

## **Thailand's State Gastro Diplomacy Policy Is an Effort to Maintain The Existence Of Tourism In The Face Of Globalization**

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### **Abstract**

To increase foreign tourist visits, one of the policies implemented by Thailand is to have a gastro diplomacy policy. This policy is related to efforts to attract tourists to visit a country through the introduction of culture, art, education and culinary. The focus of this study is on the introduction of superior cuisine owned by Thailand. This study aims to analyze the gastro diplomacy policy implemented by the Thai government by introducing culinary and identifying inhibiting factors. This study uses a literature study approach. The study results show that the Thai Government has succeeded in developing culinary by launching various programs, namely Kitchen in the World, culinary events, cooperation with domestic media, the private sector and other supporting actors. However, there are various obstacles in implementing the gastro diplomacy policy, namely negative image, globalization, lack of political support, tourism threats, political controversy, standardization and quality, infrastructure and logistics, human resources, government regulations and policies, climate change and food security. Therefore, the Thai Government must make various efforts to overcome obstacles to gastro diplomacy, including strengthening education and training, increasing public-private cooperation, campaigning for storytelling promotion, developing derivative products, and utilizing digitalization.

### **Keywords:**

policy; gastrodiploamacy; tourism; globalization

### **Introduction**

Thailand is known for its nickname White Elephant, famous for its tropical climate and fertile soil. With these conditions, Thailand has succeeded in utilizing its agricultural sector. This is evidenced by Thailand, which can produce raw materials such as cassava, sugar, rice, and palm oil to meet the needs of the food sector domestically and export abroad. In addition to exporting raw materials, Thailand also exports spices that have become a characteristic of Thailand, such as chilli sauce, curry paste, fish sauce, soy sauce, and so on. Of course, the exports carried out by Thailand can do more than that; to export these cooking ingredients, they need cleanliness in processing and packaging. With that, Thailand upholds cleanliness, one of the keys to success in determining quality in the food processing industry. Thailand's seriousness in exports can be seen from its success in that it has become one of the world's largest clean food exporting countries and ranks second in Asia (Fartiannur, 2018).

The availability of abundant raw materials with high quality and competitive prices makes Thailand a country with the potential to process and develop its foodstuffs independently. Therefore, the Thai government quickly established the country's *national branding* as a tourist attraction with diverse culinary delights and became a stepping stone in the economic sector (Ayman Falak, 2022). Thailand has created a program called *Kitchen of The World to support this*. *Kitchen of The World* is a program that aims to expand the number of restaurants that have a taste of Thailand abroad. It is hoped that with this program, authentic food with Thailand's characteristics can be accepted by the international community. This is a form of *national brand* because the originality of typical food from Thailand is almost not owned by other countries (Fartiannur, 2018). The existence of this program remains the vital role of the government, food producers and exporters in improving quality in essential areas, such as hygiene, halal standards, innovation, marketing, and assistance for small and medium enterprises.

Furthermore, the Government of Thailand also wants to become a country that can produce various halal food products number one in *The Association of Southeast Asian Nations* (ASEAN), precisely in the Southeast Asian region and even around the world. However, unlike several other ASEAN member countries, Thailand is one of the minority countries that is friendly to Muslim tourists.

Thailand has a majority Buddhist population, but this is not an obstacle to the government's desire to produce *halal food*. The government of Thailand can develop very rapidly, which is encouraged by cooperation between the government and non-government. The cooperation between the government and institutions in Thailand is a process related to *halal food management*. Seeing this phenomenon, the Thai government took further steps to continue its desire by intensifying the promotion of "Halal Food", whose main target market comes from a population with a Muslim majority (Pratikto et al., 2021). Some reasons why Thailand wants to develop *halal food* include *the fact* that the availability of raw materials owned by Thailand has the potential to be used so that it not only meet basic needs but also becomes an opportunity to attract Muslim tourists. *Second*, the Muslim population reaches approximately 2 billion people around the world. With that, it will attract much attention from most Muslims if it uses the "Halal Food" label as the focus of culinary development in Thailand. Food products with halal labels are also considered to have gone through a safe production stage by regulations and procedures, so the quality does not need to be doubted. *Third*, Thailand has a very strategic location because it is located in the middle of ASEAN member countries that have the opportunity to connect Thailand with other countries. Infrastructure also supports this so that Thailand can export its food easily. Therefore, the development of *halal food* has an impact on increasing exports carried

out by Thailand. Thailand is said to be the largest country in the world that can export halal food, which accounts for at least 20% of total exports (Nurarbani, 2018).

This article refers to gastro diplomacy as a strategy of the Thai government in promoting tourism, especially food that has Thai characteristics. The author will analyze the Thai government's policy of expanding *halal food* to attract Muslim tourists' attention. Of course, carrying out this policy involves obstacles, considering that Thailand itself is a country with a Muslim minority population.

In the practice of diplomacy, a new technique has emerged, namely gastro diplomacy or diplomacy through food, known since 2000 in politics. Thailand first used the word gastro diplomacy as part of public diplomacy, which was first practised through the Global Thailand Program held in 2002 (P. Rockower, 2011). Thailand is a country rich in culinary culture, so the purpose of the Global Thailand Program is to transform Thailand from a country known for sex tourism to a culinary destination that is also able to bring economic opportunities, build partnerships for cooks, food products, and Thailand culture, after the Global Thailand Program which was implemented in 2004, many other countries also carry out diplomacy through food, (National Geographic, 2019) which aims to increase recognition of the quality of Thailand's restaurants and processed food products, as well as encourage restaurants and food producers that produce Thailand food to improve their quality so that the authenticity value of the cuisine will be maintained (P. S. Rockower, 2012).

Gastrodiplomacy is essential for Thailand's tourism because this country has a distinctive characteristic, namely a combination of natural tourism, history, and modernization. While culinary is not only a complementary factor, it has become part of the nation's brand because some foods in Thailand still need to be owned by other countries in terms of originality. Some of them are Tom Yam, Pad Thai, Som Sam, Tom Khagai, Kao Shoi, Khaeng Kio Wan and several other types of food. To support this, the Thailand government established the Tourism Authority of Thailand with the Division of Thai Export Promotion, which is a special section that regulates standardization and policies related to the standardization of Thailand culinary sold in restaurants to obtain a logo from the Thailand government after going through the standardization process (Suntikul, 2019).

The Government of Thailand through Kitchen of The World has recorded success in increasing the number of Thailand restaurants in the world from 5,500 restaurants in 2002 to 6,875 in 2003 located overseas, 9% of which are located in the United States and Canada, 20% in Europe, 15% in Australia and New Zealand, 14% and 2% in other countries. and became more than 13,000 in 2009 (Suntikul, 2019). With more and more other countries conducting

gastrodiplomacy as a national brand, the Thailand government has also begun to revamp and improve the gastrodiplomacy program to continue strengthening its tourism, especially culinary tourism.

As a form of public diplomacy, gastro diplomacy is a way for a country to use national cuisine as a medium to communicate and project its culinary culture to foreign audiences to build the desired image, obtain a better reputation, and increase its brand recognition at the global level (P. S. Rockower, 2012). As stated by Forman and Sonenshine (2014), food is a vital element in diplomacy and international relations combined with a country's unique culture and identity. Therefore, the study of gastro diplomacy is fascinating because it highlights the importance of food in terms of the diplomatic function provided by modern forms of public diplomacy.

Today, many countries worldwide have used gastro diplomacy in their foreign policy to stand out from the crowd and gain international recognition by promoting their country's brand through national cuisine. Thailand has discovered the potential use of Thailand cuisine as a soft power tool and introduced it internationally in 2002. Thailand's cuisine is unique, exclusive, and different from other countries because of its long history of blending authentic food with Indian and Chinese culinary influences. The country then leveraged this culinary heritage to promote its national brand and increase its international influence. Surprisingly, Thailand is recognized as the first country in the world to practice gastrodiplomacy in its foreign policy officially. In 2002, the Thailand government established the "Global Thai" program to increase the number of Thailand restaurants abroad to increase the global demand for Thailand food products and internationalize Thailand cuisine (Ranta & Ichijo, 2022). This campaign provides an opportunity for the country to promote Thailand's food internationally, create a recognizable brand of the country, and expand its soft power abroad (P. S. Rockower, 2012). After that, the Thai government launched a second project named "Thailand: The Kitchen of the World" to educate Thai citizens and foreigners about Thailand's culinary culture and history to raise global awareness of Thailand's cuisine, one of its cultures. Under the gastro diplomacy project, the government held several seminars to encourage Thai investors to invest in Thailand restaurants abroad and provided a large portion of the budget for the project. The government also established Thailand cooking schools to train Thailand chefs to work overseas. In addition, the government provides financial loans to Thailand restaurants abroad and creates business relationships between Thailand restaurants abroad and the domestic food industry (Sunanta, 2005). Since the start of the gastro diplomacy campaign, there has been an increase in the number of Thailand restaurants abroad from 5,500 in 2001 to 13,000 in 2008 (Park et al., 2019). Gastrodiplomacy is essential for Thailand's tourism because the country's tourism has a distinctive character, namely a

combination of natural tourism, historical tourism, and contemporary/modern tourism. Meanwhile, culinary is not only a complementary factor, but its existence has become part of the nation's brand because some foods in Thailand are almost not owned by other countries in their originality. Some of them are Tom Yam, Pad Thai, Som Sam, Tom Khagai, Kao Shoi, Khaeng Kio Wan (green curry), and several other types of food. Research shows that tourists spend as much as 40% of their budget on food while travelling. The government understands the country's potential and opportunities to develop, one of which is this culinary opportunity to increase foreign tourist visits. Thailand's ideal natural conditions, such as its strategic location and geographical situation, support this opportunity. Natural resources and human resources are also reliable (Solleh, 2015). Gastro diplomacy is also one of them being able to support the improvement of a country's national branding. This is important because one of the factors of interest and cooperation between nations that will later have an impact on a country's growth, politics, economy, and tourism is the image of the country. Of course, this will be achieved successfully if the implementation runs smoothly and seriousness is shown to improve the nation's branding itself. On the other hand, the Thailand government quickly used gastro diplomacy to advance its national interests. Of course, the first step is to look at the domestic context, where Thailand has various types of culinary specialities from the country that can be promoted, have distinctive flavours, and are accepted by the tongue of the people, especially ASEAN. Thus, the Thailand government has shown severe and consistent steps in utilizing the existing wealth to further reintroduce Thailand to foreign countries using its culinary sector. Today, Thailand is considered a successful and well-known country in gastro diplomacy. Thailand's food has gained popularity among foreigners. This then inspired other countries to join. Nevertheless, there has been little research on the case of Thailand.

## Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach by outlining social facts to analyze the policies implemented by the Thai government in developing halal food in various countries in the world. This study aims to investigate and examine the gastro diplomacy policy implemented by the Thailand government and identify the obstacles it faces. The author uses the literature study method as a data collection technique, where the data obtained is secondary data sourced from books, journal articles, magazines and electronic media through quality internet media. It uses descriptive analysis to explain how the Thailand government implements a gastro diplomacy policy to enhance its promotion and global branding to the worldwide community.

## Results and Discussion

### *Gastrodiplomacy Policy in Thailand*

Gastrodiplomacy is essential for Thailand's tourism because this country has a distinctive character, namely a combination of natural tourism, history, and modernization. Even though culinary is not just a compliment, it has become part of the nation's brand because some foods in Thailand still need to be owned by other countries in terms of originality. Some of them are Tom Yam, Pad Thai, Som Sam, Tom Khagai, Kao Shoi, Khaeng Kio Wan and several other types of food. To support this, the Thailand government established the Tourism Authority of Thailand with the Thailand Export Promotion Division, a special section that regulates standardization and policies related to the standardization of Thailand cuisine sold in restaurants to obtain a logo from the Thailand government after the standardization process.

Thailand was the first country to realize the importance of food diplomacy. The Thailand government carried out gastro diplomacy by launching the "Global Thai" campaign in 2002. The campaign's goal is to increase the number of restaurants owned by Thais around the world. At the same time, they also bring their traditional food, Pad Thai, to the world. After the program was announced, economists predicted when the increase in Thailand's restaurants would affect the economy and international relations. The "Thailand: Kitchen of the World" project is supported by the Foreign Office of the Government Public Relations Department after the Global Thai program. (Lalu Puttrawandi K et al., 2022). The campaign aims to provide knowledge about the history and practices of Thai cuisine both at home and abroad, including awarding "Thailand Brand" certificates to Thailand restaurants that meet the criteria set by the Ministry of Trade of Thailand. The program aims to improve Thailand's reputation and encourage more Thais to become open chefs abroad. This certificate shows that the restaurant meets the requirements set by the ministry. The concept of Thailand's Gastrodiplomacy has been successful, among others, because of cultural diplomacy, which has a strong potential to build national culture, national values, national identity and pride in its national culture. Thailand has proven to be a winner of competitions at the global level, increasing tourism business and promoting its image through culinary.

### *Thailand's Gastrodiplomacy Strategy*

In implementing Thailand's gastro diplomacy policy, the Government of Thailand carries out various strategies through its culinary wealth, increasing tourist attractions, strengthening international relations, and improving people's welfare. There are two gastro-diplomacy strategies carried out by Thailand, which are as follows:

a. Domestic Strategy

Thailand has implemented various domestic policies that require food sellers to use original ingredients from Thailand to provide a different taste from dishes made by foreign chefs. This policy aims to help foreign tourists who come to Thailand experience the difference between the taste of authentic food from Thailand and food made abroad. In addition, Thailand also conducts various collaborations with several domestic media that can provide benefits for the expansion of the introduction to culinary in Thailand; in addition, Thailand also created the "Thailand Muslim Friendly Destination" application, which can be accessed from IOS and Android-based smartphones in 2017. This aims to provide easy access for Muslim tourists to find references about halal food so that foreign tourists can enjoy food tourism, and the application also contains accommodation for Muslim tourists who will visit Thailand (Nurarbani, 2018).

In the development of Halal Food, the Government of Thailand also collaborates with various other supporting actors such as the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT), the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism, the Islamic Bank of Thailand, the Central Foundation of Ilam Thailand, academics, Islamic groups there, the role of the media has led Thailand as a non-Muslim country that has successfully implemented and developed Halal Food well and provides the strength to attract tourist visits Muslims and also being a country that is committed to halal food production supported by technological development and testing (Nurarbani, 2018).

In addition, the Government of Thailand held *an event* organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), and Food Truck Club Thailand which was held at Lakeside, IMPACT, Muang Thong Thani, from March 7 to 8, 2020, to break the World Record for the most food trucks in the world (pattayamail.com, 2020). The Minister of Tourism and Sports, Pipat Ratchakitprakan, said that the event is part of a plan to promote Thailand's food tourism through Thailand gastronomy inspire tourists to travel more to Thailand and stimulate the local economy in Thailand (pattayamail.com, 2020). Another purpose of this event is to improve Thailand's *food chain* by turning it into a food truck model. The domestic strategy carried out by Thailand aims to increase interest for foreign tourists interested in coming to Thailand because of the food served, even more so in the existence of food trucks to improve street food variants and increase the existence of street food in Thailand. The focus of Thailand's *restaurant food program* is prevalent among tourists. The Government of Thailand supports the development of this sector by providing better training, certification, and facilities. The Thailand government works closely with culinary industry players, such as restaurants, hotels, and food manufacturers, to promote Thailand's culinary scene. Development of Culinary Infrastructure:

The government is also building culinary markets, culinary centres, and other facilities to support the development of the culinary industry. Promotion through Social Media is an effective tool to promote Thai cuisine to the younger generation.

b. Overseas Strategy

This strategy refers to the policies carried out by Thailand in introducing Thailand food to the outside world, such as the presence of the foreign minister of Thailand in the World of Food Asia program in 2018 with the theme "Thailand Creative Food" on that occasion the Thailand government through its deputy prime minister said that the focus of Thailand's food now lies in adding value and developing all supply chains to achieve food safety standards that are internationally recognized, such as exporting food in the form of groceries or instant food (ready-to-eat food) (Siso, 2020).

The Thailand government also collaborates with internet media that sponsor tourism and food in Thailand, this internet media is skift.com which is the largest industrial intelligence platform company that provides media, insights, and marketing for crucial travel sectors, and tatnews.org which is a platform owned by the Thailand Ministry of tourism which is tasked with presenting news from tourism in the Thailand including the original food Thailand reported to attract tourists to come to Thailand. (pulsar.travel, 2019) Thailand also always conducts food festivals in other countries to introduce the taste of its cuisine to the international community, The Thai Festival evidences this: Tastes of Thailand Returns to Harvard Square which is carried out at Winthrop Park in Harvard Square and in this festival Thailand food, is given for free, but some food is also sold for a fee according to the will of the buyer and there are also other items from Thailand which are also paid according to the buyer's wishes. Kicking off with a colourful opening parade and followed by a traditional Thailand dance performance, Winthrop Park transforms into a street market for Thailand food served by 15 restaurants, including Nine Tastes Restaurant, Thai Chili Basil, Siam Village, which is a famous restaurant in Cambridge and many more (boston.com, 2019) Thailand also has another way to introduce its food around the world, namely by creating cooking classes in several other countries by utilizing chefs in Thailand to travel to various restaurants in different countries; the journey to introduce Thailand food started in 2002 in the Global Thailand Program and the Kitchen of the World program.

The Thailand government launched a program called "Kitchen of the World", which aims to make Thailand the culinary centre of the world. This strategy involves promoting Thai cuisine in different countries through culinary festivals, Thailand restaurants abroad, and chef training. The gastro-diplomatic strategy to make Thailand the World Kitchen is to promote the export of raw ingredients and processed food (ready-to-cook, ready-to-eat, sauces or condiments)



(Marriage and Peace, 2022). The promotion focuses on food products such as tableware and decorations for Thai restaurants and health and skilled labour for collaboration with international partners. As the first goal of the policy, the government intends to increase the number of Thailand restaurants operating abroad. This will help boost the annual exports of Thailand's food industry (Varayanond, 2013). It is making the World Thailand Kitchen a means to establish food diplomacy.

In the Kitchen of the World policy, the placement of chefs from Thailand in every restaurant abroad is increasing, although the government requires that the restaurant has several criteria, namely, the restaurant must run for at least one year; open at least five days each week; certified by credit card companies; hire Thailand chefs with cooking training from the Thailand government; using raw materials and equipment from Thailand in a particular proportion; and has at least six Thai dishes on the menu (Wijaya, 2018). The Thailand government is sending its chefs also has several criteria that must be passed, namely:

1. The Ministry of Manpower drafted guidelines to train Thailand cooks and teach them how to buy raw materials from stores.
2. Provides theoretical and practical cooking courses
3. Oriental Hotel's Apprenticeship Program offers the Oriental Thai Chef Program and the Oriental Thai Cooking School to train those who want to work as chefs in overseas restaurants.
4. Dusit Thani College is Suan Dusit International Culinary School, and Rajamangala Institute of Technology provides professional Thailand cooking programs.
5. The chefs' instructors have an average of 15-20 years of experience and have mastered Thailand's typical cuisine. So, there is no doubt about their ability.

Conducting Thailand's gastro diplomacy involves culinary education through teaching and participation in events to ensure consistent food tastes and build long-term relationships with food lovers. This strategy has two components. First, the sponsoring country trains and certifies chefs to ensure consistent culinary quality before they work abroad. Second, a public teaching program for foreigners was created to help them understand the country's culinary culture firsthand (Naim et al., 2022). The process carried out in this strategy begins with the state involving schools or culinary education. During the program, foreign members of the public who want to learn to cook and improve their knowledge of the country's culinary culture will receive training. Thailand implements this approach by working with schools in Indonesia and then collaborating with culinary organizations and culinary education institutions. Proud Thailand chef Thitid Tassanakjohn, the owner of Bangkok Chef School, actively encourages Thailand's

gastro diplomacy through his educational institution which he founded in collaboration with academic institutions in Indonesia. The Ministry of Education of Thailand has accredited Bangkok Chef School. The school is committed to helping every student improve their culinary skills. The school was founded in 2016 and focuses on collaborating with overseas schools to promote Thai food.

### ***The Impact of Thailand's Gastrodiplomacy Policy***

Increase in Tourist Visits: The number of tourists visiting Thailand continues to increase, and culinary is one of the main driving factors. Increasing Exports of Food Products: Thailand's food and beverage products are increasingly known and in demand in the international market. Strengthening the Country's Image: Thailand is increasingly known as a country with rich and diverse cuisine. Community Empowerment: The culinary industry creates jobs and increases people's incomes, especially in rural areas. Thailand's gastro diplomacy policy has proven effective in improving the country's image, promoting tourism, and strengthening international relations. Thailand's success can inspire other countries that want to develop their tourism and culinary sectors.

### ***Challenges faced by Thailand's gastro diplomacy***

Although Thailand has positioned itself as a world culinary destination, the journey to success is challenging. Thailand faces several challenges in implementing gastro diplomacy policies, including:

a. Changing a Negative Image

Thailand must change the negative image associated with sex tourism to a positive image related to food tourism. This is done through the "Kitchen of The World" program which aims to increase the negative image of the country

b. Facing Globalization

Thailand must adapt to the current problem of globalization, which is a significant challenge for the country. Global culinary trends, such as the emergence of healthy, vegan, or plant-based food concepts, continue to change rapidly. Thailand must be able to adapt and innovate to remain relevant. Neighbouring countries such as Viet Nam, Laos, and Myanmar also have fascinating culinary richness. The competition to attract tourists is getting tighter. In addition, finding a balance between competitive prices and high quality is a constant challenge.

c. Lack of Public Support

Other countries such as Viet Nam and Singapore face the constraints of a lack of public support and political controversy in conducting gastro diplomacy, which is a challenge faced by other countries trying to emulate Thailand's gastro diplomacy campaign

d. Facing Tourism Threats

Thailand's tourism was threatened in 2014 due to riots and coups that occurred in the country, which forced Thailand to revive its gastro diplomacy. In addition, the challenge in tourism is maintaining the authenticity of traditional cooking flavours and techniques while meeting the tastes of the increasingly modern market. The increase in the number of tourists can also lead to commercialising traditional foods and losing their uniqueness.

e. Facing Political Controversies

Political controversies can affect the success of gastrodiploamacy, as experienced by Viet Nam and Singapore in mimicking gastrodiploamacy campaigns in Thailand.

f. Standardization and Quality:

*Diversity of Flavors:* Thailand's rich culinary variety, from palace cuisine to street food, makes it challenging to set uniform quality standards. Each region has different flavour characteristics, so the challenge is maintaining this uniqueness while ensuring consistent quality. *Local Raw Materials:* Reliance on seasonal local raw materials can affect availability and prices. This is a challenge in maintaining the consistency of taste and quality of the dish. *Halal Certification:* For a large Muslim market, halal certification is crucial. The complicated certification process and high costs can hinder small and medium-sized businesses.

g. Infrastructure and Logistics

In some areas, infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and clean water still need to be improved, hindering the development of the culinary industry and building an efficient supply chain to ensure the availability of fresh and quality raw materials at affordable prices.

h. Human Resources:

*Chef Skills:* There needs to be more well-trained chefs in traditional and modern cooking techniques. In addition, *Migrant Labor:* The dependence on migrant labour in the culinary sector poses challenges regarding labour management and protection.

i. Government Regulations and Policies:

*Bureaucracy:* Complicated licensing and regulatory processes can hinder the growth of culinary businesses. *Tax Policy:* Unconducive tax policies can burden business actors, as well as tiny and medium businesses.

j. Climate Change and Food Security:

Climate Change: Climate change can affect the availability of raw materials and the quality of agricultural products. Food Safety: Disease outbreaks such as COVID-19 can disrupt supply chains and raise consumer concerns about food safety.

**Strategies for Overcoming Challenges**

The efforts made by the Thailand government in facing the challenges faced are as follows:

- a. Implementing Strengthening Education and Training: The way to do this is to build a comprehensive education and training program to improve the quality of human resources in the culinary industry.
- b. Increasing public-private cooperation is the way to build strong partnerships between the government, business actors, and academics to overcome common challenges.
- c. Campaigning Story-Based Promotions: The way is to tell the story behind each dish to increase the added value and appeal of Thailand's cuisine.
- d. Developing Derivative Products: Developing derivative products such as cooking spices, sauces, and processed foods to expand the market.
- e. Implementing Digitalization: Utilizing digital technology to improve the efficiency and marketing of culinary products.

By comprehensively addressing these challenges, Thailand can maintain its position as a gastro diplomacy leader and continue developing its culinary sector.

**Conclusion**

In the history of its gastro diplomacy, Thailand has a program known as "Thailand: Kitchen of The World", first initiated in 2002. The gastro diplomacy was initially issued and is expected to be able to change the image of Thailand known as sex tourism. The Thailand Kitchen of The World program also seeks to create an increasing number of Thailand restaurants abroad; improve the safety, quality, and hygiene of agricultural commodities and their food; promote the export of food products and related services; develop the latest innovations in the food industry and position the country as a food research centre to meet its expectations as the "Kitchen of the World." These efforts have yielded results that have increased familiarity with Thai food in the international world. Thailand is beginning to realize that the international community is no stranger to the differences in the taste of Thailand's unique and complex cuisine in terms of flavour, appearance, serving techniques and manufacturing techniques. In this regard, Tom Yam and Pad Thai symbolize Thailand as a country with a culinary image with complex and unique flavors. Thailand has become a model for other countries to use gastro diplomacy as a means to

introduce their specialties to the global stage. Thailand is pretty successful as a pioneer country in the development of gastro diplomacy, so it is not surprising that other countries use the implementation of Thailand's gastro diplomacy as an example. Thailand sought to revive its gastro diplomacy in 2014. This is related to Thailand's tourism, which experienced a threat in 2014 due to the riots and coups that occurred in the country. It was recorded that from 2010 to 2013, foreign tourist visits tended to be stable and even increased, although there were also riots that caused chaos and deaths in that year. However, in 2014 tourists felt threatened by a military coup, resulting in a significant decline in tourists. The Thailand government then tried to find other alternatives to attract tourists. So, the gastrodiploamacy was revived.

Thailand carries out several gastro-diplomacy strategies to attract tourists. The first is campaigning for his gastro diplomacy in Indonesia from 2014 to 2018. In its gastro diplomacy relationship with Indonesia, the Ambassador of Thailand to Indonesia has a crucial role in taking various steps. The culmination of Thailand's gastro diplomacy in Indonesia was the Thailand Festival 2017 on April 7, 2017, at Central Park Mall in Jakarta, led directly by Pitchayaphat Charnbhumidol, Thailand's Ambassador to Indonesia.

In addition to the Thailand Festival, many other festivals are held in Indonesia, and these festivals always prioritize Thai food and culture as the main treat. The Kitchen of The World program is also a form of Thailand's gastro diplomacy strategy in Indonesia. Thailand, with the Tourism Authority, Embassies, and entrepreneurs, is trying to build its signature restaurants in various cities in Indonesia to attract people to get to know Thailand's cuisine better and visit the country directly. The program was successful; from 2014 to 2017, the number of Thailand restaurants increased by around 15 restaurants in various cities in Indonesia. This strategy was worthwhile because, during the year mentioned, the number of Indonesian tourists visiting Thailand increased from 2014-2017. The number of tourists in 2014 was 286,072 tourists, 370,795 in 2016, and 447,820 in 2017.

Indonesian tourists spend relatively much on food, so it can become the third largest contributor to expenditure. Every year, Indonesian tourists have seen an increase in food spending, as much as 690.28 Baht in 2014, 704.61 Baht in 2015, and 761.91 in 2016. Thailand's income from food shopping for Indonesian tourists was around 14% of the total average daily income of international tourists until 2016, which is more than 5,000 Baht.

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