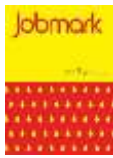


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Gastronomic Branding: New 'Menu' for Tourism, Diplomacy, and Destination Branding

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ABSTRACT

Gastronomic branding has become a popular strategy today as a consequence of the development of tourism branding, destination branding, and soft/cultural diplomacy. This article examines the content and ideas of a book entitled *Gastronomi (Brand): Konsep dan Gagasan Awal* written by Irwansyah, a researcher from the University of Indonesia. As an initial idea (according to the term used by the author), this book provides adequate insight into gastronomy in the Indonesian context. Although, of course, it requires a more comprehensive discussion to get to the technical or strategic level so that it can be easily applied by industry players, professionals, and government as part of cultural diplomacy.

Keywords

Soft diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, tourism branding, culinary, food porn

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gastronomy is considered as heritage preservation, particularly in the globalization era. Gastronomy is used as a tool to attract tourist to visit a certain region. At the same time, gastronomy has become an icon, a label or a branding for destination identity, Italy and pizza, India and curry and so on. In the international relations context, gastronomy is projected soft power around the world that engages with the worldwide community on a cultural and personal level.

This book is the journey of intellectuality and reflection of the author to explore the

INTRODUCTION

Gastronomy is a term that the most related to tourism (Hjalager & Richards, 2002), destination branding (Williams, Williams Jr., & Omar, 2014) and soft diplomacy (Adesina, 2017). In tourism,

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gastronomy from a different perspective, particularly communication studies. Each section of this book has intrigued and encouraged the readers that gastronomy is an interesting, important yet sophisticated topic to be discussed. The elaboration of works and studies have been documented a new knowledge of gastronomy that potentially could be ground-breaking of gastronomy development in the future.

Chapter one

There are eight chapters in this book that contain stories, ideas and concepts related to gastronomy. The first chapter, *Gastro Brand*, discusses the relation of gastro and brand. Food has become a symbol of the region in many places a long time ago. The food symbol attaches strongly to the area. Some places even do more thing, adopting the food symbol as their identity. Food has transformed as a trademark through a complicated process called, branding. Indonesia has also taken action by introducing Indonesian iconic culinary consisted of 30 traditional culinary icons from the various province.

Chapter two

The second chapter is about the definition and historical point of the term *Gastro and Gastronomy*. The terms are well described in this chapter by bringing the explication the basic word, *gastro*. *Gastro* is a prefix that is adopted in a different field such as medicine for *gastroenteritis*, *gastroenterology* and so on. Meanwhile, *gastronomy* is a term that all related to eating activities including process of gathering, preparing, and cooking ingredients to be food. This chapter also describes the intersection of similar terms such as *gastronomy*, *food*, *culinary* and *kitchen*.

Chapter three

The third chapter captures the branding process in gastronomy over the decades. *Gastronomy branding* has changed the marketing communication strategy in the food industry. There are three main periodical distinction; (1) before the 1970s, (2) 1970s to 1990s and (3) after the 2000s. Before 1970's gastronomy

branding was strongly related to mass production and mass communication. Meanwhile, during the 1970s to 1990s, fast food was a trend branding in the United States and expand the influence worldwide. After the 2000s, healthy food has become concerned as a growing campaign of sustainability, food made from scratch and wellness issue.

Chapter four

The fourth chapter describes the best practice of *gastro branding* from different countries. Culture form various region shape *gastro branding practice* uniquely. This section compares *gastro branding* from a different continent from Asia, Europe, Africa, Australia, Caribbean, Oceania to ex-Uni Soviet. *Gastro branding* in each country is considered as a promotion, an existence as well as economic tools.

Chapter five

The fifth chapter deliberates the explanation of *gastro-destination* and *gastro-tourism*. It is related to geographical differences and plant diversity that led to food culture in various region (Fitria, Irwansyah, & Rusfian, 2016). *Gastro-destination* is perceived as a specific sensory window of local culture and society that promotes the uniqueness of food and culinary. Meanwhile, *gastro-tourism* is a special type of tourism that attracts tourist by the culinary representation. *Gastro-tourism* is not just visiting a place but experience with the local taste and local culture.

Chapter six

The sixth chapter explores the connection between media and gastronomy. Media have taken a crucial part in shaping public opinion particularly related to food and culinary. Food journalism has emerged as the growing of culinary culture in public. This section notes that books, magazine, and television have become an instrument to share the idea of culinary culture. In the digital era, there are blog, vlog and social media that involved in gastronomy.

The term *food porn* and *food review* have also been popular as social media users post the

photogenic of food and their experience with it (Irwansyah, 2016a).

Chapter seven

The seventh chapter introduces molecular gastronomy, a term mixing the science of food and the art of cooking. The term might not be familiar for ‘the foodies’ but more sounds like an alchemy relation. Molecular gastronomy has a connection with the science, including alchemy, to understand the taste, behaviour of food ingredient in different temperature, pressure or a particular condition, the exploration of tools and cooking technic to produce an experimental culinary style.

Chapter eight

Last, this chapter summarizes the initiation of gastro branding in Indonesia. This section explores the potential of gastro branding in Indonesia and how the Indonesian government has conducted the program and promotions. The potentials have come from the instant food export product that is top of mind Indonesian product among expatriates. The number of Indonesian diasporas also play an important role to expand the awareness of traditional culinary (Irwansyah, 2016b).

CONCLUSION

This book provides a short guideline for activities and project related to the topic in each chapter. Besides, there are questions to be discussed. This is suitable for classroom activities that trigger students to explore the topic.

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