Does gastronomic improve the tourist destination image? Evidence from Lombok Island, Indonesia

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Abstract---This study aims to determine the significance of gastronomic in improving the destination's image and to determine the factors that attract tourists to Ampenan Beach, Lombok Island. Researchers used a qualitative method with a descriptive analysis approach, which is a strategy for analyzing data by describing the data that has been collected. The method of data collecting consisted of three steps: first, observation in the form of nonparticipatory observation at Ampenan Beach, Lombok. Second, interviews with 10 informants representing the public sector, managers, and the commercial sector by means of purposive sampling, and 20 tourists by means of incidental sampling. Third, the compilation of material and papers pertaining to Ampenan Beach tourism attractions. According to the results, gastronomic plays a part in enhancing the image of Ampenan Beach as a tourist attraction. This is seen by the number of tourists who visit in order to sample the local cuisine, and by the number of tourists who frequently return. Tourists are satisfied by the merchants' commitment to provide superior service. Moreover, the quality of the food's flavor is a feature that attracts travelers to Ampenan Beach, where they may experience a variety of Lombok-style spicy regional dishes. Visitors prefer to visit Ampenan Beach due to the existing culinary sensations. The greater the variety of cuisine sold, the more tourists will visit. Numerous deficiencies in the Ampenan Beach tourist attraction can be compensated for by the availability of a variety of cuisine.

Keywords---Gastronomic, Tourism Destination Image, Lombok Island, Culinary Tourism, Ampenan Beach Lombok.

Introduction

Food was not the main complimentary tourist activity. However, it evolved into a distinct sort of tourism known as gastronomic tourism (Williamson & Hassanli,
Gastronomic tourism is one of the tourism ideas that is currently developing around the (Jebbouri et al., 2022), and it is also one of the most crucial supporting components for the success of tourism in a region (Ismanto, 2022). Supporting the possibilities of natural tourism, cultural tourism, historical tourism, and marine tourism is culinary tourism. (Jęczmyk et al., 2021) Culinary tourism is also tied to the native cuisine of tourist sites. One of the factors defining the success of culinary tourism is the availability of strategic, affordable, and pleasant dining options. In an effort to address these needs, it is possible to diversify the sorts of food such that new culinary delights arise, particularly regional culinary delights that can even define the culture of a region's inhabitants daerah (Hernández-Rojas & Alcocer, 2021). Obviously, Indonesia has enormous potential in this industry of culinary tourism.

On the Indonesian island of Lombok, the Old Town Ampenan tourist area contains a gastronomic tourism potential. This Old Town is a tourist destination with a variety of features and distinctions, such as historical buildings that have been since the Dutch colonial period and are still standing. In addition to this, which makes the area so appealing, there is a beach with stunning natural beauty and a distinct character, namely Ampenan Beach, which is located in the central of Ampenan Old Town and has the potential to enhance the area's reputation. This beach is extremely popular with tourists of all ages, particularly in the late afternoon and early evening. This beach makes travel fascinating because there are numerous merchants along the seashore selling traditional cuisine, including seafood, pelecing kale, taliwang chicken, various types of satay, soto, grilled fish, and other fresh drinks.

Many tourists travel with the purpose of partaking in culinary delights while watching the beautiful sunset. The problem that exists in this beach’s tourism is that the culinary stall management system is less organized, resulting in a lack of space and a shabby appearance due to the accumulation of stalls from traders who sell freely. In addition, the infrastructure, such as artificial attractions, has not been improved, but this beach is still visited by a large number of tourists who continue to select culinary options. Whereas, as explained in the Sapta Pesona guidelines as a government program for promoting tourism awareness, the seven elements that determine a good image of a tourist attraction—safe, orderly, clean, cool, beautiful, and friendly and memorable—serve not only as the fundamental requirements of tourists but also as a benchmark for enhancing the quality of tourism (Nugroho et al., 2022). The Tourism Office of Mataram City devised a plan to construct a gastronomic tourism site in Mataram City that focuses not only on cuisine but also on natural beauty, arts, and culture (Interview, 2022).

**Materials and Methods**

In 2022, this study was conducted in the Ampenan Old Town Area of Mataram City (see fig. 1). This research will be conducted using qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research is study that focuses on the correctness of data at the time of the research and seeks to explain phenomena via the collecting of extensive data. Using a descriptive research strategy, researchers will provide systematic descriptions of the object under study in terms of facts, qualities, and
other topics relating to the research topic. The data collecting approach consists of three stages, the first of which is observation using one of the techniques that can be used to collect data by directly or indirectly viewing items at the research site. In this study, the authors employed a method of non-participation observation in which they observed tourist activities, facilities, varieties of cuisine, and services supplied to tourists.

![Figure 1. Map of the Ampenan Beach Lombok](image)

Second, the interview is a method for gathering data through question-and-answer sessions between the researcher and the subject of the study. In this study, structured interviews were used. Where the researcher prepares a list of questions to ask the information source, so that the interview is directed or structured. In this study, Ampenan beach cuisine merchants and Ampenan beach visitors will be interviewed as information sources. Purposive sampling was used to acquire a sample of 30 respondents comprised of 10 government, manager, and merchant informants at Ampenan Beach, Lombok. The 10 informants have information and experience with Lombok’s Ampenan Beach (see table 1). While 20 respondents were collected from visitors visiting Ampenna Beach Lombok utilizing the Accidental Sampling technique, which is a way for gathering samples by chance in which researchers can select respondents who are first encountered by accident. The determination of the number of respondents is based on the remark in (Creswell, 2014) regarding a realistic sample size in research ranging from 30 to 500 samples. This is consistent with (Cohen et al., 2007), which argues that the greater the sample of the size of the existing population, the better, but that researchers must collect a minimum of 30 samples. According to (Veal, 2018), the minimum sample size for study utilizing statistical data analysis is thirty samples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Id</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Organisation Profile</th>
<th>Interview Length</th>
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<td>Public Sector</td>
<td>Mataram City Tourism Office</td>
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</table>
Table 2 Interview Participant (Respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Id</th>
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<tr>
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<td>West Lombok</td>
<td>11:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>Supardi</td>
<td>East Lombok</td>
<td>05:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>Melisa Putri</td>
<td>East Nusa Tenggara</td>
<td>12:04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14</td>
<td>Eka Yuliana</td>
<td>Central Lombok</td>
<td>15:26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>Adinda Eka</td>
<td>Mataram</td>
<td>09:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jumanri Indrawan</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>P16</td>
<td>Erlan</td>
<td>Central Lombok</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>P17</td>
<td>Furia Suci R.</td>
<td>Dompu</td>
<td>10:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P18</td>
<td>I Made wahyu Surya P.</td>
<td>West Lombok</td>
<td>08:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Zulkarnain</td>
<td>Bima District</td>
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<tr>
<td>P20</td>
<td>Sholihin</td>
<td>Lombok Barat</td>
<td>06:09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P21</td>
<td>Erna Susana</td>
<td>Sumbawa District</td>
<td>10:11</td>
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<td>Nadia</td>
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<td>Mataram</td>
<td>09:18</td>
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<td>Mararam</td>
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<td>A. Mezini</td>
<td>Mataram</td>
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<td>Taufik</td>
<td>East Java</td>
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<td>P29</td>
<td>Katy Nilson</td>
<td>West Lombok</td>
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<tr>
<td>P30</td>
<td>Timothy Millar</td>
<td>West Java</td>
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Results and Discussions

The Role of Gastronomy in Improving Ampenan Beach’s Tourism Image: A Tourist Attraction Perspective

The image of a tourist destination is the impression that tourists have on the quality of a destination region. This is due to the fact that the image of a tourist destination is strongly tied to its physical characteristics, such as its names, buildings, attractions, and services, and will influence the number of visitor visits.
Several aspects at Ampenan Beach contribute to the formation of a desination image, namely: First, there are supporting natural features in the form of beach vistas. Therefore, Ampenan Beach is identical to 3S (sun, sea, and sand), a tourist destination that showcases the natural beauty of the sea and a wonderful sunset spot. Tourists can view the sunset right behind Mount Agung, paired with pristine beach sand. Along the beach, tourists can sit back and enjoy the scenery while dining, while those who choose to sit must order food from the available kiosks.

The following auxiliary attraction is historical tourism. Ampenan Beach is included in the historical tourism of Lombok Island, which was constructed in 1896 as the city center of the Ampenan international commerce port, which connects Lombok to the surrounding port routes. This port is not only well-known in Indonesia, but also internationally as one of the spice delivery routes. However, the port was closed in 1970, and all port activities have been relocated to Lembar Port, West Lombok, due to siltation and high waves on Ampenan Beach. Tourists can still find remnants of Ampenan Beach’s historical significance, such as old-style buildings and shops. Additionally, there is a fishing community to the south of the shore. Numerous local tourists are well aware that the old town area surrounding the beach dates back to the Dutch era. This town’s antiquated architecture and permeable wood are indicative of its Dutch colonial origins. These buildings have survived since the 1800s, and despite their old appearance, they are an attraction. Considering that this location was formerly renowned as a trading hub and has continued for a considerable amount of time, these buildings are still utilized for commerce. People have visited the old city because they wish to catch the moment until now.

“I believe this location has been well-known for a long time, and since it is linked with the ancient city, more people are interested in visiting. Take photographs in historic structures.” (P22)

Based on the results of the interview, it can be concluded that Ampenan Beach tourism has its own distinct appeal, with the beach’s history and proximity to Old Town Ampenan making it particularly remarkable. A destination will attract tourists if it is backed by particular attractions, especially history and culture. In addition, the cuisine is the major attraction. Ampenan Beach’s culinary tourism is a major draw because it offers a fantastic opportunity to enhance the beach’s reputation. The food stands are typically open daily from 16:00 until 22:00. Given the amount of tourists who come to view the sunset in the afternoon and to socialize at night. However, there are other stalls that are open from 9 a.m. until 10 p.m. Some traders think that selling here can improve their income.

With so many stall vendors, there are numerous gastronomic options, including seafood meals and native Lombok snacks that can leave a lasting impression on tourists. This is the reason why vendors consistently endeavor to preserve the cleanliness of the food they offer, give courteous service, and utilize fresh food ingredients. Some tourists are interested in coming because the variety of food sold makes it impossible for them to become bored and not return, as they can select and sample cuisine from the stalls.
"In my opinion, Ampenen Beach has a high reputation since there are so many local cuisines here, so visitors from outside Lombok will be satisfied, able to choose what to eat, and encouraged to return." (P12)

“Safe and secure, in my opinion, because I have not yet met any unpleasant situations.” (P20)

On the basis of the foregoing interview, it can be concluded that the flavor of various types of food is commensurate with the price charged, leading visitors to believe that the cuisine offered is capable of creating a favorable impression of Ampenan Beach tourism. Traditional cuisine that is representative of a region might be a particular draw for tourists.

Figure 2. Lombok's Ampenan Beach gastronomy

The Role of Gastronomy in Improving Ampenan Beach’s Tourism Image: services and facilities perspective

Facilities are the basic supporting elements of a tourist attraction that help to meet the needs of travelers (Nugroho, et al., 2022). Ampenan Beach has numerous facilities already. It has satisfied the needs of visitors with the help of some of the existing amenities.

“It is safe and comfortable for tourists, there is a musala nearby, and I can see that the facilities are complete (P12).

Additionally, the services offered at a tourist attraction, including those from tourism managers, shopkeepers, and parking attendants, all have an impact on how a place is perceived. A positive first impression will go from person to person and help to build a positive reputation. Due to this, several vendors at Ampenan Beach have developed a service approach that includes both providing guests food and keeping the food they sell clean. The majority of the vendors the author spoke with operate in the same manner with regard to customer service and keeping the area around the stand tidy.

In terms of the halalness of the food sold, most vendors have not yet registered their stalls to obtain halal certification of the food sold, but existing vendors have made efforts to learn and are aware of how to maintain food hygiene by using halal food ingredients; they research this information online and also attend
training sessions on how to serve healthy food that are held by the village as a way of promoting Ampenan Beach tourism.

"I really keep this location clean; I wash the meal ingredients well, and I sweep and wipe the table as well as the rest of the space. It won’t feel nice if it’s dirty, especially if outsiders are passing by. I offer polite service, smile, and extend greetings." (P4)

The aforementioned is in keeping with the opinions of visitors who claim that Ampenan Beach’s services may be rated as satisfactory. This is true both for the services offered and for the food hygiene, which is deemed adequate.

Insyallah here I believe everything is halal. “If it’s about the cleanliness of the food, we don’t know, but what I see is that it’s worth the price supplied. The service so far has not been disappointing (P28).

**The Role of Gastronomy in Improving Ampenan Beach’s Tourism Image:**

**accessibility and amenities perspective**

The roads leading to Ampenan Beach are in good shape and easy to find. This is because Ampenan Beach is located in the center of government and the center of Mataram City, Lombok Island, namely in the Old Town Ampenan area. Visitors only need to look for the Ampenan Old Town monument at the Ampenan border, then enter around 500 meters.

In addition, there are institutions in the form of support from a number of beach managers that will be able to enhance the image of tourism at Ampenan Beach. Several beach managers who were interviewed by the author stated that they would continue to assist and maintain the beach’s positive reputation. In addition, the Mataram City Tourism Office has an ongoing public sector involvement in the development of the Ampenan Beach tourism region, such as aiding in management and development monitoring.

"In terms of management and physical development, the tourism office is responsible for monitoring supervision in the form of light rehap-rehap. Responsible for substantial construction is the center. There is also a stall leader, and there are daily janitors. The coastline that collapsed as a result of the waves is currently being restored. The materials and equipment are slowly beginning to arrive." (P1)
Several variables, including tourist attractions, cuisine, facilities and services, accessibility, and supporting institutions, play a part in enhancing Ampenan Beach Lombok's image as a tourism destination, as determined by the analysis of the interview data presented above. However, cuisine is the primary aspect that attracts travelers. This is supported by positive comments from respondents interviewed by the author, to the effect that tourists visit because the food tastes good, there are a variety of foods available, including traditional snacks, cold and warm drinks, and a variety of main dishes, including seafood, meatballs, chicken noodles, satay-satean, and typical Lombok regional cuisine, and the price of existing food is still affordable, supported by good service from vendors, and et cetera.

Culinary can be a supportive factor for tourism attractiveness in a destination region and an excellent advertising strategy for defining the image of the destination (Afifa & Nugroho, 2022). This is due to the fact that a lack of culinary in a destination will render traveling activities monotonous, since culinary is a complement to tourism due to the fact that visitors cannot be separated from their need to eat and drink. Food has significant potential and may be used to enhance Destination Image by attracting more people to tourism places. Food can encourage tourists to return to an area and increase their satisfaction with it, as well as their desire to return.

The image of a tourist location is the tourists' trust, comprehension, and evaluation of a destination. Tourists have a favorable impression of Ampenan Beach due to its distinctive natural attractions, culinary establishments along the beach with a range of menu options, and excellent service, all of which will make tourists happy and encourage them to return. According to (Jebbouri et al., 2022), there are three aspects of destination image: the quality of the experience acquired by tourists, the attractions in a destination, the environment and infrastructure in the environment, and the entertainment and cultural traditions of the destination. Second, Unique destination image, comprised of the natural environment, the destination’s beauty, and its local attractions. Third, Affective destination picture, which consists of pleasant, stimulating, calming, and interesting feelings when visiting a destination.
Attraction Factors for Tourists to Visit Ampenan Beach, Lombok's Gastronomy: Price perspective

According to the findings of the researcher's interviews with twenty visitors, the inexpensive pricing was one of the factors that drew some visitors to Ampenan Beach. Due to the variety of foods and beverages available, customers can select a menu based on their budget, which is particularly convenient for the huge number of young visitors and students who are frequently in search of more reasonable dining options.

"I am interested in dining here because the meal is inexpensive and nonetheless of acceptable quality." (P12,P18,P21,P28)

On the other side, there are some visitors who believe the prices to be reasonable, therefore it can be concluded that the prices supplied are consistent with the spending capacity of visitors.

"If the flavor and price are identical, it is still worth while to try" (P19, P30).

In actuality, vendors at Ampenan Beach provide varying rates for their gourmet wares at each stall, indicating that each has its own approach for attracting customers. As Hamid and Mrs. Maryana stated as Ampenan Beach merchants:

"To attract guests, we must first pay attention to our appearance and conduct, and we offer affordable costs." (P9, P10)

Attraction Factors for Tourists to Visit Ampenan Beach, Lombok's Gastronomy: Perspective on Culinary Destination

The satisfaction felt by tourists visiting a tourist destination contributes to the destination's positive brand image (Sundqvist et al., 2020). This happiness may result from the services provided by merchants, the presentation of food, or the singularity of a location. This can contribute to Ampenan Beach's tourism reputation.

"It intrigues me to dine here since there are numerous menu options, the atmosphere is distinct, it is crowded, and I can view the ocean. The road access is likewise uninterrupted." (P20)

"What makes this place special is that the view of the sunset helps us feel at ease when eating, as well as the crowd." (P12)

Based on the results of the aforementioned interviews, it can be concluded that Ampenan Beach has a positive reputation in terms of its diverse food flavors, beach atmosphere that attracts many visitors, and as a popular place to watch the sunset in the late afternoon, as well as services and facilities that can meet the needs of beachgoers. The hotel's location in the heart of the city allows for convenient access to both the beach and public transit.
**Attraction Factors for Tourists to Visit Ampenan Beach, Lombok’s Gastronomy: Perspectives on Food and Drink Flavor**

Ampenan Beach is the epicenter of culinary tourism, with many stalls offering traditional Lombok menus and the majority of stalls selling traditional Lombok menus, leading many visitors to assert that the food has its own qualities due to the continued usage of traditional spices. In addition, the expertise in food preparation gives each stall its distinct charm and character.

"Because of the sort of cuisine that still sells a lot of traditional Lombok food, and because the flavor of traditional and wonderful food is what makes this place special." (P30)

"After an evening stroll, I generally come here because my house is nearby. If I’m tired, I drink here, and the grilled fish is great" (P12).

According to the results of interviews conducted by the author, the majority of visitors have differing opinions regarding the quality of the existing culinary taste. The majority of visitors believe that the taste of the food they order is delicious and has unique qualities that will make them want to return to Ampenan Beach to enjoy culinary again, but there are also some visitors who believe that the taste of existing food is average and in line with the price offered. This is logical given that everyone has their own preferences and requirements for flavorful foods.

**Attraction Factors for Tourists to Visit Ampenan Beach, Lombok’s Gastronomy: Location Perspective**

The strategic location and accessibility of Ampenan Beach, which make it easy for tourists to visit, are also very beneficial. Ampenan Beach is located in the central of Mataram City, roughly 38 kilometers from Lombok International Airport and 40 kilometers from Lembar port (28 Km). Because of its central location and convenient road access, it is easy for travelers to locate public transit. In addition, Ampenan beach is particularly appealing to visitors since tables and chairs are placed along the beach and face the water, creating a unique impression for all who visit. Some guests stated in the interviews that they came specifically to watch the sunset or to relax on the beach.

"I come here because I want to watch the sunset while I eat. Ampenan Beach is an alternative because it is easy to get there and has good road access." (P22)

"I visit this location for amusement after work and at sunset. The road access is excellent and easily accessible." (P12)

Tourists are more likely to visit a tourist destination that is conveniently accessible, especially if public services are also freely accessible. The traditional Lombok mode of transportation, the cidomo, is available to tourists at the Ampenan Beach region to navigate the ancient town. Based on the results of the preceding investigation, the following characteristics serve as indicators of tourist appeal for gastronomic enjoyment at Ampenan Beach:
Table 3: Classification of Tourist-Attracting Factors for Lombok's Ampenan Beach

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Reasonably inexpensive food prices</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Image of Destination Culinary</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Food and Drink Flavor Quality</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Strategic Positioning</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the basis of the aforementioned data, it can be inferred that tourist attraction variables originate from the tourist attraction itself and can indirectly influence the number of visitors (Bonang et al., 2022). This is due to the fact that each visitor has distinct objectives in terms of personal demands or fulfillment. According to the results of an analysis conducted by researchers, the primary elements that draw tourists to Ampenan Beach are the taste and quality of the available cuisine, the pricing, and the location.

As a result of significant number of tourists who visit, the majority of tourists believe that existing food prices are reasonable and in line with the quality of the food. However, there are some tourists who believe that the price of grilled fish is unreasonable, but they understand that the price is reasonable given that the food is sold in a tourist area. According to (Hernández-Rojas & Alcocer, 2021; Jebbouri et al., 2022) research, price has a favorable and significant impact on the choice of a dining establishment. This indicates that the lower the price, the greater the number of purchases made by consumers.

Then, in terms of the food's flavor, some visitors claim that the food sold has its unique flavor because the spices used are typical of Lombok's regional cuisine, which is spicy and includes a variety of foods. According to a number of guests, this establishment's defining characteristic is its diverse menus with distinct flavors. Some guests, however, claim that the cuisine's flavor is identical to that of food found in restaurants and other dining establishments, with the exception of the fact that the view of the sea is seen directly from the restaurant.

In addition, based on the results of interviews with visitors, the majority of tourists believe that the services offered by parking attendants and merchants are excellent. The majority of services offered by merchants are also prompt, kind, and cordial. Then, with regard to the cleanliness of the location and the food supplied, many guests report that the cleanliness of both the food and the tables and chairs is quite assured. This is also supported by the peddler's assertion that the method used to maintain the cleanliness of food ingredients and food served is to always wash hands thoroughly, use fresh food ingredients, always cover food sold so that it is not exposed to dust, and immediately wash, wipe, and clean cutlery and table chairs after guests have finished eating. According to the findings of (Jęczmyk et al., 2021; Williamson & Hassanli, 2020) research, tourist attraction, service quality, and tourist amenities have a direct and considerable influence on both tourist satisfaction and the likelihood of repeat visits.
Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be stated that: first, Culinary has a significant role in enhancing the image of Ampenan Beach tourist locations. With the amount of visitors who visit due to the existing culinary and return, the trader’s awareness of how to provide good service for tourist satisfaction and the greater variety of food sold would encourage more tourists to visit and sample. Numerous flaws in the Ampenan Beach tourist attraction can be compensated for by the presence of various cuisine. It cannot be argued that local cuisine has a significant impact on the image of a tourist destination. The second aspect that attracts travelers to Ampenan Beach for culinary enjoyment is the quality of the meal's flavor, with many varieties of food sold and the spicy regional cuisine of Lombok enticing guests to visit because of the existing culinary flavors. According to the findings of interviews with 20 tourists, as many as 85 percent claimed that the present cuisine may be a factor in their decision to visit.

References


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