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Adobong Salagubang: Katutubong Pagkain

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Abstract: The subject matter of this paper is indigenous exotic food which the researchers want to promote among the popular Filipino exotic food such as Balut, Isaw and Dinuguan. The objective of this research is to explore Adobong Salagubang (Adobo-Style June Bugs) and promote it to help tourism in Abra which will help ease the local poverty in Abra. Using Adobong Salagubang, researchers would like to highlight the importance of mingling global and local culture in food tourism. This will be analysed using world culture theory and cultural capital theory. The findings highlights that exotic food needs promoters who themselves had tried Adobong Salagubang. It also emphasizes the necessity of presenting the indigenous exotic food globally.

Keywords: Adobong Salagubang; exoticism; gastronomy; culinary tourism



I. Tourism Experience and Food Culture

"Food and the Tourism Experience" provides an analysis of food experiences from a wide range of countries and regions around the world. Food has a particularly important role in the development of tourism services, since it often comprises 30% or more of tourist expenditure and this money is often spent directly with local businesses. It is also argued that integrating food experiences into sustainable tourism development in rural and outlying areas may help ease poverty. In order to utilize food and tourism as an economic development strategy, it is important to encourage visitors to stop, spend and stay longer. In the short-term, the focus should be on retaining visitor expenditure. In the medium term, the focus should be on developing networks and relationships within local businesses and organizations as well as with other regional stakeholders. In the longer term, the focus should be on the development of intellectual capital in order to enhance the regional knowledge base and to develop engaging food experiences (Okumus, Okumus, & McKercher, 2007; Quan & Wang, 2004).

The research of McKercher, Okumus and Okumus inspired the researchers to explore Adobong Salagubang (Adobo-Style June Bugs) and promote it to help tourism in Abra which will help ease the local poverty in Abra.

The Province of Abra is now known as the "Natural Dye Capital of the Philippines" because it is abundant with natural dye-yielding plants. Natural dyes are extracted from the barks, leaves, fruits, and roots of these plants, and used to color food, beverages, textiles, cosmetics, furniture and pharmaceutical products. It is also well known for its loom weaving and embroidery (Department of Tourism). As of 1990, there were 743 cottage industries in Abra, of which 208 are registered with the Department of Trade and Industry. 59% are engage in bamboo and rattan craft making, and needle craft (Department of Tourism).

Abra is an island province bounded by Ilocos Norte and Mountain Province on the north, Ilocos Sur in the south, Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur on the west, and mountain province, Kalinga, and Apayao on the east. Total land area comes to

approximately 397,555 Hectares and with a total population of 234,733 as of 2010 (NSO). The climate of the province is characterized by two pronounced seasons, dry to November to April and wet during the rest of the year (Department of Tourism). Based on the 1995 census survey, Ilocano is generally spoken by 73.65% of the regions total population. 25.18% speak Tinguian or Itneg, 0.16% speaking Tagalog, and the remaining 0.54% speak other dialects. According to the National Statistics Coordination Board (NSCB), Abra has an estimated magnitude of poor population of 84,347 in 2012.

II. Culinary Tourism and Gastronomy

Countries, areas and regions have been zealously devoted to the development of tourism to improve their national economy and national images. Therefore, it is now an important issue to exert natural and cultural resources as bases for tourism planning and strategic development, and connect all forces in social, cultural, and political aspects. The product portfolio of a tourist destination consists of various visible and invisible products and services, and food is a burgeoning element for the destination to develop tourism (Okumus, Okumus, & McKercher, 2007; Quan & Wang, 2004). Consequently, culinary tourism is not only a rising category of tourism, but also an opportunity for the destination and industries to gain a competitive edge (Ibid).

Gastronomy has become a central part of the tourism experience. In recent years, food tourism has grown considerably becoming one of the most dynamic and creative segments of tourism. Both destinations and tourism businesses have realized the importance of gastronomy order to diversify tourism and stimulate local, regional and national economic development (Okumus, Okumus, & McKercher, 2007; Quan & Wang, 2004).

Tourists are increasingly seeking local, authentic and novel food experiences linked to the places they visit. Both at a regional and a national level, foods can become distinctive elements of the brand image of places and help to create distinctiveness. National culinary traditions are still strong, but as food becomes ever more globalized the authenticity of experiences is threatened. Tourists generally approach a country

via an adapted version of its cuisine. This volume presents examples of strategies that can increase tourist knowledge of a country's culinary offerings. Very often this involves a high level of collaboration between different stakeholders in a characteristic "foodscape" which unite local culture, creativity and food. The important linkages between novelty, authenticity and locality in food experiences mean that small-scale food production is not an artifact of the past; it represents a route to the future (Vitteso, G., and Amilien, V., 2011)

Creating 'authentic' experiences is often a question of careful framing and inventive and creative storytelling. Creating a strong narrative about place and the food culture that is linked to it can be an effective form of product development. Interest in culinary tourism may help rescue old traditions which are in the process of disappearing although there is a danger that tourists have less interest in the dish being authentic than in it appearing "exotic."

The local foods in Abra are Palileng, Nakamatisan nga Bunolan, Pinakbet nga Nasagpawan ti Chicharon, Dried lentils nga Naidengdeng nga Nasagpawan ti dried Palileng, and Lechon stuffed with Karimbuaya (Sibayan-Ilagan, 2013). These local foods are known by the locals and keeping their native names may entice tourists' curiosity to try them.

Another local food in Abra is the Kampa. Kampa is a very rare fish said to be found only in Abra. It bounds during the summer especially the municipality of Lagayan. It's white flesh and delicate flavor is at its best when cooked simply a La Sinigang (Sour Soup) with just Pias or Barusbus (Young tamarind leaves) and salt to taste. Similar to river fish called Bunog in Ilocano or Bunolan in Penarrubia Itneg but bigger in size. Most fish sold in Bangued comes from sur-surong or upriver from the upland municipalities of Abra. They are armed with the fin-like suction with their necks, enabling for them to cling to the rocks and survive the strong currents of the Abra River (Sibayan-Ilagan, 2013).

III. Exoticism

Exoticism, or the consumption of unknown products; these products tends to frighten consumers because consumption supposes close

contact with a foreign food stuff or dish. By buying, preparing, and eating foreign products, a person incorporates something strange. The consumer introduces foreign thing (i.e. food) deeply into their bodies, abolishing in consequence the border between the body and the still unknown. Unknown aliments, first of all, can be regarded as dangerous, which makes the fear of incorporation all the more strong as the food is new (Auge, 1986; Freschler, 1990).

On the other hand, exotic foods are indeed perceived as good for one's health and the exotic products as having significant therapeutic virtues, another factor that encourages consumers to eat new products. The link established between food and health is inherent to eating: by the incorporation of a foodstuff, the consumer eats its properties, in particular its virtues, real or imaginary, when the food is regarded as positive (Regnier, 2009).

In Abra for instance, locals naturally eat Abuos, a rare summer delicacy made out of the eggs of big, red ants. Abuos have a rich and tangy taste and is a rare delicacy. "Abuos" is the Ilocano word for giant red ants. Their eggs are bountiful wherever rice and yam crops are found. The eggs themselves look like small white beans but are soft and meaty when cooked. It is gathered by poking a hole through their treetop nests (De Mesa, 2012).

Abalin (also abaleng, or tateg, salagubang in Tagalog), is the grub or larvae of the abal-abal or sibbaweng (May/June Beetle). While the adult abal-abal is more popular known as a delicacy, its protein-rich grub is also edible and, as claimed by many "Gourmands", even more palatable. Abalin is a popular fare, enjoyed and considered as a special delicacy among Ibanags, Itaweses and the Ilokanos. These are usually found and gathered (dug-out) near or on river banks in the rainy seasons or prior to the onset of abal-abal season (May-June) (Gumangan, 2012) and local consider these exotic food as not only delicious but healthy as well.

IV. Exotic Food: An Experience of the Uncommon.



According to Fischler (1990), the origin of the seduction of exotic products relies much more on the so-called, "Paradox of the omnivore," fear of and the desire for innovation. Consuming exotic foods means to experience charming and strange products, unexpected favors, colorful dishes, and new ways of cooking. Exotic foods are opposed to the national daily and familiar food practices, and appear to be in opposition to our common habits. In consuming exotic foods, it is possible to vary one's daily habits, to fight against the boredom of eating the same food, or to renew a food tradition. Exotic products make it possible to leave the ordinary behind (Regnier, 2009).

In the Philippines, so many exotic food became popular as part of the street food. An example of this is Isaw. Isaw is chicken intestines, Betamax is grilled blood cubes, and gizzard is basically grilled chicken gizzard. All these three are grilled, and there are basically sold everywhere in the country, most especially in places near university belts.

Balut is a duck egg to be more specific, it is a develop duck egg which means that there is a little baby duck inside it. It is very popular among locals. It has this bit of broth that has a distinct taste, and some egg yolk are hardened albumen. Some would put vinegar in it, others would just put a bit of salt (Villareal, 2015).

Dinuguan is a dish that is originally Filipino. Usually Filipino's opt for personally hand picking pork blood from the local market when cooking this dish. However, some use Monterey pork blood trio for a quicker and easier process. Dinuguan is basically as stew made out of pork blood, pork meat, intestines, kidneys, lungs, vinegar, garlic, and chili. It is also called as Filipino chocolate meat because of its rich, dark color (Vistal, 2014).

Salagubang is an exotic dish that is really delicious, meaty and perfect as an appetizer. It can be cooked through adobo style, steamed rice soaked with cow's milk or through bayabas. The flesh of adobong Salagubang tastes like chicken meat with the right balance of sourness and sweetness and has no after taste and is quite juicy. It is usually on the onset of the rainy season (May) that the beetles come out (Baga-Reyes, 2011). Adobo-style is

a Filipino stew, combines chicken, pork, and sometimes fish or shell fish, first fried with garlic in lard and then seasoned with soy sauce, vinegar, bay leaf, and peppercorn Filipino's traditionally used a clay pot for cooking, but it now used a large wok called a kawali, especially they tend to leave the food longer than the Chinese do, and allow it to absorb more fat (Kittler and Sucher, 2004).

V. The future of Adobong Salagubang in the Philippine Tourism.

A. Eating insect is a world culture.

The eating and trade of edible insect species in Thailand are very common and developing rapidly (FAO). It is a serious solution to the increasingly pressing problems of global warming and animal welfare — and a practical way of adding low-fat protein to your diet (Stromberg, 2015). In this sense, culinary exoticism can be an alternative in preventing global warming, and at the same time, a new perspective in dealing with poverty issues. Hence, eating Adobong Salagubang can be more beneficial among locals of Abra.

The concept of world culture theory of globalization should be expounded to make it beneficial for local areas. An important theme of world culture theory of globalization is not a monolithic concept but a multidimensional aspect of it. It is a complex mixture of homogenization and heterogenization. People interpret globalized goods and ideas in a variety of ways and incorporate them into their lives in diverse ways (Robertson, 1997; Shenoy, 2005).

Even though globalization has been accused of suppressing regional food differences, major local and regional varieties in our eating patterns remain (Shenoy, 2005). Hence, while tourists may have a globalized standard of taste, locals of Abra serving Salagubang in Adobo style may bring heterogeneity to their indigenous food. Salagubang is often considered as appetizer (pulutan) among the locals but it can be prepared using mainstream dishes as well.



Beetles (Salagubang) and other insects are more sustainable and ethical than chicken, pork, or beef. Studies have found that raising insects like mealworms and crickets for food, on the other hand, is much more environmentally benign, because we don't need to clear nearly as much land to raise them, they're cold-blooded (so require less feed per unit of body weight to sustain themselves), and we can consume their entire bodies, wasting little flesh. Beetles are highly nutritious protein source (Stromberg, 2015).

It turns out that pound for pound, eating insects like crickets and mealworms (larvae that later turn into beetles) provides similar levels of fat and protein to conventional meats like beef, chicken, and fish. These insects also have much higher levels of nutrients like calcium, iron, and zinc, partly because we can eat them ground into a fine powder, exoskeletons and all. Beetles are also good sources of vitamin B12, an essential vitamin that's barely found in any plant-based foods (and thus can be difficult for vegans to come by). Eating insects is probably more ethical than eating meat (Stromberg, 2015).

Some people disagree about the ethics of eating meat. Some argue that the pleasure we derive from eating meat outweighs the pain and suffering experienced by a cow or pig in captivity, and some say otherwise. But few argue that these animals experience no suffering at all. Many scientists who've studied the insect nervous system, though, believe that they don't feel pain. And while it is a matter of debate, even though who disagree would be hard-pressed to argue that insects can suffer as profoundly as a cow or pig. Raising these insects for meat, instead of cows, pigs, and chickens, would reduce the total amount of suffering that result from our appetite for meat (Stromberg, 2015).

Adobong Salagubang is considered by some locals of Abra as their main dish especially among those who cannot afford to buy pork, beef, and chicken.

B. Theory of Cultural Capital Can Promote Adobong Salagubang

While theories of globalization explain how macro level forces influence the modern consumption, other forces obviously function. While social structures clearly affects the production, distribution and consumption of foods, a sole focus on structural determinants obscure the agency of the people and the counter trend away from rationalization represented by the concept of social differentiation (Germov and Williams, 1999; Sheynon, 2005).

The Cultural Capital Theory (Bourdieu, 1984) is one such theory of social differentiation that explains differences in consumption across groups in terms of tastes, pleasures and desire (Warde, 1997). Warde, Martes and Olsen (1999) define Cultural Capital as the cultural knowledge, competence and disposition, identified through embodied traits, educational qualification, material possessions and involvement in cultural practices (p125). The theory views culture as complex-structures that constitute resources that can be used as a strategy, as opposed to the view of culture as the values that suffuse aspects of belief, intention, and collective life (Sheynon, 2005; DiMaggio, 1997; Hays, 1994).

The Cultural Capital Theory provides us insights that tourists can promote Adobong Salagubang as a natural exotic food, and in such manner, it promotes Adobong Salagubang as part of global culture. Currently, researchers have recorded 10 websites that promoted Adobong Salagubang as exotic food of Abra.

C. Preparation of Adobong Salagubang

One of the interviews by the researchers was with Ms. Jobelyn Valera, 20 years old, a native and resident of Lagangilang Abra. According to her, salagubang lives on the riverside especially in places like Presentar and Aguet, (Barangays in the town of Lagangilang) and in Brgy. Mudiit, Tayum (town in Abra). Any local can catch the salagubang from different riversides. Salagubang can be caught between 5 to 7 o'clock in the evening. The peak season for harvesting salagubang is between April to May.

During off season, harvesters lay extract of Alateris leaves on the ground to attract

Salagubangs, then, they can pick the Salagubang inside the cracked hard soil. Locals usually prepare their Salagubang dish by removing their wings and legs and soaked them in water with salt for hours. After draining the Salagubang, locals can already cook them, and usually as adobo.

Before colonization introduced western dishes, early Filipinos had been cooking their food only by roasting, steaming or boiling until the Spaniards introduced Adobo. Filipino Adobo is one of the most famous dishes in the Philippines which can be done in a variety of ingredient. It could be fish, pork, beef or chicken. Some exotic animals such as frog, lizard, or even snake can be cooked in adobo style. In Abra, Salagubang is also cooked as an Adobo dish. Locals named it Adobong Salagubang because of its Filipino ingredients like salt and vinegar being immersed with Salagubang.

The ingredients of Adobong Salagubang are June bugs or Salagubang, vinegar, garlic, peppercorn and soy sauce. First, soaked beetles in salt water, overnight in the refrigerator and then drain. After the first step, remove and discard head, legs, carapace, and rinse bodies well. Sautee all ingredients together in a pan until it boil. Simmer one hour over low heat. Remove from heat and let it cool for one hour before eating. Lastly, add an additional deep fry for maximum crunch and easy eating, and then garnish with garlic (Matthew, 2013).

VI. Conclusion:

Indigenous foods, although they may be exotic can survive the challenges of globalization by empowering the local tastes through tourism. Through exoticism, our national cooking becomes richer and it can ease the growing problem of poverty in our country.

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