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**Factors Affecting Local Food  
Preferences of Domestic Tourists  
in Luang Prabang Province, Laos**

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## Summary

Local food is the wisdom of our ancestors that indicates the culture and unique characteristics of cooking. It is one of the most important aspects of daily life, as well as a significant part of tourism, especially in a rural context where it can play an important role in rural tourism and appeals to visitors' desire for authenticity. First, it is one of the main elements of tourism when tourists visit destinations. Local food may be the primary reason for tourists to visit destinations. Second, it reflects a country's identity and uniqueness while also presenting the culture of the local community. This is due to the fact that any local foods belong to the people of a village, region, or country; they are cooked from local raw materials and prepared in the manners or styles of local communities. As a result, tourists have an unforgettable experience while visiting a destination because of the destination's traditional and authentic foods. Third, if local food becomes popular among tourists at a certain point, the image of a destination becoming "A destination for food" may emerge.

Significantly, since Luang Prabang is Laos' top tourist destination, Luang Prabang foods, in addition to the current main natural and cultural attractions, can be another important component of tourism growth in Luang Prabang in particular and Laos in general. The reasons this point was emphasized are that the food in Luang Prabang is unique and delicious, and it is becoming increasingly popular among international and domestic tourists. This research aims to answer the main research problems of the preference level for local food consumption among domestic tourists in Luang Prabang and which factors affect the local food preference of domestic tourists in Luang Prabang. This is due to the trend of fast food from other regions, which is unhealthy and contaminated in the production process. Local foods use local ingredients and organic ones and support local communities and small businesses. Consequently, a difference in tourists' perspectives about local food in Luang Prabang, came up with ideas and inspiration for the desire to conserve local food in Luang Prabang, and the importance of local food to tourism in Luang Prabang Province. This research is based on secondary and primary research. In secondary research, using the relevant literature sources. The primary research uses a questionnaire to ask domestic tourists' points of view about the regional food they eat in Luang Prabang and why they

choose it. Moreover, there is another point of view comes from a deep interview on the side of business owners in the tourism industry in Luang Prabang like local restaurant owners.

The result showed that Luang Prabang's local food is one of the attractiveness which motivates tourists, especially domestic also international tourists to visit Luang Prabang based on the research about the local food preference of domestic tourists in Luang Prabang is high level, or they like Luang Prabang local food for both savory and dessert including Luang Prabang hot and Spicy Papaya salad, melon in coconut milk, and etc. In this study, there are three factors were found that affect the local food preferences of domestic tourists in Luang Prabang: the convenience and availability factors which include easiness to eat and buy Luang Prabang local food during travel in Luang Prabang for domestic tourists like many local restaurants to eat and many types of local food to eat. Followed by the food image factor include food appearance, hygiene, and uniqueness. The last is the taste satisfaction factor includes how the taste of Luang Prabang local food, whether it is tasty or normal taste. The other perspectives of restaurant owners in Luang Prabang expressed all factors above are important and influence the local food preferences in Luang Prabang although the service provided by restaurants is another factor that should add more.

To summarize, local food in Luang Prabang Province can be a great way to promote the region's cultural heritage and rural tourism. To support, develop and conserve local food, it is important to educate visitors and the new generations about the cultural significance of local food, encourage sustainable food practices, and collaborate with local farmers, food producers, and restaurants to promote and serve local food. Therefore, the findings of this study are considered to add knowledge of Luang Prabang local cuisine in the part of culinary studies in Laos by preliminary.