

WESTERN & INDONESIAN GASTRONOMIC DIFFERENCES

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Indrakarona Ketaren is President and co-Founder of the Indonesian Gastronomy Association (IGA), a non-profit organization involving enthusiasts, connoisseurs and art observers of Indonesian cuisine with the objective to preserve and nurture Indonesian local traditional food, as well as to develop and promote Indonesian gastronomy in the international scene. With a special focus on the knowledge, arts, cultures, and history of traditional dishes, as well as their innovations, IGA works under the motto "food has its tale" (cibus habet fabula), analysing the philosophy, thought, history and

behaviours around food, which become symbols, rituals, customs and wisdom of the local communities and ultimately form their identity.

Gastronomy is both the art of good eating and the science of good food, as well as a study on the relationship between the various components of history and culture with food as its center. Born as a result of a societal outbreak between the monarchs and commoners during the French Revolution in the late 1700s, today it is recognized as a way of combining heritage, philosophy, art, culture, and tourism altogether in one platform. Through gastronomy, it is possible to construct a picture of the similar or different approaches related to food and beverages used in different countries and cultures, which could then be extended to topics of agriculture, health, education and provide innovative solutions to a sustainable living.

Gastronomy was first introduced in Indonesia only in 1982, cultivating a different form of construction and characteristics compared to western society, namely where the production of Indonesian food does not originate from the world of royalty or aristocracy. Although both existed in the past, it does not determine the personality of food in the country as a whole. In addition, Indonesian food recipes are commonly created by rural communities, each possessing unique rituals and values of traditional customs.

The study of gastronomy in the case of Indonesia can be elaborated into three main elements: history, culture, and geographical landscape. The origins of the raw materials used in Indonesian cuisine and its process of cultivation stands as an important role in the history of the archipelago, affecting the local consumption of the people that later on matures into the shaping of a distinct food culture. Another significant factor would be the surrounding natural environment and the cooking processes used by each ethnic community, giving prominence of the geographical landscape of the respected areas in the related gastronomic region.

Indonesian gastronomical characteristics reflects greatly on convivial settings, highly contrasting the western aristocratic origins of gastronomy. Although the use of food appliances, presentations, etiquette and culinary techniques are still heavily influenced by the western world, Indonesian gastronomy carries its own intangible values of traditional rituals, philosophy, heritage and customs of the country's identity in food.

This paper was written in 2019.

IGCAT's mission is to empower and facility local communities to realise the potential of their distinct food, culture, arts and sustainable tourism and local resources.

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