

FROM JACKPOT TO HOTSPOT: RE- IMAGINING MACAU AS A GASTRONOMIC DESTINATION

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Food plays an important role in both daily life and travelling. In recent years, more and more tourists are interested in food tourism, also seeking authentic experiences, while local cuisine is a way to experience destination authenticity. The study location of this research is Macau SAR of China, a city that was designated for Creative City of Gastronomy by UNESCO in 2017. The city is famous for its gaming features and known as the “Las Vegas of the East”. Therefore, this research aims to understand to what extent do the title given by UNESCO influence tourists’ perceived destination image and the promoted destination image from the culinary industry and the local government perspectives. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to the theoretical development of existing literature relating to food tourism and destination image. Further, contribute contextually and practically via assisting the local government in monitoring and evaluating the current destination image.

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