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## **What is the authentic food in this destination?**

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### **Abstract**

Culinary is a cultural product; therefore, the assessment of authentic foods from the perspective of local residents is very important. This study explores authentic food based on the frequency of consuming that food and the ease of accessing the food. A survey was conducted on 218 residents in Bangka Belitung. The results of the study focus on the how often the participants consumed certain foods and the ease of acquiring that food. The results show that authentic food deserves to be considered a culinary tourism brand. The value of this research is the method of determining authentic food.

**Keywords:** Authentic food; local residents' perspective

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## INTRODUCTION

A common question among tourists is authentic food destinations. Therefore, looking for authentic food is a must for destination managers. Culinary tourism is very beneficial for stakeholders as tourists enjoy the unique and high-quality foods and services of each region (Kivela and Crott, 2006). Moreover, it helps tourists fulfill their physical, security, social, appreciation, and self-actualization needs (Tikkanen, 2007). Culinary tourism opens business opportunities and provides financial benefits for culinary producers (Kivela and Crott, 2006). Local residents and communities enjoy the benefits of employment opportunities and the economic impact of culinary tourism and cultural opportunities (Kivela and Crott, 2006).

Bangka Belitung cuisine is very diverse due to its diversity of raw materials, which are mostly derived from sea products and are not found in other regions. Furthermore, their processing methods are different. The special foods of Bangka Belitung are not yet widely known by people from other regions because they are rarely found in other areas. To support culinary tourism in Bangka Belitung, it is necessary to explore the authentic culinary traditions of Bangka Belitung.

### Literature review

Authentic culinary traditions are very important in culinary tourism because tourists want a variety of dining experiences (Sidalı and Hemmerling, 2014) and choices (Liao and Ma, 2009). Liao et al. concluded that authenticity is interpreted in various ways. Authenticity is defined as a form that cannot be imitated. Authenticity often means quality that can be trusted. Authenticity means heritage, a consistent form, according to the buyer. Authenticity can also mean rare, sanctity, or purified.

De Vries and Go (2017) classify authentic food based on food specifications adopted to local preferences, stereotyped aspects, atmospheric and human communication of menus. From the customer's perspective, authentic is a traditional recipe, employees' behaviors, local ingredients, and personal attention. Sidalı and Hemmerling (2014) used customer perceived authenticity to measure authenticity with subjective and objective judgments. Subjective appraisal is an emotional appraisal of the product, while objective appraisal is an appraisal related to production.

The weakness of authenticity from a tourist point of view is subjective (Cohen, 1988). According to Cohen et al., food is a social construct. One social construct is habit; thus, from the perspective of the local population, authentic food is food that is the habit of the local residents. The discussion from a local perspective is very important because culinary tradition is a cultural product where local residents decide whether the food is authentic. The habits of the local population are measured by the level of frequency of eating food and the ease of acquiring that food.

Lennernas and Andersson, (1999) classified food based on time and nutrition. Based on meal times, food consists of food for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, while food based on nutrition consists of complete meals and snacks. Coasta et al. (2001) concluded that food can be classified based on food processing technology, production, purchasing and delivery, and consumer behavior. Their study assessed authentic food from the view of local residents, with an emphasis on food specifications that are adjusted to local tastes.

## METHOD

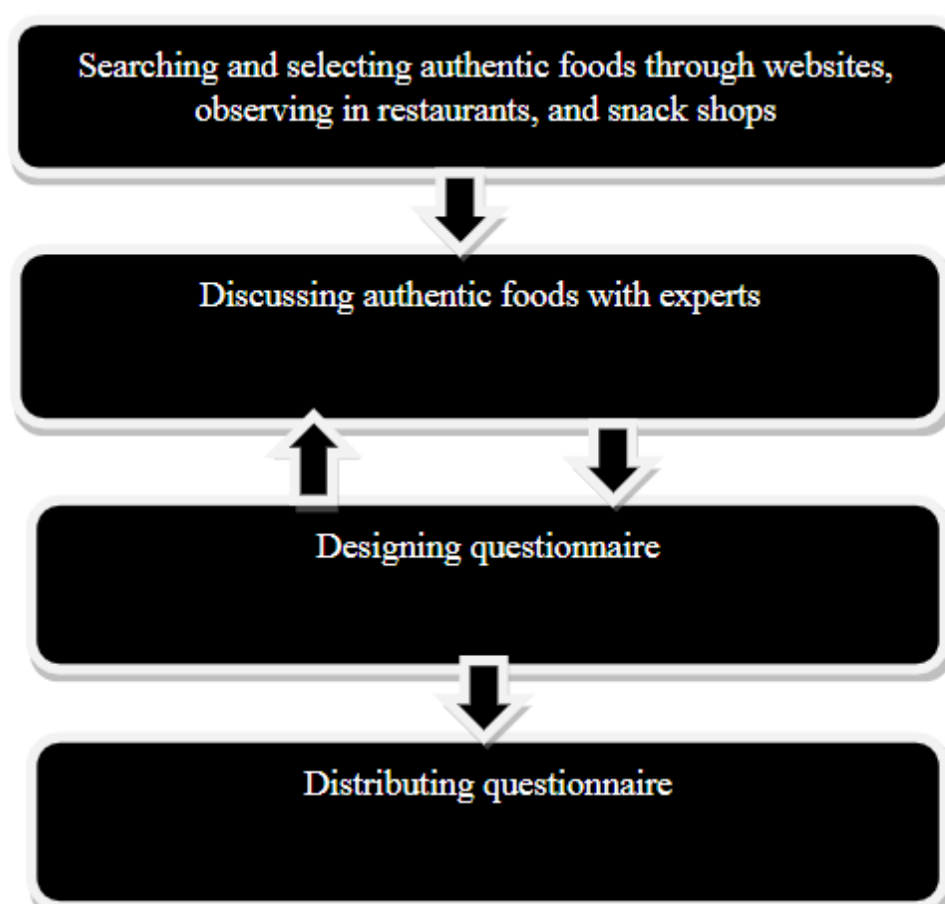
The first step to determine authentic Bangka Belitung food was to search for culinary items on the official website and tourism website, then confirmed with Bangka Belitung cultural experts and observations in restaurants, coffee shops, snack manufacturers, snack shops, and markets. The local food that was assessed were 31 types, including main dishes, snacks, and drinks.

The next step was a survey of local residents. The sampling technique chosen was a snowball sampling. The number of respondents was 218.

**Table 1.** description of the respondent

	Categories	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Male	49.1%
	Female	50.9%
<b>Age</b>	<20 years	2.3%
	20 – 30 years	35.3%
	31 – 40 years	33.9%
	41 – 50 years	16.5%
	51 – 60 years	10.1%
	>60 years	1.8%
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	27.1%
	Married	72.0%
	Widow/Widower	0.9%
<b>Education</b>	Junior high school degree	1.4%
	Senior high school degree	20.2%
	Diploma degree	7.8%
	Bachelor degree	52.8%
	Master degree	16.1%
	Doctoral degree	1.8%
<b>Occupancy</b>	Private officer	22.9%
	Government officer	48.6%
	Businessmen	17.0%
	Students	9,1 %
	Other	2,2%
<b>Residence</b>	Bangka Regency	20.6%
	Central Bangka Regency	7.8%
	West Bangka Regency	5.5%
	South Bangka Regency	8.3%
	Belitung Regency	6.9%
	East Belitung Regency	3.2%
	Pangkalpinang	43.6%

There weretwo groups of questions asked ofrespondents; the level of frequency of consuming food and the ease of getting the food. The data was processed with an average value, then the assessment of respondents rated.





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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The geographical position of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province is in Western Indonesia. This province is located in the current south of Malacca and the South China Sea, and this region is rich in marine and fishery resources. This condition affects the food of the local population. Based on the nutritional content, the culinary traditions can be divided into a complete meal (meal) and snacks (snacks). Most meals and snacks use raw fish and other seafood. Bangka Belitung people also eat rice and other side dishes such as vegetables. The habits of the Bangka Belitung people are to eat half-heavy food or appetizers before eating a heavy meal. Lighter food often consumed may be a noodle soup (lakso) (Elvian and Suhada, 2015). Noodle soups are often found in various places; however, their noodle soup uses fish broth. This is rarely found elsewhere; thus, that it can be considered an authentic food.

Yellow Fish Soup (Lempah Kuning, also called Gangan) is a side dish that is often consumed by the local residents of Bangka Belitung. This side dish has been approved by the National Cultural Heritage as a national dish (Rahmawati & Rismawati). According to the survey, Fish Yellow Soup includes food that is often consumed by local residents and easily available.

Kemplang, Kritcu, and Getas are crackers made from fish. These crackers are made by small and medium businesses in Bangka Belitung and are sold in food souvenir shops and grocery stores (dono). These crackers are consumed by local residents as a complement when eating heavy food or as a snack; thus, it is concluded to be authentic food. Rintak Cookies (Kue Rintak), Gandus Cake (Kue Gandus), and Jongkong Cake (Kue Jongkong) are often consumed in the morning or at traditional ceremonies, and are categorized as original food. This is further supported by the results of the survey.

Abon is a type of side dish with a typical shape made from meat or fish. Abon processing is done by boiling, shredding, seasoning, frying, and pressing. Abon from fish is more popular than Abon from beef. In Bangka Belitung, the Abon made from fish is called Sambel Lingkung. It is made by small and medium businesses and sold in food souvenir shops and grocery stores. Because it is unique, it is categorized as authentic food.

The authentic foods of Bangka Belitung most often consumed by the local population by order are Savory Fish Cakes (empek-empek), Fish Crackers (Kemplang), Yellow Fish Soup (Lempah Kuning), and squid egg crackers (Keripik Telur Cumi).

Type of Food	Food Category	Average Level of Consumption Intensity	Rank of Consumption Intensity	Average Level of Ease of Acquiring Food	Rank of Ease to Acquire Food
Savory Fish Cake (empek-empek)	Snack	4.24	1	4.78	1
Fish Crackers (Kemplang)	Crackers	4.09	2	4.71	3
Grilled Fish Cake (Otak-otak)	Snack	3.99	3	4.64	4
Fish Yellow Soup (Lempah Kuning/ Gangan)	Side Dish	3.94	4	4.55	6
Squid Eggs Crackers (Kritcu/Keripik Telur Cumi)	Crackers	3.90	5	4.62	5
Sweet Martabak (Martabak Bangka)	Snack	3.87	6	4.73	2
Fish Crackers (Keretek)	Crackers	3.83	7	4.51	7
Lime (Jeruk Kunci)	Beverages	3.70	8	4.44	9
Jongkong Cake (Kue Jongkong)	Snack	3.65	9	4.34	12
Cassava Leaves and Papaya Bloom Salad (Tumis Pucuk Ubi Kembang Kates)	Vegetable	3.58	10	4.23	9
Edible Caladium Araceae Root (Lempah Darat)	Vegetable	3.53	11	4.41	10
Noodle Soup (Mie Bangka/Belitung)	Half-Heavy Food	3.53	12	4.30	13

Type of Food	Food Category	Average Level of Consumption Intensity	Rank of Consumption Intensity	Average Level of Ease of Acquiring Food	Rank of Ease to Acquire Food
Sambel Lingkung	Side Disk	3.37	13	4.47	8
Lakso	Snack	3.25	14	4.18	16
Bugis Cake (Kue Bugis)	Snack	3.20	15	4.11	17
Crab Fill (Kepiting Isi/Ketam)	Snack	3.18	16	3.69	21
Rintak Sago Cookies (Kue rintak sago)	Crackers	3.06	17	4.19	15
Fermented Anchovies (Rusip)	Appetizer	2.99	18	4.37	11
Cempedak Plate (Lempok Cempedak)	Cake	2.90	19	3.44	23
Talam Cake (Kue Talam)	Cake	2.85	20	3.85	20
Tofu Skin Soup (Kembang Tahu)	Half-Heavy Food	2.78	21	3.97	18
Kelubi Pickle (Asinan Kelubi)	Appetizer	2.69	22	3.95	19
Seashell (Lokan Laut)	Side Disk	2.66	23	3.29	26
Dried Gourmet Soup (Lempah kulat)	Vegetable	2.60	24	2.98	29
Snail Gunggung (Siput gunggung)	Snack	2.53	25	3.37	25
Gandus Cake	Cake	2.53	26	3.68	22
Ranggi Cake (Kue rangai)	Cake	2.45	27	3.42	24
Fish Meatball (Cacak ikan)	Half-heavy food	2.44	28	3.15	27
Fermented Fish (Pakasem)	Side Disk	1.86	29	3.06	28
Haisom Sea Cucumber (Teripang)	Side Disk	1.59	30	2.50	30
Shark Fin (Sirip hiu)	Side Disk	1.29	31	1.94	31

### Limitations and future study

One limitation is that there may be other types of food not examined here. Therefore, similar research is needed for foods that have not been studied here. To find authentic food from the perspective of the local population, another measurement tool is needed.

### Acknowledge

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What is the authentic food in this destination?

Levyda, Giyatmi, Kania Ratnasari

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