

**GASTRONOMIC TOURISM POTENTIAL OF THE SURKHANDARYA REGION****Ashurov Jumanazar Saidkulovich**Lecturer at the Department of Technology and Geography,  
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**Abstract:** This article explores the gastronomic tourism potential of the Surkhandarya region, highlighting the role of unique national dishes in attracting tourists. It analyzes the culinary traditions of the oasis and the possibilities of developing "Surkhoncha" cooking methods as a tourism brand. Finally, the article provides scientific and practical recommendations for creating gastronomic routes in the region.

**Keywords:** Gastronomic tourism, Surkhandarya, national dishes, tourism potential, culinary traditions, Surkhoncha tandir meat, tourism brand, gastronomic route.

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqolada Surxondaryo viloyatining gastronomik turizm salohiyati, hududning o'ziga xos milliy taomlari va ularning sayyohlarni jalb etishdagi o'rni tadqiq etiladi. Shuningdek, vohaning oshpazlik an'analari, "Surxoncha" pishiriq va taom tayyorlash usullarining turistik brend sifatida rivojlanish imkoniyatlari tahlil qilingan. Maqola yakunida viloyatda gastronomik marshrutlarni shakllantirish bo'yicha ilmiy-amaliy takliflar ilgari surilgan.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Gastronomik turizm, Surxondaryo, milliy taomlar, turizm salohiyati, oshpazlik an'analari, Surxoncha tandir go'sht, turistik brend, servis, gastronomik marshrut.

**Аннотация:** В данной статье исследуется потенциал гастрономического туризма Сурхандарьинской области, роль уникальных национальных блюд региона в привлечении туристов. Анализируются кулинарные традиции оазиса и возможности развития методов приготовления блюд в стиле «Сурхонча» как туристического бренда. В завершение статьи выдвинуты научно-практические предложения по формированию гастрономических маршрутов в регионе.

**Ключевые слова:** Гастрономический туризм, Сурхандарья, национальные блюда, туристический потенциал, кулинарные традиции, сурхандарьинский тандыр-гушт, туристический бренд, гастрономический маршрут.

**INTRODUCTION.** Under the conditions of modern economic reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan, diversifying the tourism sector, particularly developing gastronomic tourism, has been designated as one of the priority tasks. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated January 12, 2024, No. PF-9, "On measures to drastically increase the flow of foreign tourists to the Republic and further accelerate domestic tourism," as well as other regulatory legal documents related to the field, serve to create tourism products by utilizing the unique potential of the regions.

Along with its ancient history, unique nature, and archaeological monuments, the Surkhandarya region possesses immense potential for gastronomic tourism due to its rich culinary culture. National dishes formed as a result of the oasis's unique climate and livestock

farming traditions—notably the internationally recognized "Surkhon-style Tandir Meat" and the medicinal dishes prepared with mountain herbs of Boysun and Sherobod—are considered an integral part of ethnotourism.

The tourism development programs approved by relevant resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers emphasize the issues of creating Surkhandarya's gastronomic brand and promoting it on an international scale. Gastronomical tourism not only extends the duration of tourists' stay in the region but also holds significant socio-economic importance in ensuring local employment and preserving national values. However, today there remains a high demand for scientifically based research regarding the formation of infrastructure, service quality, and gastronomic routes that meet international standards in the region. Through a systematic analysis of the region's existing gastronomic resources, this article investigates effective mechanisms for their integration into the international tourism market.

**MAIN PART.** As global tourism continues to evolve, increasingly sophisticated travelers are seeking unique and immersive experiences that provide a deeper connection with the destinations they visit. Gastronomical tourism, which involves travel focused on exploring food products as a means of experiencing a region's culture and traditions, is becoming popular as a key driver of this trend. Uzbekistan, with its strategic location on the ancient Silk Road, possesses a culinary heritage as rich and diverse as its history. This article explores the potential of gastronomical tourism in Uzbekistan, examining how it serves as a vital component of the country's tourism industry and contributes to its economic development. Uzbekistan's culinary landscape is distinguished by flavors that tell the story of a crossroads of civilizations. Dishes such as palov, somsa, manti, and lagman not only offer insight into the nation's culture and history but also provide a canvas for gastronomical innovation and tourism development. Despite its potential, the sector faces challenges such as limited international awareness and underdeveloped tourism infrastructure that may hinder growth. However, through strategic investment and promotion, Uzbekistan can increase its global visibility as a primary destination for culinary enthusiasts. This introductory study sets the stage for a deeper analysis of how gastronomical tourism can not only attract tourists but also stimulate local economies, preserve cultural heritage, and promote sustainable practices in Uzbekistan. By harnessing the power of its gastronomical resources, Uzbekistan has the opportunity to create a compelling narrative that attracts gastronomes from around the world and transform its rich culinary traditions into a cornerstone of tourism development. According to J. Bessiere, gastronomical tourism serves not only as a tool for economic development but also as a means of preserving cultural identity and heritage [1]. O'zbekiston Respublikasida turizm sohasini strategik darajaga ko'tarish maqsadida qabul qilingan "2022–2026-yillarda Yangi O'zbekistonni rivojlantirish strategiyasi" doirasida hududlarning "o'sish nuqta"larini aniqlash va ularni brend darajasiga olib chiqish vazifasi belgilangan. Xususan, Surxondaryo viloyati uchun gastronomik turizm nafaqat ovqatlanish, balki hududning nomoddiy madaniy merosini eksport qilish vositasidir. O'zbekiston Respublikasi Prezidentining 2023-yil 27-iyuldagi "Turizm yo'nalishidagi islohotlarni yanada jadallashtirish va sohada davlat boshqaruvi tizimini samarali tashkil etish chora-tadbirlari to'g'risida"gi PF-114-sonli Farmonida turistik marshrutlar tarkibida milliy taomlar targ'ibotini kuchaytirishga alohida urg'u berilgan. Surxondaryo viloyatining iqlim sharoiti va ekologik toza mahsulotlari ushbu farmon ijrosini ta'minlashda muhim resurs bo'lib xizmat qiladi.

**Surkhandarya gastronomy** is famous not only within the republic but also across Central Asia for its "Tandir Meat" brand. However, the potential for gastronomical tourism is not limited to a single dish. Each district of the region has its own unique "gastronomical specialization." For

instance, as part of a cultural environment recognized by UNESCO, the Boysun district offers soups and *dumlama* dishes prepared with medicinal herbs, which represent the pinnacle of ethnic gastronomy. The Sherobod district is renowned for pomegranate cultivation and "nardong" sauces made from pomegranate juice, demonstrating the harmony between agrotourism and gastronomy. Denov and Sariosiyo, on the other hand, are distinguished by their subtropical climate products and unique pastries. According to statistical data, 35-40 percent of foreign tourists visiting Surkhandarya express specific interest in the region's national dishes.

The "Procedure for certification of tourism services and classification of tourism objects," approved by Resolution No. 433 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated July 10, 2020, sets new requirements for gastronomic facilities. Based on the requirements of this resolution, there are plans to establish "Gastronomic Streets" in Surkhandarya. Although more than 500 public catering enterprises currently operate in the region, only a portion of them meet international service standards (halal certification, multilingual menus, online booking). In designing gastronomic routes, it is essential to include "Master-class" elements, such as the tourist's direct participation in the food preparation process and observing the product's journey from "field to table."

**Gastronomic tourism resources and regional specialization of Surkhandarya region**

No	Area (district/city)	Main gastronomic products	Feature	Tourism direction	Possibility of development
1	Termez city	Fish dishes, national soups	Based on Amu Darya fish	Gastronomic and ecological tourism	Gastro-tours based on fishing
2	Boysun district	Medicinal soups, dumplings	Prepared with mountain herbs	Ethnogastronomical tourism	Integration with UNESCO heritage
3	Sherabad district	Pomegranate, nardong sauce	Horticultural products	Agro-gastronomic tourism	Creating export-oriented products
4	Denov district	Fruits, juices, desserts	Subtropical climate products	Agro and gastronomic tourism	Tours with farms
5	Sariosiyo district	Mountain dishes, meat products	Traditional livestock farming	Ecotourism and gastronomy	Integration with mountain tourism
6	Muzrabot district	Dishes based on melon products	Vegetarian cuisine	Agro-tourism	Demonstration of the product production process
7	Angor district	National vegetable dishes	Eco-friendly products	Rural tourism	"From field to table" model

8	Jarkurgan district	Tandoor meat, bakery products	Traditional tandoor method	Gastronomic tourism	"Tandir Road" route
9	Kumkurgan district	Dairy products, yogurt, cottage cheese	Based on livestock	Gastro and agro tourism	Create a local brand
10	Sherabad-Denov road	Tandoor meat, mixed national dishes	Interregional gastronomic harmony	Complex gastronomic route	Create a tourist route

Additionally, in the southern regions of the province, particularly in the city of Termez, unique dishes prepared from Amu Darya fish, along with the melon and gourd-based menus of the Muzrabot and Angor districts, ensure tourism diversification. Research indicates that in developing Surkhandarya's gastronomic tourism, strengthening marketing and digital promotion, training gastronomic guides, and improving infrastructure in remote mountainous areas are urgent tasks. Based on Resolution No. 793 of the Cabinet of Ministers dated September 21, 2019, involving the private sector to train brand chefs and holding an annual traditional "International Tandir Meat Festival" will increase the region's international attractiveness. By systematizing gastronomic routes, there is an opportunity to significantly enhance the province's tourism potential and increase the income of the local population.

As gastronomic tourism grows, sustainability must remain a primary focus to protect the environment and support local communities. This includes promoting local products, minimizing food waste, and ensuring that tourism development does not disrupt local ecosystems or cultural integrity. Implementing sustainable practices not only preserves resources but also appeals to the increasing number of tourists who prefer environmentally responsible travel options. Regarding the economic impact, the potential economic benefits of a well-developed gastronomic tourism sector are substantial, especially for rural areas where agricultural products can be directly linked to the tourism industry. However, ensuring these benefits are distributed equitably and contribute to broader economic development goals requires careful economic planning and support from local and national governments. With targeted investment and strategic planning, the region has the potential to become a leading destination for gastronomic tourism. This development can yield significant economic benefits and contribute to the preservation of the province's rich culinary and cultural heritage.

**CONCLUSION.** With its unique culinary traditions and ecologically clean products, the Surkhandarya region is a territory of strategic importance on the gastronomic tourism map of Uzbekistan. Within the framework of the implementation of the Decrees and Resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan regarding the development of the sector, the region possesses all the necessary resources to elevate national brands such as "Tandir Meat," "Boysun Medicinal Dishes," and "Sherobod Pomegranates" to an international level. Gastronomic tourism serves as an effective mechanism not only for preserving the cultural heritage of the region but also for ensuring local employment and increasing the flow of foreign currency into the provincial economy.

In order to fully utilize the region's gastronomic potential and further develop the sector, the following scientific and practical proposals are put forward:

1. **Modernization of Infrastructure:** Implementing international service standards (Halal, ISO) in gastronomic facilities and launching user-friendly "Gastronomic Maps" and mobile applications for tourists.

2. **Branding and Marketing:** Widely promoting "Surkhon-style" cooking methods on digital platforms, organizing festivals with the participation of foreign food bloggers, and creating a "Gastronomic Passport" of the region.

3. **Personnel Training:** Establishing a system for training professional gastronomic guides and brand chefs who can not only present the food but also narrate its history and the philosophy behind its preparation.

In conclusion, the systematic integration of Surkhandarya's gastronomic opportunities into tourist routes will allow the region to become one of the major "gastronomic hubs" in Central Asia in the future.

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