

Exploiting Folk Cultural Resources of Dai Binh Village, Quang Nam Province, in Tourism Development



Le Thi Dieu Mi

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, School of Languages, Humanities and Social Sciences, Duy Tan University, Da Nang, 550000, Vietnam

ABSTRACT: The article systematically investigates the current status of folk cultural resource exploitation in the tourism development of Dai Binh Village, Quang Nam Province. The author employs research methods including data collection, synthesis, document analysis, and statistical data processing to evaluate the tourism development status of Dai Binh Village. Additionally, comparative analysis methods are used to analyze statistical data and make assessments, evaluations, and scientifically based forecasts. To accomplish this research, the author utilizes primary sources such as official documents, reports, articles, etc., from governmental agencies and scholars specializing in folk cultural resources of Dai Binh Village. These sources provide a critical foundation for the author to gain an overview of folk cultural resource exploitation activities in Dai Binh Village's tourism development. Based on this foundation, the author analyzes and clarifies the folk cultural resources of Dai Binh Village and the current status of their exploitation in tourism development. Furthermore, the article proposes several solutions to effectively utilize folk cultural resources in the tourism development of Dai Binh Village, Quang Nam Province.

KEYWORDS: Resources, folk culture, Dai Binh, Quang Nam

INTRODUCTION

Dai Binh Village, an ancient village with a lifespan of up to 300 years, is located in Que Trung commune, Nong Son district, Quang Nam province, Central Vietnam. It is renowned as a miniature Southern fruit village in the Central region of Vietnam. The village is not only known for its fruit orchards but also as a convergence of diverse customs, traditions, and rich cultural heritage encompassing beliefs, spirituality, and festivals. On July 3, 2020, the People's Committee of Quang Nam province issued Decision No. 1783/QD-UBND recognizing Dai Binh Village as a tourist destination in Que Trung commune, Nong Son district. The village possesses significant potential in folk cultural resources for tourism development, prompting increased attention and investment in upgrading accommodation, dining, and infrastructure facilities. However, the village faces challenges such as inadequate management, deficiencies in physical and technical infrastructure, a shortage of skilled labor, and underutilization of folk cultural resources, which have yet to fully attract domestic and international tourists. Studying the folk cultural resources in Dai Binh Village, Quang Nam province, in the context of tourism development aims to provide an overview of the current status of exploiting these resources. This study proposes solutions to effectively utilize these cultural resources, thereby contributing to the development of tourism in Dai Binh Village specifically, and Vietnam's tourism sector as a whole in the coming years.¹

Folk Cultural Resources of Dai Binh Village, Quang Nam Province

Mentioning Dai Binh Village, people not only think of its poetic natural scenery but also of its unique folk cultural resources such as ancient houses, wells, festivals, traditional crafts, and cuisine.

Firstly, ancient houses are one of the invaluable resources of the village. Dai Binh Village still preserves old houses built long ago. Among them, two notable houses are over 100 years old, one being 125 years and the other 165 years old, and are maintained by the elders in the village. These ancient houses were handed down by the ancestors and are preserved to this day. As the houses deteriorated over time, some have been rebuilt or repaired for living purposes. However, some houses still retain the architecture of the old times.

From the outside, the ancient houses are not very large. The front of the house is made of wood with gaps below the house. This was the architecture of the old days, with the surroundings made of large stones piled up securely. The special feature of these ancient houses is their roofs, made of terracotta tiles, which are laid tightly together, hardly leaking or blowing off during rainy and

¹ Dai Binh is an ancient village located in Trung Phuoc town, Nong Son district, Quang Nam province, Vietnam.

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stormy seasons. The interior structure of Dai Binh's ancient houses has a central space with two rooms on either side. Everything inside is made of wood. Watching old films, one can see similar designs of ancient houses. The wooden structures are beautifully crafted, with dragon motifs engraved on the wooden beams above all the front pillars.

Besides the ancient houses, deep within Dai Binh Village, there is an old well with the legend of the Tien Well that is always full, with clear blue water. During prolonged droughts, when fields dry up and crack due to lack of water, the Tien Well never loses a drop. This well also holds potential as a cultural resource to be exploited for tourism development.

Next, one cannot overlook the festivals when talking about the folk cultural resources of Dai Binh Village. The village hosts two major cultural festivals: the Ba Thu Bon Festival and the Dai Binh Culture and Tourism Festival. The Ba Thu Bon Festival is a unique cultural and spiritual event that deeply reflects the folk religious life of Nong Son - the land associated with the Thu Bon mother river, expressing the desire for fertility, bountiful harvests, and favorable weather for the village community. The Ba Thu Bon Festival includes both ceremonial and festive parts. The ceremonies are highly characteristic, linked to legends and existing landmarks and relics, such as the water-fetching ceremony from Ba Well to the Dinh for offering, the procession ceremony mimicking the Nguyen Dynasty's proclamation, and the floating lantern ceremony at Ba Rapids reenacting Ba's drowning and sending her spirit downstream. The festival is vibrant with cultural and sports activities like traditional opera singing, Bai Choi singing, call-and-response singing, tug-of-war, volleyball, and especially boat racing. Traditional rituals formed from legends and associated with existing landmarks and relics have created cultural values in both tangible and intangible aspects. In 2021, the traditional Ba Thu Bon Festival in Trung An village, Que Trung commune, Nong Son district, was honored by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism as a national intangible cultural heritage.

The Dai Binh Culture and Tourism Festival is an event successfully organized by Nong Son district since 2019 but was delayed until 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, under the theme "Quang Nam - Green Tourism Destination". During the 3-day Dai Binh Culture and Tourism Festival in Que Trung commune, Nong Son district, visitors can participate in special activities such as bamboo boat racing, children's drawing competitions, tree planting campaigns, kite flying competitions, and the "Explore Nong Son" marathon. Residents and visitors can experience the food market, visit and shop for handicrafts, participate in garden tours, stay overnight in tents in the gardens or by the river, and enjoy Bai Choi art performances.

In addition, traditional crafts are a unique and attractive folk cultural resource in Dai Binh Village. The village is famous for its mulberry cultivation and silkworm farming, carpentry, agarwood production, bean sprout making, liquor production, and making crunchy cakes. However, like a natural consequence of development, Dai Binh Village cannot avoid the gradual fading of its long-standing traditional values. Among these, the traditional craft villages are alarmingly deteriorating due to time and urbanization. Among the crafts and products, mulberry cultivation and silkworm farming, agarwood production, bean sprout making, and cake making have prospects for restoration and development linked with tourism, as these crafts can develop local raw materials and create unique products.

According to the villagers of Dai Binh, mulberry cultivation and silkworm farming began in the 1940s, was interrupted during the 1960-1965 war, and now only a few households remain engaged in the craft. The alluvial plain along the village is very suitable for mulberry cultivation and silkworm farming, not only for silk production but also for utilizing agricultural space for economic development and creating an ecological space for tourism along the river.

Agarwood production is also a traditional craft of Dai Binh Village, with three facilities (Mr. Hai, Mr. Vy, and Mr. Nhan) producing agarwood products from aquilaria trees mainly purchased in Tien Phuoc (Quang Nam). Dai Binh artisans have crafted valuable products such as bead chains, tree towers, and display items, with product prices ranging from 100 thousand to 300 million VND. These products will serve the needs of tourists visiting the village.

The bean sprout making craft, more than 40 years old, takes advantage of favorable climate conditions combined with Thu Bon river sand and water to produce distinctive bean sprouts. 1 kg of green beans yields 8-10 kg of bean sprouts in a process lasting 3-4 days. The current bean sprout production process remains traditional but could be improved for higher efficiency and productivity.

The crunchy cake making craft in the village is self-contained and proactive, with the cultivation of raw materials (the Ngai plant), production of raw materials (making flour), and cake making all done within the village. Production facilities and sites will also become experiential tourism destinations in the future. Therefore, the restoration and development of traditional crafts are urgent.

Moreover, Dai Binh Village is famous as a culinary paradise of Quang's countryside. Visitors to the village cannot miss special dishes such as Dai Binh fruits, De Le mountain chicken, Dai Binh bòn bon salad, Quang noodles, and pork rolled with rice paper.

THE CURRENT STATE OF EXPLOITING FOLK CULTURAL RESOURCES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN DAI BINH VILLAGE, QUANG NAM PROVINCE

Tourist Attractions in Dai Binh Village

Overall, Dai Binh Village is a small village in Que Trung Commune, Nong Son District, but it contains most of the potential tourist attractions of the district. The tourist attractions in Dai Binh Village are divided into five main clusters: communal activities, spiritual and religious sites, ecological spots, culinary points, and ancient architectural sites. The village also contains many long-standing

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relics and ancient houses. Among the ancient structures in the village, the first to appear was the communal house. This was the meeting place for the village elders, named Chieu Vo Tu. After the establishment of the communal house, the village was divided into three areas: the head of the village called Ngon Nuoc Su, the middle of the village called Bang Lang Su, and the end of the village called Vung Chuoi Su. No one knows why these names were chosen. Over time, due to storms and floods, the communal house at the head of the village was damaged in 1964. Later, descendants who had moved away returned with the means to restore and rebuild the village more splendidly. The village also has a temple, which is a place of worship for the deceased and the nameless souls in this land. Therefore, whenever visitors come to Dai Binh Village, they can visit the uniquely structured ancient houses, drink green tea, and chat with the elderly villagers about the village's history or eerie stories that might give them goosebumps.

Additionally, Tien Well is a point within the cluster of attractive destinations that visitors cannot miss when coming to Dai Binh Village. With its mysterious story that no one has been able to explain, Tien Well has now been included in the one-day tour itinerary of Dai Binh Village by the local authorities in Nong Son District and the villagers of Dai Binh.

Moreover, the traditional crafts are also a focus in Dai Binh Village for restoration and development to make them one of the main tourist attractions in the future. Regarding the industries, the village currently has sugarcane, mulberry farming, silkworm raising, carpentry, agarwood processing, bean sprout making, liquor brewing, and traditional cake making. For example, mulberry farming and silkworm raising are one of the village's strengths, currently being revived, but there are no plans to restore silk production associated with tourism; villagers only raise silkworms for food purposes. The bean sprout and traditional cake making industries are not yet large-scale and remain small.

Although the traditional crafts in Dai Binh Village are showing signs of decline, besides the revenue from growing and selling various fruits, the income from selling products from these industries also contributes significantly to the village's income. Specifically:

Table 1. Information on Some Products from Traditional Crafts in Dai Binh Village

(Year: From 2019 to Present)

Product Name	Unit Price	Market
Agarwood Incense and Products		Quang Nam Province, Da Nang City, Ho Chi Minh City, and international (China)
- Cone Incense	80,000 VND/box	
- Stick Incense (boxed)	100,000 VND/box	
- Stick Incense (bundled)	500,000 VND/kg	
- Coil Incense	4,000,000 VND/kg	
Agarwood Artifacts	40 million - 300 million VND/item	
Agarwood Bead Necklace	100,000 - 300,000 VND/piece	Within Nong Son District
Bean Sprouts	10,000 VND/kg	
Traditional Thuận Cakes	3,500 VND/piece	
Black Sesame Oil	300,000 VND/liter	Quang Nam Province and Da Nang City
Peanut Oil	100,000 - 120,000 VND/liter	

Source: Department of Culture and Information, Nong Son District

Based on the statistics from Table 1, it can be seen that the products from traditional crafts in Dai Binh village are relatively diverse and reasonably priced. This will be one of the factors contributing to attracting tourists to visit and learn about the craft villages.

In addition to the destinations in Dai Binh village, tourists can also visit other potential destinations in Nong Son district such as Phuoc Binh Lake - Nui Chua, Hon Kem - Da Dung, Tay Vien Hot Springs, the Elephant Conservation Area, and other famous tourist attractions outside the district like My Son Sanctuary and Hoi An.

Visitors and Revenue

The integration of folk cultural resources into tourism development in Dai Binh village has only been operational for the past three years. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all tourism activities both domestically and globally. During the pandemic, Nong Son district closed all sectors, including tourism, and implemented complete isolation from neighboring areas until early 2022. After the pandemic subsided, Dai Binh tourism officially reopened to visitors.

For instance, the Dai Binh Culture and Tourism Festival attracted tens of thousands of visitors. More than 2,000 people visited and took souvenir photos at the "Memories of Dai Binh" artifact display area, with hundreds of thousands of interactions on social media. Specifically, during the Marathon competition held at the festival, the organizers recorded a high number of participants

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registering and experiencing the event. The competition had three categories: 7km with 370 participants, 21km with 230 participants, and 32km with 185 participants. Each participant received a race T-shirt, and those who completed their registered distance received a completion medal made of agarwood, a unique feature. Notably, a total of 30 prizes were distributed equally among male and female participants in each category, with five prizes per distance.

Additionally, preliminary statistics show that the number of tourists visiting Dai Binh village in 2022 was estimated at around 4,500, generating approximately 8.5 billion VND in revenue. To obtain these figures, authorities conducted preliminary surveys through accommodation, dining facilities, fruit orchards, and visitor numbers at the Dai Binh Culture and Tourism Festival. However, since Dai Binh tourism has only been active for about a year, there are not many statistics and comparisons available. In 2023, Dai Binh Village tourism expects to welcome 30,000 to 35,000 visitors, generating tourism revenue of 12 to 15 billion Vietnamese dong. The Dai Binh Culture and Tourism Week 2023 will be held from August 11th to 17th at Dai Binh Ecotourism Village, Trung Phuoc Commune, Nong Son District. The event aims to preserve and promote cultural values, attracting tourists while showcasing and introducing diverse and appealing local destinations.

The festival features a series of unique and diverse activities, including exhibitions and introductions of local OCOP products, artistic fruit display competitions, rock painting for children and visitors, kite flying for children, the final night of the Bolero Love Song Contest in Nong Son District, the "Echoes of the Thu River" music night by the riverbank, exploring the countryside market with OCOP products, handicrafts of agarwood and local souvenirs. Participants can join the Discovering Nong Son Run, in support of World Elephant Day 2023, with distances of 38km, 21km, and 7km, aimed at promoting biodiversity conservation in the area. Visitors can also experience and capture picturesque scenes of the village, enjoy fruits in local orchards, and visit the Dai Binh Memory Space with historical artifacts related to the cultural life and beliefs of Dai Binh residents. Especially noteworthy are opportunities to engage in activities with local residents such as enjoying excerpts of traditional opera, singing folk songs, traditional games, boat racing, fishing, and trying traditional crafts like making Thuận cakes, Quang noodles, bamboo weaving, spinning thread, and carving agarwood. After years of organization, the Dai Binh Culture and Tourism Week has become a renowned tourism product and a branded event, attracting a large number of residents and tourists alike.

Although Dai Binh village has only been recognized as a tourist destination in recent years, and there are not many specific comparative statistics, it has achieved an unexpectedly high number of visitors and revenue. The number of visitors and revenue indicates that leveraging Dai Binh's folk cultural resources for tourism development holds significant potential and promises growth in the near future.

SOLUTIONS FOR EFFECTIVELY UTILIZING FOLK CULTURAL RESOURCES IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN DAI BINH VILLAGE, QUANG NAM PROVINCE

Enhancing the Quality of Tourism Products:

Given the current state of tourist destinations and products, several solutions are proposed to enhance the quality of tourism products in the village, effectively utilize folk cultural resources to meet tourist needs, and promote the development of Dai Binh village tourism:

Content Development: Dai Binh village and relevant authorities should invest in developing content and scripts to introduce the village's folk cultural values in a concise and coherent manner for destination interpretation. The local government should plan and assign individuals responsible for different tourist spots to ensure proactive reception, interpretation, and guidance for visitors.

Service Upgrades: The local government should invest in upgrading existing services such as the Dai Binh fruit garden tour, dining, and accommodation. Additionally, new services should be introduced, such as souvenir shops selling agarwood products or village-specific fruit and confectionery specialties, to better meet the quantity and quality demands. Priority should be given to developing accommodation and transport services while gradually expanding the scale of culinary services, coffee shops, and other additional services.

Culinary and Craft Experiences: Services that offer culinary and craft experiences at tourist spots should be organized to meet the experiential needs of tourists and help them understand the unique folk culture of the area.

Diversifying Tourism Products:

Besides improving quality, Dai Binh village needs to focus on diversifying tourism products to increase interesting activities, attract tourists, and encourage longer stays. Specific measures include:

Reviving Traditional Crafts: The local government should restore and renovate traditional crafts to diversify activities within a tour and create unique products for tourists to take home.

Developing Processed Agricultural Products: Incorporate related projects and programs to develop processed products from local agricultural produce, such as grapefruit essential oil, candied grapefruit, grapefruit wine, banh thuan, lotus leaf tea, and other food items like dried bamboo shoots and herbal teas.

The local government should also provide detailed guidelines on types and products for tour development, such as:

Local Culture Exploration: Develop two groups of products based on the degree to which they meet market demand and the value of Dai Binh village's tourism resources:

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- Learning about the cultivation, care, and growth of fruit trees in Dai Binh orchard, including planting, harvesting, and selecting fruits.

- Visiting traditional architecture, rural landscapes, and water wharves.

Local Specialty Food and Shopping: Famous local specialties include:

- Dishes made from livestock products: Chicken, beef dishes, etc.

- Dishes from crops: Dai Binh fruits, mixed jackfruit, forest vegetables, etc.

- Dishes from aquatic products: Natural fish from the Thu Bon River, stream fish, etc.

- Especially, products made from lotus.

Shopping: Souvenirs made from agarwood and local OCOP (One Commune One Product) products.

- Ecotourism and Recreation: Visiting the Forbidden Forest, experiencing "forest bathing" and listening to forest sounds, taking photos, hiking, exploring the Fairy Well, and relaxing by Ao Ao stream. Design tours connected with Hon Kem - Da Dung, Ba Thu Bon Palace, etc., to exploit existing products and services.

- Spiritual and Cultural Experiences: Understanding and experiencing the village's beliefs through shrines like Ngu Nuong Princess Shrine, Nghia Trung Shrine, Ho Chuoi Palace, etc.

Training Quality Human Resources:

High-quality human resource training is crucial and should be a focus for authorities and localities:

- Establishing Business Groups: The local government, in coordination with Dai Binh villagers, should establish business groups for tourism products and services such as accommodation (guesthouses, homestays, tents, farmstays), culinary services, transportation services (vehicle rentals, rickshaw, motorbike, bicycle, electric car, canoe services), and organize experience exchange trips to similar tourist areas.

From this, the village tourism management board can gradually build specialized training routes for each group:

- Accommodation Services: Train in housekeeping, customer reception, and additional services like laundry, in-room service, and shuttle services. Enhance knowledge of local folk culture to meet tourist inquiries.

- Culinary Services: Understand local culinary characteristics to share cultural values through dishes. Standardize menu items and pricing, and ensure food safety and hygiene.

- Transport Services: Equip transportation workers with knowledge about local folk culture to provide information to tourists. Conduct training on customer service at tourist spots, standardize service charges to avoid overcharging.

Other service groups should integrate skills training like folk singing, opera, and cultural performances to meet tourists' cultural exploration needs.

Given Vietnam's international integration, with an increasing number of foreign tourists, local authorities should organize foreign language training (English, Chinese, Korean, etc.) for workers to better serve tourists interested in local folk culture.

Building Tourism Programs with Neighboring Areas:

Collaborating and building tourism programs with neighboring areas can create attractive tourism programs and promote local tourism development. Da Nang City, known as one of Vietnam's major tourism centers, plans to develop westward, providing favorable conditions for Quang Nam Province and Dai Binh village to develop linked tourism programs. Combining Da Nang's modern attractions with Dai Binh's folk cultural attractions like craft villages and ancient houses can create a harmonious and novel appeal to tourists.

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APPENDIX: SOME IMAGES OF DAI BINH VILLAGE, QUANG NAM PROVINCE

Figure 1: Strawberry Farming and Silkworm Rearing



Figure 2: Mung Bean Sprout Production



Figure 3: Dai Binh Village Cultural and Tourism Festival 2022



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Figure 4: Tourists experiencing Dai Binh Village Cultural and Tourism Festival



Figure 5: Dai Binh Village Cuisine



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