

NORTHERN VIETNAM AS A CULTURAL TOURISM DESTINATION FOR FINNISH TRAVELLERS

Ngoc Anh Le

Bachelor Thesis
School of Tourism and Hospitality Management
Degree Programme in Tourism
Bachelor of Hospitality Management

2019

School of Tourism and Hospitality
Management
Degree Program in Tourism
Bachelor of Hospitality Management

Author	Ngoc Anh Le	Year	2019
Supervisor	Ulla Kangasniemi, Petra Paloniemi		
Commissioned by	Khanh Sinh International Tourism Ltd.,		
Title of Thesis	Northern Vietnam as a Cultural Tourism Destination for Finnish Travellers		
Number of pages	55 + 8		

Vietnam has emerged as a popular tourism destination in the recent years among Finnish travellers with its well-known coastal destinations. At the same time, the Northern part of the country possess a long history and a diversity of cultural heritage, which can offer tourists with abundant sources for culture learning. The aim of this paper is to examine Finnish travellers' interest towards Northern Vietnamese cultural tourism. The research finding is going to assist in the development of the commissioner's cultural tourism products.

In order to gain valuable data for the research, a survey was conducted to gather qualitative data on Finnish travellers' social opinion on Northern Vietnamese cultural tourism. The data was collected from 98 Finnish citizens from different age groups, aiming to generalize the perception within the whole group. The result reveals Finnish travellers as purposeful cultural tourists. They have high interest in travelling to Northern Vietnam for culture learning purpose, however they lack specific information on what the destination has to offer. The research finding points out the undersupply of destination branding as well as high quality services at the destination, which should be taken into consideration to attract more Finnish travellers to Northern Vietnam.

Key words

Finnish travellers, Vietnamese culture, Tourism, Culture.

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	5
2 CULTURAL TOURISM AND AUTHENTICITY CONCEPT	7
2.1 Culture Definition	7
2.2 Cultural Tourism Concept	8
2.3 Types of Cultural Travelers.....	10
2.4 Authenticity of Cultural Tourism Experiences	13
3 COMMISSIONER AND CULTURAL TOURISM IN NORTHERN VIETNAM ...	16
3.1 Commissioner	16
3.2 Overview of Cultural Tourism in Vietnam.....	17
3.3 Geographical Area of Northern Vietnam	18
3.4 Arts and Crafts.....	20
3.5 Festivals, Customs and Lifestyle.....	24
3.6 Cuisine.....	27
4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	30
4.1 Semi-structured Interview	30
4.2 Survey.....	30
4.3 Reliability and Validity	31
5 FINNISH TRAVELERS' INTEREST TOWARDS NORTHERN VIETNAM CULTURAL TOURISM.....	33
5.1 Respondents' Background.....	33
5.1.1 Demographic Information	33
5.1.2 Travellers' Behaviour.....	35
5.2 Respondents' Cultural Interests.....	39
5.3 Respondents' Interest towards Northern Vietnam Cultural Tourism	41
6 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION	48
BIBLIOGRAPHY	54
APPENDICES.....	59

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ATLAS	Association for Tourism and Leisure Education
CPI	Centre for Press and International Communication Cooperation
DMO	Destination Management Organization
Eurostat	The Statistical Office of the European Commission
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VNAT	Viet Nam National Administration of Tourism
VOV	The Voice of Vietnam

1 INTRODUCTION

Being a small, developing country in South East Asia, Vietnam has not been seen as a popular tourism destination for travellers around the world when compared to its neighbouring countries such as Thailand, Cambodia and China. Vietnam has a long coastline of 3260km, with 125 stunning beaches and thousand islands close to the mainland including Truong Sa and Hoang Sa archipelagos. (VNAT 2018d.) With that geographical characteristics, there are more than 70 percent of leisure and tourism destinations in Vietnam located in coastal areas, which account for 80 percent of total tourist number (Sekhar 2005, 817). However, the country has plenty more to offer to tourists than coastal tourism destinations. Vietnam has a long history and rich culture, which is exhibited clearly in the Northern part of Vietnam. Hanoi has been through more than a thousand years of civilization; ethnic minorities inhabit mostly in the North East area; and most of Vietnamese natural heritages are located in the North (UNESCO World Heritage Centre 2019). Therefore, it is necessary to understand to what extent cultural tourism in Northern Vietnam attracts European travellers in order to better develop the destinations in Vietnam.

According to a tourism survey conducted by Matka Nordic Travel Fair 2018, 55 percent of Finnish tourists travelled abroad in 2017, of which seven percent travelled to South Asia. (Messukeskus 2018.) Since 2009, Finnish tourists are exempted from entry visa to Vietnam providing their stay is under fifteen days. This could explain the dramatic growth of Finnish visitors to Vietnam since then. In addition, Finnair has been offering direct flights from Helsinki to Vietnam in the summer since 2013 (Koumelis 2012). In the last four years, the number of Finnish tourists travelling to Vietnam has still gradually increased (VNAT 2018e.) Finland is now in the top 30 countries that has most visitors to Vietnam. Thus, it has become one of the potential markets in Northern Europe that Vietnam tourism is targeting.

The commissioner for this thesis is Khanh Sinh International Tourism Ltd., It is a tourism agency located in Hanoi, Vietnam. Their strength destination is Vietnamese Northern region. The company provides both luxury and culture exploring trips in the area. Due to the significant difference between the number

of Asian and European tourists taking their trips, Khanh Sinh Tourism Ltd, is aiming to develop their products and services to attract more tourists coming from Europe, especially for their exploring cultural tours in Northern Vietnam.

The main objective of the thesis is to understand to what extent cultural tourism in Vietnam attracts Finnish travellers, specifically in the Northern region. The research aims to answer the question of what Finnish travellers' level of interest towards Northern Vietnam culture is. Whether they are attracted to Vietnam for its nature, culture or for other reasons. The result of this research can be utilized to develop ideas on using Northern Vietnamese culture to promote the destination image to potential Finnish cultural tourists.

To achieve the intended goals, a research was conducted using qualitative method. Semi-structured interview was conducted with the commissioner of the thesis to have an insight into the current situation of Northern Vietnam culture tourism (Appendix 1). Meanwhile, a questionnaire was designed to gather qualitative data about Finnish travellers' perception on the research object (Appendix 2.) A variety of question types were used to assist in gaining better perspective on what specific motivations of travellers coming to Northern Vietnam are. This can be achieved by looking at their travel goals, level of interest as well as experience and expectation towards Northern region cultural tourism.

2 CULTURAL TOURISM AND AUTHENTICITY CONCEPT

2.1 Culture Definition

The aim of this thesis is to understand about culture tourism and Finnish traveller's perspective about it. The word 'culture' is used everywhere, and in different circumstances. Therefore, before familiarizing with what culture tourism is, one must understand the meaning of culture.

According to Smith (2009), it is complicated to define culture, as it 'has both global and local significance, and it can be deeply historic or highly contemporary. It can be represented as physical and material, tangible or intangible; as political and symbolic, or as the practices of everyday life' (Smith 2009, 1). In other words, it is a very complex and multidimensional phenomenon. It can be defined both broadly and narrowly depending on the context. When looking at culture from a holistic view, it includes the heritage that are handed down from the past. Those are historical sites, works of art, as well as people's way of living, their customs and habits. On the other hand, it can also be used in almost any activity that involves ordinary human's lifestyle such as dining culture, tea culture or football culture. (Smith 2009, 2.)

Raymond Williams (1998) claims that the definition of culture consists of three main categories: ideal, documentary and social. First, culture is ideal since it reflects the values that contribute to the perfection process of human being. Second, culture is also documentary as it records and values all the precious ideas and experiences with different forms of artworks. Lastly, culture is social as it expresses different meanings of life. Besides arts and learnings, the values lie also in the ordinary ways of living and behaviour. Within his culture analysis, Williams (1998) suggests that the definition of culture cannot exclude any of the above-mentioned categories as there is value in each one of them, which makes the terms appear, if not completely, at least more reasonable. He also states that there are three levels of culture. Lived culture of certain time and places which can only be experienced to the fullest by individuals living in that exact time and place. Recorded culture of different periods by all means: arts, literature or even

facts in everyday life; and culture of selective tradition, which connects the two mentioned above. (Williams 1998, 48–50.)

It can be said that the one word 'culture' has a numerous way to define. However, in terms of tourism study, there is one commonly used definition by UNESCO: 'Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a human as a member of society' (UNESCO 2017). Culture is a constantly changing phenomena and influenced both by internal and external elements, and it only become reality through meaningful experiences (Ivanovic 2008, 26.) Therefore, culture is understood differently depending on how the tourists view what a meaningful experience is. In the following chapters, the concept of cultural tourism will be discussed to find out the convergence between the two, as well as cultural tourists' typology to understand their perception of cultural tourism.

2.2 Cultural Tourism Concept

As mentioned above, there are many definitions on culture, therefore it is impossible to give one exact explanation for cultural tourism. Heritage tourism, arts tourism, indigenous tourism, are the terms that usually used to describe culture tourism. In fact, they are interchangeable and sub-sectors of cultural tourism. Richards (2007) claims that cultural tourism cover a broader range of cultural products, including artefacts from the past (heritage tourism) as well as contemporary cultural products (arts tourism) or people's way of life in the region (Smith 2009, 29). Dreyer (2000) suggests the term 'cultural tourism' as it contains the element of 'culture in tourism'. Thus, he claims that any form of tourism that has cultural features is considered as cultural tourism. (Dreyer 2000, 21.) It can be said that nearly every trip taken contains some or potentially contains cultural elements. This leads to the fact that all forms of tourism related activities are linked with culture, as the local's lifestyles, traditions, food and beverages are parts of the given country's culture offering to the receiving travellers (Rohrscheidt 2008, 51).

However, in many cases, past and present cultural tourism products are intertwined and problematic to be distinguish. Especially in indigenous

community where the line between the old and new, heritage and arts is not well defined. Contemporary cultural products might act as contributors to the heritage of a destination. (Smith 2009, 30.) For instance, festivals and events are held in historical places or buildings and handicrafts are made with ancient techniques and sustainable materials. In their Cultural Research Project held in 1991, the European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS) defined culture from two distinctive approaches: conceptual and technical, which definition is in Figure 1. These two are differentiated as in technical level, cultural tourism is looked at in favour of arts and intellectual values, while in conceptual level, it is concentrated more on the experiences or other cultures' way of living.



Figure 1 Definitions of Cultural Tourism (Smith 2009, 30).

McKercher and Du Cros (2009) suggest another alternative to better explain culture tourism. Since it differs by one's own needs, the researchers have examined numerous definitions and pointed out that it can be divided into four broad categories: tourism-derived, motivational, experiential, and operational (McKercher & Du Cros 2009, 3).

In tourism-derived category, culture is seen as a special tourism interest. It can act as a tool to attract visitors to a certain destination as well as stimulate the development of businesses in those attractions. It helps to create a connection between people and places, thus, encourage the movements between places for

their own interests. Culture is perceived as the motivations of travellers to come to certain places. McKercher & Du Cros (2009) refer to UNWTO's definition on cultural tourism as 'movements of persons essentially for cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts and cultural tours, travel to festivals and other events, visit to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore or art, and pilgrimages' (UNWTO 1985, 6). However, motivations alone cannot capture the vast meaning of cultural tourism. It is also believed to be experiential and aspirational events occur in various tourism destinations. (McKercher, Du Cros 2009, 4.) People travels to acquire more knowledge as well as to seek new and authentic experiences. Thus, it can be said that the main motives for cultural tourism are education and novelty (Ivanovic 2008, 77). From operational viewpoint, cultural tourism is defined by tourists' participation in cultural activities, which can involve all three aforementioned aspects. It points out the wide range of cultural tourism activities which share the same sets of resources and outcomes. (McKercher & Du Cros 2009, 5–6.)

2.3 Types of Cultural Travelers

As said by Richards (2007), cultural tourism is hard to define with a certain definition. He sees it as a crossover between tourists and cultural phenomena, which affects their decision making when it comes to traveling to another destination (Richards 2007, 26). Therefore, it is essential to look at cultural tourism from a traveller's perspective, understand their thinking and behaviour to thoroughly perceive what cultural tourism is.

It is argued that people have been travelling for what we now call cultural tourism since the Romans. However, not until the late 1970s that the tourism researchers and providers realized that there is a segment of customers who travel for a specific purpose of gaining deeper understanding of the destination's culture. It was thought of as an activity pursued by a small number of people with higher education who wants an experience other than sun, sand and sea holiday. 1990s was the years of cultural tourism recognition as a mass-market activity, as there was 35 to 70 percent of travellers considered as cultural tourists. (McKercher & Du Cros 2009, 1.) This argument has been proved to be true as Ivanovic (2008) presented the highlighted characteristics of cultural tourists based on a research

conducted by ATLAS in 2002. More than half of them are young female, between 24 to 29 years old. They are high education individuals with above-average income as well as high level of spending. These tourists seek for a mixture of culture, entertainment and relaxation in their vacations rather than just one of the aforementioned elements. (Ivanovic 2008, 310–311.)

According to Mousavi, Doratli, Mousavi & Moradiahari (2016), Stebbins (1996) suggests that in general, cultural tourists can be divided into two main categories of general and specialized cultural tourists where both types consider culture as one of their hobbies and make it as a reason to travel. (Mousavi, Doratli, Mousavi & Moradiahari 2016). These two types of cultural tourists are further explained in Table 1.

Table 1 Categories of Cultural Tourists in General (Stebbins 1996).

General Cultural Tourists	Specialized Cultural Tourists
Makes a hobby of visiting different geographic sites. Over time, as general cultural tourists increase their knowledge of different cultures, they may become specialized cultural tourists who focus on one of a small number of geographic sites of cultural entities.	Repeatedly visits a particular city, region, or country in search of a broad cultural understanding of the place, or goes to different cities, regions, of countries in search of exemplars of, for instance, a kind of art, history, festival, or museum.

Indeed, cultural tourists are greatly different from each other depend on their needs, goals, and interests, which directly affect their behaviour. Thus, in order to understand more deeply about this specific group of travellers, McKercher & Du Cros evince the cultural tourists can be divided into five distinctive categories which are presented in Figure 2. These types are based on the importance of culture in their decision making to visit a destination as well as the level of experience they are looking for during their trip. The types introduced by the authors are: purposeful cultural tourist, serendipitous cultural tourist, sightseeing cultural tourist, casual cultural tourist, and the incidental cultural tourist. (McKercher & Du Cros 2009, 139.) It can be seen from Figure 2 that the horizontal axis represents the importance of cultural elements in choosing a destination. It can vary from being the only main reason to not playing any roles in the decision-

making process, which according to the author is the 'centrality of cultural tourism in overall decision to visit a destination' (McKercher & Du Cros 2009, 140). Meanwhile the vertical axis reflects the depth of experience sought by travellers, which ranges from entertainment or recreational experiences to deep and meaningful cultural understanding experiences. (McKercher & Du Cros 2009, 139–140.)

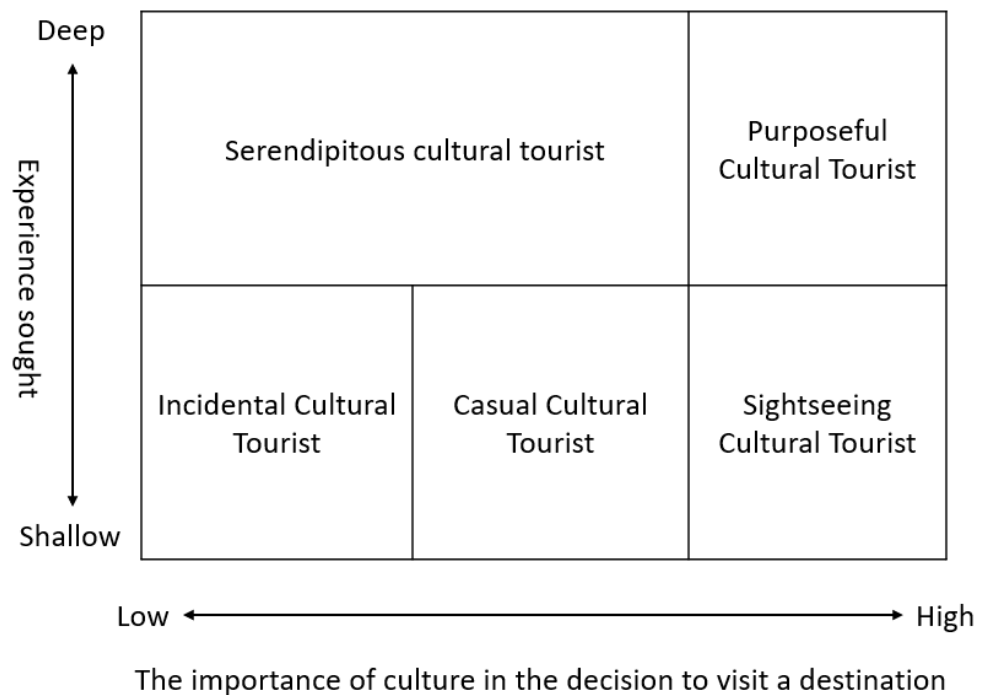


Figure 2 Types of Cultural Tourists (McKercher & Du Cros 2009, 140).

McKercher & Du Cros have combined the centrality and the depth of experience dimensions to produce five different types of cultural tourist. Based on MacCannell's (1973) work, other researchers (Waller & Lea 1999; McIntosh and Prentice 1999) suggest that the depth of experience may be influenced by tourists' perception of authenticity, (McKercher & DuCros 2009, 143) which will be further discussed in the next sub-chapter.

The purposeful cultural tourists' main motivation to visit a destination is to seek for deep cultural experience. They differ from serendipitous cultural tourists in a way that they do not travel for cultural reasons but eventually got involved and has deep cultural experiences. Sightseeing cultural tourist's main priority in their

trip is for cultural purpose, however they do not seek for deep but more shallow experience. The casual cultural tourist has culture as somewhat their motive to travel, thus, their level of experience is shallow. Incidental cultural tourist has no intention to travel for culture yet participates in some cultural activities and has shallow experiences. (Mc Kercher & Du Cros 2009, 144.) These five types can be found and vary in different destinations depending on its assets and the origin of the cultural tourists. The authors also suggest that the categories are not exclusive to one single tourist, but one person can be labelled as all five categories depending on the situation.

2.4 Authenticity of Cultural Tourism Experiences

The concept of authenticity is brought up in this paper since it is closely related to cultural tourism, as it relates to the past and people's way of life. Museums, landscapes, tangible and intangible heritage are representations of the past. While present cultural landscapes, arts, crafts, food, and other participatory activities are representations of visitors' needs and wants. Therefore, authenticity is believed to be one of the most important attributes in cultural tourism. The quality of cultural heritage is thereby enriched by authenticity and vice versa. (Ramkissoon & Uysal 2010, 573.) The term authenticity was used in museum-related definitions to determine the realness of exhibited objects, which is later on extended for usage in products such as gastronomy, festivals, dress, and even rituals (Ramkissoon & Uysal 2010). As cited by Wang (1999), Sharpley (1994) defined authenticity as 'traditional culture and origin, a sense of the genuine, the real or the unique.'

In the last few years, the demand for authenticity in tourism product is becoming higher compared to the past. 'Tourists are searching for a connection with something that is real, unsullied and rooted within the destination' (Yeoman, Brass & McMahon-Beattie 2007); thus, tourism destinations are expected to provide incoming guests a place with such expectations. It is predicted that there is another type of tourists emerging in the future, which is the 'authentic' tourists. They are expected to be highly educated and are cautious about their choice of product. With their profound travel experience, they require a high level of authenticity and will not hesitate to reject everything that is false or surreal.

(Ivanovic 2008, 308.) This trend is said to be generating a popular demand specifically in cultural tourism market. Although when being asked, travellers do not consciously look for authenticity during their trip, however they mainly want to 'experience other culture', 'broaden knowledge and horizons', which leads them to experience different kinds of authenticity. Some travellers even use new experiences and activities as a way to discover themselves. It can be seen that although authenticity is not the explicit travel motivation, it still plays a vital role in one's journey. (Derre 2010.)

As claimed by MacCannell (1973), travellers nowadays seek for authenticity as a form of escape to other places from their ordinary life. They want to relive the past, to experience the ancient way of life through tourism, even for a brief moment (Ramkissoon & Uysal 2010). Therefore, the so called 'staged authenticity' is introduced to travellers as a vehicle to bring them back to where they want their escape to be. Staged authenticity in tourism core is to project individual's images and beliefs to the tourism product and at the same time highlight the culture and custom values. Similar to a concert, staged authenticity can be distinguished into front stage and back stage. Tourists might enjoy everything that happens in the front stage but some still longing to go the back to see what the people are really like. However, sometimes they have to accept the fact that what is considered 'real' might not be real from that point of view. (University of Northern British Columbia 2008.) Commenting on MacCannell's staged authenticity term, Wang (1999) further pointed out that the tourists may become the victim of staged authenticity when they are actually looking for original authenticity. In other words, tourists' experience can be considered non-genuine even if they think they have achieved such experience. Therefore, it is still under controversy that whether staged authenticity can or cannot bring tourists 'real' and genuine experiences.

Wang (1999) then made a distinction on 3 types of authenticity: objective, constructive (or symbolic) and existential authenticity. Objective authenticity involves authentic experiences when the original is perceived genuine, based on absolute criteria. For example, a folkloric play is recognized as authentic if it is performed by people from the area that the story is originated. Constructive authenticity is on the other hand the projected image of social's expectation of

the toured object. Which means that the experience's level of authenticity is dependent on the tourists' beliefs, stereotype images, or dreams. Therefore, this type of authenticity is in fact symbolic authenticity. Distinctive from objective and constructive authenticity, existential authenticity is not object-based but more activity-related. As Wang (1999, 352) pointed out: '[existential authenticity] refers to a potential existential state of Being that is to be activated by tourist activities.' In this case, people feel themselves more expressed than everyday life, since they are participating in something new and unique from their living environment. (Wang 1999, 349–370.) This sense of authenticity has more connection with emotions, feelings, and individuality, which can be referred to as self-authentication. (Newman & Smith 2016).

All in all, authenticity is now becoming a phenomenon in tourism industry, especially cultural tourism. It can be experienced in different ways as well as in different levels. It can be measured both by the realness of the displayed object and the tourist's own perspective. Although authenticity is experienced differently based on travellers' view of 'realness'. Derre (2010) claims that there are a few main elements of experiencing authenticity: culture, architecture, interacting with locals, and trying local cuisine. In Chapter 3, the aforementioned cultural elements of Northern Vietnam will be further examined.

3 COMMISSIONER AND CULTURAL TOURISM IN NORTHERN VIETNAM

3.1 Commissioner

The commissioner for this thesis is Khanh Sinh International Tourism Ltd., which is situated in Hanoi, Vietnam. Khanh Sinh has been operating since 2002 and has been growing into one of the country's best inbound tour operator. They offer various types of service and products, including inbound and outbound tours, transportation services, hotel booking as well as visa services for domestic and international tourists. 'Your pleasure is our future' is their motto, Khanh Sinh Tour is committed to provide the best services for their customers. (Khanh Sinh Tour 2018.)

Northern Vietnam is currently their strength destination; thus, they are trying to develop tourism in the region by providing various products and services for international as well as domestic tourists. Their offerings include eco-tourism trips in Moc Chau; leisure and national heritage tours in wide range from economy to luxury cruises to Ha Long Bay; exploring beach and islands with ferry tours to Cat Ba and Hai Phong as well as indigenous and cultural tourism in Sapa, Ha Giang and Ban Gioc Waterfall (Khanh Sinh Tour 2018.) Apart from packaged tours, Khanh Sinh also allow tourists to customize their trips base on their interests, as well as provide accommodation and transportation for travellers who wants to explore by themselves.

At the moment, the majority of tourists purchasing tours from the commissioner are from Asian countries such as Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, China and Japan. (Ha 2018). These markets have grown tremendously in the last few years. Meanwhile, they have not received as many European tourists as in the past. Therefore, Khanh Sinh wants to develop their products and services to attract more tourists coming from Europe, especially for their cultural tours in Northern Vietnam.

3.2 Overview of Cultural Tourism in Vietnam

Tourism has become an instrumental sector in Vietnam's development. The S-shaped country has been selected as one of the most attractive destinations in the world by popular magazines, which draws attention to millions of international visitors every year. The number of visitors has dramatically increased in the last 5 years: from 7.8 million in 2014 to 12.9 million in 2017; by September 2018, international visits has reached 11.6 million, which is 22.9% higher compared to the same period last year (VNAT 2018e.)

Analysing strengths and weaknesses on Vietnamese tourism within her research, Tran (2013, 43–50) pointed out that Vietnam benefits from its geographical location, rich natural resources and diverse climate which create an ideal environment for beautiful landscapes to form. In additions, its long coastline and thousands of islands have charmed tourists from all over the world to these magnificent Sun-Sand-Sea destinations. Therefore, big travel agencies such as TUI, Thomas Cook and Aurinkomatkat mostly offer tours to these beach cities, which located mostly in the middle and south of Vietnam. Consequently, Vietnam is only seen as leisure destination for most tourists around the world in general and for Finnish in specific.

However, with four thousand years of history, and distinct traditions of 54 ethnic groups, spiritual and cultural heritage are also highlight to Vietnamese tourism. Historical sites such as Imperial City of Hue, Thang Long Citadel and Dien Bien Phu are evidences of Vietnamese civilization through hundred years of fighting for the unity and independence of the country. Significant investments have been made to develop culture-rich destinations as well as organize traditional festivals to introduce Vietnamese culture to international tourists (VNAT 2018b.) Nevertheless, Vietnam cultural tourism still struggle to catch up with its neighbour such as Thailand, Laos, China and Cambodia. Reasons being the limitation of market research and technology in enterprises are hindrance to the development of existing or new products. Weak management system, lack of sustainable strategies for tourism destinations have caused damage and overcrowd issue to several attractions. Furthermore, poor marketing and branding strategy are also reasons for the setback of the cultural tourism industry. (Tran 2013, 43–50.)

Budget for tourism marketing is limited, thus, promotional campaigns are usually ineffective. Local travel agencies offer cultural tours but failed to reach out to potential customers due to the lack of professional skills. (Tran 2013, 43–50.)

Noticing the industry's weaknesses, the government and VNAT have been making effort to improve the situation in the recent years. Hospitality training and education conferences were held for workers to exchange knowledge with each other. In order to improve customer's journey, more investments have been made in developing applications that help tourists find and customize tours according to their needs. In terms of marketing, VNAT have been setting up representative offices in major tourist markets, take parts in world's tourism conferences and do roadshow in different countries to promote the culture image of Vietnam. (VNAT 2018b.) In 2018, VNAT partnered up with Tourism Advisory Board to launch an official website for Vietnamese tourism, as well as official account on high engagement social media channels. With the aim is to provide tourists with high quality information and inspiration to visit the country (Official Website Vietnam Tourism 2018.)

3.3 Geographical Area of Northern Vietnam

Dao (1992, 13–14) claims that culture lays not only in arts and literature, but it also reflects in the way people live and behave. Therefore, each country has their own culture because they have different way of life, based on where they live. Geographical area plays a vital role in people's lifestyle. For example, people who live in the mountainous area have to build their house higher than the ground for fear of snake and wild animals; while the ones who live near the sea can live in boathouses. Thus, to understand culture of a place thoroughly, we also need to look into geographical elements. (Dao 1992, 13–14).

Bordered by China and South China Sea, Northern Vietnam consists of two major areas: The Northern Midland and Mountainous Region and the Red River Delta and Northeast Coast. The geographical area of the aforementioned regions is illustrated in Figure 3. Northern Midland and Mountainous Region includes North East (Dong Bac) and North West (Tay Bac) mountainous areas, which is famous for its magnificent mountains, most well-known is Fansipan peak at 3,143m

above sea level. The mountain is called 'The Rooftop of Indochina' as it is the highest mountain in the Indochina Peninsula. (VNAT 2018a). Apart from the mountain, the area is enveloped with enchanting topography: cascading rice terraces, majestic waterfalls, lakes, hills, and not to mention mountain paved and winding roads for adventurous souls. In addition to be the most picturesque part of Vietnam, the Northern Midland and Mountainous Region also preserves the evolution of the Vietnamese through people's way of life and beliefs as well as historical remnants of the struggling war for the liberation of our country.



Figure 3 Map of Regions of Vietnam (Vietnam, Destinations and Travel Tips, 2016).

With three quarters of the territory covered with mountains and hills, Vietnamese are mostly inhabited in the deltas and flatlands, namely the Red River in the north and Mekong Delta in the south. Formed by the alluvium of Thai Binh and Red River, the enriched land becomes promising for Vietnamese people to grow

(VNAT, 2018c). Vietnamese settled and intensely cultivated the area since the ancient time. (McLeod & Nguyen 2001, 1–2). Considered the potential of the Red River Delta, in 1010 King Ly Thai To has chosen Thang Long (now called Hanoi) to be the capital of Vietnam. Red River Delta and Northeast Coast is not only an ideal place for the Viet to live but it also holds the majority of the most stunning destinations in Vietnam, providing most of UNESCO-recognized tangible and intangible World's Heritage are located or originated from this area. (UNESCO Word Heritage Centre 2019). Namely Ha Long Bay, Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, various temples and pagodas; as well as intellectual heritage such as traditional festivals, performed arts and customs.

3.4 Arts and Crafts

Leslie & Sigara (2005) pointed out that since the early 20th century, Grand Tours around historical places and monument in search of cultural knowledge has been one of the oldest motives for travel. While visiting these places, tourists are likely to come across various types of art: from paintings, sculptures, to music and other types of performed art. Given its long history with different periods of colonialism, Vietnam treasures a diverse cultural heritage, which can be considered as a fusion of Viet and others such as French and Chinese. Domestic sources enriched by external elements inspired artists and crafters to be creative with their artworks. With the limitation of this paper, only several significant features will be discussed, namely: ceramics, woodblock paintings, water puppet and Bac Ninh alternate singing. The significance identity of these specific form of art and crafts to Northerners' way of life is the reason for them to be chosen to elaborate.

Vietnam is known as an agricultural country which only began to industrialize since the late 20th century. Before that revolution, most of Vietnamese's consumed goods were made by local artisans. The art of making crafts is handed over from generation to generation, which means the secret tricks and techniques are kept within families and close-knit villagers. Thus, there is a formation of specialized craft villages throughout the country. In Red River Delta, the most well-known craft villages are Van Phuc with its stunning silk products, wood carving of Dong Ky, traditional embroidery art from Quat Dong, and the most famous: Bat Trang Pottery village for its ceramic goods. It is the oldest and also

the most famous ceramics village in Vietnam. Located in the perfect area with rich source of clay, Bat Trang village has been the largest ceramic and porcelain centre in Vietnam since the 15th century. There is a variety of techniques and brushwork that makes Vietnamese ceramics distinctive to others. For example, pottery made in Bat Trang is recognizable with hue glazed ceramics and light, blurred, uneven intensity brushwork as seen on a pot shown in Image 1. (McLeod & Nguyen 2001, 98).



Image 1 Bat Trang Pottery (Wikimedia Commons 2018b).

According to Guy & Stevenson (1997), despite Vietnamese ceramic is said to be influenced by Chinese, the Viet are still developing techniques to have their own distinctive styles and forms. Ceramics are widely produced in different shapes and designs for daily use as well as decoration in temples and pagodas. Nowadays, besides exploring the village itself, visitors to traditional craft villages are welcomed to watch and try making pottery with the master crafters and bring the finished product home as a souvenir. This is a great way to educate young people about Vietnamese traditions and create memorable experiences for international guests.

Northern Vietnam is home to woodblock painting, which is also known as Dong Ho painting. It is one of the most popular kind of folk art in the North of Vietnam.

Dong Ho paintings are named after the village that specialized in making these colourful paintings. It dated back to 15th century when people were keen on hanging these colourful prints in their house during festive times such as Lunar New Year or Mid-Autumn since it is believed to bring good luck to their family. The paintings illustrate people's everyday life with surrounding objects and symbols which express wishes for happiness, longevity as well as carry moral and religious lessons, or a reminder of our triumphant over the enemies. (McLeod & Nguyen 2001, 102.) A Dong Ho painting was made by applying the colour paints, which were made from flowers, tree and ashes, to the woodblock and press on tree bark paper. Thus, they were such affordable piece of art that everyone from the poorest to the richest family of the village could have one for their home. (VOV Online 2017.) Until this day, there are many people who still keep this tradition and have signature Dong Ho paintings in their house for good luck, which examples could be seen in Image 2.

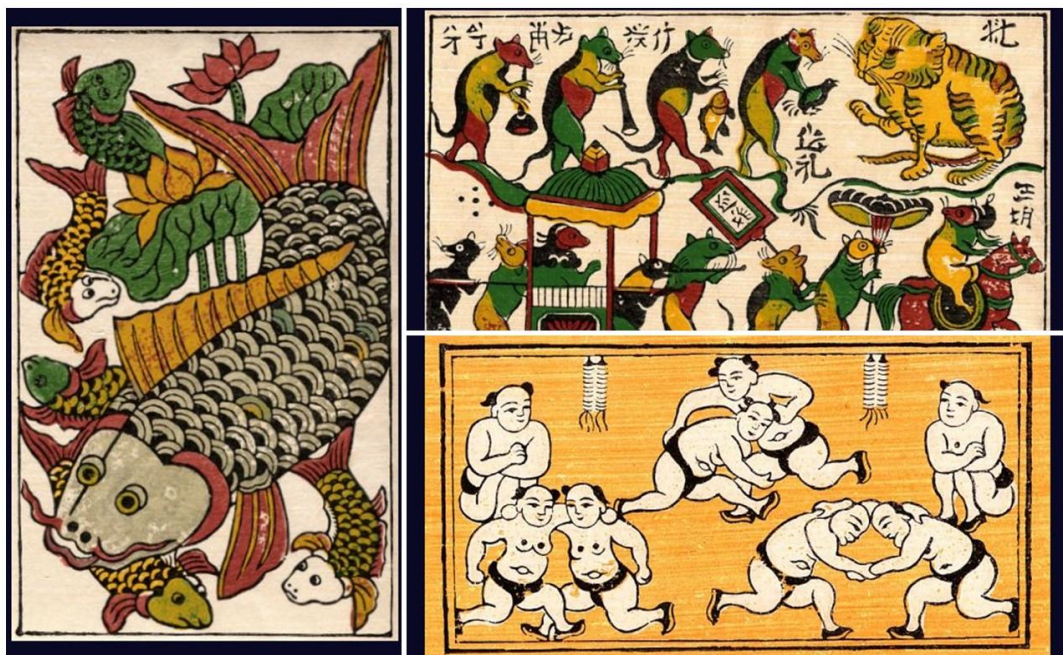


Image 2 Examples of Dong Ho painting (Wikimedia Commons 2018).

One cannot discuss Northern Vietnamese art without mentioning water puppetry, the unique art form which has a history of more than a thousand years. The first water puppet theatre performance was documented in the 10th century, which is said to occurred in King Ly Nhan Tong birthday celebration. (Gaboriault 2009, 20). In other research, the practice is believed to have originated in the villages

of the Red River Delta during harvest festivals, where the puppeteers are farmers and fishermen. The artisans formed a group out of interest and performed free of charge in local festivals. Water puppetry – ‘mua roi nuoc’ in Vietnamese literally means ‘making the puppets dance on water’, which is the opposite to land puppetry. Thus, the performance was done on waterbody, usually lakes or ponds. (McLeod & Nguyen 2001, 180.)

The puppets are made from light wood, which is carved into different characters and lacquered. They are controlled by rods and wires beneath the water. However, the puppets’ movement are not only dependent on the manipulation of the rods, but also by the force of water. Thus, it requires the puppeteers to be extremely skilful to work the puppets on the watery stage. Music plays an instrumental role of water puppetry as its rhythm guides the puppeteers to control the puppets, create atmosphere to the play, as well as highlight the characters’ actions and thoughts. (Thang Long Water Puppet Theatre 2018.) Performed in Cheo melodies from the Northern plains, water puppetry tells folk tales, life story of the ordinaries, or relive heroic moments in the past, which broaden viewers’ perspective on Vietnamese life, culture and belief. Thus, throughout the years, water puppetry remains its important role in keeping and passing on Viet cultural values to the young generation domestically as well as internationally (Thang Long Water Puppet Theatre 2018).

Another type of performed art should be mentioned is Bac Ninh alternate singing, as known as ‘Quan ho Bac Ninh’, is a type of folk music created by Vietnamese peasants in Bac Ninh and Bac Giang province (Viet Bao 2014). Quan ho are alternate response songs between the male and female groups from different villages. Quan ho Bac Ninh is believed to be able to best express the Viet culture in terms of love, lifestyle and religious. (Viet Bao 2014.) Quan ho attendance not only delighted by the beautiful love duets but also with the betel carving art. Eating betel is one of the instrumental elements of Vietnamese’s life. Therefore, it is not only a type of entertainment but the alternate singing culture of Bac Ninh also plays a vital role in people’s social life. It acts as a connection between villages, bring people closer together through singing sessions. Given its significance in Viet culture, in 2009, UNESCO has recognized Quan ho as part of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage 2019).

3.5 Festivals, Customs and Lifestyle

Culture and heritage always go hand in hand. Similar to culture, heritage cannot be simply defined as one or another. Thus, ICOMOS (1999) suggested a definition of heritage as 'a broad concept includes the natural as well as the cultural environment.' Which means it encompasses not only landscapes, historic places, built sites but also cultural practices and living experiences. Heritage records and express the development of people's lives, forms the local identity which plays an instrumental role as the foundation for development both in present time and in the future. (ICOMOS 1999.) In other words, to fully absorb the culture, one must also understand the people's way of life. In this chapter, Northern people's highlighted customs, lifestyles and celebrated festivals are discussed to give readers better view on this area's cultural heritage.

Being such a small country, Vietnam accommodates as many as 54 groups of ethnic people. The majority of which are Viet, also known as Kinh people. They reside mostly in the delta area of Vietnam, while the uneven, mountainous rest of the territory is left for the non-Viet people. Living away from the Kinh and the rapid development in the deltas, the ethnic minorities are still able to keep their own culture in its most original form.

Due to the harsh living environment, the highlanders have lived in stilt houses since long time ago. It is believed that stilt house protects the residents from predators at night, and it also keeps the food away from the humidity from the ground. The bottom of stilt house is left unused or to cage cattle. (Vietnam Culture 2019.) In the stilt, other activities are also done. From worshipping ancestors, welcoming guests, cooking, eating as well as embroidering, weaving, knitting blankets for family members and others. (Far East Tour 2016.)

Travelers to the mountainous area in the North of Vietnam are usually amazed by the magnificent landscape of terrace fields. Based on the area's topography these fields are used for easier distribution of water for the crops. The rice and corn cultivation have been part of the highlanders' life for generations. (Le 2013.) People here mainly live on agriculture and goods trading in the weekly fair market.

In addition, the making of textile fabric and other handmade goods are important to the life of the ethnic people as well. Highland women are well-known for their handicraft skills in making textile fabric for tradition outfit in daily usage as well as in special occasions such as market fair or New Year celebration (Trekking Sapa 2018).

Cultural events and festivals play an instrumental role in the development of cultural tourism in tourism industry these days. (Csapo 2012, 222). According to an online survey conducted by UNWTO in 2005, the majority of tourists are motivated to take part in cultural events and festivals during their travel. There are 88% of the asked cultural tourists agree that events and festivals are important reason to choose a specific destination. (UNWTO 2005, 44.)

The most significant festival in Vietnam is Lunar New Year, counted by the lunar calendar. A lunar year has 355 days, which is divided into twelve months of 29 to 30 days each. Which explains the difference between lunar new year and the ordinary 365-day solar year. Lunar new year usually occurs during the end of Gregorian calendar's January to the beginning of February. It is considered the most important holiday in the year since it is the transition of one time period to another. New year comes mean a new page of life opens. Thus, people try their best to settle business, such as pay off debts or collect them, since it is considered bad luck or a jinx if they do it in the upcoming year. Vietnamese celebrate Lunar New Year for one week to ten days, starting from the 30th day of lunar December. Differ from the Viet, some ethnic tribes such as the Dao, celebrate new year once on the 30th and once again on the 15th. During these days, traditional food such as sticky rice cake (bánh chưng) is commonly served. Otherwise, every tribe has their own signature dish to eat on these days to celebrate the new year.

In terms of holiday activities, it is varied in different location of the country. There are a few traditions that are performed in the ethnic minorities' community during Lunar New Year. Dao people have a dance ceremony on the 1st and 2nd day of new year. In which they go to the tribe leader's house to perform a special dance as a way to invite the gods and ancestors to come and celebrate new year with the offspring. (Bnews 2018.) H'Mong people have a tradition to put on a 10

meters high bamboo tree ('cây nêu') to make known of a gathering known as 'Gầu Tào' Festival, which is held for 3 consecutive days. There are a wide range of activities which participants can take part in such as singing, dancing, and playing traditional games. After the festival, there is a small ceremony held in front of the host's house to bring the bamboo tree back. (HanoiTV 2017.)

Other well-known festivals in the North is usually occur during the first month of new year. (Vietnam Travel Information 2014.) Which usually involves ceremony to worship the gods in pagodas and temples to wish for good luck, happiness, children and wealth for the upcoming year; as well as to take part in many other entertaining contests and activities. For example: Huong Pagoda Festival, Yen Tu Festival and Chu Dong Tu Festival. Lim Festival in Bac Ninh is held on the 13th lunar January. It is the biggest festival for 'quan họ' competition as well as other traditional games and performances such as water puppetry, human chess, wrestling and cock fighting.

Other than New Year Festivals, market fair customs in the mountainous area is also an interesting topic. People from ethnic minority groups not only go to markets for trading goods but also to look for potential partners. Which is why visitors may come across the term 'Love Market' when they travel to the mountainous area of Vietnam. The most popular Love markets are in Sapa, Khau Vai and Moc Chau. Each love market has its own distinguished feature, but the most significant one is the Khau Vai love market.

Khau Vai love market is held yearly in lunar March after it became an official festival in 1919. It is not only for young people to come and find love but also for people who missed the chance to be lifelong partner to see each other again. At this occasion, even people who are married can go and find their past lover and spend a night together at the Love Market. (Que Huong Online 2009.) Other people who are not looking for partners come to the love market to either spend time with their friends or sell goods they made from home. Although Love Market still a festive annual event these days but young people do not come here with the aim of finding a partner anymore, but it is still a very colourful and rich in culture tradition of Northern Vietnam minorities (Love Market 2016.)

3.6 Cuisine

Vietnamese culture is a junction between Chinese – French due to the long colonial eras: 1000 years of Chinese, 100 years of French. Therefore, the food culture is heavily influenced by these countries, especially in the North (McLeod & Nguyen 2001, 117). Vietnamese adapt from Chinese the use of chopsticks, staple foods such as noodles, tofu, soy sauce and five-spice as well as cooking techniques. Western food culture has found its way in to the Viet's life when the French came. They introduced the use of potato, dairy, coffee, and most importantly baguette and pate, which is the base to our worldwide-famous Vietnamese 'banh mi'. (Monaco 2015.) Northern cuisine is distinguished from which in the South since part of it used to belong to Champa dynasty (Cambodia nowadays), hence the sweeter and spicier food taste. In addition, given the difference in geographical area, the cold harsh winter in the North makes it less of an ideal climate to grow herbs and fruits compared to the South.

The French colonization is believed to have influenced the most on Vietnamese cuisine. The Viet took on Western cooking style and recreate into its unique dishes as we see today. The ultimate example is the most famous Vietnamese dish among foreigners: Pho. It is believed to be created in Northern Vietnam since the mid-1800s during the French colonial. Some people suggest that the name Pho is the Vietnamese way to pronounce 'pot au feu' – a French beef stew which the dish is inspired on. Traditional Pho consists of 3 main elements: flavourful beef broth, thinly sliced beef and chewy noodles, then topped with finely chopped spring onions and other herbs of choice. Northern Pho is special for its clear broth, with subtle scent of toasted cinnamon sticks, star anise, ginger, cloves and the sweetness from the beef bone and charred onion. (Rennick 2018.) Pho is eaten at any time of the day, but mostly at breakfast. A hot bowl of Pho is always the best way to start the day for Northerners.

Vietnamese cooking methods included grilling, boiling and steaming (McLeod & Nguyen 2001, 118). The food used to be cooked on a brick or clay stove using charcoal or wood; some poorer families also used dry leaves and straw. These days, people have switched to electric or gas stove, but this way of cooking is still kept in many families in the suburban areas or for certain dishes, most

significantly ‘bún chả’, which translated into English is grilled pork noodles. Apart from Pho, Hanoi’s ‘bún chả’ must be mentioned in any kind of North Viet cuisine discussion. Originated in Hanoi, this dish has been one of Hanoian’s most favourite of all times, so much that they can have it at any time of the day. It includes pork belly or pork patties grilled over charcoal, rice vermicelli, a dipping-sweet-and-sour sauce made with vinegar, sugar, garlic and fish sauce and a healthy amount of fresh herb. People eat ‘bún chả’ by dipping the vermicelli, meat and vegetables into the sauce and then eat everything together. Each element of the dish compliments each other to make a beautiful medley of flavour. The dish is so popular and significant to Hanoi culture that Barack Obama and Anthony Bourdain had to had it during their visit to Vietnam.

It can be seen that Vietnamese cuisine cannot be itself without the appearance of one ingredient: rice. As known as one of the biggest rice producers in the world, rice as well as glutinous or sticky rice have an important part in Vietnamese cuisine. It is consumed in different forms: the rice is grounded into flour then made into noodles, congee, various types of cake, rice paper to wrap spring rolls and used in other dishes. Glutinous rice is normally steamed and eaten for breakfast or on festival days. (McLeod & Nguyen 2001, 119.) The most traditional dish eaten by every Vietnamese during Lunar New Year is ‘bánh chưng’, which is a sticky rice cake filled with mung beans and pork belly. In the Northern highlands, sticky rice plays an important role in people’s lives since the ancient time. One of the most popular Thai tribe specialties is five-colour sticky rice. The dish is carefully made with specific type of sticky rice and only coloured with natural leaves and fruits which can create 5 colours: yellow, red, purple, pink, and orange. (CPI 2017.) It is not only for aesthetic purpose but also for Thai people ritual activities and commemorate their ancestors.

Rice is also used in fermented foodstuff such as shrimp paste, fermented rice (‘mễ’), as well as making alcohol. Ethnic groups are known for their special alcoholic beverage which called ‘rượu cần’. It is made by fermenting glutinous rice with herbs and roots, creating its distinguished earthy flavour. The mixture is then put in a large porcelain jug to ferment for at least one month before use. ‘Rượu cần’ is usually drank in special occasions such as wedding, harvest

festivals or when the host is having a special guest, since it is shared between many people. (Vietnam Discovery 2014.)

Given the diverse ethnic groups, the food culture in the mountainous area is even more magnificent. Given the hot, humid climate in the summer, cold harsh winter plus the limitation of refrigerator, Viet highlanders tend to use fresh ingredients taken from family gardens or surrounding areas such as wild animals, freshly picked herbs, flowers for daily consumption. For example, in Thai people in the Northwest area have been using 'ban' flower as a usual ingredient in their daily meals. It is used as a vegetable, with which can be made into salad, steamed, boiled or stir fried. (Vietnam Discovery 2017.)

The highlanders usually cook their food by chargrill, roast or smoke to create exotic and unique flavoured dishes. Each tribe has their own specialty; however, some dishes still have similarity in terms of ingredients and cooking techniques. Adapting the cooking methods during the Mongol invasion (McLeod & Nguyen 2001, 117–118), Vietnamese highlanders created their own signature dish, named 'thắng cố'. Originated from Hmong tribe, 'thắng cố' is a Sino-Vietnamese word, which literally means 'soup in a big pan'. It is a slow cooked stew of horse organs with a combination of medicinal barks and herbs. In the past, this dish is only cooked on special events such as festivals, wedding, funeral and market fairs where many people are gathered. On these days, people are allowed to meet their long-lost friends, lovers or relatives, enjoy a "thắng cố" pot and drink homemade rice wine, while catching up with each other. It is believed that 'thắng cố' is not only an ordinary dish but also act as a mean to socialize for highlanders. (Thanh Thong Media 2016.) In addition to this special dish, Northern mountains are known for other dishes such as whole roasted animals; chargrilled meat with noodles, and smoked buffalo.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Semi-structured Interview

Semi-structured interview is a research method, in which the researchers will have a list of questions, however these questions can vary from interview to interview. It depends on the flow of the conversation, as the interviewer may ask other sub questions which relate to the topic to have more in depth knowledge about the matter being discussed. They may also lead the discussion into areas that have not been previously considered but are significant to the researcher's understanding, which could benefit in addressing the research question and objectives. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 320, 324.)

This method was chosen to be used with the commissioner to acquire information about their operation. The themes need to be covered are general information of the company, target groups, information about purchased customers as well as future development plan for the focused market of the research. There were 5 questions for the main topic prepared in advance, while doing the interview, the author came up with follow up questions to explore the company's objectives and expectation for the research. The interview was held at the commissioner's office, with Miss Ha - Sales and Marketing manager, in Vietnamese. The conversation was recorded and transcribed in English by the author for further usage (Appendix 1).

4.2 Survey

Survey is a data collecting technique in which each person is asked to answer to the same set of questions in a predetermined order. There are two types of survey. Self-administered, in which the questionnaire can be done by the respondents themselves or interviewer-administered with the help of the interviewer in a form of a structured interview. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 360–363.) Survey is the most widely used method in quantitative research because of its possibility to collect a large amount of data in a short period of time. However, in the case of this thesis, the survey is conducted to collect qualitative data, which aims to collect personal opinions of Finnish travellers on

Northern Vietnamese cultural tourism. It was sent out in survey form to get the most possible responses in order to generalize the results to the whole group of people to a certain extent.

Regarding the research, a survey was formulated on Google Form to find out what the motivations for Finnish travellers to come to Northern Vietnam and their perception of culture tourism in this area (Appendix 2). The survey has 20 questions relate to participants' demographic, travel motivation, culture and tourism interest as well as their own opinion about culture tourism in Northern Vietnam. Types of questions used are single/ multiple choices, grid questions and open-ended questions. Grid questions are used to measure travellers' perception about specific features related to culture. Respondents are asked to measure their interest level on a scale from 1 to 5. In which 1 is "not interested at all" to 5 is "very interested". The short-answer questions were given with the goal to gain qualitative data, namely descriptive and holistic answers from respondents about their experiences and expectations about Vietnam as a cultural destination. The survey was open for answer from the beginning of August 2018 to the end of January 2019. The targeted participants are Finnish only, therefore, it was sent out on social media groups of Finnish travellers, as well as by email to Lapland University of Applied Sciences' students and personnel.

4.3 Reliability and Validity

Jennings (2010) explains reliability as a matter of whether a particular technique when applied repeatedly to the same object would yield the same result each time (Jennings 2010). In order to achieve the reliability, the questionnaire needs to be designed in such way that can get as much information about insights on travellers' motivation to come to Northern Vietnam in general and for cultural heritage purposes in specific as possible. It is used for both potential and return customers to see if they were or are interested in the topic, therefore, the questions need to be simple and direct. Internet content analysis helps to compare the pre-image of the destination versus travellers' real experience. However, the reliability of the sources needs to be taken into account to have the most accurate results.

Research validity is understood as its ability to measures what it intends to measure. In other words, a study is considered valid if the result gives the accurate answers to the questions stated. As one of the research methods is via survey, it is crucial to take this matter into account. It is argued that it is far harder to produce a good questionnaire than one might imagine. A good question should be clear and simple, while it still ensures to collect the precise data required for the study and achieve the objectives. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 361.) Therefore, in this thesis, qualitative research with some quantitative analysing methods is used to improve the validity of the study on travellers' perception.

5 FINNISH TRAVELERS' INTEREST TOWARDS NORTHERN VIETNAM CULTURAL TOURISM

5.1 Respondents' Background

5.1.1 Demographic Information

This chapter will describe the demographic of the respondents of the questionnaire, which includes information about age, gender, occupation and family status. Total respondents were 101. In which 3 of them were eliminated since 2 of the respondents are not Finnish and the other one did not provide their nationality. Figure 4 shows the proportion of respondents' age and gender.

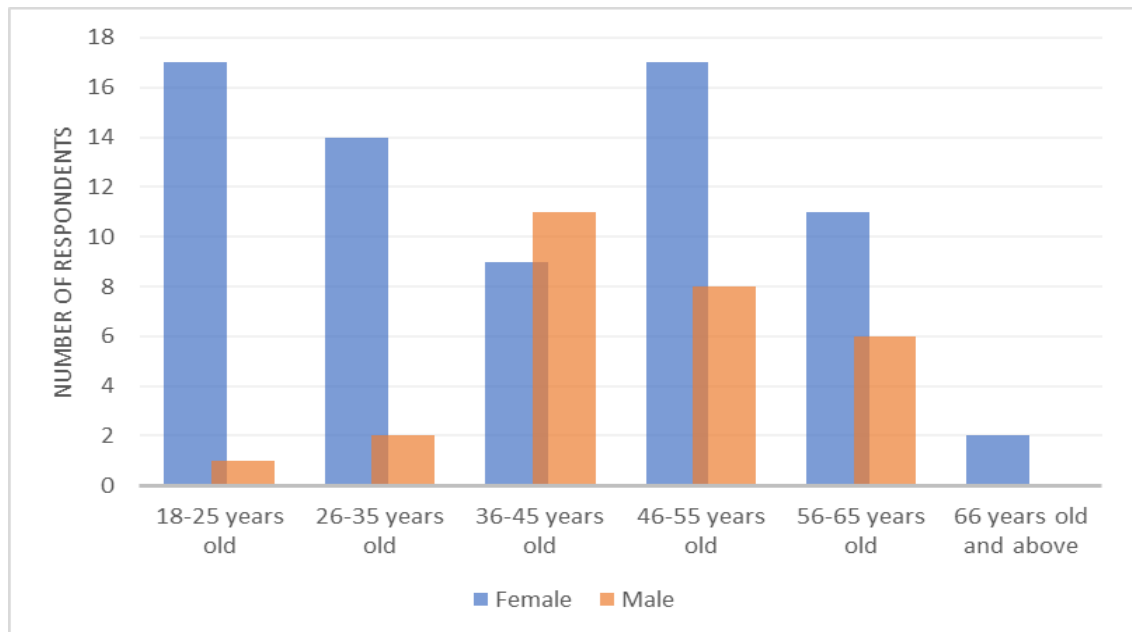


Figure 4 Age and Gender of Respondents (N=98)

The majority of respondents are female, which takes up to more than 70% of the total responds. Larger number of female respondents are in the group of 18 to 35 and 46 to 55 years old. While the major part of male respondents aged from 36 to 65 years old, with no one is older than 66. The reason for the difference between gender of the survey participants may due to the fact that there are more female members in the social media channels that the questionnaire was sent out.

Figure 5 demonstrates the family status percentage of all respondents. As shown in the chart, people who have family with children take up to almost half of the total survey participants. Married couple without children account for only one fifth of the total responses. The answers given in this question are not totally accurate since there are couples in Finland who are not married but still live together and have children. Thus, the validity of this question is under consideration. Should there be an 'Other' option in the questionnaire, the responds would appear closer to the family status of Finnish travellers.

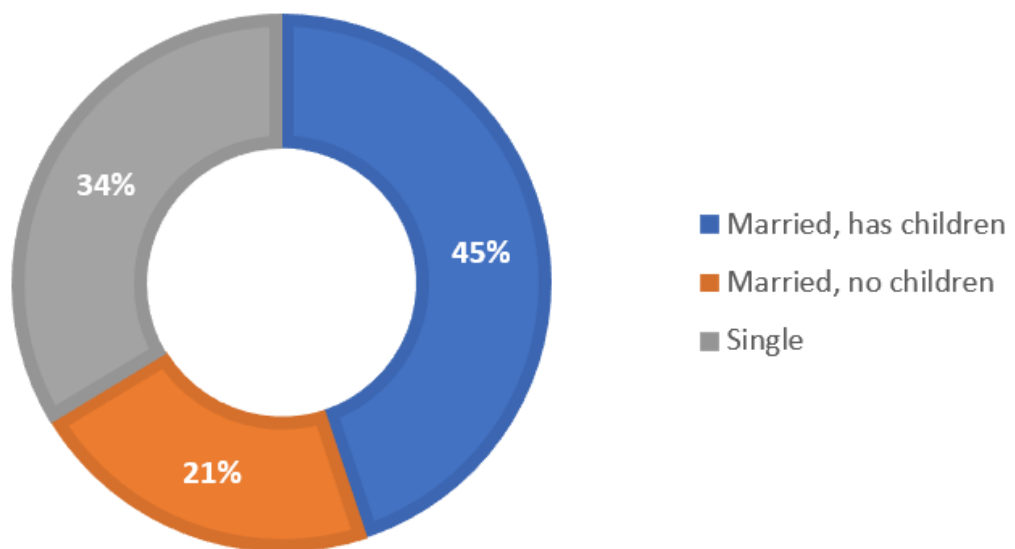


Figure 5 Family Status of Respondents (N=98)

Respondents were also questioned about their occupational status, which data is exhibited in Figure 6. The majority of participants are employed people. While the number of students, unemployed and retired respondents only account for less than 30%.

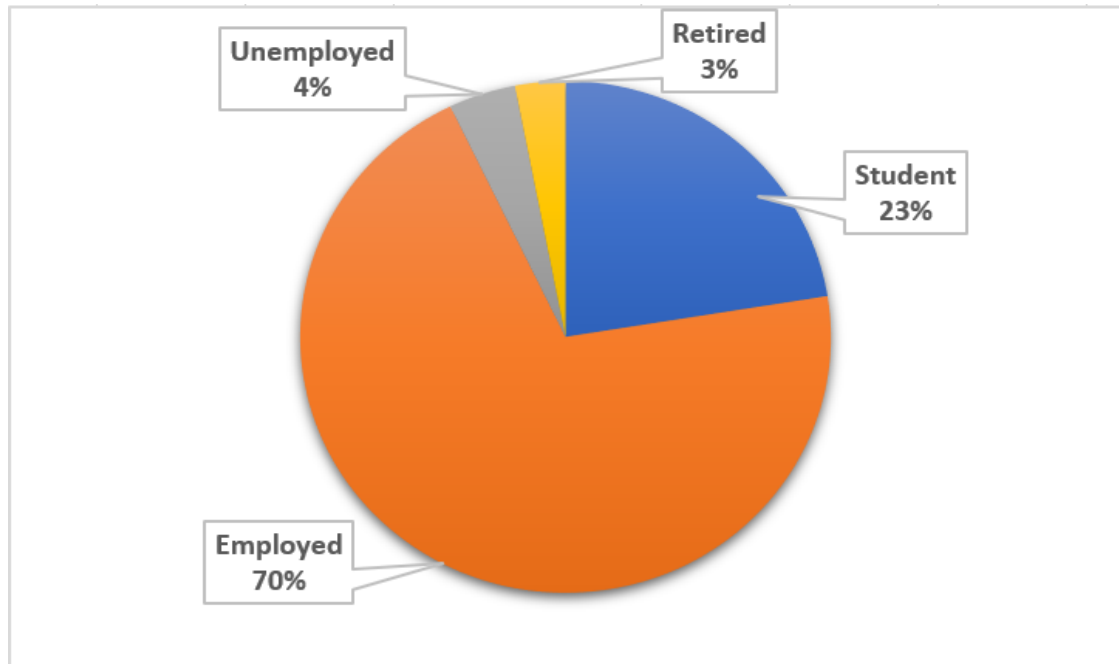


Figure 6 Occupational Status of Respondents (N=98)

This can be explained by the fact that the survey was sent out on Facebook groups of travellers and University emails, thus there are higher percentages of working people as well as students. Based on the facts presented by the charts above, it can be seen that Finnish travellers are young to middle aged, who have good level of education and income.

5.1.2 Travellers' Behaviour

In order to develop better strategies and provide tourists with suitable services and products, it is vital to understand their behaviour. According to Reisinger (2009, 279–283), tourists behaviour refers to “the way they select, purchase, use and evaluate travel products, services and experiences”. Aiming to have a better view on Finnish’s travel behaviour, the respondents were asked to answer a few questions about their travel goals, usual travel companion, how they weigh authenticity during their trips as well as their preferred type of accommodation. (Appendix 2.) Respondents’ travel goals are displayed in Figure 7, in which “Learn culture and history” and “Relax” are what most respondents want to achieve during their travel. Although learning culture plays an important part in their travel goals, Finnish travellers are not keen on interacting with the locals in accordance to their cultural interest, since only 65 people choose “Interact with

locals” as one of their goals. Other important travel goals were enjoying nature and trying local cuisine. This trend can be easily understood. Given the weather condition in Finland, many travellers go to another country aiming to escape from the bitterly cold winter and enjoy the sun-beach weather. At the same time, local food can be attractive to Finnish travellers as well since food is one of the most significant elements of a place’s culture. On the other hand, spending time with family and doing sports are not the main goal of most survey participants during their trip. Few have other goals such as work, photography or just simply to have fun.

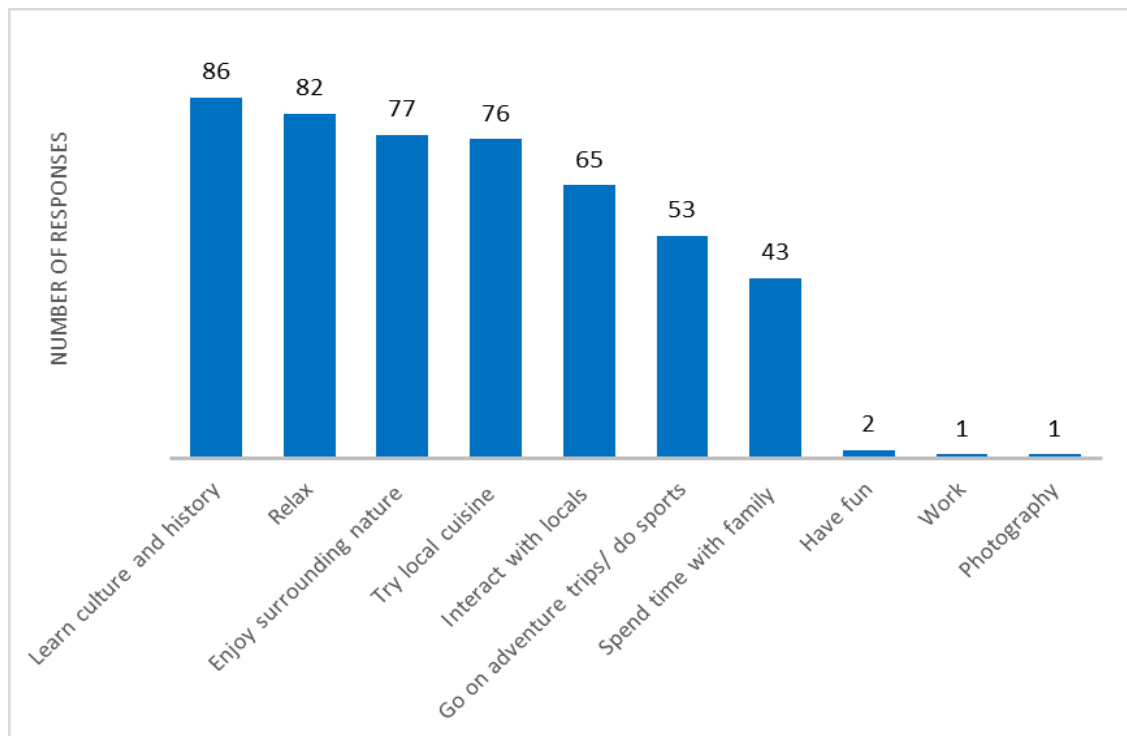


Figure 7 Respondents’ Travel Goals (N=98)

Finnish travellers’ travel goals can also be explained by how they weigh authenticity factor in their trip. Figure 8 shows how people responded when asked “How do you weigh the importance of authenticity in your trip” scaled from 1 to 5, in which 1 is not important at all to 5 is very important. Interestingly, there were 85 respondents answer that authenticity is either important or very important to their trip. As discussed in Chapter 2.4, authenticity have been emerging as a high demand of tourists these days. That statement is proven to be true based on the data collected from Finnish travellers. Although seeking for authenticity is

not listed in the travel goals, Finns have high expectation on this attribute during their travel. Aiming to learn about new culture, they look for experiencing the realness and uniqueness the destination provides, which are reflected by its people's way of living and cuisine. As discussed in Chapter 2, experiencing authenticity not only brings travellers better understanding about locals' culture but also helps them escaping the reality and experiencing the past, which can be a way to explore themselves as individuals.

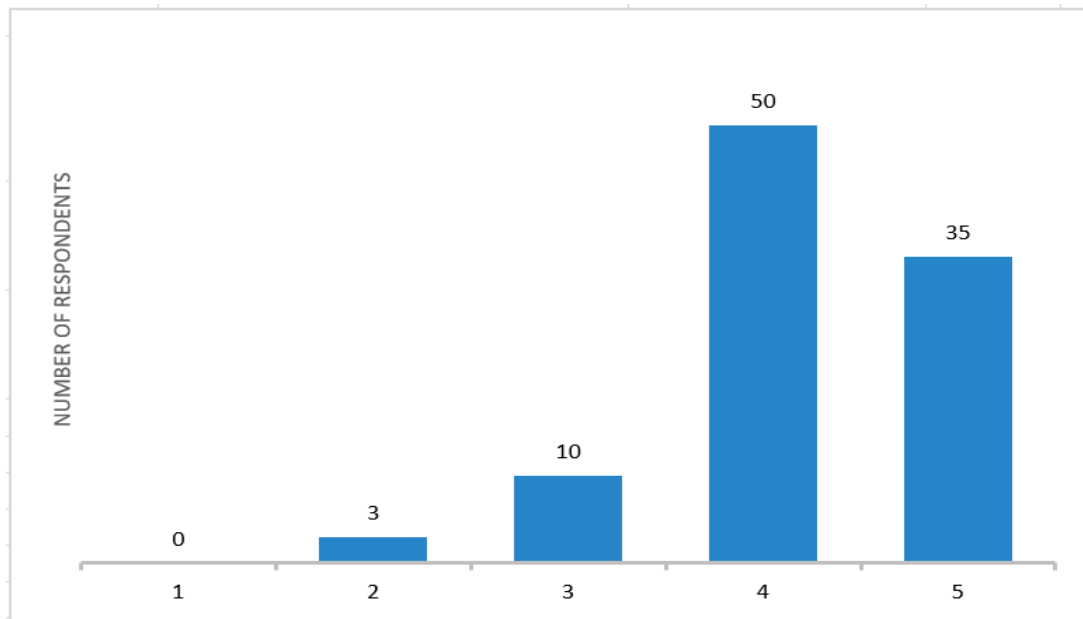


Figure 8 Importance of authenticity during the trip (N=98)

Figure 9 displays the usual travel companion of the survey respondents. Finnish appear as companion-needed travellers as they are more likely to travel with other people such as friends and family rather than alone. Most respondents prefer to travel with their family without children, following are friends and family with children. Travelling with business partners or relatives are understandably least usual with the total of 10 people choosing these answers.

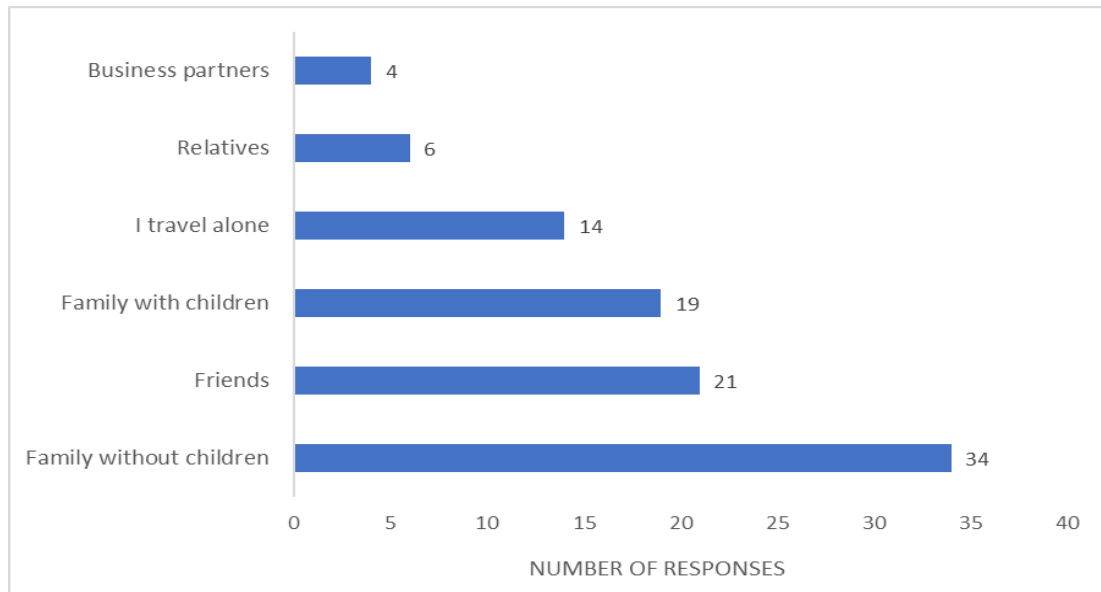


Figure 9 Respondents' Travel Partner (N=98)

With the great interest in learning new culture, at the same time Finnish travellers cannot leave out the leisure factor of their trip. According to their choice of accommodation, majority of travellers would prefer to stay in mid-range to luxury hotels. There are 47 out of 62 responses for this option came from people aged from 36 to 66 years old. Some other travellers would also choose to stay at budget hostels or private Airbnb, while only a few who would like to do Couchsurfing or stay in locals' home, guesthouse and other types of accommodations. The age range and occupational status can play a vital role in the preferred type of accommodation. It suggested that middle aged travellers with sufficient income would prefer traditional mid to high-end hotels than other types of new emerged types such as Airbnb, homestay or Couchsurfing. This identifies a challenge for Northern region service providers who wants to promote culture exploring tours in the mountainous area. According to Ha (2018), cultural tours based in highlands usually cannot provide high quality but only average services, which does not comprehend with Finnish travellers' preference.

Table 2 Preferred Type of Accommodation of Respondents (N=98)

Type of accommodation	Number of Respondents
3 to 5 stars hotel	62
Budget hostel	16
Private AirBnb	13
Home stay with the locals/ Couchsurfing	3
Guesthouse	1
1 to 3 stars hotel	1
Apartments (not AirBnb)	1
All mentioned	1

5.2 Respondents' Cultural Interests

To examine the respondents' perception of culture, they were asked to define the word "culture" in a short answer. There were 69 responses to this question. Figure 10 displays the overall idea of travellers' definition about culture in distinct categories. In general, Finnish travellers have a holistic view about culture, as they were able to name several, or all of the important factors lie behind culture. Most responses define culture with the highlight of local people and their daily lifestyle, customs and habits. Providing human interaction in society, people are the best reflector of a place's culture through their habits and way of thinking. Hence, similar to what UNESCO defined culture, Finnish travellers see people as the core of culture. Additionally, Finns also consider cuisine, arts, region, language and architecture as contributing elements of culture. Some participants also give other ideas to define culture such as the uniqueness of the place, how people evolve and location, which accounts for 14% of the total responses.

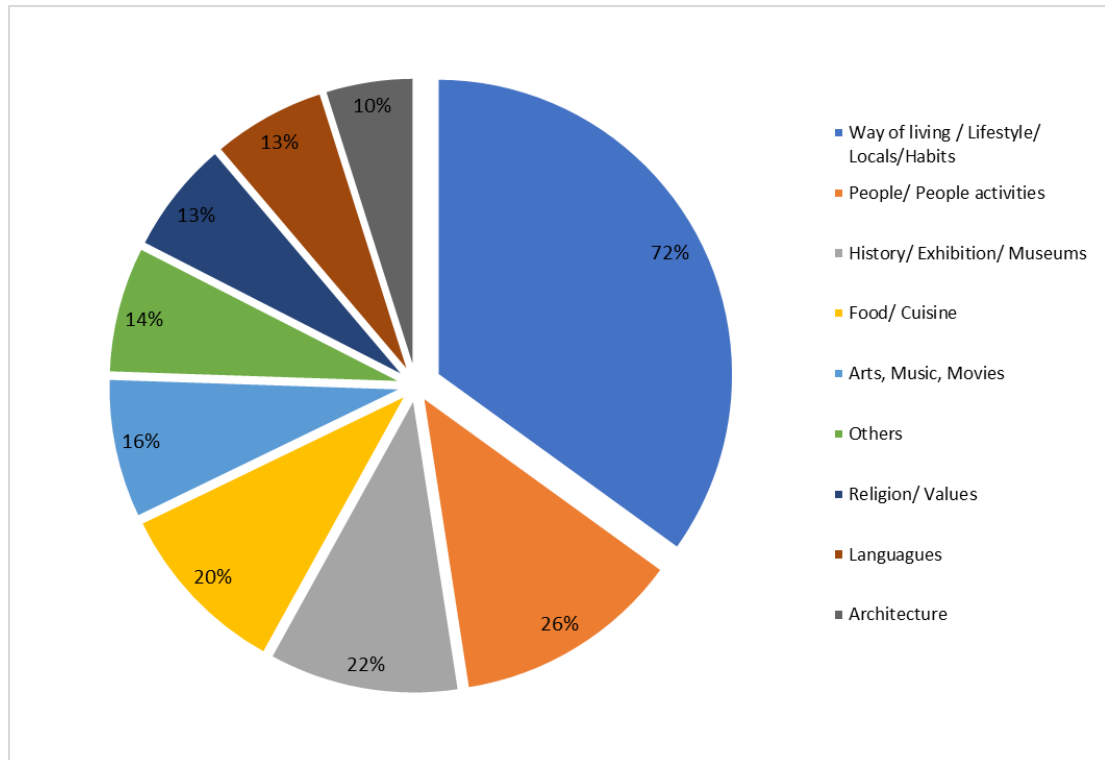


Figure 10 Respondents' Culture Definitions (N=69)

The respondents were asked about their interest in culture. More than 51% of them stated that they are very interested in culture, 38% are somewhat interested, 6% have neutral opinion and only 5% are not interested. Table 3 exhibits respondents' culture interest in detail by their age. The overall culture interest in different ages are high. Finns that are highly attracted by culture are either in the age of 26 to 35 or over 66 years old. Meanwhile, the average level of interest towards culture of people aged from 36 to 55 years old are interestingly lower compared to the others.

Table 3 Culture Interest by Age (N=98)

Age	Not interested at all	Not Interested	Neutral	Somewhat Interested	Very Interested	Average
18-25 years old	0	1	0	8	9	4.39
26-35 years old	0	1	3	5	7	4.75
36-45 years old	0	0	1	11	8	4.35
46-55 years old	0	2	2	9	12	4.24
56-65 years old	0	1	0	4	12	4.59
66 years old and above	0	0	0	0	2	5.00

When it comes to the question “What type of culture are you interested in?”, Finnish travellers show their extreme interest towards local lifestyle and customs as well as cuisine with 80 answers for both categories, as shown in Figure 11. Roughly half of the respondents are interest in architecture, music and arts. Only 25 people are attracted to crafts, and 1 specifically want to know more about the destination’s history.

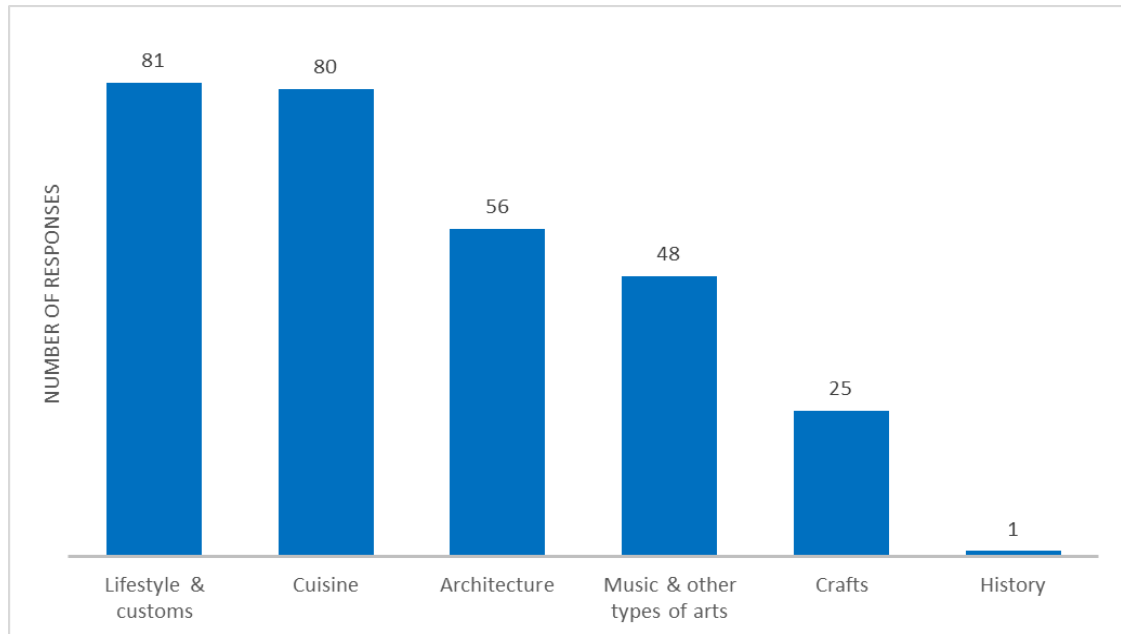


Figure 11 Attractive Types of Culture for Respondents. (N=98)

5.3 Respondents’ Interest towards Northern Vietnam Cultural Tourism

According to Finnish travellers’ cultural interests, Vietnam is an ideal destination for them to travel to. With thousand years of cultural heritage as well as the distinctive lifestyle of various ethnic groups living in the country, Finnish travellers are the exemplar target to promote Vietnamese cultural tourism to. This chapter will analyse and discuss the interest towards Vietnamese culture tourism in Vietnam in general and Northern region in specific, based on the answer of the survey participants.

According to the survey result, there are 59 out of 98 respondents who have never visited Vietnam; while the other 39 people have. Most people who have been to Vietnam have been to the North, which ratio is 28 out of 39. This comes as a surprise since it is believed that Finnish travellers are more likely to go to the

South, providing the direct flight opportunity, wide variety of tour package offers by local travel agencies and beach destinations along the coastline. Apart from the magnificent Ha Long Bay which made the reputation of Northern region, this area is seen as a less popular destination for Finnish travellers with the aim to relax and escape from the harsh weather in Finland.

To find out how Finnish travellers discovered Northern Vietnam culture, the respondents were asked what the sources of information are. The result is shown in Figure 12. Majority of respondents get information about Northern Vietnam culture through social media, which covers the internet, social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram; as well as blog posts. Compared to social media, half of the participants also receive information through traditional media. This means that they get the idea about the destination via book, magazine, television and movies. There are 22 respondents stated that they get information about Northern Vietnam through word of mouth, which can be from their friends, family or co-workers. It can be seen from the survey result that travel agencies need to better the promotion of Northern cultural tourism since there are only seven respondents received info from agency or from the hotel where they stay at. On the other hand, there were 3 respondents stated that they are not interested, thus they either do not need or have not search for the information. The rest of the survey participants said they do not have any information about the asked destination. As discussed in Chapter 3.2, one of the weaknesses Vietnamese tourism is facing is poor marketing and destination branding. By looking at the research result, it is believed that not only VNAT but also travel agencies and Destination Management Organizations in Vietnam should take online marketing into more serious consideration to promote the image of Northern Vietnam as an attractive cultural destination. Utilization of popular social media channels such as Instagram, Facebook; collaboration with travel bloggers and influencers could aids in the expansion of customer segments.

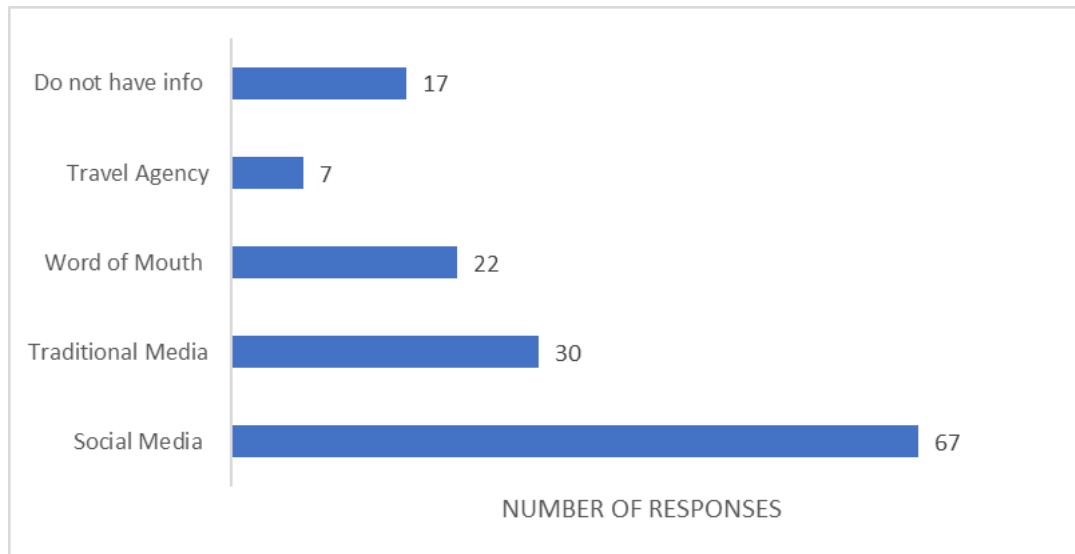


Figure 12 Source of information about Northern Vietnam (N=98).

Figure 13 displays the factors affect respondents' decision to visit Vietnam. Again, culture lies at the top of the list of motivations with 77 responds. Similar to general travel goals, a great proportion of Finnish travellers look for relaxation and nature surrounding at the destination. Not many respondents are motivated by sport or business and education opportunity. Apart from the motivations mentioned above, other respondents want to visit Vietnam because of the lower price level compared to Finland, and for photography purpose. On the other hand, three participants suggested that they had neither motivation nor interest to visit Vietnam.

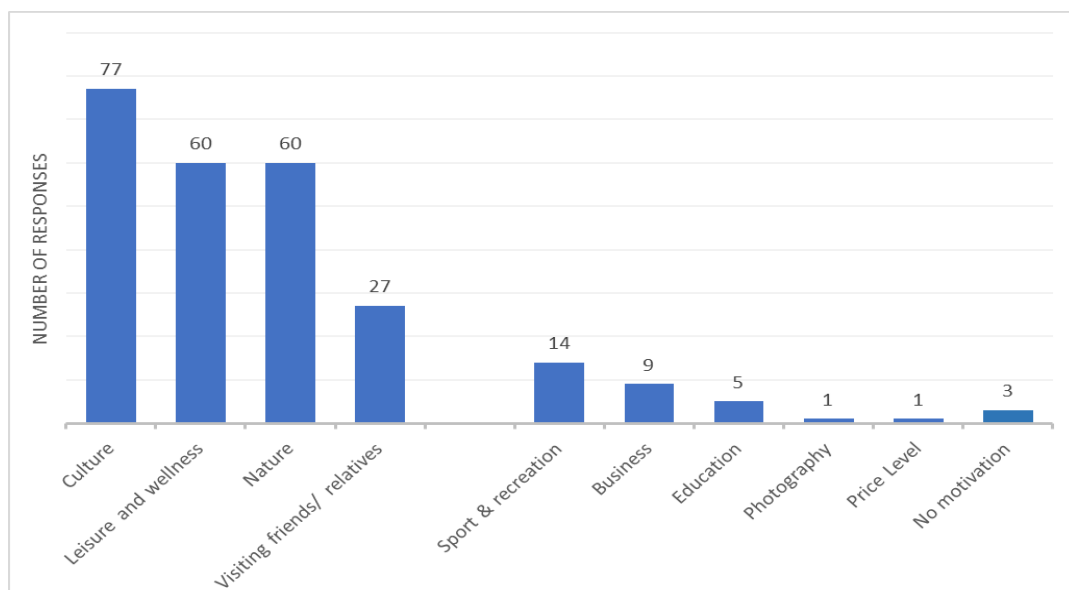


Figure 13 Motivations to visit Vietnam (N=98).

In order to gain deeper understanding about how attractive Vietnam and its Northern region are to the respondents who have not been there, open-ended questions were given to them to express their conception. There were about 50 respondents who actively share their opinion through their answers. Tables 4 and 5 display the comprehensive result of the likelihood as well as reasons for Finnish travellers to visit Vietnam in the future.

Table 4 Reasons to visit Vietnam (N=57) Table 5 Reasons to visit Northern Vietnam (N=53)

Would you like to travel to Vietnam? Why? (N=57)	Reasons	Number of respondents	Would you like to travel to Northern Vietnam? Why? (N=53)	Reasons	Number of respondents
YES (N=47)	Culture (Food/ People/Lifestyle/ History)	23	YES (N=37)	No particular reason	18
	Nature	12		Culture (Food/ People/Lifestyle/ History)	13
	Curiosity	8		Curiosity	4
	No particular reason	8		Nature	4
	Price level	3		Visiting Family/ Friends	2
NO		5	NO		5
MAYBE		4	MAYBE		5
DO NOT KNOW		1	DO NOT KNOW		6

It can be seen that the intention categories are almost identical between two sets of answers; however, the number of respondents is slightly different in each category. In both questions, the majority of respondents show great interest in visiting the mentioned destination. Respondents showed great fascination in Vietnamese culture in general. However, the number of respondents who mentioned culture as one of the reasons to visit Northern region is not as many. Similar to nature and curiosity. Survey participants are willing to go to Northern Vietnam, yet without any particular reason. This can be explained by the fact that they do not have much knowledge about the difference in culture between distinct parts of the country due to the lack of information. Travellers only have overall expectation about Vietnam as a whole but not in specific areas. This caused the number of travellers who have no particular reasons or do not know if they want

to travel to the North are higher, while the others who are not interested remains the same in two questions.

To give more ground to the statement above about Finnish travellers' overview about Vietnam, another open-ended question was asked. Out of 57 people who responded to the question relate to their experience and expectation about Vietnamese culture, 41 have a positive image about the destination (Table 6). The responses show the stereotypical image of Vietnam by the repeated mentioning of features such as, interesting culture, war history, friendly people, beautiful nature and favourable price level. Although the last 2 are not categorized in culture but it suggests the positive image Vietnam possess in the eye of Finnish travellers. Nevertheless, there are also negative opinion about Vietnam mentioned by respondents. Most of them are concerns about the traffic and criminal situation in Vietnam. This is unavoidable since there is numerous news regarding Vietnamese people taking advantage of tourists; some who have been there even experienced pick-pocketers. In addition, Finnish travellers can be overwhelmed with the traffic situation in Vietnam due to the high density of moped and traffic jam, which rarely happens in Finland. Apart from the positive and negative opinions, 14 respondents have no expectation about Vietnamese culture. A few others express their expectation is to compare Vietnamese culture to other South East Asia countries such as Laos, Thailand and Cambodia.

Table 6 Respondents' expectations and experiences about Vietnamese culture (N=57).

Give a few thoughts about Vietnamese culture: what are your expectations as well as experiences? (N=57)	Opinions	Number of Respondents
POSITIVE EXPERIENCE/ EXPECTATION (N=41)	Interesting History/ Culture/ Food	30
	Nice people/ lifestyle	23
	Beautiful Nature	12
	Cheap for travel	5
NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE/ EXPECTATION (N=4)	Traffic/ Crowded	2
	Rude people/ Criminal	2
	Unhygienic	1
	Poor English speakers	1
NO EXPERIENCE/ EXPECTATION		14
OTHERS		3

To measure exactly what intrigues Finnish travellers to visit Northern Vietnam, a grid question was provided. The main objective of this question is to look more closely into the attributes that makes Northern Vietnam culture tempting to targeted travellers. Table 7 displays the average point calculated from the respondents' answers. The most attractive categories from the survey participants' point of view from highest to lowest order is Lifestyle and Customs, Heritage and Cuisine. Generally, Finnish travellers are attracted to the locals' daily lifestyle. Ethnic minorities customs and festivals draw most attention to the respondents in this category. This suggests both potentials and challenges to the tour makers in Vietnam. According to Ha (2018), exploring highland culture tours are usually based in the mountainous area, therefore, the service cannot be luxury but only classic which means 2 to 3 stars, which does not match the majority of Finnish travellers' service standard. Thus, tour operators in Vietnam need to come up with a solution to the question: how to preserve the originality

of Northern destinations while still able to provide comfortable experiences for leisure tourists who demand higher quality services.

Table 7 Respondents' Interest Level of Different Cultural Elements (N=98)

Type of Culture		Not interested at all	Not interested	Neutral	Somewhat interested	Very interested	Total	Average
Cuisine (Avg. = 3.76)	Popular dishes (Pho, spring rolls, ...)	3	6	12	28	49	98	4.16
	Local/ Exotic dishes (buffalo jerky, goat, horse, ...)	16	11	20	24	27	98	3.36
Heritage (Avg. = 3.78)	Pagodas, temples, religious sites	5	5	13	41	34	98	3.96
	National heritage sites & historical monuments	2	4	10	41	41	98	4.17
	Music & other types of art	6	10	29	37	16	98	3.48
	Craft villages and workshops	3	20	22	31	22	98	3.50
Lifestyles & Customs (Avg. = 3.87)	Agricultural lifestyle	5	6	30	31	26	98	3.68
	Ethnic groups customs (way of living, ceremony,...)	4	7	14	38	35	98	3.95
	Traditional festivals & holidays	4	5	14	40	35	98	3.99

Within heritage category, national heritage and historical monuments have the high score of 4.17 on average. Many respondents show their fascination towards the history of Vietnam, especially about the Vietnam war. It has been one of the significant factors that shape the country as we see today. Various documentaries about that period have been made known via traditional media and the internet, which draw intention to tourists to visit Vietnam for such reason, which includes Finnish. In terms of cuisine, Finnish travellers display high interest in popular dishes such as Pho, spring rolls and bun cha with the second-highest average score of 4.16, whereas other exotic food category hold the lowest score among all attributes. Finns are more acquaint to the food they have tried in Finland; hence it is important for them to try the authentic version at the destination. On the other hand, more exotic dishes such as smoked buffalo or the highland specialty - 'thắng cố' which has been described in chapter 3, can appear as an extraordinary delicacy for Finnish travellers.

6 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the author will sum up the findings as well as suggest several ideas for future development. As mentioned in the introduction, the aim of this thesis was to identify Finnish travellers' perception of Northern Vietnamese culture tourism in order to better promote the destination image. The number of Finnish travellers visiting Vietnam has been on an increasing trend, which places Finland among the top 30 countries that has most visitors to Vietnam in 2018. Being one of the potential markets to Vietnamese tourism, it is necessary for tour operators in Vietnam to understand Finnish travellers' needs and wants to come up with sufficient strategies. Several researches have been conducted about Vietnam as a tourist destination, but none of them review culture as a primary attraction to tourists. Therefore, it is believed that this research can shed some light on this matter.

By using qualitative method with open-ended and scale questions survey to collect data, the author was able to gather valuable information from the respondents. There were 98 Finnish citizens participating in the survey. With about 50 participants actively shared their personal opinions on the open-ended questions. This data helped in generating a general social idea on how Finnish travellers perceive culture and how it affects their decision to visit Northern Vietnam.

Regarding the reliability of this research, they are based on Finnish respondents to the survey. The author has carefully recorded and analysed the information to get the most accurate and suitable result for the general population. The responses are accumulated from Finnish travellers' own opinion and experience on Vietnam cultural tourism in the Northern region. There were 2 responds made by Vietnamese and Thai, which need to be eliminated for the precision of the end result. Therefore, it can be said that the data is Finnish-centred, which meets the criteria of the research problems. On the other hand, since the survey was conducted in English, there might be a small amount of people who cannot understand it fully to give the sufficient response. For example, short answer questions were not answered by everyone and some of them were in Finnish. While collecting the data, one of the respondents pointed out a problem with the

question about marriage status. She is living with her partner without being married, however that option was not available to select. Consequently, the yielded demographic result can be affected by this lack of option. As the study's results are mainly dependent on the information collected from the survey participants, it can be valid for the whole group of Finnish travellers to a certain degree. Despite the number of respondents was adequate to generalize the results, it is suggested to conduct further research to ensure the validity and reliability of the research results.

It can be seen from the collected data that Finnish travellers are scattered in different age groups, most of them are either employed or receiving education. Finns can be categorized as cultural tourists, since culture affects greatly on their decision in travelling to another destination. They expect a mixture of relaxation and culture learning during their trips. Moreover, a high level of authenticity is sought in their cultural experience, which identifies Finnish as purposeful culture travellers in general. This trait is equally found in all respondents regardless the difference of their age. However, according to McKercher & Du Cros (2009), the cultural tourist type can vary between travellers as well as the situation.

Relaxation is an instrumental element for Finnish holiday-makers. Based on the accommodation preference, Finns expect to have a decent service quality provided by mid to high-end hotels, which can make their stay at the destination more comfortable with their friends and families. This indicates an increasing demand in high quality accommodation and services in Northern region, of which the destination is now being undersupply. Understanding the customers' travel behaviour and the current situation, tour operators and DMOs in Vietnam can now identify the challenges they are facing; hence come up with solutions to accommodate the needs and wants of the high potential customers in the coming years.

Finnish travellers not only have great interest in learning new cultures, but they also have a good understanding of the term. For most of them, culture is derived mainly from people's lifestyle, way of thinking, habits, cuisine and history. Based on the survey result, it can be seen that Finnish travellers show high level of interest in Vietnamese culture, especially in local lifestyle, customs, history and

cuisine. They do not only visit Vietnam for the sun sand beach experience but also with great intention of learning the place's culture. Given the diverse and rich cultural heritage in the North, this area can provide unforgettable journeys for Finnish purposeful cultural travellers.

Matchmaking travellers' interest with what the destination can provide is vital to promoting the destination to potential customer segments. Based on the survey results, despite the large number of Finns who have not visited Vietnam, most of them have positive image of the destination. Friendly people, stunning nature and captivating culture are the general pre-image of the destination. Looking at current state of Vietnamese cultural tourism, it can be seen that more actions should be taken to better the destination branding to European market segment in general and Finnish market in specific. Thus, tourism boards in Vietnam should enhance this image of Vietnam in the eye of travellers. Introducing the people and lifestyle of Vietnamese people through different media channels, organizing workshops, as well as actively taking part in tourism conference in Finland and neighbouring countries to expand travellers' knowledge of Northern Vietnamese as a tempting destination not only for its nature but also for people and culture.

Learning culture is one of the most important goals of Finnish travellers to visit Northern Vietnam. Similar to how UNESCO defines culture, Finns perceived people's way of life as its core. Hence, Northern Vietnamese lifestyle can be used as main attraction for cultural tourism. The vast number of ethnic minorities living in the North of Vietnam gives the destination a captivating characteristic. Distinctive lifestyles, customs and habits of different ethnic groups such as the Dzao, Hmong and Thai can provide travellers with endless opportunity to acquire new knowledge. The distinguished way of living can be recognized explicitly during special occasions. Therefore, it is suggested to organize culture exploring tours to mountainous areas preferably during Lunar New Year and the following months. Since during that time, most important festivals are occurred, namely Gau Tao, Lim Festivals as well as the traditional Love Market in Khau Vai. During festivals, traditional rituals, competition and art performances and games are held. By introducing cultural tours during this time of the year, travellers are exposed to locals' tradition, entertainment and experience Northerners' customs in the most authentic way.

It is emphasized in the survey result that Finnish travellers are fascinated by Northern Vietnam cultural heritage, of which the destination has an abundant source. Based on Finnish travellers' interest on historical sites, Northern Vietnam possess various remnants of colonialism from different periods such as the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, Dien Bien Phu battlefield as well as Hoa Lo Prison and various war museums. Northern Vietnamese history not only shown in historical sites and monuments but also in the destination's cuisine. Finns are familiar with Northern Vietnamese delicacies such as pho, bun cha and banh mi due to the large number of Vietnamese immigrants in Finland. Thus, it triggers them to not only try the authentic food but also learn about its origin. In addition to reputative dishes, exotic highland cuisine is also one of the hidden charms in Vietnamese cuisine. Although this food category has not won the Finnish travellers' attention, it could be included in highland cultural exploring tours to give Finns a complete sense of authentic experiences they seek for. The authenticity element in cuisine, however, can be somehow modified to be adapted by travellers' palate. For example, some ingredients in Vietnamese 'thắng cố' might appear as extreme for Finns; therefore, some elements can be altered to fit with customers' appetite, while the cooking techniques and ways to enjoy the dish remains the same in order to best keep the authenticity of the experience. Tour makers can consider organizing tours which combine both sightseeing, visiting locals' home to have cooking lessons or food tour around the city for a holistic experience.

On the other hand, it is important to point out the interesting facts which makes the other less popular cultural elements such as arts and crafts stand out. In contrary to lifestyle and cuisine, Finnish travellers have little knowledge as well as intention to get to know Vietnamese arts, crafts and music. However, these types of performed arts and handicrafts act as live documentaries that reflect and carry on Northern Vietnamese people thinking, habits and customs through times. Thus, it is important to develop Finnish travellers' knowledge on it by promoting cultural trips which involves partaking in art shows, workshops and hands on experiences. For instance, a day trip consists of visit to craft villages such as Bat Trang for ceramic workshops or self-made woodblock paintings in Dong Ho village in the morning to learn about the life of Vietnamese artisans.

Afterwards, travellers can wrap up the day in Hanoi to enjoy a water puppet show, which brings them closer to Northern Vietnamese people's life in the past by listening to folk tales and reliving heroic moments by the vibrant performance of the puppets dancing on water. Being an important part of culture, developing handicraft tours in Northern region can become a highly potential attraction to not only Finnish but also tourists from all around the world in the future.

However, there are several challenges that Northern Vietnam cultural tourism is facing. Firstly, Finnish travellers only have general knowledge about Vietnamese culture but do not have enough information about the difference between areas. Therefore, to be able to attract tourist to the North, not only the official tourism board but also tour operators should focus on building the image of Northern Vietnamese culture. Better promotion of Vietnamese culture should be performed widely on the internet, official account of Vietnamese Tourism Boards should be more active on highly competitive social media channels such as Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. Travel guides which give clear highlights about cultural difference between region to accentuate the diversity and richness of the country's cultural heritage, lifestyle and values. This way, tourists will be provided with high quality and trustworthy information from official sources, as well as inspiration to go to Northern Vietnam as an ideal destination for culture learning. Secondly, there is a lack of service infrastructure and sufficient quality in the potential destinations for culture tours. In order to match with Finnish travellers' behaviour, sustainable service and construction development should be taken into account in mountainous areas by VNAT and local DMOs. Thirdly, Vietnamese tour-makers should take authenticity into serious account while providing cultural trips. Since it is an instrumental factor affecting travellers' experience, meanwhile can sometimes be problematic to deliver the genuine ideas due to the divergence in individuals' perception about the matters. Moreover, authenticity is experienced by travellers in different ways and levels; thus, tour makers should also consider ways of using staged authenticity which brings about the closest to original experiences to their targeted customers.

All in all, this paper provides an overall view of Finnish travellers' profile as purposeful cultural tourists and their interest towards Northern Vietnam culture. It shows the ultimate goals of Finnish visiting Vietnam is combining learning

culture and relaxing. Despite high interest in visiting Northern Vietnam, Finnish travellers do not have clear idea about Northern region culture due to the lack of information received. This paper provides evidences showing Northern Vietnam has an abundant source of culture heritage to deliver endless culture learning opportunities for Finnish travellers to the destination. Therefore, it is suggested that improvement in destination marketing should be performed, especially on internet platforms since it is the main source of information Finnish travellers use. Destination infrastructure and service quality should also be developed in order to meet the demands of Finnish travellers. Tour operators in Vietnam should consider combining several cultural elements in developing their tourism product to be able to provide Finnish guests with comprehensively authentic experiences. In summary, despite the limitation of the research, it definitely provides a solid base for future study to be conducted to develop strategies to attract Finnish travellers to Northern Vietnam as a culture destination.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BNews 2018. Phong tục đón Tết của các dân tộc miền núi phía Bắc. In English: Lunar New Year Celebrating Tradition of Northern Ethnic Groups. Accessed 28 January 2019 <https://bnews.vn/phong-tuc-don-tet-cua-cac-dan-toc-mien-nui-phia-bac/77107.html>.

CPI 2017. Dẻo Thơm Xôi Ngũ Sắc Vùng Tây Bắc. English: Five-colour Sticky Rice in Northwest Area. Accessed 29 October 2018 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8Gwcbn4opQ&index=1&list=PLbCVtdofqLktPZcx9uESxWqQM28pPtMV>.

Csapo, J. 2012. The Role and Importance of Cultural Tourism in Modern Tourism Industry. Strategies for Tourism Industry-Micro and Macro Perspectives. InTech

Dao, D. A. 1992. Việt Nam Văn Hoá Sử Cương. English: Overview of Vietnam Culture and History. Ho Chi Minh City Publisher. Ho Chi Minh City.

Dreyer, A. 2000. Der Markt für Kulturtourismus. Dreyer 2000, 25–48.

Derre, L. 2010. The Relationship Between Authenticity and the Tourist Experience. Case Study: Budget Travellers in Bruges, 1–10. Accessed 24 September 2018 http://www.steunpunttoerisme.be/main/files/nieuwsbrief/oktober_2008/paperNVVS_derre.pdf.

Eurostat 2018. Participation in Tourism for Personal Purposes By Age Group (number of tourists). Accessed 14 October 2018 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tin00187&plugin=1>.

Far East Tour 2016. Vietnamese Traditional House On Stilts - Vietnam Culture. Accessed 28 January 2019 <https://www.fareastour.asia/destination/detail/vietnamese-traditional-house-on-stilts-vietnam-culture-26.html>.

Gaboriault, D. 2009. Vietnamese Water Puppet Theatre: A Look Through the Ages. Western Kentucky University. Honors College. Thesis Project. Accessed 23 October 2018 http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/stu_hon_theses/205.

Guy, J. & Stevenson, J. 1997. The Evolution of Vietnamese Ceramics. Accessed 12 March 2019 <https://web.archive.org/web/20070930152448/http://www.thingsasian.com/stories-photos/1194>.

Ha, G. 2018. Khanh Sinh International Tourism Ltd., Sale Executive. Interview with Khanh Sinh Tourism Ltd.'s Sale Executive 16 October 2018.

HanoiTV 2017. Phong Tục Đón Tết Của Các Dân Tộc Miền Núi. In English: Lunar New Year Celebration of Mountainous Ethnic Groups. Accessed 28

January 2019 <http://hanoitv.vn/phong-tuc-don-tet-cua-cac-dan-toc-mien-nui-d58551.html>.

ICOMOS 1999. International Cultural Tourism Charter: Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance (8th draft). Mexico City.

Ivanovic, M. 2008. Cultural Tourism. Cape Town: Juta & Company, Ltd.

Jennings, G. 2013. Tourism Research. National library of Australia.

Khanh Sinh Tour 2018. About Us. Accessed 18 March 2018
<http://khanhsinh.com/en/about-us.htm>.

Koumelis, T. 2012. Finnair to Open Direct Route to Hanoi in Summer 2013. Accessed 14 October 2018 <https://www.traveldailynews.com/post/finnair-to-open-direct-route-to-hanoi-in-summer-2013-52275>.

Le, P. 2013. Terraced Field Farming Culture In Northern Vietnam. Accessed 28 January 2019 <http://vovworld.vn/en-US/culture/terraced-field-farming-culture-in-northern-vietnam-194873.vov>.

Leslie, D., Sigala, M. & Peltonen, A. 2005. International cultural tourism: Management, Implications and Cases. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Love Market 2016. Documentary. Etherium Sky Films & Media. Accessed 28 January 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiONEA0pFaE&vl=en>.

MacCannell, D. 1973. Staged authenticity: Arrangements of social space in tourist settings. American journal of Sociology, Vol. 79 No. 3, 589–603.

McKercher, B. & Du Cros, H. 2009. Cultural Tourism: The Partnership Between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management. New York: Routledge.

McLeod, W. M., Nguyen, T. D. 2001. Culture and Customs of Vietnam. London: Greenwood Press.

Messukeskus 2018. Tourism Survey 2018: Finns travel to break away from their busy everyday lives – responsibly. Accessed 12 October 2018
<https://messukeskus.com/press-release/tourism-survey-2018-finns-travel-break-away-busy-everyday-lives-responsibly/?lang=en>.

Mikos von Rohrscheidt A., 2008, Turystyka kulturowa. Fenomen, potencjał, perspektywy, GWSHM Milenium, Gniezno.

Mousavi, S. S., Doratli, N., Mousavi, S. N., & Moradiahari, F. 2016. Defining Cultural Tourism. U International Conference on Civil, Architecture and Sustainable Development. pp. 1–2.

Monaco, E. 2015. The French Influence on Vietnamese Cuisine. Accessed 29 October 2018 <https://epicureandculture.com/vietnamese-cuisine-french-influence/>.

Newman, G.E., Smith, R.K. 2016. Kinds of Authenticity. *Philosophy Compass*, 11/10, 609–618.

Official Website Vietnam Tourism 2018. Vietnam Tourism Launches www.vietnam.travel. Accessed 9 October 2018 <https://vietnam.travel/vietnam-official-tourism-website>.

Que Huong Online 2009. Chợ Tình Ở Vùng Cao: Cái Tình Không Bán. In English: Highland Love Market: The Love That Cannot be Sold. Accessed 28 January 2019 <http://quehuongonline.vn/gioi-thieu-ban-sac-van-hoa/cho-tinh-o-vung-cao-cai-tinh-khong-ban-8778.htm>.

Ramkissoon, H., & Uysal, M. 2010. Testing the role of authenticity in cultural tourism consumption: A case of Mauritius. *Tourism Analysis*, Vol.15, 571–583.

Richards, G. 2007. *Cultural Tourism: Global and Local Perspectives*. Psychology Press.

Reisinger, Y. 2009. *International tourism: Cultures and behaviour*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Rennick, L. 2018. North vs South: The Many Faces of Pho. Accessed 12 March 2019 <https://www.sbs.com.au/food/article/2018/04/30/north-vs-south-many-faces-pho>.

Rohrscheidt, A. M. V. 2008. Cultural Tourism – Concerning the Definition. *Turystyka kulturowa*, 1, 46–62. Accessed 20 September 2018 http://www.turystykakulturowa.org/pdf/2008_11_01EN.pdf.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. 2009. *Research Methods for Business Students*. England: Pearson Education Limited.

Sekhar, N. U. 2005. Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Vietnam: Present Potentials and Future Challenges. *Ocean and Coastal Management*, vol. 48, pp. 813– 827.

Sharpley, R. 1994. *Tourism, Tourists and Society*. Huntingdon: ELM.

Smith, M.K. 2009. *Issues in Cultural Tourism*. New York: Routledge Publisher.

Stebbins, R. A. 1996. Cultural Tourism as Serious Leisure. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 948-950.

Thang Long Water Puppet Theatre 2018. The History of Vietnamese Puppetry Art. Accessed 24 October 2018 <http://thanglongwaterpuppet.org/en/the-history-of-vietnamese-puppetry-art/>.

Thanh Thong Media 2016. Đặc Sản Vùng Tây Bắc Món Thắng Cổ. English: Thang Co – Northwest Specialty. Accessed 29 October 2018 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkgMJ7nW_Jc&t=446s.

Tran, L. 2013. *Measuring the Perceived Destination Image of Vietnam in Finland*. University of Lapland, Faculty of Social Sciences. Pro Gradu Thesis.

Trekking Sapa 2018. My Unforgettable Experiences While Visiting the Sapa Highland in Vietnam (Part 1). Accessed 12 March 2019
<https://www.trekkingsapa.com/news/unforgettable-experiences-visiting-sapa-highland-vietnam-part-1/>.

UNESCO 2017. Cultural Diversity. Accessed 16 March 2018
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/cultural-diversity/>.

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage 2019. Quan Họ Bắc Ninh Folk Songs. Accessed 12 March 2019 <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/quan-ho-bac-ninh-folk-songs-00183>.

UNESCO World Heritage Centre 2019. State Parties. Vietnam. Accessed 12 March 2019 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/vn>.

University of Northern British Columbia 2008. How to Have an Authentic Experience. Accessed 24 September 2018
https://www.unbc.ca/assets/outdoor_recreation_tourism_management/new_courses/authentic_experiences.pdf.

UNWTO 1985. The State's Role in Protecting and Promoting Culture as a Factor of Tourism Development and the Proper Use and Exploitation of the National Cultural Heritage of Sites and Monument for Tourism. Madrid: World Tourism Organization.

–2005. City Tourism & Culture: The European Experience. Accessed 28 January 2019
<http://81.47.175.201/stodomingo/attachments/article/122/CityTourismCulture.pdf>.

Viet Bao 2014. Quan họ Bắc Ninh - Văn hóa phi vật thể. In English: Quan Ho Bac Ninh – Intangible Cultural Heritage. Accessed 23 October 2018
<http://vietbao.vn/Kham-pha-Viet-Nam/Quan-ho-Bac-Ninh-Van-hoa-phi-vat-the/2131856081/148/>.

Vietnam Discovery 2014. Hương Vị Ẩm Thực Mường [Du Lịch Văn Hóa Việt Nam]. In English: Taste of Muong Cuisine. Accessed 28 January 2019
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODZPT1GRHnM>.

–2017. Tây Bắc | Món Ăn Nặng Tinh Tây Bắc. In English: Northwest | Signature Food of the Northwest. Accessed 28 January 2019
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYM_QBw8hKY&list=PLbCVtdofqILktPZcx9uESxWqQM28pPtMV&index=23.

Viet Nam National Administration of Tourism 2018a. Northern Midland and Mountainous Region. Accessed 9 October 2018
<http://www.vietnamtourism.com/en/index.php/tourism/items/2880>.

– 2018b. Events-News. News. Accessed 10 October 2018
<http://www.vietnamtourism.com/en/index.php/news/cat/01>.

– 2018c. Red River Delta and North East Coast. Accessed 9 October 2018 <http://www.vietnamtourism.com/en/index.php/tourism/items/2874>.

– 2018d. Tourism Potentials. Accessed 27 February 2018 <http://www.vietnamtourism.com/en/index.php/about/items/2839>.

– 2018e. Tourism Statistics. International Visitors. Accessed 10 October 2018 <http://vietnamtourism.gov.vn/english/index.php/cat/1501>.

Vietnam Culture 2019. Vietnamese Traditional Stilt Houses. Accessed 28 January 2019 <http://www.vietnam-culture.com/articles-220-34/Vietnamese-Traditional-Stilt-Houses.aspx>.

Vietnam, Destinations and Travel Tips 2016. Map of Regions of Vietnam. Accessed 9 October 2018 <https://travel.voyagevietnam.co/map-of-regions-of-vietnam/>.

Vietnam Travel Information 2014. 10 Interesting Festivals on The First Lunar Month in The North of Vietnam. Accessed 21 January 2019 <http://vietnamtravelinformation.net/10-interesting-festivals-on-the-first-lunar-month-in-the-north-of-vietnam/>.

VOV Online 2017. Reviving Vietnam's Folk Art of Dong Ho Woodcut Painting. Accessed 23 October 2018 <https://english.vov.vn/culture/reviving-vietnams-folk-art-of-dong-ho-woodcut-painting-359978.vov>.

Wang, N. 1999. Rethinking Authenticity in Tourism Experience. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol 26, No 2, 349-370.

Wikimedia Commons 2018. Category: Dong Ho Painting. Accessed 23 October 2018 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Dong_Ho_painting.

– 2018b. Category: Bát Tràng Porcelain. Accessed 23 October 2018 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:B%C3%A1t_Tr%C3%A0ng_porcelain.

Williams, R. 1983. *Key words: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Fontana, London.

–1998. *The Analysis of Culture*. In J. Storey (ed.) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 48–56.

Yeoman, I., Brass, D. & McMahon-Beattie, U. 2007. Current Issues in Tourism: The Authentic Tourist. *Tourism Management*, vol. 28, pp 1128–1138.

Zhang, Y., & Wildemuth, B.M. 2005. *Qualitative Analysis of Content*. Accessed 13 March 2019 https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~yanz/Content_analysis.pdf

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Interview with Khanh Sinh Tourism Ltd.'s Sale Executive

Appendix 2 Survey on Vietnamese Culture Tourism

Appendix 1 1(2) Interview with Khanh Sinh Tourism Ltd.'s Sale Executive

Author: Which international market take the major part in Northern Vietnam Tours offered by Khanh Sinh Tours? Especially are there many Finnish customers?

Interviewee: At the moment the majority of our company's customers are Korean, Chinese, umm, Malaysian, Singaporean and Japanese. I am not very sure about the exact number, but Korean market is huge. There can be a few million guests coming each year, a lot. But unfortunately, we have not yet received many Finnish tourists as I recall.

Author: Are you planning to develop culture-focused tours in the North of Vietnam in the near future to attract more European tourists? If yes, how are you going to do it?

Interviewee: Yes, we really want to expand our operation for more customers and we have been trying to improve it every day. With that being said, our goals are improving our marketing on Google and different social media sites; add more destinations to what we have now and also improve our service quality.

Author: Do you allow travelers to customize their trip or do you only sell premade packaged tours?

Interviewee: Yes, we do it upon customer's request. If they want to explore the destination by their own, we will help them with hotel booking and transportation, and they will have other services such as sightseeing tickets, food and drinks at their own expense.

Author: Ok, could you tell me if there is any difference in number between tourists who take luxury tours and exploring culture tours?

Interviewee: Actually, luxury tours are mostly leisure tours. Customers will spend time in 5 stars resort or cruises in Ha Long Bay, while resorts can be mentioned are all over Vietnam. On the other hand, exploring tours are usually based in the mountainous area, therefore, the service cannot be luxury but only classic which means 2 to 3 stars. Those tours are made for travelers who like to explore and learn about new culture and experience new things, that group of customers are more likely to take part in cultural tours. While other older or wealthy group of customers are more likely to take part in luxury tours.

Author: So, about the explorer type of customers, where do they usually come from?

Interviewee: It depends, for example European customers tend to buy luxury tours, while British and younger travelers are the ones who purchase adventure and cultural tours. Actually, there is no certain number of which country's traveler like to go on cultural or luxury tours, but it depends on the age group and if they are interested or not. However, as I have been working with them, I realized that the adventure and cultural tourists are usually young British. German and others prefer basic, easy leisure tours. Because exploring culture tours are usually very tough and tiring, so it requires travelers to have physical ability. Asian travelers also don't do much exploring tours. Generally, I think that there are not many tourists who take part in real adventuring and exploring tours, that number is still low.

Appendix 1 2(2)

Author: umm, so do you collect feedbacks from customers who have taken your tours?

Interviewee: Yes, we do, every day. We have to have our customers feedback on every service we provide from hotels, transportation, drivers, tour guide, food... every service will be evaluated daily. We will base on that feedback to improve our service quality.

Author: Yes, ok, so, looking at cultural tours you have been offering, what do you think are their strengths and weaknesses?

Interviewee: Only cultural tours? Hmm, cultural tours we normally have, umm, only organized tours for customers to visit and learn about locals' lifestyles. Umm, about music and performed arts, we also have tours for customers to experience it in different regions, because each region has their own culture. So, our strength is we have good understanding about that information so that we can organize those tours for our guests. And about weaknesses of our tours, I think that we still haven't been able to develop this group of customers. There are not many tourists coming to us for cultural tours.

Author: So, about your customers, do they usually book their tours online or do they come to the office to book directly?

Interviewee: We have both, half of our customers will book online and half of them will come directly here to book their trip. Especially for tourists who want to customize their trip, they will come here to book several independent tours. And for those who book online, they will book our pre planned packaged tours.

Author: From your point of view, how do you think about your online sales and marketing? Is it one of your strengths?

Interviewee: Hmm, about sales and marketing online...it is not really our strength. We are still developing it and updating daily, but it is still not our strength. To further develop it, I think we still have to invest a lot more in advertising, but we haven't invested much in it yet. So, it is still at a moderate level.

Author: Speaking of European tourists, do you have a specific target market group or are you treating them equally?

Interviewee: We are developing on these markets equally. We have been receiving customers from European countries such as Germany, Russia or Australia, American, we have all of them. But to be honest, as I see from last year until now, we receive more Asian tourists than European ones. It might be that they have redirected their trip to other countries or our country's tourism marketing is not very good, I don't really know. But the number of European tourists has been decreasing significantly. Therefore, our company is not focusing on any specific market in Europe, but we are developing it equally between all countries.

If you need detailed information on number of tourists, you can send me an email and I can give you exact number on the top 5 nationalities that comes to us every year.

Author: That would be great, thank you very much for your time.

Interviewee: (smile) No problem!

Appendix 2 Survey on Vietnamese Culture Tourism

3/11/2019

Survey on Vietnamese Culture Tourism

Survey on Vietnamese Culture Tourism

This survey is part of my Bachelor thesis at Lapland University of Applied Sciences. The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out how Finnish travelers perceive culture tourism in the Northern part of Vietnam as well as to what extent culture interests the target group when travelling to the destination.

All responses will be kept confidential and will only be used by the author and the commissioner of the thesis. The questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

Should you have any questions or feedback regarding the survey, please do not hesitate to contact me via email: anh.le@edu.lapinamk.fi

* Required

General Information

1. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

2. Age *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 18-25 years old
- ☐ 26-35 years old
- ☐ 36-45 years old
- ☐ 46-55 years old
- ☐ 56-65 years old
- ☐ 66 years old and above

3. Nationality

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Finnish
- ☐ Swedish
- ☐ Norwegian
- ☐ Danish
- ☐ Other: _____

3/11/2019

Survey on Vietnamese Culture Tourism

4. Status **Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Married, no children
- ☐ Married, has children

5. Occupation **Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Employed
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Retired

Travelers' Typology

6. What do you want to achieve when you travel? (multiple answers) **Check all that apply.*

- ☐ Relax
- ☐ Spend time with family
- ☐ Try local cuisine
- ☐ Learn culture and history
- ☐ Go on adventure trips/ do sports
- ☐ Interact with locals
- ☐ Enjoy surrounding nature
- ☐ Other: _____

7. With whom do you usually travel? **Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ I travel alone
- ☐ Family with children
- ☐ Family without children
- ☐ Relatives
- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Business partners

3/11/2019

Survey on Vietnamese Culture Tourism

8. What type of accommodation would you prefer? **Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ 3 to 5 stars hotel
- ☐ Private AirBnb
- ☐ Budget hostel
- ☐ Home stay with the locals/ Couchsurfing
- ☐ Other: _____

9. How would you define the word 'culture'? Please give a short answer.

10. Are you interested in culture? **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

11. What type of culture are you interested in? **Check all that apply.*

- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Cuisine
- ☐ Crafts
- ☐ Lifestyle & customs
- ☐ Music & other types of arts
- ☐ Other: _____

12. How do you weigh the importance of authenticity in your trip? **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important

Travel Interests in Vietnam

3/11/2019

Survey on Vietnamese Culture Tourism

13. Have you been to Vietnam? **Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

14. If no, would you like to travel there? Why?

15. What are the motivations for you to visit Vietnam? **Check all that apply.*

- ☐ Business
- ☐ Culture
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Nature
- ☐ Leisure and wellness
- ☐ Visiting friends/ relatives
- ☐ Sport and recreation
- ☐ Other:

Travel interests in Northern Vietnam**16. Have you been to Northern Vietnam ****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

17. If no, would you like to go there? Why?

18. How did you get information on Northern Vietnamese culture? **Check all that apply.*

- ☐ Internet (social media, travel blogs...)
- ☐ Traditional Media (books, newspapers, magazines, TV, ...)
- ☐ Travel Agency
- ☐ Friends & families' recommendations
- ☐ Other:

What is your level of interest regarding the following cultural elements?<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1rQc7L2rcWo7wL7YURzvnNnmDCqgP-TUmWtOMhxSt6zo/edit>

4/6

1. Cuisine

19. Popular dishes (Pho, spring rolls, ...) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

20. Local/ Exotic dishes (buffalo jerky, goat, horse, ...) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

2. Heritage

21. Pagodas, temples, religious sites *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

22. National heritage sites & historical monuments *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

23. Music & other types of art *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

24. Craft villages and workshops *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

3. Lifestyle & Customs

3/11/2019

Survey on Vietnamese Culture Tourism

25. Agricultural lifestyle **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

26. Ethnic groups customs (way of living, ceremony,...) **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

27. Traditional festivals & holidays **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very interested

28. Finally, give a few thoughts about Vietnamese culture: what are your expectations as well as experiences?

Powered by

