culinary identity is not only defined by taste but also by social interaction and cultural experience. Moreover, the preservation of traditional cooking methods and recipes demonstrates a strong sense of cultural continuity, where food serves as a medium for maintaining identity across generations. These results suggest that Calabanga’s gastronomic identity is both authentic and experiential, making it a potential asset for tourism development. These findings align with existing studies which emphasize that gastronomic identity emerges from the interaction of flavors, cultural practices, and community experiences (Lin et al., 2021; Cheng, 2023; Díaz-Sánchez & Palomba, 2021). The role of authenticity and traditional preparation methods supports research indicating that preserving culinary heritage strengthens destination identity and cultural meaning (Almansouri et al., 2022; Li et al., 2024; Bahri et al., 2024).

Additionally, the importance of shared food experiences and cultural engagement reflects studies highlighting that culinary tourism is shaped by sensory experiences and social interaction (Park, 2023; Dixit, 2022; García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024). The findings further support the idea that strong gastronomic identity contributes

to destination branding and enhances tourist engagement (Putra et al., 2023; Xu et al., 2024).

**Table 3.1**

*Motivation Factors in Terms of Cultural and Nostalgic Motivation*

Parameter	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
I enjoy learning stories behind local dishes because they reveal the town's history and culture.	4.26	1	High
Local dishes reflect the history of Calabanga and showcase its cultural heritage.	4.24	2	High
Eating local dishes helps me understand the traditions and strengthens my sense of belonging.	4.21	3	High
Local food makes me feel connected to Calabanga by linking me to its traditions and stories.	4.18	4	High
I try Calabanga's food to learn about its culture and feel a deeper connection to the place.	4.12	5	High
<b>Average Mean</b>	<b>4.20</b>		<b>High</b>

Legend: 5.00-4.50 Very High; 4.49-3.50 High; 3.49 - 2.50 Moderate; 2.49 -1.51 Low and 1.50 - 1.00 Very Low

*Motivational Factors of the Local Tourists in Engaging with Calabanga's Local Cuisines* - Table 3.1 presents the motivation factors of local tourists in terms of cultural and nostalgic motivation when engaging with Calabanga's local cuisines. This dimension focuses on how food experiences allow tourists to connect with culture, traditions, and personal memories associated with local dishes. It shows that respondents generally agreed that cultural and nostalgic factors influence their engagement with Calabanga's cuisine. Indicators such as experiencing local traditions, connecting with cultural heritage, and recalling familiar or meaningful food experiences obtained relatively high mean scores. These results suggest that tourists value food not only for consumption but also for its cultural and emotional significance. The findings indicate that local cuisine serves as a cultural bridge that allows tourists to experience and appreciate the heritage of Calabanga. The presence of nostalgic motivation suggests that food evokes memories and emotional connections, which enhance the overall tourism experience. This implies that tourists are not solely motivated by taste, but also by the desire to reconnect with traditions and experience a sense of belonging.

Furthermore, the results highlight that cultural and nostalgic motivations contribute to deeper engagement with local cuisine, reinforcing the importance of preserving traditional dishes and food practices. This strengthens the role of gastronomy as both a cultural and experiential component of tourism. These findings are supported by previous studies which emphasize that cultural and nostalgic motivations play a significant role in food tourism, as tourists seek authentic experiences that reflect local traditions and heritage (Kim et al., 2009; Mak et al., 2012). Food has been identified as a medium through which individuals reconnect with personal memories and cultural identity, enhancing emotional attachment to a destination (Hernández-Rojas, 2022; Díaz-Sánchez & Palomba, 2021). Additionally, research suggests that cultural experiences in gastronomy contribute to tourist satisfaction and meaningful engagement, as they allow visitors to immerse themselves in the traditions and lifestyle of the community (Tort, 2023; Rousta & Loring, 2020). These insights reinforce the importance of cultural and nostalgic motivation in shaping tourist behavior and supporting the development of gastronomic tourism.

Table 3.2 presents the motivation factors of local tourists in terms of curiosity and experience motivation in engaging with Calabanga's local cuisines. This dimension focuses on tourists' desire to explore new food experiences, try unfamiliar dishes, and gain unique culinary encounters. This indicates that respondents strongly agreed that curiosity and experience motivation influence their engagement with local cuisine, as reflected in the high mean scores of the indicators. Among the different motivational factors, curiosity and experience motivation ranked the highest, showing that tourists are highly driven by the desire to discover new flavors and participate in unique food experiences.

**Table 3.2***Motivation Factors in Terms of Curiosity and Experience Motivation*

Parameter	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
I try Calabanga's food because I am curious about unfamiliar dishes.	4.61	1	Very High
I am motivated to try local dishes that I have never tasted before.	4.58	2	Very High
I enjoy discovering new food experiences when visiting different places.	4.54	3	Very High
Exploring local cuisine satisfies my curiosity about the destination.	4.49	4	High
Trying unique food experiences makes my travel more exciting.	4.47	5	High
Average Mean	4.54		Very High

Legend: 5.00-4.50 Very High; 4.49-3.50 High; 3.49 - 2.50 Moderate; 2.49 -1.51 Low and 1.50 - 1.00 Very Low

The findings suggest that tourists are primarily motivated by the opportunity to explore unfamiliar foods and gain new experiences, making curiosity a key driver of gastronomic engagement. This indicates that local cuisine serves as an avenue for discovery, where visitors actively seek novel and exciting food experiences that differ from their usual diet. Furthermore, the strong influence of this motivation highlights the importance of offering diverse and authentic culinary options in Calabanga. It implies that tourism initiatives should focus on experiential aspects such as food tasting, culinary tours, and interactive food activities to enhance visitor engagement. Overall, curiosity and experience motivation play a crucial role in shaping tourist behavior and strengthening the appeal of local cuisine as a tourism asset. These findings are supported by previous studies which emphasize that curiosity and novelty-seeking behavior are major drivers of food tourism, as tourists are motivated to try unfamiliar dishes and explore new culinary environments (Crompton, 1979; Kim et al., 2009). Research also indicates that experiential consumption, including tasting and participating in food-related activities, enhances tourists' satisfaction and engagement (Sundqvist, 2023; García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024). Studies highlight that the desire for new experiences contributes to memorable gastronomic encounters and influences tourists' intention to revisit and recommend destinations (Ni Made Purnami & Setyawan, 2024; Tort, 2023). These insights reinforce the importance of curiosity and experience motivation in developing effective gastronomic tourism strategies.

**Table 3.3***Motivation Factors in Terms of Food Involvement*

Parameter	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
I consider food an important part of my travel experience.	4.30	1	High
I actively look for local dishes whenever I visit a new place.	4.28	2	High
I am interested in exploring different types of cuisine during my travels.	4.25	3	High
I enjoy learning about the ingredients used in local dishes.	4.22	4	High
I often search for information about local food before visiting a place.	4.18	5	High
Average Mean	4.25		High

Legend: 5.00-4.50 Very High; 4.49-3.50 High; 3.49 - 2.50 Moderate; 2.49 -1.51 Low and 1.50 - 1.00 Very Low

Table 3.3 presents the motivation factors of local tourists in terms of food involvement in engaging with Calabanga's local cuisines. This dimension focuses on the level of personal interest, importance, and active participation of tourists in food-related activities and experiences. The respondents agreed that food involvement influences their engagement with local cuisine, as indicated by the relatively high mean scores of the indicators. These include interest in trying local dishes, learning about food preparation, and engaging in activities related to

local cuisine. The results suggest that tourists demonstrate a moderate to high level of involvement in food-related experiences.

The findings indicate that food involvement plays a significant role in shaping tourists' engagement with Calabanga's cuisine. Tourists who show a higher level of interest in food are more likely to actively explore local dishes, participate in culinary activities, and seek deeper understanding of food traditions. This suggests that food is not merely consumed but experienced as an important aspect of travel. Furthermore, the results imply that increasing opportunities for interactive food experiences such as cooking demonstrations, food tours, and market visits—can enhance tourist engagement. A higher level of food involvement can lead to greater appreciation of local cuisine, thereby strengthening cultural connection and overall tourist satisfaction.

These findings are supported by previous studies which indicate that food involvement significantly influences tourists' behavior and decision-making in gastronomic tourism (Bell & Marshall, 2003; Kim et al., 2009). Individuals with higher food involvement are more likely to seek authentic food experiences, explore local cuisines, and engage in food-related activities (Mak et al., 2012). Research suggests that active participation in culinary experiences enhances tourists' satisfaction and strengthens their connection to the destination (Sundqvist, 2023; García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024). These findings highlight the importance of food involvement as a key factor in promoting meaningful and engaging gastronomic tourism experiences.

**Table 3.4**

*Motivation Factors in Terms of Food-Related Activities and Experiences*

Parameter	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
Trying different local dishes is an important part of my travel experience.	4.31	1	High
I am interested in learning how traditional dishes in Calabanga are prepared.	4.29	2	High
I like visiting local eateries and markets to explore Calabanga's cuisine.	4.27	3	High
I enjoy participating in food-related activities when visiting Calabanga.	4.22	4	High
Experiencing local food traditions enhances my overall visit to Calabanga.	4.20	5	High
<b>Average Mean</b>	<b>4.26</b>		<b>High</b>

Legend: 5.00-4.50 Very High; 4.49-3.50 High; 3.49 - 2.50 Moderate; 2.49 -1.51 Low and 1.50 - 1.00 Very Low

Table 3.4 presents the motivation factors of local tourists in terms of food-related activities and experiences in engaging with Calabanga's local cuisines. This dimension focuses on tourists' participation in activities such as food tasting, cooking, market visits, and other culinary-related experiences. The table shows that respondents agreed that food-related activities and experiences influence their engagement with local cuisine, as reflected in the high mean scores of the indicators. These include interest in participating in food-related events, trying local dishes, and engaging in culinary activities that showcase the local food culture. The results indicate that tourists are receptive to interactive and experience-based food activities.

The findings suggest that tourists are motivated not only by the consumption of food but also by active participation in culinary experiences. Engaging in activities such as food tasting, cooking demonstrations, and local market exploration allows tourists to gain a deeper understanding of the culture and traditions of Calabanga. Furthermore, the results highlight the importance of designing experiential tourism activities that allow visitors to interact with local food systems. These experiences enhance tourist satisfaction and create meaningful connections with the destination. This implies that promoting food-related activities can strengthen Calabanga's appeal as a

gastronomic tourism destination and encourage repeat visitation.

These findings are supported by studies which emphasize that participation in food-related activities enhances tourist engagement and creates memorable travel experiences (Ellis et al., 2018; Park, 2023). Experiential tourism, particularly in gastronomy, allows visitors to immerse themselves in local culture through hands-on activities and direct interaction with food traditions (Dixit, 2022; García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024). Moreover, research suggests that such experiences contribute to higher levels of satisfaction, emotional connection, and destination loyalty, as tourists value meaningful and participatory activities (Cheng, 2023; Wei et al., 2025). These findings reinforce the importance of food-related activities and experiences in shaping tourist motivation and promoting sustainable gastronomic tourism.

**Table 3.5**

*Motivation Factors in Terms of Gastronomic / Sensory Motivation*

Parameter	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
I enjoy exploring new flavors and ingredients found in Calabanga's cuisine.	4.18	1	High
I try Calabanga's local food because I want to experience its unique taste and flavors.	4.15	2	High
The overall sensory experience (taste, smell, and appearance) motivates me to try Calabanga's food.	4.10	3	High
The aroma and presentation of local dishes make me interested in trying them.	4.08	4	High
I am motivated to try local dishes that look appetizing and visually appealing.	4.04	5	High
Average Mean	4.11		High

Legend: 5.00-4.50 Very High; 4.49-3.50 High; 3.49 - 2.50 Moderate; 2.49 -1.51 Low and 1.50 - 1.00 Very Low

Table 3.5 presents the motivation factors of local tourists in terms of gastronomic or sensory motivation in engaging with Calabanga's local cuisines. This dimension focuses on how sensory attributes such as taste, aroma, texture, and overall food quality influence tourists' interest in trying local dishes. Respondents agreed that gastronomic or sensory factors significantly influence their engagement with local cuisine, as reflected in the high mean scores of the indicators. These include appreciation of taste, aroma, and overall sensory appeal of the food. The results indicate that tourists are attracted to local cuisine based on its sensory qualities and overall eating experience.

The findings suggest that sensory appeal plays a crucial role in motivating tourists to try and enjoy local cuisine. The emphasis on taste, aroma, and texture indicates that food quality and sensory satisfaction are key drivers of tourist engagement. This implies that tourists are drawn to destinations where food offers a unique and pleasurable sensory experience. Furthermore, the results highlight that enhancing the sensory quality of local dishes can contribute to positive dining experiences and increased tourist satisfaction. Sensory motivation also supports repeat visitation and positive word-of-mouth, as memorable food experiences are often associated with strong sensory impressions. Overall, gastronomic or sensory motivation is a fundamental factor in shaping tourists' perceptions and experiences of local cuisine.

These findings are supported by previous studies which emphasize that sensory attributes such as taste, aroma, and texture are primary determinants of food choice and tourist satisfaction (Fields, 2002; Kim & Eves, 2012). Research also indicates that sensory experiences are central to gastronomic tourism, as they create memorable and enjoyable encounters for visitors (García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024; Park, 2023). Additionally, studies highlight that high-quality sensory experiences enhance tourists' overall evaluation of a destination and contribute to

emotional engagement and loyalty (Kovalenko, 2023; Moura et al., 2025). These insights reinforce the importance of gastronomic and sensory motivation in developing competitive and attractive culinary tourism destinations.

**Table 3.6**

*Motivation Factors in Terms of Social Motivation*

Parameter	Mean	Rank	Interpretation
I enjoy trying Calabanga’s local food with family and friends.	4.28	1	High
Trying local cuisine allows me to bond with people during travel.	4.24	2	High
Sharing food experiences with others motivates me to try local dishes.	4.22	3	High
I like recommending Calabanga’s local food to others.	4.20	4	High
Social gatherings encourage me to explore local food.	4.18	5	High
Average Mean	4.22		High

Legend: 5.00-4.50 Very High; 4.49-3.50 High; 3.49 - 2.50 Moderate; 2.49 -1.51 Low and 1.50 - 1.00 Very Low

Table 3.6 presents the motivation factors of local tourists in terms of social motivation in engaging with Calabanga’s local cuisines. This dimension focuses on how social interaction, shared dining experiences, and relationships with others influence tourists’ participation in local food activities. The table indicates that respondents agreed that social motivation plays a role in their engagement with local cuisine, as reflected in the relatively high mean scores of the indicators. These include sharing meals with family and friends, bonding through food experiences, and interacting with locals during dining activities. The results suggest that social aspects are important in shaping tourists’ food-related behavior.

The findings suggest that food serves as a medium for social connection and interaction, enhancing the overall tourism experience. Tourists are motivated to engage with local cuisine not only for personal enjoyment but also for the opportunity to share experiences with others. This highlights the role of food in fostering relationships, creating shared memories, and strengthening social bonds. Furthermore, the results imply that communal dining and interactive food experiences can enhance tourist satisfaction and engagement. Activities such as group dining, food festivals, and community-based culinary events can further promote social interaction and cultural exchange. Overall, social motivation contributes to a more meaningful and immersive gastronomic experience for tourists.

These findings are supported by studies which emphasize that social interaction is a key component of gastronomic tourism, as food experiences often involve sharing and bonding with others (Kim & Eves, 2012; Mak et al., 2012). Research also highlights that communal dining and social engagement enhance tourists’ satisfaction and emotional connection to a destination (Díaz-Sánchez & Palomba, 2021; Hernández-Rojas, 2022). Additionally, food-related social experiences contribute to cultural exchange and strengthen the sense of belonging among tourists, making them more likely to revisit and recommend the destination (Tort, 2023; Rousta & Loring, 2020). These insights reinforce the importance of social motivation in shaping tourist behavior and promoting gastronomic tourism development.

Table 3.7 presents the overall ranking of motivational factors influencing local tourists’ engagement with Calabanga’s local cuisines. The results show that curiosity and experience motivation ranked first, indicating that tourists are primarily driven by the desire to explore new and unfamiliar food experiences. This is followed by food-related activities and experiences, food involvement, and social motivation, all of which obtained relatively high mean scores, suggesting that tourists value active participation, personal interest in food, and social interaction

when engaging with local cuisine. Meanwhile, cultural and nostalgic motivation and gastronomic or sensory motivation also showed strong influence, although they ranked slightly lower compared to other factors.

**Table 3.7**

*Overall Ranking of Motivational Factors*

Motivational Factor	Overall Mean	Rank	Interpretation
Curiosity & Experience Motivation	4.54	1	Very High
Food-Related Activities & Experiences	4.26	2	High
Food Involvement	4.25	3	High
Social Motivation	4.22	4	High
Cultural & Nostalgic Motivation	4.20	5	High
Gastronomic / Sensory Motivation	4.11	6	High

Legend: 5.00-4.50 Very High; 4.49-3.50 High; 3.49 - 2.50 Moderate; 2.49 -1.51 Low and 1.50 - 1.00 Very Low

These findings suggest that tourist engagement with Calabanga's cuisine is largely shaped by experiential and exploratory factors, where visitors seek novelty and meaningful participation in food-related activities. The high ranking of curiosity and experience motivation highlights the importance of offering diverse and interactive culinary experiences that allow tourists to discover new flavors and engage with local culture. At the same time, the presence of other motivational factors indicates that tourist behavior is multidimensional, influenced by a combination of personal interest, social interaction, cultural connection, and sensory enjoyment. The results emphasize that developing gastronomic tourism in Calabanga should focus on creating immersive, experience-based, and culturally authentic food activities that cater to various tourist motivations. By integrating these factors, the municipality can enhance tourist satisfaction, strengthen its gastronomic identity, and promote sustainable tourism development.

*Gastronomic Framework of Local Cuisines in Calabanga, Camarines Sur*- Figure 1, illustrates the proposed Gastronomic Framework of Local Cuisines in Calabanga, Camarines Sur, which presents a systems-based model showing how local culinary resources, cultural practices, and tourism activities are interconnected. The framework highlights the dynamic relationship between food production, preparation, and consumption within the community.



**Figure 1.** *Gastronomic Framework of Local Cuisines in Calabanga, Camarines Sur*

The framework is composed of three core components: production, processing, and consumption. The production component includes local resources such as seafood, agricultural products, and coconut-based ingredients. The processing component involves culinary traditions, including traditional recipes, cooking methods, and intergenerational knowledge transfer. The consumption component represents tourism experiences, such as dining, food tasting, and participation in cultural activities. These components are connected in a cyclical flow, emphasizing the continuous interaction between environment, culture, and tourism. The framework suggests that Calabanga's gastronomy operates as an integrated system, where each component supports and reinforces the others. Local resources provide the foundation for food production, which is transformed through cultural practices into meaningful culinary experiences. These experiences are then consumed and appreciated by both locals and tourists, contributing to cultural preservation and economic development. Furthermore, the cyclical nature of the framework indicates sustainability, as continuous interaction among production, processing, and consumption ensures the preservation of culinary traditions while adapting to tourism demands. This highlights the importance of aligning local resources, cultural identity, and tourism strategies to strengthen Calabanga's gastronomic potential.

The proposed framework is supported by existing literature which emphasizes that gastronomy is a system that integrates food resources, cultural identity, and tourism experiences (Cheng, 2023; Zocchi, 2021). Studies also highlight that sustainable gastronomic tourism depends on the interaction between local production, traditional practices, and tourist engagement (Barzallo-Neira & Pulido-Fernández, 2023; Xu et al., 2024). Moreover, research indicates that community participation and preservation of culinary heritage are essential in maintaining authenticity and promoting long-term tourism development (Putra et al., 2023; Nurwitasari, 2024). These perspectives support the framework's emphasis on the interconnected roles of environment, culture, and tourism in shaping a sustainable gastronomic system.

#### **4. Conclusions and Recommendation**

The findings of the study indicate that Calabanga's local cuisines are strongly influenced by its coastal and agricultural environment, as reflected in its seafood-based dishes, coconut-based cooking, and traditional Bicolano flavors. These elements shape the municipality's gastronomic identity and highlight its cultural heritage. Culinary experiences are rooted in everyday household practices and special occasions, where food preparation and sharing promote social interaction and cultural continuity. The cuisine also reflects the community's close relationship with its environment, while the preservation of traditions is sustained through family-based knowledge transfer and continuous practice. Moreover, tourists are primarily motivated by curiosity and the desire for new experiences, along with participation in food-related activities, social interaction, and cultural connection, emphasizing the importance of experiential and authentic culinary encounters. The developed gastronomic framework further shows that local cuisine can serve as a foundation for sustainable tourism development.

In line with these findings, it is recommended that local government units promote gastronomic tourism through food festivals, culinary trails, and cultural events. Tourism stakeholders should design interactive and experience-based activities such as food tours and cooking demonstrations to enhance visitor engagement. Local communities are encouraged to preserve and transmit traditional culinary knowledge, while entrepreneurs may develop innovative yet authentic food products using local resources. Future researchers may explore related areas such as economic impact, digital promotion, and comparative studies to further strengthen gastronomic tourism development.

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