
**TRANSFORMING TRADITIONAL CUISINE INTO
TECHNOPRENEURIAL INNOVATION: NASI
TUTUG ONCOM (NTO) AS A
GASTRONOMIC TOURISM
ATTRACTION**

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Abstract: *This study examines the potential of nasi tutug oncom (NTO), a traditional Sundanese dish from Tasikmalaya, as a culturally rich, digitally marketable gastronomic tourism product. Although Indonesian culinary heritage has gained attention in tourism development, regional dishes like NTO are understudied in both research and policy. The study aims to (1) analyze the attractiveness of NTO as a tourism product, (2) evaluate existing promotional efforts and challenges, and (3) propose technopreneurial strategies to enhance its digital sustainability and marketability. A qualitative approach was employed through semi-structured interviews and participant observation with ten key stakeholders, including tourism officials, gastronomy experts, NTO producers, entrepreneurs, and travel agent. Using the "3S" framework: Something to See, Something to Do, and Something to Buy". Findings reveal that NTO offers a holistic gastronomic experience encompassing cultural observation, active participation, and economic contribution. However, current promotions are fragmented, with a limited digital presence and coordination. Technopreneurship emerges as a viable approach to repositioning NTO through digital storytelling, visual branding, and e-commerce. This study contributes to the discourse on gastronomic tourism by emphasizing regional culinary heritage and the importance of stakeholder collaboration and digital innovation in sustaining local gastronomy.*

Keyword: *culinary heritage; digital promotion; gastronomic tourism; nasi tutug oncom (NTO); technopreneurship*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji potensi Nasi Tutug Oncom (NTO), sebuah makanan tradisional khas Sunda yang berasal dari Tasikmalaya, sebagai produk pariwisata gastronomi yang kaya budaya dan dapat dipasarkan secara digital. Meskipun warisan kuliner Indonesia telah mendapat perhatian dalam pengembangan pariwisata, namun makanan tradisional seperti NTO belum banyak dikaji baik dalam penelitian maupun kebijakan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (1) menganalisis daya tarik NTO sebagai produk pariwisata, (2) mengevaluasi upaya promosi yang dilakukan sejauh ini beserta tantangannya, dan (3) menawarkan strategi technopreneurial untuk meningkatkan keberlanjutan digital dan daya pasarnya. Pendekatan kualitatif dipilih dengan memanfaatkan observasi partisipatif dan wawancara semi-terstruktur terhadap sepuluh pemangku kepentingan, di antaranya adalah dinas pariwisata, ahli gastronomi, produsen dan wirausahawan NTO, serta agen perjalanan. Penelitian ini menggunakan kerangka teori "3S": Something to See, Something to Do, and Something to Buy. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa NTO menawarkan pengalaman gastronomi secara menyeluruh yang

mencakup pembelajaran budaya, partisipasi aktif, dan kontribusi ekonomi. Meskipun demikian, saat ini promosinya masih terfragmentasi, minim koordinasi, dan belum digital. Technopreneurship muncul sebagai strategi untuk memposisikan kembali NTO melalui storytelling digital, branding visual, dan e-commerce. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada diskursus tentang pariwisata gastronomi dengan menekankan warisan kuliner lokal, pentingnya kolaborasi pemangku kepentingan, dan inovasi digital untuk mempertahankan gastronomi lokal.

Kata kunci: warisan kuliner; promosi digital; pariwisata gastronomi; nasi tutug oncom (NTO); technopreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

Gastronomic tourism is increasingly recognized as a key component of cultural preservation, identity expression, and local economic development in the context of global tourism trends (Pivarski et al., 2023; UNWTO, 2025). As tourists seek more meaningful and experiential engagements with destinations, local culinary traditions are becoming powerful mediums to convey cultural narratives and enhance visitor satisfaction (Seyfi et al., 2020). This paradigm shift places food not merely as sustenance, but as a cultural attraction capable of generating economic value, fostering community pride, and sustaining local heritage.

Indonesia, a nation known for its rich culinary diversity, has seen an increase in gastronomic tourism as a tool for development and sustainable destination branding (Ahmadi & Wijaya, 2024; Mau et al., 2024). In this context, traditional dishes such as *Nasi Tutug Oncom* (NTO) offer unique opportunities to be repositioned as signature gastronomic products that appeal to both domestic and international tourists. Originating from Tasikmalaya in West Java, NTO is a dish that blends cooked rice with *oncom*, a fermented soybean cake, seasoned with garlic, shallots, chili, and aromatic herbs. Its humble origin reflects both the creativity and resilience of Sundanese cuisine (Rusli et al., 2024), and its contemporary appeal lies in its adaptability and potential for culinary storytelling.

NTO has evolved from a practical household staple into a symbolic dish of cultural pride and regional identity (Abdullah & Nugraha, 2020). This transformation creates opportunities for heritage-based branding and experiential tourism. Traditional foods like NTO have great potential to be repackaged as tourism products that combine flavor with storytelling, tradition with innovation, and authenticity with accessibility. In this context, traditional dishes serve as tangible expressions of identity and offer immersive experiences that engage multiple senses, including taste, smell, sight, and touch (Cirillo, 2022). Furthermore, the growing interest among younger generations in slow food movements, localism, and sustainable consumption offers a timely opportunity to celebrate traditional foods (e.g., NTO) as narratives of place, history, and identity, not just as meals (Lin, 2020).

However, the success of culinary tourism depends on more than just taste. It must be strategically positioned as a comprehensive tourist attraction. According to the 3S framework (Something to See, Something to Do, and Something to Buy) a destination or attraction must offer visual appeal, interactive experiences, and purchasable items to engage tourists effectively (Damayanti & Puspitasari, 2024). Within this framework, traditional foods like NTO can serve as visual cultural symbols (see), involve tourists in cooking or storytelling activities (do), and be commodified through packaged products or culinary souvenirs (buy).

As the digital economy continues to grow, integrating technology into culinary tourism becomes increasingly important. Digitalization can increase the visibility of traditional foods, enable creative marketing strategies, and support innovative business models through technopreneurship (Rahayu et al., 2022). In this context, technopreneurship refers to the process of applying digital and technological innovations to build, promote, and sustain entrepreneurial ventures in the culinary sector (Majid et al., 2024). Technologies such as augmented reality, virtual tours, digital storytelling platforms, and e-commerce marketplaces offer novel pathways to engage audiences and enhance gastronomic experiences.

Studies on digital entrepreneurship in culinary tourism are still emerging in Indonesia. Some research highlights promising initiatives in Bali and Yogyakarta, where small-scale food entrepreneurs utilize Instagram and TikTok to promote local delicacies (Ratnaningtyas et al., 2025). However, literature that specifically addresses Sundanese cuisine such as NTO is limited. Most discussions on this topic remain anecdotal or are confined to culinary blogs and grey literature, lacking empirical depth and academic rigor.

Furthermore, successful gastronomic tourism development requires a collaborative ecosystem that involves chefs, producers, tourism authorities, digital marketers, and community members. As Fandos-Herrera et al. (2025) assert, innovation in traditional food tourism must extend beyond product enhancement to include co-creation and stakeholder integration. Unfortunately, fragmented collaboration and limited digital literacy remain barriers in many rural or semi-urban Indonesian communities (Rahayu et al., 2022).

Although there is growing interest in the intersection of culinary heritage, tourism, and technology. Current academic literature lacks comprehensive empirical studies that examine this triad

within the Indonesian context, particularly for lesser-known regional dishes like NTO. While general research on Indonesian gastronomic tourism exists, it tends to focus on internationally renowned dishes such as *rendang*, *nasi goreng*, and *sate* (Pratama et al., 2023), overlooking the potential of localized culinary heritage as tourism assets.

This study addresses that gap by exploring how NTO can evolve into a sustainable tourism attraction through the lens of gastronomic appeal, technopreneurship potential, and the 3S framework. It aims to fill a conceptual and practical void by offering a case study that highlights both the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation in culinary tourism within a culturally rich but digitally underrepresented region. Specifically, it seeks to (1) examine the attractiveness of NTO as a tourism product; (2) assess current promotional efforts and identify key challenges; and (3) propose technopreneurial strategies that support its digital sustainability and long-term marketability. The research is centered in Tasikmalaya and involves multiple stakeholders including local entrepreneurs, tourism officials, gastronomy experts, and travel agent.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the appeal of *Nasi Tutug Oncom* (NTO) as a potential gastronomic tourism attraction in the context of sustainable innovation. Given the exploratory nature of the topic and the cultural depth required to understand local perspectives, qualitative methods were considered most appropriate. The research design included semi-structured in-depth interviews and participant observation to allow for flexible yet focused data collection and interpretation.

Data collection focused on capturing diverse stakeholder viewpoints related to the production, promotion, and tourism potential of NTO. A total of ten

informants were selected purposively to ensure variation in background and relevance to the research topic. These included government tourism officers, gastronomy experts on Sundanese cuisine, NTO entrepreneurs, *oncom* producer, instant NTO developers, and travel agent with experience in culinary tour packaging.

The interviews were guided by open-ended questions covering topics such as the cultural value of NTO, current promotional efforts, entrepreneurial activities, and perceptions about its tourism potential. All interviews were recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and supported by field notes. Participant observation was conducted during visits to food stalls, *oncom* producer, and NTO producers to contextualize the narratives and capture sensory experiences associated with NTO.

Data collection continued until saturation was reached, meaning no new insights or themes emerged from subsequent interviews. After the tenth informant, it became evident that the responses began to repeat, and the research questions had been adequately addressed. At this point, data collection was concluded.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, guided by Braun & Clarke's framework (2006) but implemented as a reflexive and iterative process. First, all transcripts were read several times to develop familiarity with the content. During this phase, initial thoughts and reflections were noted. Coding was then carried out manually, highlighting meaningful segments related to the cultural, sensory, and promotional aspects of NTO.

Codes were gradually organized into candidate themes, particularly focusing on elements relevant to gastronomic attraction, such as the sensory uniqueness of the dish, community storytelling, and buying experiences. The emerging themes were

continually refined and reviewed to ensure consistency and representativeness. Special attention was paid to how informants described NTO in terms of "something to see, something to do, and something to buy", which became the analytical lens for understanding its potential as a tourism product. The final stage of analysis involved defining and naming the themes and selecting vivid excerpts from the interviews to support each theme in the findings section.

To ensure the credibility of the data, a triangulation strategy was applied by comparing and cross-verifying insights from various stakeholder groups. For instance, information from tourism officials were checked against inputs from culinary experts. This approach strengthened the internal validity and helped confirm the robustness of the thematic categories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Attractiveness of Nasi Tutug Oncom (NTO) as a Tourism Product

The attractiveness of *Nasi Tutug Oncom* (NTO) as a gastronomic tourism product can be conceptualized through the "3S" framework: Something to See, Something to Do, and Something to Buy. Based on the findings of this study, NTO offers a rich and diverse experience that combines cultural engagement, culinary experience, and local economic participation (see Table 1).

In the "Something to See" category, tourists can experience the visual aspects of the NTO journey. These include observing traditional fermentation and roasting methods for *oncom* (see Figure 1), witnessing the planting of shallots and kencur, and watching the preparation and plating of NTO using both traditional and modern techniques. Tourists can also encounter authentic Sundanese cooking tools such as stone mortars and bamboo steamers, which offer a direct link to local heritage.

Table 1 NTO as a Gastronomic Attraction Based on the 3S Model

Aspect	Something to See	Something to Do	Something to Buy
<i>Oncom</i> production	Observing traditional <i>oncom</i> -making processes	Participating in making Tasikmalaya <i>oncom</i>	Purchasing raw <i>oncom</i> products
Farming activities	Watching the planting of shallots and kencur	Engaging in planting shallots and kencur	—
Ingredient selection	Selecting ingredients for NTO	Actively choosing fresh local ingredients	Buying fresh ingredients or NTO ingredient kits
NTO cooking process	Viewing traditional and modern cooking methods	Joining in the preparation and cooking of NTO	Purchasing freshly made or packaged NTO
Traditional serving	Observing traditional plating and presentation	Serving NTO using traditional utensils and techniques	Buying traditional Sundanese tableware or utensils
Local culture & daily life	Observing Tasikmalaya community daily activities	Learning about NTO's historical context and philosophical meaning	Buying cultural souvenirs related to Sundanese gastronomy
Culinary tools	Viewing traditional cooking tools	Hands-on experience with tools such as stone mortars and bamboo steamers	Purchasing traditional cooking tools
Tasting experience	—	Tasting NTO and its side dishes in a traditional setting	Buying ready-to-eat or instant NTO, and gastronomic tour packages

Source: Authors Analysis (2025)

The “Something to Do” category emphasizes tourist participation. Visitors can engage in preparing *oncom*, planting herbs, selecting local ingredients, cooking the dish, and serving it in traditional ways (see Figure 2). Additional activities include learning the cultural narratives behind NTO and practicing with traditional cooking tools. A culinary expert noted, “NTO is more than just a dish; it's a gateway to our culture. Tourists who engage in its preparation gain insights into our traditions and way of life”. This finding aligns with Wachyuni et al. (2022), who highlighted the increasing popularity of participatory, meaningful culinary experiences, particularly among younger tourists (e.g. millennials).

The “Something to Buy” category reflects the commercial potential of NTO. Tourists can purchase raw ingredients,

ready-to-eat and instant NTO products, spice kits, cooking utensils, and locally themed souvenirs. The availability of curated gastronomic travel packages and digitally marketable products supports local entrepreneurs while extending the cultural reach of NTO. Integrating such offerings with digital platforms enhances market access and cultural preservation (Del Soldato & Massari, 2024).



Figure 1 Processing of Tasikmalaya *Oncom* Raw Materials
Source: Primary Documentation (2024)

Current Promotional Efforts and Key Challenges

Despite its rich cultural significance and potential as a tourist attraction, NTO's promotional efforts remain fragmented and face several challenges. Local government initiatives have included featuring NTO at regional food festivals and cultural events. However, these efforts lack consistency and a cohesive strategy. As one tourism official noted *"we have displayed NTO at events and festivals, but there's no continuous promotion or dedicated platform to reach a wider audience"*. This sporadic approach limits NTO's visibility beyond local events.

Moreover, small-scale entrepreneurs and vendors often rely on personal social media accounts to market their products, leading to inconsistent branding and messaging. The absence of a unified digital marketing strategy hampers the ability to attract a broader tourist demographic. One local NTO vendor expressed *"I posted about my NTO on Instagram, but it's hard to reach consumers who don't already know about it"*. This highlights the need for a centralized digital platform or campaign to effectively promote NTO to both domestic and international tourists.



Figure 2 Different Ways of Serving NTO

Source: Primary Documentation (2024)

Additionally, there is a lack of collaboration among stakeholders, including government agencies, tourism boards, and local businesses. This disjointed approach results in missed opportunities for joint promotions and integrated tourism packages that could increase NTO's appeal.

The identified challenges align with the findings of Mukhlis et al. (2023), who

emphasized the importance of coordinated digital marketing strategies for MSMEs in the culinary tourism sector to effectively reach and engage target audiences.

Technopreneurial Strategies for Digital Sustainability and Marketability

To address the promotional challenges and improve the marketability of NTO, it is essential to implement technopreneurial strategies that leverage digital platforms. One promising approach is developing a centralized digital platform dedicated to NTO that includes storytelling, cooking tutorials, and cultural insights. This platform could serve as a hub for tourists seeking authentic culinary experiences and provide vendors with a space to display their products.

Subsequently, creating engaging videos and stories about NTO can also attract more audiences who are interested in unique culinary experiences. Incorporating QR codes on NTO packaging that link to digital content, such as preparation methods and cultural narratives, can enhance the consumer experience and foster a deeper connection with the product.

Furthermore, training programs for local entrepreneurs on digital marketing and content creation can empower them to effectively promote their products online. This aligns with the findings of Suyuti et al. (2022), who emphasized the importance of digital marketing literacy for developing the creative culinary industry.

Collaborating with travel influencers and culinary bloggers can also amplify the reach of NTO promotions. These influencers can attract tourists seeking genuine cultural experiences by sharing authentic stories and experiences.

Lastly, integrating NTO into digital travel platforms and e-commerce sites can provide tourists with easier access to purchase products and book culinary experiences, thereby expanding the market reach. Implementing these technopreneurial strategies can transform

NTO from a local delicacy into a globally recognized culinary tourism product, ensuring its sustainability and contributing to the economic development of Tasikmalaya.

The following discussion will cover the findings of this study. This study contributes to the growing body of literature that recognizes traditional cuisine as a valuable cultural asset and a viable driver of tourism development (Mau et al., 2024; Pivarski et al., 2023; Rivza et al., 2022). In particular, our findings affirm that traditional dishes like *Nasi Tutug Oncom* (NTO) offer not just culinary satisfaction but also opportunities for immersive cultural engagement, local economic growth, and heritage preservation.

Unlike other studies that emphasize the passive consumption of traditional food, this research aligns with and extends the findings of An (2018) and Agyeiwaah et al. (2019), who argued that tourist satisfaction increases with active participation. Our application of the “3S” framework (Something to See, Something to Do, and Something to Buy) reveals that the attractiveness of NTO lies in its full experiential value, ranging from hands-on cooking and farming experiences to cultural learning and souvenir acquisition.

The emphasis on visual and sensory experiences, such as observing *oncom* fermentation and engaging with traditional cooking tools, is consistent with existing literature on multisensory tourism (Molina-Collado et al., 2024; Muskat et al., 2024). However, this study advances this discourse by offering tourists access to a story-based format that incorporates sensory experiences, whether on-site or digital. This shift marks a transition from the traditional concept of gastronomy as a performance to gastronomy as an experience, or even as content.

Subsequently, the commercial aspects of the NTO experience demonstrate how traditional food tourism can be integrated into local economies. The "Something to Buy" element fulfills

tourists' expectations for souvenirs while creating income opportunities for small-scale producers and artisans. These findings support those of Duan et al. (2023) and Qiu et al. (2024), who highlighted the significance of souvenir economies in preserving intangible heritage. Simultaneously, packaging NTO as part of curated gastronomic tours and e-commerce initiatives diversifies revenue streams, which is essential for culinary products susceptible to homogenization due to global food trends.

Moreover, this study challenges the dominant assumptions of gastronomic tourism research, which typically focuses on well-known dishes and popular destinations. Previous research often highlights iconic destinations like Yogyakarta or Bali, which benefit from strong institutional support and existing tourism industries (Ahmadi & Wijaya, 2024; Wachyuni et al., 2022). By contrast, our study in Tasikmalaya, a city not yet positioned prominently on the Indonesian or global gastronomic tourism map, contributes to the diversity of gastronomic tourism literature by highlighting the potential of lesser-known regions. It demonstrates that with appropriate digital and managerial interventions, regional food practices can become part of national and global tourism.

Additionally, this study contributes to the conversation on digital transformation in tourism by highlighting the role of technopreneurship in promoting local gastronomy. This complements recent findings by Wardana et al. (2023), who emphasized the importance of digital literacy for food entrepreneurs to achieve sustainability and competitiveness. Our study extends this insight by highlighting the challenges and opportunities that traditional food entrepreneurs face in the era of digital promotion.

Overall, this study advances scholarly and practical understanding by positioning NTO as not only a cultural product, but also a technopreneurial asset.

It encourages scholars and practitioners alike to reconsider the spatial and cultural boundaries of food tourism and to explore new models that integrate traditional knowledge with digital innovation.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that *Nasi Tutug Oncom* (NTO) possesses unexplored potential as a culturally significant and digitally promotable gastronomic tourism product. NTO exemplifies how traditional food can provide a sensory experience and serve as a means of cultural education, community participation, and economic empowerment. By applying the “3S” framework (Something to See, Something to Do, and Something to Buy), this research revealed that NTO offers a multifaceted experience for tourists. From observing the preparation of *oncom* and exploring farming practices, to hands-on cooking sessions and the purchase of authentic culinary products, NTO can serve as both an educational and participatory attraction. These attributes align with broader trends in cultural and experiential tourism, where visitors seek immersive and meaningful engagement with local lifestyles.

Moreover, this study highlights that, when strategically integrated, technopreneurship can improve the visibility, accessibility, and sustainability of traditional food-based tourism. Although current efforts are fragmented and limited in scale, digital storytelling, visual branding, and e-commerce platforms offer promising opportunities for innovation. Importantly, digital tools not only expand market reach but also help preserve culinary traditions by documenting recipes, production techniques, and oral histories.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the evolving literature on gastronomic tourism by highlighting the intersection of culinary heritage and technopreneurship in a digitally

underrepresented region. Unlike existing studies, which focus primarily on well-known destinations like Bali and Yogyakarta, this study underscores the importance of developing alternative destinations by integrating local food culture with digital tools. Furthermore, it supports emerging perspectives that emphasize stakeholder collaboration, co-creation, and storytelling as crucial components in building sustainable culinary tourism ecosystems.

From a managerial perspective, this study provides practical insights for policymakers, tourism planners, and food entrepreneurs. Adopting technopreneurial strategies, such as digital storytelling, influencer partnerships, and curated e-commerce platforms, can increase the visibility, marketability, and longevity of traditional culinary assets like NTO. However, achieving this vision requires coordinated efforts, including policy support, digital training, and infrastructure development tailored to local capacities.

While offering new perspectives, this study is not without limitations. Its qualitative scope and small sample size restrict the generalizability of its findings. The focus on a single dish and region, although valuable for contextual depth, may limit broader applicability. Additionally, the short research time frame did not allow for a longitudinal assessment of the proposed technopreneurial interventions.

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