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ENHANCING MALABON'S GASTRONOMIC TOURISM THROUGH THE MARKETING MIX: BASIS FOR A STRATEGIC PROMOTIONAL PLAN

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this research was to use the 8Ps Service Marketing Mix Framework (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, Physical Evidence, and Productivity) to examine the marketing practices of selected gastronomic destinations in Malabon City. By using these elements, the study aimed to identify the key challenges and potential opportunities of the city's culinary sector and used the findings as a basis for a Strategic Promotional Plan to enhance Malabon's position as a gastronomic destination. The study used a descriptive-quantitative research design, and data were gathered through a purposive sampling technique comprising two groups of respondents: twenty-five (25) business owners, managers, or supervisors, and two hundred fifty (250) tourists or consumers and CTCAO personnel who had experienced Malabon's culinary offerings. A structured survey was utilized by the researcher to gather data about the effectiveness of their current marketing strategies. Results showed that Malabon City has a strong reputation for food quality and heritage-based products, but there are significant gaps in how modern marketing is applied. Key findings revealed that "Quality" (Product) and "Respect" (People) received the highest ratings, reflecting the authenticity of local services. However, "Variety" (Product), "Segmented Pricing" (Price), "Parking" (Physical Evidence), and "Technology Use" (Productivity) received the lowest ratings. This highlights challenges in diversification, infrastructure, and modernization. On the basis of these results, the researcher proposed a Strategic Promotional Plan focused on the "8Ps OVER" strategy to address the identified weaknesses, optimize the potential opportunities, and ensure the long-term sustainability of Malabon's gastronomic tourism.

Keywords: *Gastronomic Tourism, Malabon City, Marketing Mix, Strategic Promotional Plan*

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Over the years, tourism has evolved beyond traditional sightseeing to include diverse and specialized forms of tourism. Among these emerging trends is gastronomic or culinary tourism, which centers on exploring a destination's culture and heritage through its food. As mentioned by Gupta (2024), gastronomic tourism initiatives "have the potential to generate income, create employment opportunities, and stimulate economic growth through activities such as culinary tours, homestays, and food festivals." As Filipino travelers and international visitors increasingly seek distinctive and authentic culinary experiences, local food destinations continue to gain attention.

In recent times, gastronomic tourism has become increasingly important within the Tourism Industry, as tourists travel to experience unique local food. The local cuisine not only helps satisfy tourists' demand for consumption but also helps build heritage and identity. One such destination is Malabon City, which is steadily emerging as a key player in Metro Manila's gastronomic scene. With its unique blend of traditional and modern cookery, Malabon offers a wide variety of culinary delights that reflect its rich cultural heritage, highlighted by iconic local products such as Pancit Malabon, Sapin-sapin, Pichi-pichi, and Jamico's Crispy Pata. Malabon's distinct competitive advantage lies in its deep-rooted culinary identity embedded within local communities, long-standing family-run food enterprises, and heritage recipes passed down through generations. Since the Culinary Industry has boomed in the City of Malabon, competition has become stiff not only in the immediate area but also with other Gastronomic Destinations, such as Binondo and Tondo.

Despite Malabon's culinary richness and strong potential, its promotion remains fragmented, underscoring the need for a more cohesive and strategic approach to fully position the city as a leading gastronomic destination. This research addresses a critical gap by proposing a comprehensive Strategic Promotional Plan dedicated to Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism, an area yet to be systematically explored. The research provides a foundational guide for stakeholders to systematically promote the city's gastronomic identity, enhance visibility, and strengthen its competitiveness as a culinary destination.

Enhancing Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism focuses on the interplay among tourism, gastronomy, and marketing, as evidenced by the analysis and discussion of tourists' diverse perspectives. The importance, benefits, and necessities of developing and promoting Gastronomic Tourism have been identified. However, there is a noticeable gap and conflicting findings in the existing literature and local practices, as no study has systematically assessed Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism using the 8P's Framework. This gap is further emphasized by Paunan (2025) in "Tourism Chief Samples Malabon Food Crawl," where Tourism Secretary Christina Frasco highlighted that promoting market tourism can boost job opportunities and support local livelihoods. This lack of strategy hinders the full realization of the city's potential as a key gastronomic destination, underscoring the need for this study to establish an effective framework for promoting Malabon's unique culinary identity.

Existing promotional strategies for Malabon's gastronomic tourism remain insufficient as they are largely fragmented, event-based, and lack a unified branding direction. Current efforts rely heavily on isolated initiatives by individual businesses or short-term campaigns, resulting in limited market reach and inconsistent messaging. This lack of a structured, long-term promotional framework weakens Malabon's visibility and competitiveness as a distinct gastronomic destination. The selected gastronomic destinations in Malabon City were chosen based on their cultural significance, historical value, popularity among locals and visitors, and their role in preserving authentic Malabon cuisine. These establishments represent a mix of long-standing heritage food businesses and emerging culinary enterprises, allowing the study to capture both traditional and contemporary gastronomic practices. Their accessibility, product uniqueness, and potential to serve as flagship attractions make them ideal focal points for developing a cohesive promotional strategy that reflects Malabon's distinct culinary identity. Integrating digital platforms can enhance Malabon's gastronomic tourism by expanding reach and ensuring consistent branding. Utilizing social media, influencer partnerships, virtual tours, and online booking platforms

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can increase audience engagement while positioning Malabon as a culturally rooted yet modern gastronomic destination.

Review of Related Literature

This chapter presented the literature that had a significant bearing on the study. The researcher gathered data to support the statements indicated in the problem. This section was designed to help readers better understand the issues related to this study. It explained the nature, theories, effects, types, roles, and techniques of marketing practices. The acquired information helped the researcher formulate the theoretical framework and prepare the research methodology. On the other hand, related studies or literature may support, substantiate, or negate the findings of the present study.

Gastronomic Tourism

Gastronomy is about much more than food. It reflects the culture, heritage, traditions, and sense of community of different peoples. It is a way of promoting understanding among different cultures, and of bringing people and traditions closer together. Gastronomy tourism is also emerging as an important protector of cultural heritage, and the sector helps create opportunities, including jobs, most notably in rural destinations. Several destinations are getting ready to restart tourism.

Malabon City's gastronomic significance has been strongly recognized by national and local stakeholders, highlighting its role in preserving Filipino identity and cultural heritage through food. According to Frasco, as cited in Paunan (2025), Malabon tells a powerful story of Filipino identity where every recipe carries history and memory, a sentiment underscored during the Department of Tourism's (DOT) food crawl on May 28–29, 2025, conducted under the "Salo-Salo: Taste the Flavor, Experience the Culture" program (Paunan, 2025). Led by Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia-Frasco, the visit showcased iconic eateries and public markets, emphasizing market tourism as a means to create immersive culinary experiences, generate employment, and support local livelihoods (Tourism chief samples Malabon food crawl, 2025). The initiative was warmly supported by local officials, including Mayor Jeannie Sandoval, who stressed that local delicacies such as Pancit Malabon reflect the heritage, traditions, and identity of the Malabueños, reinforcing pride in locally rooted cuisine (Tourism chief samples Malabon food crawl, 2025). Sandoval (2025) further emphasized that Malabon's gastronomy not only highlights its well-loved dishes but also its vibrant culture, which is an integral part of both local and national identity. Complementing these perspectives, Pinay Wise (2024) describes Malabon as a city rich in history and culture, from its origins as a fishing village known as "Tambobong" to its transformation into a vibrant cultural hub where its diverse and distinctive culinary offerings stand as a testament to its enduring heritage, faith, and gastronomic excellence (Malabon LGU urges residents to promote local food products, 2025; Pinay Wise, 2024).

Studies highlight the strong influence of culinary experiences on tourist satisfaction and behavior. According to Gregana and Ylagan (2024), tourists in Central Luzon highly value food-related travel as a shared experience with friends and family, appreciating authentic flavors, local customs, and the use of fresh ingredients that enhance both health and taste. Native cuisine was described as delicious and memorable, with a warm and lively ambiance that encouraged exploration of local gastronomic traditions and motivated tourists to support and promote local culinary culture, resulting in high overall destination satisfaction. Meanwhile, Panjaitan, Hermanto, and Widyastuti (2020) emphasized the importance of marketing strategies in culinary tourism centers, noting that product quality, pricing, promotion, service, facilities, and the use of social media vary significantly between owner-operated booths and managed establishments, underscoring the need for context-specific promotional approaches in gastronomic tourism.

The studies highlight both converging and diverging findings regarding firm characteristics and marketing effectiveness. Marasigan, Navarro, Palanca, and Pantoja (2023) note that SMEs typically operate with limited employees and budgets, suggesting that guerrilla marketing can improve visibility; however, employee count was used only for profiling and not analyzed as a factor influencing marketing outcomes. Sharabati et al. (2024) found

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that digital marketing strategies positively affect SME performance, with larger firms having more resources to implement them effectively, showing convergence in recognizing the role of firm size and resources in marketing capacity, but divergence in analytical depth. In terms of firm longevity, Aganon et al. (2021) emphasized business sustainability descriptively, while Semenov and Randrianasolo (2023) empirically demonstrated that firm age moderates the relationship between advertising intensity and performance, indicating that organizational maturity shapes promotional effectiveness. These studies collectively suggest that both firm resources and age influence marketing outcomes, though the extent and manner of their impact vary across contexts and research approaches.

The 8Ps Marketing Mix

The marketing mix is a set of marketing tools or tactics used to promote a product or service in the market and sell it. It is about positioning a product and deciding to sell it in the right place, at the right price, and at the right time. The product will then be sold in accordance with the marketing and promotional strategy. The marketing mix is a powerful tool for developing the right marketing strategy and implementing it through effective tactics. Assessing the roles of the P's in marketing is vital to your overall marketing approach. The marketing mix strategy goes hand in hand with positioning, targeting, and segmentation.

Panjaitan, Hermanto, and Widyastuti (2020) emphasized that improving marketing in culinary tourism destinations requires strong collaboration between managers and booth owners, with careful attention to product quality, appropriate pricing, effective promotion, particularly through social media, as well as service quality, cleanliness, facilities, and the overall environment to enhance consumer satisfaction. Similarly, Pujiharto (2021) highlighted the importance of analyzing marketing mix strategies for culinary products, noting that consumer motivation influences price, product, distribution, and promotion decisions, while sellers' attitudes significantly affect product and distribution strategies, with attracting new customers as a primary objective. Moreno, Espiritu, Maniclang, and Talabis (2023) further asserted that a successful marketing mix ensures products and services reach the right customers at the right time and price, stressing that continuous evaluation based on real-time data and consumer research is essential for sustained growth. Marcelo and Dela Fuente (2023) emphasized that marketing lies at the core of organizational success, especially during challenging periods such as the pandemic, and that understanding target market characteristics enables businesses to align offerings, achieve strategic goals, and ensure long-term growth. Aduana, Angeles, Cantoria, and Encarnacion (2024) confirmed that the expanded marketing mix elements, product, place, process, people, promotion, physical evidence, and price, are highly effective in shaping customer perception and satisfaction, providing a strong foundation for developing informed and comprehensive marketing mix enhancement plans.

Product

Product is the core of any business. Hence, it is vital that it provides the best value to customers as their needs and demands change. The higher the product's quality, the better traction it gets from customers.

According to Roy and Datta (2022), marketing originally focused on physical products, but growing consumer demand for services has shifted the emphasis toward experiences and performances, making service marketing increasingly important. Supporting this view, Carniel (2022) defined a product as anything that satisfies consumer needs and wants, whether tangible or intangible, including services, ideas, and experiences. In the tourism context, Kutlu and Ayyıldız (2021) emphasized that tourism products extend beyond physical offerings to encompass the overall experience of visiting, learning, and engaging in activities that allow tourists to temporarily escape everyday life. Skillmaker (2024) highlighted that hospitality products consist of both tangible and intangible elements, such as accommodations, food and beverages, entertainment, and service quality, all designed to create memorable guest experiences and foster customer satisfaction and loyalty. Truong et al. (2020) noted that innovation in tourism and hospitality products enhances business performance, sustains competitiveness, and strengthens customer satisfaction and behavioral loyalty. Using a Gantt chart in product development is crucial as it helps plan, schedule, and monitor tasks effectively, ensuring that each component of the tourism product is delivered on time and aligned with strategic objectives.

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Price

Price is the amount a company can charge for its products or services. In setting prices, managers/owners should ensure prices are reasonably affordable, fair, and competitive.

According to Twin (2024), pricing must be carefully balanced: setting prices too high may reduce sales, while setting them too low can undermine business sustainability; thus, prices should align with customers' perceived value. Chaffey (2024) described pricing as a skill-based, research-driven process that requires managers to combine market data and operational considerations to formulate effective pricing policies. Quirie (2023) highlighted pricing as a powerful tool that influences demand, competitiveness, and destination image, stressing the need for careful planning, research, and testing in highly competitive markets. Rabiulawal et al. (2025) noted that effective tourism pricing strategies consider factors such as seasonality, location, service quality, and competition, as prices can signal either luxury or value and must correspond to the experience offered. Novkovic (2023) underscored that affordability and perceived value play key roles in consumer decision-making, as appropriate pricing enables businesses to capture market share, foster customer loyalty, and position themselves as preferred choices.

Place

Place (distribution) is the third component of the marketing mix. Distribution refers to the process of making a product available for consumer or business use.

According to Manuel (2022), distribution channels, which are 'place' in the marketing P's, encompass all activities required to transfer ownership of goods and move them from the point of production to the point of consumption. The best place to open a business isn't always obvious. The company's larger business goals and general direction before deciding. If a business is better suited to a rural location with plenty of parking than to a city center location with excellent transport links, then location is of utmost importance to the firm. Yasar (2022) defines place as the where and how of product or service purchase by customers. It also entails where the product is stored and manufactured. Digital transformation has evolved how products are sold online, from small local shops to global producers. Location selection is one business decision that must be made carefully. Business site selection is a complex strategic decision that may affect a company's long-term future. Nimbagal, Chittaranjan, and Panda (2022) discussed how companies use warehousing, brick-and-mortar outlets, and social media marketplaces together. It also reviews channel selection criteria, contrasting direct-to-consumer vs intermediary arrangements. Delmar and Larsen (2024) emphasized that the role of place is to ensure that products and services reach the target market at the right time and at a reasonable cost, requiring careful selection of distribution channels and efficient management of physical distribution. Sheremet, Rangus, and Fenswick (2025) highlighted that location decisions are among the most critical strategic choices businesses make, as location directly influences fixed and variable costs and customer accessibility.

Promotion

Promotion is the process of informing people about an organization's products and services. It is an important tool in business for persuading more prospective customers to succeed in the industry. Promotion is a technique companies use to enhance brand perception and encourage customers to use their products and services.

According to Desai and Pandey (2024), one of the most effective ways to promote in this era is through integrated marketing communications. This again refers to holistic marketing. It means you share a consistent message across all owned, earned, and paid media channels. As mentioned by William and Strong (2020), promotion can be improved through (1) analysis of spending and establishing objectives, (2) better selection of appropriate promotional techniques, (3) pre-testing, (4) evaluation, (5) focusing on the long term, and (6) the development of more detailed information on the effect of promotion. Dilanyan (2025) emphasized that a well-defined promotional strategy forms the foundation of successful marketing campaigns, enabling businesses, particularly

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in the restaurant and culinary sectors, to target broader audiences, strengthen brand recognition, and create sustainable revenue streams while differentiating themselves from competitors. Rehman, Gulzar, and Aslam (2022) highlighted that effective promotion integrates multiple methods, including public relations, product placements, traditional advertising, direct marketing, and digital strategies such as social media ads and content marketing, ensuring a consistent message across platforms. In the context of tourism, AX Team (2023) noted that advertising and promotion are pivotal in connecting potential travelers with destinations and experiences, generating awareness and interest, influencing travel decisions, and ultimately driving consumer action, making promotional efforts essential for maintaining competitiveness and brand visibility in the tourism industry.

People

People are the most important element of any service or experience. Services are produced and consumed simultaneously, and aspects of the customer experience are tailored to each consumer's individual needs. Most of us can think of a situation in which the personal service offered by individuals has made or spoiled a tour, vacation or restaurant meal. Remember, people buy from people that they like, so the attitude, skills and appearance of all staff need to be first class. People have an important role in service delivery. They are relied upon to deliver and maintain transactional marketing, and people play an important part in the customer relationship.

According to Grönroos (2020), marketing teams and all personnel involved in service delivery shape customer experiences through their beliefs, attitudes, and actions, which are reflected in every aspect of service and brand messaging. Wirtz and Lovelock (2022) noted that in high-contact services, employees essentially embody the service itself, making customer satisfaction inseparable from employee performance and interpersonal interactions. Indeed, Editorial Team (2025) reinforced that customers associate service quality with the people delivering it, highlighting the importance of training and development to ensure consistent, high-quality interactions. Bogdan and Apostol (2022) argued that fostering “people success” a culture that enables employees to grow, develop skills, and maximize potential is foundational for business success, while Rosario-Maldonado (2022) stressed that employees represent a significant competitive advantage, as businesses that empower, motivate, and engage their workforce can harness creativity, passion, and productivity to thrive in today’s dynamic market. Together, these insights underline that investing in people not only strengthens service delivery but also builds long-term customer relationships and sustainable organizational success. This people-centered approach also calls for the active involvement of local government units, business owners, community leaders, and tourism stakeholders in collaboratively designing and implementing service standards and promotional initiatives. By aligning efforts across these groups, destinations can present a cohesive brand identity that enhances visitor experiences, strengthens community participation, and attracts tourists through unified and sustainable promotional strategies.

Physical Evidence

Physical evidence within the service marketing mix refers to the environment in which a service arises from an interaction between an employee and a customer, combined with a tangible commodity. The physical evidence includes representations of the service, such as brochures, company stationery, business cards, reports, and the company website. A good example is a hotel. The design, furnishings, lighting and decoration of a hotel, as well as the appearance and attitudes of the employees, influence the quality of service and the customer experience.

According to the Square Editorial Team (2021), physical evidence encompasses everything customers see when interacting with a business, including the physical or online environment, branding, product packaging, social media presence, and other visible elements. Satisfied customers also provide tangible evidence through written recommendations or reviews, which communicate service quality to potential clients. Kandampully, Bilgihan, and Amer (2022) emphasized that in service settings such as theme parks, restaurants, or schools, the “service escape” or environment is crucial, consisting of environmental conditions (temperature, sound, smell), spatial layout and functionality (equipment, decoration), and signs, symbols, and artifacts (branding, style, personal touches), all of which help make intangible services more tangible for customers. Che Ngah, Mohd Rosli, Mohammad Lotpi, and

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Samsudin (2022) highlighted that the ambiance of a gastronomic destination, including temperature, lighting, color, music, and overall atmosphere, sets the mood, complements the type of cuisine, and allows customers to relax and enjoy their experience. Fresca (2023) and Talukder and Kumar (2023) further stressed that the combination of ambiance, décor, lighting, cleanliness, spatial layout, and music works synergistically with high-quality food and service to elevate perceived value, foster emotional satisfaction, encourage loyalty, and increase the likelihood of repeat patronage, demonstrating that physical evidence is a key factor in creating memorable and impactful dining experiences.

Process

The "Process" element of the service marketing mix encompasses the activities, procedures, protocols, and other factors that determine how the service is ultimately delivered to the customer. As services result from actions for or with customers, a process involves a sequence of steps and activities to get there. According to Wibowo and Aprianingsih (2024), the process is defined as the approaches a company uses to deliver its offerings, encompassing all activities and services in which people play a key role. Mehrguth (2020) emphasized that well-designed procedures, mechanisms, and activity flows are essential for efficiency, consistency, and customer satisfaction. Appinio (2024) further explained that processes serve as the backbone of service delivery, aligning internal functions with customer expectations through defined protocols, workflows, standard operating procedures, and automation, thereby reducing inefficiencies and enabling continuous improvement. Juju and Supriadi (2023) noted that efficient processes positively influence consumer attitudes, perceptions, and purchase intentions by creating seamless, prompt, and professional service experiences that foster trust and reliability. Saiphet (2022) highlighted that streamlined service flows, systems, and order management directly affect user experience, particularly in online transactions, as complicated or inefficient processes can discourage repeat business. Well-coordinated processes not only enhance operational performance but also significantly shape customer perceptions, satisfaction, and long-term loyalty. In the context of gastronomic tourism, maintaining standardized food preparation procedures and consistent service delivery is equally critical, as these processes ensure food quality, hygiene, presentation, and timely service, all of which contribute to a memorable dining experience and reinforce the destination’s reputation for culinary excellence.

Productivity

Productivity levels can be measured for all factors of production, including labor. In the hospitality industry, there are many possible input and output units for productivity management. For a specific hotel and its departments, the most meaningful ones need to be agreed upon beforehand. Input units can be measured in terms of worked hours (per day, per week, per month), payroll expenses, etc. Output units, on the other hand, can be monitored by revenue, covered units, rooms cleaned, check-ins/check-outs, etc. Keeping it simple is one very important issue in productivity management. It is the tradeoff between accuracy and simplicity.

Hofmeister, Kanbach, and Hogreve (2023) emphasized that carefully managing customer expectations through clear advertising and promotion aligns perceived and actual service, reducing complaints, returns, and extra work while allowing employees to operate more efficiently. Rew, Siguaw, and Sheng (2021) noted that productivity is influenced by multiple factors, including forecasting business volumes, planning work rates, and fostering inter-departmental flexibility, and suggested that productivity benchmarks be set for operational departments to guide performance and budget labor costs. James (2021) and Dew, Padilla, and Shchetkina (2024) argued that productivity should not be measured solely by cost savings or efficiency but by how well services deliver value to customers, with improvements that customers can actually perceive, such as faster service, better support, or smoother processes. Sahara Group Foundation (2021) emphasized that productivity and quality go hand in hand, noting that enhancing service speed and capacity without compromising quality directly benefits customers by ensuring they receive faster, higher-quality service. These studies highlight that effective productivity strategies balance operational efficiency with the creation of meaningful, customer-centered value.

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Local Food Promotion

Malabon City, often described as a bridge between the past and the future, is a historically and culturally significant urban center in the Philippines. According to Artikel (2024), it is one of the country's oldest cities, with a rich colonial history, vibrant cultural heritage, and ongoing economic development that honors its traditions while embracing modernization. Historically, Malabon thrived through its fishing and agricultural industries, which shaped its early economy and way of life (Calalo, 2025). Known as Tambobong before gaining city status, the name originated from "labong," referring to the abundant bamboo shoots in the area (Paunan, 2025). Despite rapid urbanization, Malabon has successfully balanced progress with cultural preservation, maintaining heritage sites and vibrant traditions while cultivating a thriving culinary scene (Cortez, 2025). The city has earned recognition as a gastronomic destination, celebrated for signature dishes and locally sourced delicacies such as Pancit Malabon, lechon, sapin-sapin, okoy, and crispy pata, drawing both local and international attention. As mentioned by Heussaff (2025), Malabon's unique blend of history, culture, and cuisine positions it as a city that continues to evolve while preserving its rich heritage and culinary identity.

Catolico, Oluyinka, and Palmiano (2025) emphasized that restaurants should prioritize transparent and consistent service, integrate digital engagement tools such as mobile ordering and personalized marketing, and adopt relational marketing strategies to foster long-term customer loyalty. Globally, culinary tourism has rapidly become a key factor in travelers' destination choices, with food experiences forming the heart of travel experiences (Gutierrez, Rivera, & Roxas, 2022). In the Philippines, heirloom recipes, food-centric festivals, traditional cooking practices, and talented local chefs contribute to the growing appeal of Filipino cuisine, though experts note that the country's culinary identity and branding remain underdeveloped. Calinao, Fulgencio, Terones, and Velarde (2021) argued that well-planned culinary tourism not only enhances tourist satisfaction but also strengthens community livelihoods, preserves socio-cultural heritage, and improves a locality's economic competitiveness by integrating local participation into tourism planning. Comparable insights from Salonga and Borbon (2021) illustrate that regions like Bukidnon, despite rich agricultural resources and potential culinary products such as the pineapple-based Piñasitas, remain underdeveloped in terms of tourism. By leveraging local produce and cultural presentations, destinations can structure culinary tourism to attract broader audiences while promoting economic and cultural sustainability. Together, these studies underscore the strategic value of culinary tourism in enhancing destination appeal, community development, and long-term competitiveness.

According to Alcoriza and Cruz (2025), this form of tourism not only enhances travelers' satisfaction and influences destination choice but also serves as a tool for economic growth and heritage preservation. In the Philippines, regional cuisines and traditional food practices are increasingly recognized as key attractions, with the Department of Tourism (DOT) collaborating with private stakeholders to implement programs like the Siram Bicol Circuit Tour, which promotes authentic Bicolano delicacies and culturally rich culinary experiences. Castro and Barrientos (2024) highlighted that positioning cuisine as the core element of San Jose's gastronomic identity reinforces the importance of food-based tourism strategies in attracting visitors. By promoting traditional culinary techniques and distinctive local flavors, destinations can establish themselves as gastronomic hubs, offering travelers meaningful connections to the region's cultural heritage while enhancing overall destination appeal.

Synthesis of Literature and Research Gap

The reviewed literature collectively highlights the pivotal role of gastronomic tourism and the 8Ps of marketing in shaping customer experiences, business performance, and destination competitiveness. Gastronomic tourism is more than just food consumption; it encompasses culture, heritage, and immersive experiences that promote local identity while driving economic growth and community development. Studies on Malabon City and other Philippine regions underscore how local culinary offerings, heritage practices, and signature dishes, when effectively promoted, influence tourist satisfaction, encourage repeat visitation, and enhance community livelihoods. The application of the marketing mix, including product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence, process, and productivity, has been shown to significantly impact service delivery, customer

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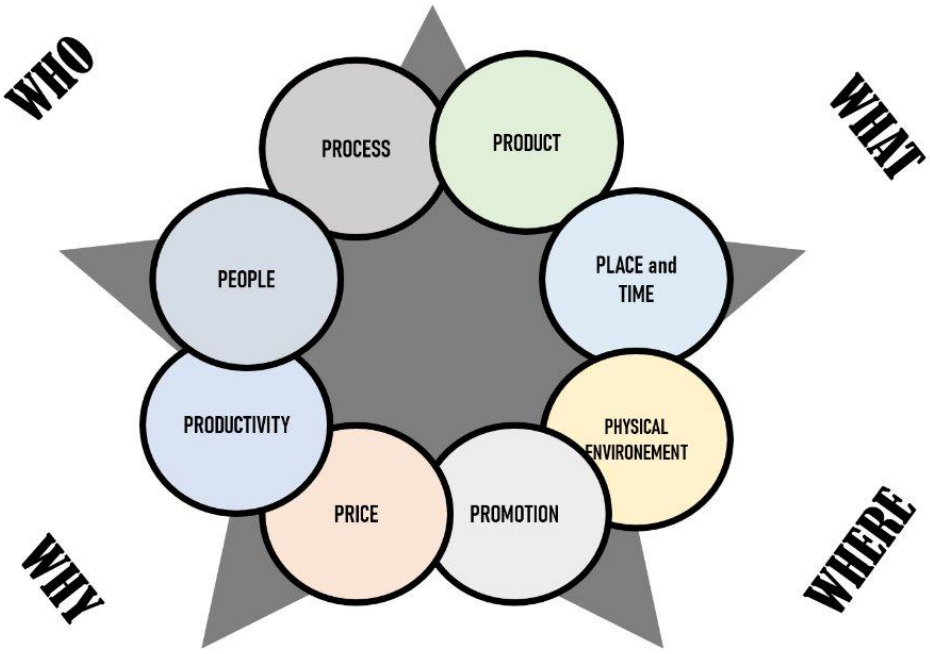
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satisfaction, and organizational growth. These studies converge on the notion that aligning business strategies with customer expectations, standardizing service and food preparation processes, and leveraging digital tools and relational marketing can enhance both the culinary tourism experience and the long-term sustainability of local food enterprises.

While the literature provides comprehensive insights into the effects of gastronomic tourism, marketing mix strategies, and productivity on tourist satisfaction and business performance, there remain gaps in understanding their integrated impact at the city level, particularly in historically and culturally rich areas like Malabon City. Most studies focus on regional or sectoral analyses, without examining the interplay among all 8Ps of marketing, standardized food-service processes, and tourists' experiential perceptions within a single, cohesive framework. Although prior research acknowledges the role of local culinary offerings in enhancing community livelihoods and cultural preservation, empirical studies measuring how specific marketing strategies, digital engagement, and relational marketing initiatives influence tourist satisfaction, repeat visitation, and local economic outcomes in Malabon are limited. Addressing this gap would provide actionable insights for local business owners, tourism stakeholders, and policymakers to optimize gastronomic tourism strategies that simultaneously enhance visitor experiences and support sustainable community development. Several related studies demonstrate that survey-based assessments of marketing mix elements and tourist perceptions can be effectively used as inputs in developing strategic promotional plans. Existing literature shows that descriptive and quantitative findings are commonly translated into practical marketing strategies, branding frameworks, and promotional models in tourism research. These studies confirm that analyzing customer satisfaction, awareness, and engagement provides a reliable basis for identifying priority actions and promotional directions. The reviewed literature supports the feasibility of formulating a strategic promotional plan for Malabon City grounded on empirical data and established tourism marketing practices.

Theoretical Framework

Figure 1. Lovelock and Wirtz Service Marketing Theory (2011)



The expanded Marketing Mix or 8Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, Physical Evidence, and Productivity provides a comprehensive framework for planning and evaluating marketing strategies in service-oriented sectors such as tourism. As mentioned by Lovelock and Wirtz (2011), this model functions as both a

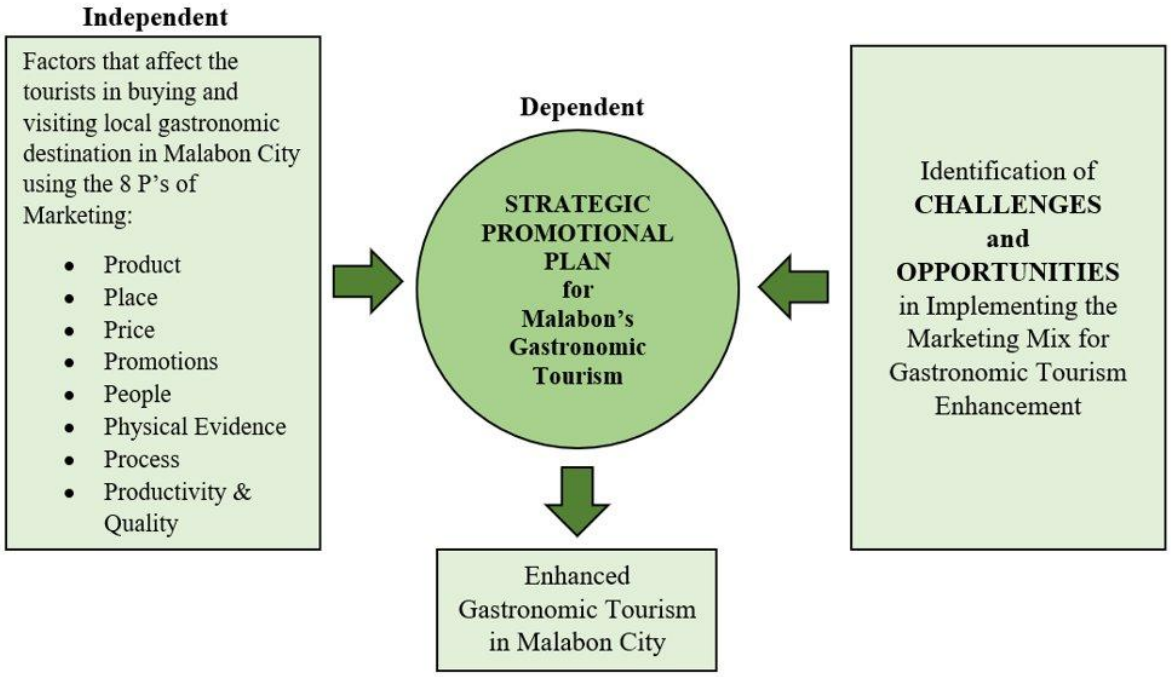
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strategic and operational tool for designing and delivering experiences, including food-and gastronomy-based tourism products. In the context of culinary tourism, the 8Ps enable destinations to develop authentic food offerings, engage local communities, ensure service quality, and communicate a strong, coherent brand image to domestic and international markets. By aligning marketing principles with tourism development goals, the 8Ps help generate visitor satisfaction, cultural pride, and inclusive economic growth.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework for Enhancing Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism



The conceptual framework of this study positions the 8Ps of Marketing Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Physical Evidence, Process, and Productivity & Quality as the primary guide in developing a Strategic Promotional Plan for enhancing Malabon's gastronomic tourism. These elements collectively influence tourists' perceptions and decisions, and their evaluations allow the study to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities in the city's current culinary tourism offerings. Insights from the analysis of the 8Ps inform the formulation of targeted promotional strategies to strengthen Malabon's image as a food destination, increase awareness of local culinary products, and attract more visitors. By integrating marketing mix strategies with stakeholder collaboration and resource considerations, the framework ensures that the promotional plan is practical, sustainable, and aligned with economic and cultural tourism development goals.

The independent variable, the Strategic Promotional Plan for Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism, drives tourist behavior by integrating the 8 P's of Marketing into a unified approach that strengthens the city's appeal as a food tourism destination. Its effective design and implementation directly influence the dependent variable, tourists' buying and visiting behavior, by shaping perceptions of product authenticity, pricing, promotions, service quality, and overall experience. As these elements improve, tourists' satisfaction, intention to visit, and likelihood of revisiting increase, ultimately enhancing Malabon City's gastronomic tourism. The identification of challenges and opportunities serves as a vital input to the strategic promotional plan rather than a separate outcome. Challenges reveal gaps and constraints in implementing the marketing mix, while opportunities highlight strengths and potential advantages that can be utilized. These factors directly inform the formulation and refinement of the strategic promotional plan. By addressing challenges and maximizing opportunities, the plan becomes more

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realistic, adaptive, and aligned with actual market conditions and stakeholder capacities. The conceptual framework is derived from Christopher Lovelock and Jochen Wirtz's 8P Service Marketing Theory, which serves as the major determinants affecting customer satisfaction and service effectiveness. These 8Ps are used as independent variables in the framework to evaluate the tourists' buying and visiting behavior.

Statement of the Problem

The main issue facing Malabon's gastronomic tourism is the lack of a coherent, well-structured marketing strategy to effectively promote its unique culinary heritage. Despite having diverse and authentic local dishes, the city's food attractions remain underpromoted and fragmented due to weak coordination among stakeholders. Addressing this gap through a marketing mix analysis is essential to identify strategic areas for improvement across product development, pricing, distribution, and promotion. By applying the 8Ps framework, the study can guide the creation of an integrated promotional plan that strengthens Malabon's brand identity and enhances its competitiveness as a culinary destination.

The study aims to determine the promotion and marketing practices of selected Gastronomic Destinations in the City of Malabon, which will serve as a basis for a strategic promotional plan. Specifically, the researcher sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of: 1.1 Age, 1.2 Gender, 1.3 Civil Status, 1.4 Income, and 1.5 Frequency of Visits to Gastronomic Destinations in Malabon?
2. What is the organizational profile of the selected gastronomic establishments in Malabon in terms of: (for restaurants owners/ managers/ supervisors only) 2.1 Types of Ownership, 2.2 Number of employees, 2.3 Number of years' existence, 2.4 Type of gastronomic destination, and 2.5 Main Cuisine Offered?
3. How do the respondents assess the marketing practices of selected Gastronomic Destinations in Malabon City in terms of the extended Marketing Mix (8Ps): 3.1 Product, 3.2 Price, 3.3 Place (distribution), 3.4 Promotion, 3.5 People, 3.6 Physical Evidence, 3.7 Process, and 3.8 Productivity & Quality?
4. Based on the results and findings of the study;
    a. What key challenges and potential opportunities are evident in Malabon City's Gastronomic Tourism?
    b. How can these identified challenges and opportunities be used to strengthen and enhance the Strategic Promotional Plan?

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the demographic profile of consumers and stakeholders involved in Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism in terms of age, gender, civil status, and income level, to understand their insights for enhancing marketing strategies in Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism
2. To describe the organizational profile of selected gastronomic establishments in Malabon based on type of ownership, number of employees, years in operation, and types of cuisine offered.
3. To assess how selected gastronomic destinations in Malabon City implement each element of the extended marketing mix (8Ps – Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, Physical Evidence, and Productivity & Quality) to attract and satisfy their target consumers.
4. To identify key challenges and opportunities affecting the promotion and development of Gastronomic Tourism in Malabon based on insights from consumers, business operators, and the Tourism Office.
5. To design a strategic promotional plan for Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism by translating survey findings into actionable branding, digital marketing, and stakeholder collaboration strategies that enhance restaurant visibility and destination competitiveness.

Assumptions of the Study

1. All data are valid and reliable.

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2. Gastronomic establishments in Malabon differ in organizational characteristics (ownership type, employee count, years of operation, types of gastronomic destination and main cuisine offered), which affect their marketing practices and capacity to promote tourism effectively.
3. Current marketing practices utilizing the extended marketing mix (8Ps) have strengths and weaknesses that affect the promotion and competitiveness of Malabon's gastronomic tourism, which can be addressed through a strategic promotional plan.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to benefit the following:

LGU and Economy – This study contributes to Malabon City's economic growth by helping target potential markets and strengthening its culinary heritage tourism ranking. The development of gastronomic tourism can generate employment opportunities for local residents, both part-time and full-time, thereby increasing household income and overall economic activity. Increased tourist arrivals and spending can generate additional revenue for the city, supporting local projects, infrastructure improvements, and enhancing food establishments and tourist sites. As gastronomic tourism gains recognition, Malabon City can build a positive reputation, stronger stakeholder connections, and a competitive position in the tourism sector, contributing not only to city development but also to national economic progress.

Policymakers and Tourism Planners – This study will serve as a basis for understanding what tourists want and expect from Malabon's gastronomic tourism, including food, leisure, and the overall experience. The findings can guide the development of effective policies and promotional strategies that highlight the city's unique local cuisine, ambiance, and cultural identity. By improving planning and marketing efforts, Malabon City can encourage tourist satisfaction, increase recommendations, and position itself as a competitive gastronomic destination.

Businesses – this study will help the private sector achieve the satisfaction tourists seek in terms of food, leisure, and experiences. The Tourists will surely recommend to others that they must visit and try the Local Cuisine in Malabon City because of the ambiance, the places, and the area of each establishment, and the different tastes of the local food that make them unique from other places.

Community – The community will benefit from this study by increasing visitation and awareness of Malabon City's food tourism. It supports local businesses and residents by highlighting their place, food, history, and hospitality, while promoting sustainable tourism that encourages community participation, retains economic benefits locally, and preserves Malabon's cultural and culinary heritage for future generations.

Education and Research – This is a huge help as a reference that will serve as the foundation for future research. It will serve as a guide for the researcher (s) to add more information on Gastronomic Tourism in Malabon City. This study also aims to raise awareness and contains information regarding the promotion of Local Food Tourism in Malabon City. At the same time, this will also signify providing students with knowledge of how the food originates, its etymology, recipes, and techniques. And lastly, how they innovate their food, and how they put their own style of cooking to improve their Heirloom Dishes.

Definition of Terms

For purposes of clarity, the following terms are defined as follows.

Enhancing refers to deliberately improving Malabon City's gastronomic appeal by strengthening existing culinary assets, refining marketing strategies, and increasing tourist engagement to elevate the city's competitiveness as a food destination.

Gastronomic Destinations are places in Malabon City where local food and culinary practices are the main attractions for visitors. These destinations highlight indigenous ingredients, traditional cooking methods, food

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heritage, and dining establishments that express local identity and distinguish the city through cuisine-based tourism.

Gastronomic Tourism refers to tourist activities centered on experiencing Malabon City's local cuisine, such as visiting traditional food establishments, tasting signature dishes, and participating in food-related events that highlight the city's culinary identity.

Malabon City is the geographic and cultural setting where local culinary traditions, particularly heritage dishes, serve as the core resource for developing and promoting gastronomic tourism within Metro Manila.

The Marketing Mix in this research comprises the strategic combination of product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence used to promote Malabon City's culinary offerings and influence tourists' decisions to visit and consume local food products.

Price pertains to the cost tourists incur when purchasing Malabon City's food products and dining experiences, including affordability and value perception, which directly affects tourists' willingness to try local cuisine.

The product encompasses Malabon City's culinary offerings, including local dishes, food experiences, and cultural food practices, presented to tourists as the primary attraction of gastronomic tourism.

Place relates to how and where Malabon City's food products and culinary experiences are made accessible to tourists, including restaurant locations, food markets, and the availability of local cuisine within the city.

Promotion involves the communication strategies used to inform and persuade potential tourists about Malabon City's gastronomic offerings, such as advertising, social media exposure, events, and word of mouth related to local food.

People are the individuals directly involved in delivering gastronomic experiences in Malabon City, such as food vendors, restaurant staff, and tourism personnel, whose service quality influences tourist satisfaction and perceptions.

Process refers to the systems and procedures involved in delivering food services and culinary experiences in Malabon City, including service flow, food preparation standards, and consistency that affect tourists' overall experience.

Physical Evidence represents the tangible elements that shape tourists' impressions of Malabon City's gastronomic offerings, such as restaurant ambiance, food presentation, cleanliness, packaging, and visual cues that reinforce quality and authenticity.

Productivity refers to how efficiently local food businesses and tourism stakeholders in Malabon City use resources, such as labor and materials, to deliver high-quality gastronomic experiences to tourists.

The Strategic Promotional Plan is a structured approach developed in the study to guide the promotion of Malabon City's culinary assets, integrating marketing mix elements to attract tourists and strengthen the city's position as a gastronomic tourism destination.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study was conducted at the selected Gastronomic Destinations in the City of Malabon, specifically in the barrios of Concepcion, San Agustin, Baritan, and Flores, to identify and assess their marketing practices. The barrios mentioned in the City are areas where famous and popular Gastronomic Dishes can be found. There are seven (7) Gastronomic Destinations in the City of Malabon, which are acknowledged and recognized by the CTCAO (City Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office) of Malabon City and the DOT (Department of Tourism). The selected Gastronomic Destinations are named as follows: (1) Nanay's Pancit Malabon, (2) Dolor's Kakanin, (3)

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Aling Tessie's Valencia Triangulo, (4) Belen's Kitchenette, (5) Betsy's Cake Center, (6) Hazel's Puto, and (7) Jamicos Crispy Pata.

The Gastronomic Destination Number 1 is located on Gov. Pascual Avenue, cor. Sta. Ana Concepcion, Malabon City, is one of the city's iconic panciterias serving traditional Pancit Malabon since 1984. Situated in a converted old house, it is beloved for its seafood-rich, umami-packed sauce made from shrimp broth, tinapa, and annatto, coating premium rice noodles topped with hard-boiled egg slices, shrimp, chicharon, and tinapa flakes, with bilao servings available in various sizes. The Gastronomic Destination Number 2, located along Gov. Pascual Ave., Concepcion, Malabon City, was founded in the 1930s as a small home-based business and is known for its colorful assortment of native kakanin such as sapin-sapin, kutsinta, cassava, and ube halaya arranged in festive trays, making it a staple for celebrations, pasalubong, and local tourism that has since expanded to other parts of Metro Manila. The Gastronomic Destination Number 3 is found in Flores, 5 Brgy. Flores, Malabon City, started in 1972 and became famous for Valencia Triangulo, a unique triangular variation of turon made with saba, jackfruit, and bikong pinipig, wrapped in lumpia wrapper and fried in caramelized brown sugar.

The Gastronomic Destination Number 4 is located in Pantihan 4, Flores, Malabon City, where Mama Belen's Kitchenette has been a beloved establishment since 1941 and is one of the oldest gastronomic destinations in the city. After Aling Rosy's passing in 2011, her grandson Carlo Agustin revived the tradition, preserving the original recipes and techniques, particularly their Pancit Malabon featuring seafood such as shrimp and oysters, which remains a favorite despite the passage of time. The Gastronomic Destination Number 5 is situated along Rizal Ave. Ext. San Agustin, Malabon City, in the "bayan" area, was founded by Bellaflor Serna in 1962 and is now run by her daughter, Betsy David. It is known for its signature soft broas filled with buttercream, alongside classic Filipino pastries such as mamon, egg pie, cream puffs, and homemade jelly rolls.

The Gastronomic Destination Number 6 is located on Gen. Luna St., Brgy. San Agustin, Malabon City, is a well-loved family-run shop specializing in steamed rice cakes, particularly its signature white, fluffy puto made with egg white, which remains popular among locals and tourists alike, as well as its savory puto pao filled with flavorful asado pork. The Gastronomic Destination Number 7 is found on Gen. Luna St., Brgy. Concepcion, Malabon City, and was established in 1970; it became famous for its signature crispy pata, a deep-fried pork knuckle celebrated for its ultra-crispy golden skin and tender, flavorful meat.

The research also aimed to identify strengths and areas for improvement in their marketing practices, which served as the basis for developing a strategic promotional plan to enhance the city's image. This study is limited to descriptive statistical analysis. No inferential statistical tests were applied, such as correlation or comparative analysis, because the main goal is to describe respondents' assessments and formulate a strategic promotional plan based on the findings. The undertaking was carried out within Academic Year 2025–2026. The data collection phase took place from February to April 2026, spanning 9–10 weeks, during which surveys were administered, responses gathered, and preliminary data organization conducted.

This research study focused on scrutinizing and assessing the marketing strategies of Gastronomic Tourism in Malabon City. However, this study is limited only to selected gastronomic destinations and does not include non-gastronomic tourist spots in Malabon City, such as historical, cultural, or recreational attractions. With the assistance of the CTCAO, formal permission or endorsement was secured from all participating establishments to ensure cooperation and access during data collection. The researcher used various methods to gather data and information to produce a well-researched study. It aimed to identify the opportunities and challenges of existing promotional approaches and evaluate their effectiveness in attracting both local and international tourists.

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Methods

Research Design

The researcher employed the quantitative–descriptive research design to gather data from the target respondents. This method is appropriate for the study because it aims to quantify attitudes, opinions, and marketing practices related to Malabon's gastronomic tourism. Quantitative research allows the collection of numerical data that can be statistically analyzed to describe trends and relationships among variables. The descriptive survey method was used to obtain factual, accurate information on respondents' demographic and organizational profiles, as well as their assessment of marketing practices based on the extended marketing mix (8Ps). This method systematically describes the conditions of gastronomic tourism in Malabon City and provides measurable insights that will serve as the basis for a strategic promotional plan. The study used purposive sampling, selecting respondents who are directly involved in gastronomic tourism, including restaurant owners or managers, consumers, and representatives from the Malabon Tourism Office. To ensure methodological coherence, the survey results were analyzed to identify common patterns, strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in current gastronomic tourism promotion. The findings from the extended marketing mix (8Ps) were summarized to identify key areas for improvement. These results were used to develop clear promotional objectives, target markets, and practical strategies based on the identified needs.

A structured questionnaire survey served as the main data-gathering instrument. The quantitative data collected were organized, summarized, and analyzed using descriptive statistical tools, such as frequency distributions, percentages, and weighted means, to identify the prevailing marketing practices, strengths, and challenges faced by the respondents. These results were then interpreted qualitatively to develop a strategic promotional plan by translating numerical trends and patterns into actionable strategies. For instance, insights on the most frequently used marketing practices guided the identification of priority areas for improvement, target markets, and effective promotional channels. By aligning the quantitative findings with the goals of enhancing Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism, the study ensured that the resulting promotional plan was practical, data-driven, and responsive to both business and community needs in Malabon's gastronomic tourism.

Respondents and Sampling

This study utilized purposive sampling to select respondents who can provide relevant information about the marketing practices of gastronomic destinations in Malabon City. The respondents included tourists, restaurant owners or employees, and personnel from the City Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office (CTCAO). To be included in the study, respondents had to meet the following criteria: (1) Must be residing in or visiting the City of Malabon, (2) Must be an employee or staff member of a local restaurant, or an officer of the CTCAO, (3) Must be a tourist who has previously visited Malabon for culinary or heritage purposes, (4) Must be willing to voluntarily participate in the study. To ensure adequate representation of key stakeholders, a target sample size was set for each respondent group. The study targeted approximately 200 tourists, as they represent the primary market and provide insights. In addition, 25 restaurant owners/managers were selected to capture business perspectives on marketing practices and challenges. Around 50 CTCAO personnel were also included due to their direct involvement in planning and implementing tourism programs and promotional activities. This distribution is based on the different sizes and roles of each group and ensures that both visitor and provider perspectives are well represented in the development of the strategic promotional plan. The identified population is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation and Planning of CTCAO – Malabon City: Number of Tourists in 2022

Category	Number of Tourists
Malabueños (local people in Malabon City)	187

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Domestic Tourists (people across the Philippines)	692
International Tourists (people across the globe)	39
Total Number of Tourists	918

Note. Sample size: 918 × 30% = 275. Total number of respondents = 275. Source: CTCAO – Malabon City (2022).

A total of 275 respondents participated in the study, representing approximately 30% of the total identified population based on 2022 CTCAO data. The identified population of 918 tourists who visited Malabon for heritage and culinary tourism includes three distinct strata: 187 local residents (Malabueños), 692 domestic tourists from other regions in the Philippines, and 39 international tourists. The local resident group is included to capture community perspectives on gastronomic tourism, including awareness, patronage, and perceptions of local food establishments. To ensure relevant and reliable responses, participants must be 18 years old and above and have visited at least one gastronomic or heritage food site in Malabon within the last ten (10) months. Tourist respondents must belong to the identified strata (local residents, domestic tourists, or international tourists), while business and government respondents must be restaurant owners, managers, or employees involved in food service operations, or CTCAO personnel engaged in tourism planning or promotion. Excluded from the study are minors, individuals who have not visited Malabon's gastronomic sites, and those unwilling to provide consent. These criteria ensured that respondents could provide informed and meaningful inputs for the study. Participants also had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty, and any data provided prior to withdrawal was excluded from the analysis upon their request. The CTCAO provided official records and assisted in identifying potential respondents, ensuring that the sample accurately reflects the diversity of visitors and supports the development of a strategic promotional plan. As the implementing arm of the city government for tourism and cultural programs, the CTCAO plays a central role in promoting and managing initiatives that support Malabon's gastronomic and heritage tourism development.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument employed in this study was a structured survey questionnaire designed to systematically collect data from respondents and selected gastronomic establishments in Malabon City. Two research instruments were utilized: (1) a survey questionnaire intended for tourists and consumers, and (2) a structured checklist designed for business owners or managers/supervisors. Both instruments were developed based on the 8Ps of Service Marketing and were aligned with the specific objectives of the study and the Statement of the Problems (SOPs).

Part I: Demographic Profile of Respondents

This section collected personal and behavioral information of the respondents to understand their background and engagement with gastronomic tourism. It included age, gender, civil status, monthly income, and frequency of visits to gastronomic destinations in Malabon City.

Part II: Organizational Profile of Selected Gastronomic Establishments

This section gathered data from owners, managers, or supervisors regarding the profile of their establishments, including type of ownership, number of employees, and years of operation. (The results also report the type of gastronomic destination and main cuisine offered.)

Part III: Marketing Practices Assessment

This section examined respondents' perceptions of the marketing strategies employed by the selected gastronomic destinations, based on the extended marketing mix (8Ps) framework: (1) Product, (2) Price, (3) Place (Distribution), (4) Promotion, (5) People, (6) Physical Evidence, (7) Process, and (8) Productivity and Quality.

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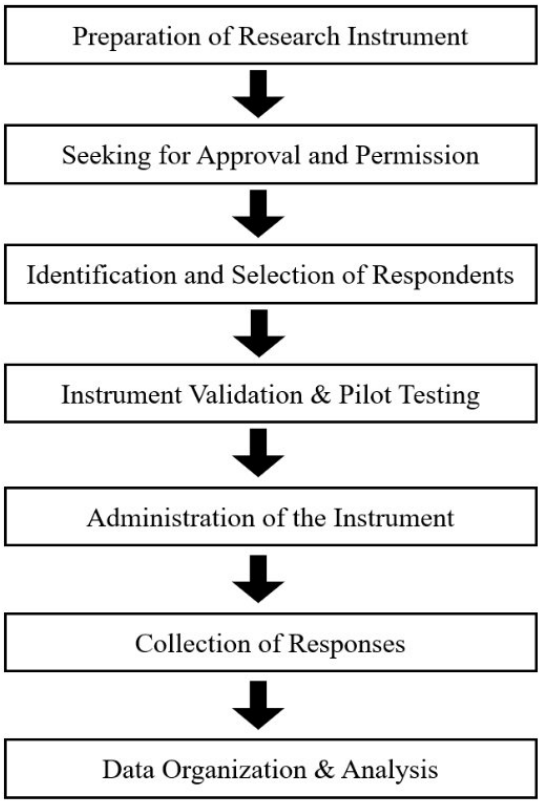
Part IV: Strategic Promotional Plan Development (Output)

Based on the findings from the previous sections, this part guided the development of a strategic promotional plan aimed at enhancing Malabon's gastronomic tourism through an effective marketing mix.

The survey questionnaire was selected as the primary instrument for its effectiveness in collecting quantifiable and comparable data from both individuals and establishments. This approach ensures that the study captures comprehensive insights into the demographic characteristics, organizational profiles, marketing practices, and strategic needs of gastronomic tourism in Malabon City.

Data Gathering Procedure

Figure 3. Data Gathering and Research Procedures



The data for this research were collected through a survey questionnaire administered to the target respondents. Data collection helps generate potential data from respondents who can provide answers to the research instrument. The first step for the researcher was to prepare the instrument to be used. Next, approval and permission were sought from the concerned parties. The third step was identifying and selecting target respondents. One of the most important factors to consider is targeting the right group of people who can contribute to the study's success; by selecting the correct audience, precise and accurate responses were gathered. In this regard, the researcher targeted respondents with a brief background in Malabon City and its popular culinary delicacies. The fourth step was to validate the instrument with professionals in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry and to conduct pilot testing. The fifth step was the administration and distribution of the instrument and the collection of all data from respondents' answers. Lastly, all responses on Gastronomic Tourism in Malabon City were organized and analyzed. The data lifecycle plan was followed: data were retained for five (5) years, securely stored and accessible only to authorized individuals, and properly disposed of afterward by permanently deleting electronic files.

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Data Processing

The survey questionnaires were administered through face-to-face distribution of the instrument. The researcher obtained the respondents' consent before they were involved in data processing. The instrument was comprised of eight sections (one for each of the 8Ps) on Marketing Gastronomic Tourism in Malabon City. The researcher assured the confidentiality of the survey questionnaires, as participants' identities would remain anonymous and were not important. Also, the researcher recognized that each participant's level of consciousness may affect honesty and the effectiveness of their responses to the survey. Based on the findings, the researcher formulated the study's conclusions and recommendations.

The checklist was adopted from existing and previously validated instruments related to tourism experience, customer satisfaction, and food service quality, while the survey questionnaire used in this study, dedicated to tourists/consumers, underwent a few modifications to the original instrument, including the use of local terms, adjustments in wording and examples, and the incorporation of items that reflect the local tourism and food service environment of Malabon City, in order to improve respondents' comprehension and accurately capture their experiences and perceptions. Open-ended items were included to gather respondents' views on perceived challenges and opportunities in Malabon's gastronomic tourism.

Statistical Treatment

The following statistical tools and techniques were used in this study: Percentage and Frequency, Weighted Mean, Ranking, Likert Scale, and Verbal Interpretation. To strengthen the validity of the findings and support more reliable strategic extrapolations, weighted means and ranking were employed to identify the most significant marketing practices among respondents.

Frequency and percentage were used to answer problems 1 and 2 (the respondents' demographic profile and the destinations' organizational profile). The weighted mean was used to answer problem 3 (the assessment of the 8Ps), computed by multiplying each response value by its weight and dividing the sum of the products by the number of responses. Ranking arranged the results from highest to lowest so that relative standing could be compared without being distorted by extreme values. Responses were measured on a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree), which produces ordinal data that can be summarized through frequencies, percentages, and averages.

The translation of numerical results into descriptive terms makes them more understandable. The following scale was used in interpreting the weighted mean in the context of this study (Table 2).

Table 2. Likert Scale Interpretation

Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Interval Observed
4	Strongly Agree	3.25 – 4.00
3	Agree	2.50 – 3.24
2	Disagree	1.75 – 2.49
1	Strongly Disagree	1.00 – 1.74

Ethical Considerations

The researcher observed and adhered to ethical guidelines and concerns when collecting data through the questionnaire. The study accordingly raised no ethical concerns in the field of research. The researcher recognized

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that all details and statistics collected through the research instrument must comply with the research ethics guidelines.

The Graduate Studies Department of La Consolacion University Philippines (LCUP) introduced the determination and implementation of specific ethical considerations for all theses and dissertations to ensure compliance with ethical requirements and safeguard the interests of research participants. Hence, the researcher secured institutional clearance and permission from the LCUP Graduate Studies Department. The following ethical considerations were put into place for this research undertaking:

1. The dignity and well-being of the respondents were protected. They were not harmed in any form or placed in an uncomfortable position. Informed consent was obtained by the researcher prior to participation, typically at the time of on-site survey administration, ensuring that respondents understood the purpose of the study, their rights, and their voluntary participation as stated on the ICF (informed consent form). Only adults aged 18 years and above were included in the study, and minors were explicitly excluded; therefore, no assent procedures are required, as the target respondents are generally non-vulnerable adults involved in tourism-related activities.
2. All data gathered were treated with strict confidentiality. The identity of participants and their businesses remained anonymous in the presentation, analysis, and publication of results. Data were securely stored and accessed only by the researcher for the purposes of this study.
3. Prior to conducting the research, formal permission was obtained from the concerned Local Government Unit (LGU) and other relevant authorities. This ensured the study aligns with local research regulations and ethical standards.
4. The research data remained confidential throughout the study and were handled in compliance with Republic Act No. 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012). RA 10173 was followed by collecting personal information only for research purposes, securely storing it, and restricting access to authorized personnel. Data were not shared without consent, identifying information was anonymized in reporting, and all records are to be safely disposed of after the retention period to ensure confidentiality and compliance with the law.
5. Research Participants were approached directly by the principal investigator (PI) during the data collection phase. Recruitment was conducted primarily through on-site intercept surveys at selected gastronomic destinations in Malabon City, where eligible participants were identified and invited to take part in the study.
6. The researchers declare that there is no conflict of interest related to this study. All data collection, analysis, and reporting were conducted objectively, and the researchers have no financial, personal, or professional relationships that could influence the outcomes or interpretations of this study.
7. This study involved minimal risk to participants. Possible risks included inconvenience in answering survey questions about personal opinions or experiences in gastronomic tourism. No physical, psychological, or social harm was anticipated, and participants could skip any question or withdraw from the study at any time. No incentives or reimbursements were provided for participation in the study. The research adhered to ethical guidelines prescribed by the academic institution and the Research Ethics Committee (REC). All necessary documentation and approvals were secured before data collection began.

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RESULTS

The objective of the study was to present and explain the factors in Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism Marketing Mix, using a survey questionnaire and checklist as the primary research instrument. This chapter presents the data using appropriate tables, text, and analysis and interpretation of the results, organized in the order and sequence of the research questions presented in Chapter 1.

Results of the Checklist for Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors

Profile of the Respondents

Profiles of the respondents on age, gender, civil status, and monthly income were gathered during the first phase of the administered checklist for business owners, managers, and supervisors of the selected Gastronomic Destinations in the City of Malabon. This information is of utmost importance because age will determine whether respondents are old enough to make decisions, provide necessary details, and reflect on indicators that will enhance Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism. Gender is included to show male and female participation in managing gastronomic establishments, reflecting differences in leadership and decision-making. Civil status may influence responsibility, time commitment, and business stability. Monthly income assesses economic standing and capacity to invest in initiatives that support Malabon City's gastronomic tourism.

Table 3. Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Age (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
30 years and below	3	12%	4
31 – 40 years	12	48%	1
41 – 50 years	5	20%	2
51 – 60 years	4	16%	3
61 years and above	1	4%	5
TOTAL	25	100%	

Table 3 presents the demographic profile of respondents by age. All respondents are of legal age, which signifies that ethical considerations were observed in conducting the study. Ensuring that participants meet the minimum age requirement safeguards their welfare and ensures responses from individuals capable of making informed and responsible decisions. The data reveal that the majority of respondents are in the 31–40 age bracket, comprising 12 of 25 respondents (48%) and ranking 1st. This indicates that most gastronomic business owners, managers and employees in Malabon belong to the prime working age group. Individuals in this age range are often characterized by high productivity, professional maturity, and active engagement in business development.

Table 4. Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Gender (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Male	9	36%	2
Female	14	56%	1
LGBTQIA+	2	8%	3

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TOTAL	25	100%	

Table 4 shows that, out of 25 respondents, the majority are female, comprising 14 respondents (56 percent), ranking 1st. The gender distribution suggests that Malabon's gastronomic establishments are largely female-led, with meaningful participation from male and LGBTQIA+ entrepreneurs. This diversity in gender representation may enhance service quality, customer engagement, and organizational effectiveness, contributing positively to the growth and sustainability of the local gastronomic tourism industry.

Table 5. Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Civil Status (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Single	8	32%	2
Married	16	64%	1
Others	1	4%	3
TOTAL	25	100%	

Table 5 shows that the majority of respondents are married, comprising 16 of 25 respondents (64%) and ranking 1st. The distribution indicates that the gastronomic sector in Malabon City is largely composed of married entrepreneurs and managers, indicating that family-oriented individuals play a significant role in sustaining and developing local gastronomic enterprises. Being married often brings added responsibilities and financial considerations, which can motivate business owners to prioritize steady growth, careful planning, and sustainable operations.

Table 6. Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Monthly Income (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
₱10,000 and below	2	8%	4
₱10,001 – ₱20,000	10	40%	1
₱20,001 – ₱30,000	7	28%	2
₱30,000 and above	6	24%	3
TOTAL	25	100%	

Table 6 shows that, out of 25 respondents, the largest group falls within the ₱10,001–₱20,000 income bracket, comprising 10 respondents (40%) and ranking 1st. Most respondents belong to the lower-middle income group, suggesting that their earnings are within a moderate financial range.

Profile of the Gastronomic Destinations

Profiles of the selected gastronomic destinations, including type of ownership, number of employees, years of existence, type of gastronomic destination, and main cuisine offered, were gathered using the second part of the administered checklist. The type of ownership indicates whether the establishment is a sole proprietorship, a partnership, or a corporation, which may affect decision-making, management style, and investment capacity. The number of employees provides insight into the scale of operations and workforce management, while years of existence reflect the stability, experience, and credibility of the establishment. Identifying the type of gastronomic

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destination helps categorize the business by its offerings and target market, and knowing the main cuisine highlights the uniqueness of local food products that contribute to Malabon City's gastronomic tourism appeal.

Table 7. Profile of the Gastronomic Destinations in Terms of Type of Ownership

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Sole Proprietorship	23	92%	1
Partnership	2	8%	2
Corporation	0	0%	3
TOTAL	25	100%	

Table 7 shows that the majority of gastronomic businesses in Malabon City are sole proprietorships, comprising 23 respondents (92%) and ranking 1st. The dominance of sole proprietorships suggests that the local gastronomic industry is largely composed of small-scale and personally operated enterprises. Malabon's Gastronomic sector is primarily driven by individually managed businesses. This ownership structure may influence operational style, resource allocation, and long-term growth strategies, shaping the overall character of the city's local food industry.

Table 8. Profile of the Gastronomic Destinations in Terms of Number of Employees

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
10 and below	11	44%	1
11 – 15	8	32%	2
16 – 20	3	12%	3
21 – 25	2	8%	4
26 and above	1	4%	5
TOTAL	25	100%	

Table 8 shows that, out of 25 respondents, the majority have 10 employees or fewer, comprising 11 respondents (44%) and ranking 1st. It confirms that Malabon's gastronomic sector is largely composed of small-scale businesses with limited workforce size. This structure may influence operational strategies, service delivery approaches, and the overall management style of food establishments within the city. A sufficient number of staff enables food establishments to provide faster service, maintain cleanliness, and ensure consistent food quality, all of which are essential in competitive culinary destinations.

Table 9. Profile of the Gastronomic Destinations in Terms of Years of Existence

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
21 – 30 years	9	36%	1.5
31 – 40 years	9	36%	1.5
41 – 50 years	3	12%	3.5
51 – 60 years	3	12%	3.5
61 years and above	1	4%	5

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TOTAL	25	100%	

Table 9 presents businesses operating for 21–30 years and 31–40 years, both at 36 percent, sharing the highest rank of 1.5. The findings reveal that a significant portion of gastronomic businesses in Malabon have been operating for more than two decades. The high percentage of establishments in the 21–40 years age range suggests that many businesses are well-established and have sustained operations for a long time. Longevity in business often reflects stability, consistent customer patronage, and the ability to adapt to changing market conditions.

Table 10. Profile of the Gastronomic Destinations in Terms of Type of Gastronomic Destination

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Restaurant	12	48%	1
Cafe	7	28%	2
Bakery	4	16%	3
Food Stall	2	8%	4
Eatery	0	0%	5
TOTAL	25	100%	

Table 10 shows that restaurants comprise the largest group, with 12 respondents (48%) ranking 1st. The findings reveal that restaurants dominate the local gastronomic landscape in Malabon City. The high percentage of restaurants suggests that formal dining establishments play a central role in the city's food tourism sector.

Table 11. Profile of the Gastronomic Destinations in Terms of Main Cuisine Offered

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Filipino	12	48%	1
Chinese	7	28%	2
Spanish	4	16%	3
Continental	2	8%	4
Fusion	0	0%	5
TOTAL	25	100%	

Table 11 shows that Filipino cuisine is the most commonly offered type among gastronomic destinations in Malabon City, with 12 respondents (48%) ranking it 1st. The local food tourism scene is heavily dominated by traditional, familiar flavors, reflecting the city's emphasis on promoting its culinary cultural heritage. The significant presence of Filipino cuisine suggests that both residents and tourists are drawn to authentic local dishes, while the moderate offerings of Chinese and Spanish cuisine provide some diversity but are less prominent.

Marketing Practices of the Selected Gastronomic Destinations in Malabon City

The marketing practices of the selected gastronomic tourism destinations in Malabon City were examined using the 8Ps of marketing: product, price, place, promotion, people, process, physical evidence, and productivity. This framework is important as it highlights how establishments design their offerings, set pricing, reach customers, and create memorable dining experiences to attract tourists. It also improves how effectively they manage staff, operational processes, ambiance, and overall service quality, thereby enhancing Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism.

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Table 12. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Product (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Appearance	2.52	Agree	4
Product Quality	3.60	Strongly Agree	1
Palatability	3.28	Strongly Agree	2
Packaging	2.60	Agree	3
Variety	1.92	Disagree	5
Grand Mean	2.78	Agree	

Table 12 shows that the indicator "variety" had the lowest weighted mean of 1.92 among the 5 indicators, which is verbally interpreted as Disagree. This indicates that menu options among gastronomic destinations in Malabon City are limited, highlighting the need for greater product diversification to better meet diverse customer preferences and to strengthen overall product marketing practices. This is generally observed among gastronomic destinations in Malabon City, particularly in maintaining quality and taste; however, limited menu variety suggests a need for greater product diversification.

Table 13. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Price (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Discount Pricing	2.04	Disagree	3.5
Seasonal Pricing	2.16	Disagree	2
Segmented Pricing	1.72	Strongly Disagree	5
Psychological Pricing	2.04	Disagree	3.5
Promotional Pricing	2.40	Disagree	1
Grand Mean	2.07	Disagree	

Table 13 shows that the indicator "segmented pricing" had the lowest weighted mean of 1.72, which is verbally interpreted as Strongly Disagree. Gastronomic Destinations in Malabon rarely adjust their prices for specific customer groups, such as students, senior citizens (beyond mandated discounts), families, bulk buyers, or corporate clients. The low rating suggests that most businesses apply uniform pricing rather than tailoring prices according to customers' purchasing power, buying behavior, or occasion-based demand.

Table 14. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Place (Distribution) (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Retail	3.76	Strongly Agree	1
Wholesale	2.84	Agree	3
Internet	3.28	Strongly Agree	2
Peer-to-Peer	1.96	Disagree	5

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Multi-Channel	2.04	Disagree	4
Grand Mean	2.78	Agree	

Table 14 shows that the indicator "peer-to-peer" had the lowest weighted mean of 1.96, interpreted as Disagree, indicating that this distribution strategy is rarely practiced among gastronomic destinations in Malabon. The results explained that establishments seldom utilize direct customer-to-customer or community-based selling approaches, such as referral systems, reseller partnerships, community ambassadors, or collaborative selling through local networks.

Table 15. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Promotion (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Television	2.28	Disagree	3
Vlogs	2.92	Agree	1
Magazines	1.40	Strongly Disagree	4
Social Media Platforms	2.48	Disagree	2
Posters/Billboards	1.04	Strongly Disagree	5
Grand Mean	2.02	Disagree	

Table 15 shows that the indicator "posters/billboards" had the lowest weighted mean of 1.04, interpreted as Strongly Disagree, indicating that this promotional strategy is the least utilized among gastronomic destinations in Malabon. This very low rating suggests that establishments rarely invest in outdoor advertising or other traditional, visible promotional materials. The minimal use of posters and billboards may limit public visibility, especially among potential customers who rely on physical or roadside advertisements when choosing dining destinations.

Table 16. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of People (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Customer Service Skills	2.48	Disagree	5
Positive Mental Attitude	3.04	Agree	4
Communication	3.16	Agree	2
Knowledge	3.12	Agree	3
Respect	3.88	Strongly Agree	1
Grand Mean	3.14	Agree	

Table 16 shows that the indicator "customer service skills" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.48, interpreted as Disagree, indicating that this aspect of people-related marketing practices is less evident among gastronomic destinations in Malabon. This result suggests that although staff may demonstrate positive attitudes, respect, and basic communication skills, there may still be gaps in delivering consistent, high-quality customer service. Customer service skills include responding effectively to customer needs, handling complaints professionally, providing prompt assistance, and creating a positive dining experience. The lower rating suggests that some establishments may lack adequate staff training or structured service standards.

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Table 17. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Physical Evidence (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Signage	2.20	Disagree	3
Parking	1.80	Disagree	5
Exterior Design	2.96	Agree	1
Interior Design	2.52	Agree	2
Surrounding Environment	2.04	Disagree	4
Grand Mean	2.30	Disagree	

Table 17 shows that the indicator "parking" had the lowest weighted mean of 1.80, interpreted as Disagree, indicating that parking facilities are the least evident aspect of physical evidence among gastronomic destinations in Malabon.

Table 18. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Process (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Greeting the Customers	3.04	Agree	2
Safety and Security	3.36	Strongly Agree	1
Process of Taking Orders	2.92	Agree	4
Handling Requests/Complaints	2.44	Disagree	5
Mode of Payment	2.96	Agree	3
Grand Mean	2.94	Agree	

Table 18 shows that the indicator "handling requests and complaints" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.44, which is verbally interpreted as Disagree. This finding suggests that establishments may struggle to respond effectively to customer concerns, special requests, or service issues during the dining experience. The low result implies that complaint management procedures may not be consistently implemented, which can affect customer satisfaction and overall service quality.

Table 19. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Productivity (Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Team and Individual Productivity Goal	2.64	Agree	4
Technology, Tools, and Equipment	2.32	Disagree	5
Staff Efficiency and Workflow	3.08	Agree	1
Customer Service and Turnaround Time	2.84	Agree	3

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Resource Utilization	3.04	Agree	2
Grand Mean	2.78	Agree	

Table 19 shows that the indicator "technology, tools, and equipment" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.32, which is verbally interpreted as Disagree. This result suggests that many establishments may have limited adoption or utilization of modern technology, tools, and equipment in their daily operations. The low rating implies that some businesses may still rely on traditional or manual processes, which could affect operational efficiency, service speed, and overall productivity.

Results of the Survey Questionnaire for Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel

Profile of the Respondents

The profile of the respondents includes age, gender, civil status, monthly income, and frequency of visits to Malabon's gastronomic destinations, as these factors help ensure respondents are mature, economically capable, and sufficiently familiar with local food tourism to provide relevant insights. Age, gender, and civil status reflect experience, participation patterns, and responsibilities, while monthly income and visit frequency indicate economic capacity and exposure, all of which influence perceptions, decision-making, and contributions to enhancing gastronomic tourism.

Table 20. Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Age (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
21 – 30 years old	17	6.80%	5
31 – 40 years old	81	32.40%	1
41 – 50 years old	44	17.60%	4
51 – 60 years old	53	21.20%	3
61 years old and above	55	22.00%	2
TOTAL	250	100%	

Table 20 shows that respondents aged 31–40 years old had the highest frequency of 81 respondents (32.40%), ranking 1st, indicating that this age bracket represents the majority of the tourists, consumers, and tourism staff who participated in the study conducted in Malabon. This result indicates that individuals within this age range are the most active participants in gastronomic tourism activities in the area.

Table 21. Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Gender (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Male	94	37.60%	2
Female	132	52.80%	1
LGBTQIA+	24	9.60%	3
TOTAL	250	100%	

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Table 21 shows that female respondents had the highest frequency of 132 (52.80%), ranking first. This suggests that gender, as part of the demographic profile, plays a significant role in understanding participation patterns and preferences in Malabon's gastronomic tourism.

Table 22. Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Civil Status (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Single	128	51.20%	1
Married	79	31.60%	2
Others	43	17.20%	3
TOTAL	250	100%	

Table 22 shows that respondents with a single civil status had the highest frequency of 128 (51.20%), ranking 1st. This data showed that single individuals may be more active and available to explore local food destinations, thereby influencing the demographic profile by civil status.

Table 23. Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Monthly Income (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
₱10,000 and below	59	23.60%	3
₱10,001 – ₱20,000	88	35.20%	1
₱20,001 – ₱30,000	68	27.20%	2
₱30,000 and above	35	14.00%	4
TOTAL	250	100%	

Table 23 shows that respondents with a monthly income of ₱10,001–₱20,000 had the highest frequency of 88 (35.20%), ranking 1st. The majority of respondents belong to the lower–middle income group, suggesting that income level may influence spending behavior and participation in gastronomic tourism activities in the area.

Table 24. Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Frequency of Visit to Malabon's Gastronomic Destinations (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
First-time Visitor	11	4.40%	4
Occasionally (1–2 times/month)	98	39.20%	2
Frequently (3–4 times/month)	101	40.40%	1
Regularly (5 or more times/month)	40	16.00%	3
TOTAL	250	100%	

Table 24 shows that respondents who frequently visit Malabon's Gastronomic Destination (3–4 times per month) had the highest frequency (101, 40.40%), ranking 1st. The results indicate that a large portion of respondents

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regularly visit gastronomic destinations in the area, suggesting strong engagement and continued interest in Malabon's local food tourism activities.

Marketing Practices of the Selected Gastronomic Destinations in Malabon City

The marketing practices of the selected gastronomic tourism destinations in Malabon City were evaluated using the 8Ps of marketing: product, price, place, promotion, people, process, physical evidence, and productivity from the perspective of tourists, consumers, and CTCAO employees. This assessment is important as it determines how effectively these establishments meet customer expectations, deliver quality service, and implement strategic marketing efforts that contribute to the overall development and competitiveness of Malabon's gastronomic tourism.

Table 25. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Product (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The establishment offers a variety of food items that meet customer preferences.	2.66	Agree	3
The quality of products consistently satisfies customer expectations.	3.26	Strongly Agree	2
The menu is updated regularly to include new and seasonal items.	1.84	Disagree	5
Ingredients used are fresh and of high quality.	3.71	Strongly Agree	1
The establishment offers unique dishes that differentiate it from competitors.	2.32	Disagree	4
Grand Mean	2.76	Agree	

Table 25 shows that the indicator "the menu is updated regularly to include new and seasonal items" obtained the lowest weighted mean of 1.84, interpreted as Disagree. This indicates that while product quality is positively perceived, respondents believe establishments need to improve menu innovation and develop unique dishes to further strengthen the appeal of Malabon's gastronomic tourism. Strong product quality and fresh ingredients significantly enhance visitor satisfaction and destination competitiveness. The results imply that while product quality is recognized, respondents feel that local food establishments in Malabon could enhance their competitiveness by innovating their menus and developing unique dishes.

Table 26. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Price (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The pricing strategy is reasonable and affordable for the target market.	3.31	Strongly Agree	2
Pricing is competitive compared to other gastronomic destinations.	2.72	Agree	5
Food prices reflect the quality and uniqueness of the destination.	2.74	Agree	4

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The price reflects the perceived value of the food and service.	3.23	Agree	3
There is transparency in pricing, with no hidden charges.	3.72	Strongly Agree	1
Grand Mean	3.14	Agree	

Table 26 shows that the indicator "pricing is competitive compared to other gastronomic destinations" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.72 among the 5 indicators, which is verbally interpreted as Agree. The results suggest that while respondents generally perceive the pricing strategy positively, there is a need to improve price competitiveness to further enhance Malabon's appeal as a gastronomic tourism destination.

Table 27. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Place (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The location of the establishment is accessible and convenient for customers.	3.01	Agree	2
Distribution channels ensure products are available when needed.	2.64	Agree	4
The establishment is easily accessible via public transportation or major roads.	3.55	Strongly Agree	1
Online ordering or delivery options are available to reach more customers.	2.18	Disagree	5
The establishment is located in a safe and secure area for customers.	2.89	Agree	3
Grand Mean	2.85	Agree	

Table 27 shows that the indicator "online ordering or delivery options are available to reach more customers" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.18 among the 5 indicators, which is verbally interpreted as Disagree. The results suggest that respondents perceive the availability of online ordering as insufficient. It also implies that overall marketing practices regarding place/distribution are satisfactory but still need improvement, particularly in online accessibility.

Table 28. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Promotion (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The establishment actively promotes its products through various channels.	2.69	Agree	2
Promotional strategies effectively attract new customers.	2.64	Agree	3
The establishment uses social media actively to engage customers.	2.75	Agree	1

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Special events, festivals, or food fairs are utilized to promote the business.	2.24	Disagree	4
Loyalty programs or incentives are used to retain regular customers.	2.21	Disagree	5
Grand Mean	2.51	Agree	

Table 28 shows that the indicator "loyalty programs or incentives are used to retain regular customers" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.21 among the 5 indicators, which is verbally interpreted as Disagree. The results indicate that respondents perceive loyalty programs as either not widely implemented or ineffective at encouraging repeat visits. The lack of strong loyalty initiatives may result in missed opportunities to retain regular customers and build long-term relationships.

Table 29. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of People (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Staff are well-trained, friendly, and provide excellent customer service.	2.70	Agree	5
Employees contribute to a positive customer experience.	2.81	Agree	4
Staff are knowledgeable about the menu and can make appropriate recommendations.	2.99	Agree	3
Employees handle customer complaints professionally and efficiently.	3.21	Agree	1
Staff are motivated and committed to providing excellent service.	3.18	Agree	2
Grand Mean	2.98	Agree	

Table 29 shows that the indicator "staff are well-trained, friendly, and provide excellent customer service" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.70 among the 5 indicators, which is verbally interpreted as Agree. While the rating indicates a generally positive perception, it highlights an area that requires improvement to enhance overall visitor experiences. This suggests that respondents perceive staff training as the least strong aspect of people management in the gastronomic tourism setting.

Table 30. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Physical Evidence (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The establishment maintains a clean, attractive, and welcoming environment.	2.98	Agree	2
Branding and presentation enhance the customer's perception of quality.	2.59	Agree	4

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The establishment's interior and exterior design reflect its brand and theme.	2.26	Disagree	5
Proper signage and menus are visible and easy to read.	2.62	Agree	3
Cleanliness and hygiene standards are consistently maintained.	3.33	Strongly Agree	1
Grand Mean	2.76	Agree	

Table 30 shows that the indicator "the establishment's interior and exterior design reflects its brand and theme" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.26 among the 5 indicators, which is verbally interpreted as Disagree. This indicates that respondents perceive the physical design of the establishments as the weakest aspect of the physical evidence dimension. In light of the findings, the results imply that enhancing the visual and thematic aspects of Malabon's food establishments could improve visitors' overall impressions and strengthen the destination's brand identity.

Table 31. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Process (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Service processes are efficient and customer-oriented.	2.54	Agree	5
Operations are organized and consistent in delivering quality service.	3.10	Agree	1
Ordering, payment, and service processes are smooth and efficient.	2.97	Agree	3
The establishment has clear procedures for handling customer feedback.	3.00	Agree	2
Operational processes minimize waiting time and improve customer satisfaction.	2.67	Agree	4
Grand Mean	2.86	Agree	

Table 31 shows that the indicator "service processes are efficient and customer-oriented" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.54 among the 5 indicators, which is verbally interpreted as Agree. This indicates that respondents perceive the service process as the least efficient aspect within the process dimension. Although other operational aspects, such as organized operations and feedback procedures, are viewed more positively, inefficiencies in service flow may still affect the overall customer experience.

Table 32. Descriptive Statistics in Terms of Productivity (Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel)

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The establishment maintains high productivity without compromising quality.	2.62	Agree	4

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Continuous improvement initiatives are implemented to enhance service and product quality.	2.88	Agree	3
The establishment monitors and evaluates performance regularly to improve quality.	2.57	Agree	5
Consistency in food taste and service quality is maintained daily.	3.52	Strongly Agree	1
Staff productivity is optimized without compromising customer experience.	3.42	Strongly Agree	2
Grand Mean	3.00	Agree	

Table 32 shows that the indicator "the establishment monitors and evaluates performance regularly to improve quality" had the lowest weighted mean of 2.57 among the 5 indicators, which is verbally interpreted as Agree. This indicates that respondents perceive the monitoring and evaluation of performance as the least emphasized aspect of productivity.

Identified Challenges and Potential Opportunities and Their Integration into the Strategic Promotional Plan

Based on the findings of the study, the following are the major considerations in proposing the Strategic Promotional Plan to enhance the Gastronomic Tourism of Malabon City using the 8Ps of Marketing.

Figure 4. Key Challenges and Potential Opportunities in Enhancing Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism

Key Challenges	
Product	Limited menu variety and lack of continuous innovation in food offerings.
Price	Weak implementation of diverse pricing schemes such as discounts, segmentation, and promotional offers.
Place	Limited accessibility due to lack of delivery services, online ordering, and multi-channel distribution.
Promotion	Weak, uncoordinated promotional efforts and low utilization of both traditional and digital marketing platforms.
People & Process	Inadequate customer service skills and ineffective handling of customer requests and complaints.
Physical Evidence & Productivity	Poor facilities like parking and ambiance and low adoption of technology affecting efficiency and service quality.
Potential Opportunities	
Product	High-quality products and fresh ingredients can strengthen brand reputation and position Malabon as a destination for authentic cuisine.
	Consistent food quality can create a competitive advantage by building customer trust, loyalty, and long-term growth in gastronomic tourism.
Place	Strong retail accessibility can increase customer reach and foot traffic by improving convenience and strategic location use.
People	Respectful staff behavior can build strong customer relationships, boost satisfaction, and encourage repeat visits

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The challenges identified are directly hampering the growth of tourism, affecting customer satisfaction, accessibility, service quality, and the overall attractiveness of gastronomic destinations in the city of Malabon. Weak promotion, limited innovation, facilities, and service processes may reduce tourist engagement, repeat visits, and the city's competitiveness as a sustainable gastronomic tourism destination.

Strategic Promotional Plan in Response to Identified Challenges and Opportunities

Figure 5. The 8Ps OVER Promotional Plan

Proposed Strategic Promotional Plan in Enhancing Malabon's Gastronomic Tourism "8 P's O.V.E.R"	
OFFERING	intangible combination of products and services which are often customized. The total offer to the customers. It is more than the product itself.
VALUE	highly variable based on customer needs, usage, and perceived outcomes. Customer-perceived value refers to the difference between the benefits and costs of a product or service compared to alternatives.
EXPERIENCE	activity which experiential marketing can be defined as international immerse people within the brand through the stimulation of their senses.
RELATIONSHIPS	is a facet of customer relationship (CRM) that focuses on customer loyalty and long-term engagement rather than short-term goals like customer acquisition and individual sales.

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Figure 6. The Detailed 8Ps OVER Promotional Plan

	ACTIVITY	OVER CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE	TIMELINE	BUDGET	RESPONSIBLE STAKEHOLDERS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
PRODUCT	Malabon Signature Food Series	Offering	To promote and preserve Malabon's culinary identity through signature local dishes.	Once a year	₱80,000–₱120,000	Malabon City Tourism Office and Local Restaurant Owners	✔ Showcase local food businesses during festivals, food fairs, and tourism activities
PRICE	Loyalty Card & Digital Rewards System	Relationship	To increase customer retention through rewards and incentives.	Every 6 Months	₱30,000–₱50,000	Local restaurant owners and business associations	✔ Achieve a 20% increase in repeat customers through loyalty card
PLACE	Gastronomic Tourism Map of Malabon City	Experience	To improve tourist accessibility to Malabon's food destinations.	Whole Year	₱70,000–₱100,000	Malabon City Tourism Office, City Planning & Engineering Office and Local Transport Groups	✔ Distribute and promote digital views of the Gastronomic Tourism Map annually
PROMOTION	QR Code Campaigns	Value	To enhance customer engagement through digital platforms and QR codes.	Whole Year	₱70,000–₱100,000	Marketing Teams, Social Media and Local Influencers	✔ Produce an official promotional video for Malabon Gastronomic Tourism ✔ Publish 4 or more promotional posts per week on Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram
PEOPLE	Customer Service and Hospitality Training Programs	Experience	To improve service quality and professionalism among food personnel.	Every 6 Months	₱50,000–₱80,000	TESDA Trainers and Restaurant Managers	✔ Conduct customer service and hospitality training for personnel every 6 months
PHYSICAL EVIDENCE	Food Safety Inspections and Visible Rating Displays	Value	To ensure food safety compliance and strengthen customer trust.	Quarterly	₱30,000–₱50,000	City Health Office and Sanitation Inspectors	✔ Ensure that 100% of participating establishments comply with food safety and sanitation standards
PROCESS	Queue Management System	Experience	To improve service efficiency and reduce customer waiting time.	Once a year	₱30,000–₱70,000	Restaurant managers, operations staff, IT support providers	✔ Reduce customer waiting time by at least 20% during peak hours and Tourism Events
PRODUCTIVITY	Digital Feedback Forms	Relationship	To collect customer feedback for continuous service improvement.	Whole Year	₱10,000–₱20,000	restaurant management, IT personnel	✔ Collect at least 200 customer feedback responses quarterly through digital feedback forms

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Figure 7. Gantt Chart (Timeline of Activities for the 8Ps OVER)

GANTT CHART (Timeline of Activities)

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	MONTH											
		January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Malabon Signature Food Series	Once a year												
Loyalty Card & Digital Rewards System	Every 6 Months												
Gastronomic Tourism Map of Malabon City	Whole Year												
QR Code Campaigns	Whole Year												
Customer Service and Hospitality Training Programs	Every 6 Months												
Food Safety Inspections and Visible Rating Displays	Quarterly												
Queue Management System	Once a year												
Digital Feedback Forms	Whole Year												

Legend:	
Whole Year =	
Once a year =	
Quarterly =	
Every 6 Months =	

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Figure 8. Infographics of the Seven Malabon Gastronomic Destinations



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Figure 9. Infographics of the Seven Malabon Gastronomic Destinations (continued)



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DISCUSSION

This section interprets the results presented above and relates each to the reviewed literature and to the 8Ps framework of Lovelock and Wirtz that guided the study.

Interpretation of the Findings in Relation to the Literature

Profile of the Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors and of the Gastronomic Destinations (Tables 3–11)

Table 3. According to Grönroos (2020), service businesses rely on the competence, maturity, and age of owners in their prime working years to ensure effective management and customer relationships. In Malabon's gastronomic tourism, the predominance of respondents aged 31–40 years old suggests strong potential for innovative marketing and sustainable service operations.

Table 6. According to Quirie (2023), monthly income influences business capacity and resource allocation, and income levels may affect marketing investment and service improvement strategies. Results indicate diverse financial capacity among gastronomic business owners and managers in Malabon City, with the majority in the lower-middle income bracket. This financial profile may influence how businesses allocate resources and plan for growth within the local gastronomic tourism industry.

Table 7. According to Yasar (2022), the type of business ownership influences management practices and operational efficiency, as different ownership structures often dictate decision-making processes, resource allocation, and the level of managerial control exercised within an establishment. Ownership structure may also affect the sustainability and growth of local food ventures.

Table 9. According to Kutlu and Ayyıldız (2021), the years of existence of a food establishment affect its reputation and customer trust, and in Malabon's gastronomic tourism, longevity contributes to attracting and retaining visitors. Businesses that have existed for several decades may have developed strong brand recognition, loyal customer bases, and refined operational systems.

Table 10. As Castro and Barrientos (2024) suggest, the type of gastronomic destination influences tourist experiences and preferences, while the establishment type affects visitor satisfaction and engagement. The formal restaurants and smaller eateries help define Malabon's culinary culture, attracting a range of tourists from casual food enthusiasts to gastronomic enthusiasts, and highlighting the city's potential for sustainable growth in food tourism.

Table 11. This accords with the study by Castro and Barrientos (2024): the main cuisine offered by a gastronomic destination influences tourist preferences and satisfaction; cuisine variety affects visitor attraction and the overall experience. Offering a diverse range of cuisines allows establishments to cater to different tastes, dietary preferences, and cultural backgrounds, increasing the likelihood of attracting a wider audience.

Marketing Practices as Assessed by Business Owners, Managers, and Supervisors (Tables 12–19)

Table 12. Roy and Datta (2022) explained that marketing has evolved to emphasize experiences and performances, making product presentation and service delivery crucial in gastronomic tourism. Similarly, Carniel (2022) defines a product as anything that must satisfy consumer needs and wants, and in Malabon's gastronomic tourism, food quality, taste, and the overall dining experience are essential components of effective product marketing.

Table 13. Twin (2024) noted that pricing must be carefully balanced to align with customers' perceived value, while Quirie (2023) highlighted pricing as a powerful tool that influences demand and competitiveness. In Malabon's gastronomic tourism, effective price strategies are essential to attract customers and sustain business

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profitability. Relating this to Quirie's point, the limited practice of segmented pricing suggests that businesses may not be fully maximizing pricing as a strategic tool to stimulate demand or strengthen competitiveness.

Table 14. Delmar and Larsen (2024) emphasized that place ensures that products and services reach the target market at the right time and at a reasonable cost through effective distribution channels. In Malabon's gastronomic tourism, the strategic location and online accessibility are vital for attracting and serving customers efficiently. Place or distribution is not only about having a physical store or online presence, but also about strategically selecting and maximizing various channels to improve accessibility, convenience, and market coverage.

Table 15. According to Desai and Pandey (2024), integrated marketing communications is the strategic coordination of all marketing channels, both digital (like social media, email, websites) and traditional (like TV, radio, print ads), to deliver a unified and consistent message to the target audience, while Rehman et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of combining traditional and digital promotional strategies; in Malabon's gastronomic tourism, utilizing diverse and coordinated promotional tools can enhance visibility and attract more visitors. As a result, businesses may miss opportunities to strengthen brand awareness within the local community and attract walk-in customers.

Table 17. Kandampully, Bilgihan, and Amer (2022) noted that the service environment, including layout, design, and signage, makes intangible services more tangible, while, as cited by Ngah et al. (2022), it also influences customers' mood and dining experience. The result suggests that many establishments may have limited or inadequate parking for customers, which can create inconvenience, particularly for visitors who travel by private vehicle. Insufficient parking may discourage potential customers from visiting certain establishments, especially during peak hours, when accessibility and convenience are important factors in choosing dining destinations.

Table 18. Mehrguth (2020) stated that well-designed procedures are essential for efficiency and customer satisfaction, while Appinio (2024) noted that aligning internal functions with customer expectations enhances the visitor experience and operational performance. It also highlights the need for establishments to strengthen their service processes, particularly in addressing customer feedback and resolving concerns promptly and professionally.

Table 19. According to Rew, Siguaw, and Sheng (2021), productivity is influenced by operational flexibility. Implementing productivity benchmarks and efficient resource management can enhance service delivery and overall business performance. In the context of gastronomic tourism, productivity can be strengthened by adopting efficient systems, modern equipment, and well-organized operational processes.

Profile of the Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel (Tables 20–24)

Table 20. According to Bogdan and Apostol (2022), age, as part of the demographic profile, significantly influences tourists' preferences, spending behavior, and participation in gastronomic activities, supporting the finding that middle-aged and older groups dominate Malabon's gastronomic tourism market.

Table 21. According to Rosario-Maldonado (2022), gender differences influence tourists' motivations, experiences, and food-related consumption behavior, underscoring the importance of considering demographic profiles in tourism research. This supports the present study, as the gender distribution of respondents provides valuable insight into how different gender groups engage in and contribute to Malabon's gastronomic tourism.

Table 22. As noted by the Indeed Editorial Team (2025), civil status can influence lifestyle preferences, social behavior, and decision-making patterns, all of which are important factors in tourism participation. The high number of single respondents may reflect greater flexibility and interest in food exploration, thereby affecting the demographic profile by civil status.

Table 23. As mentioned by Quirie (2023), demographic factors such as monthly income significantly influence tourists' preferences, purchasing power, and overall participation in gastronomic tourism activities. The income

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distribution of respondents in Malabon's gastronomic tourism reflects how financial capacity shapes engagement with local culinary experiences. Income level plays a significant role in determining spending behavior and participation in local food tourism activities within Malabon.

Table 24. According to Calalo (2025), Malabon's food attractions maintain consistent appeal, encouraging regular patronage and contributing to the city's growth in gastronomic tourism. A high rate of repeat visits indicates strong customer satisfaction, effective service delivery, and positive overall dining experiences, while occasional visits may suggest event-driven participation or seasonal travel patterns.

Marketing Practices as Assessed by Tourists, Consumers, and CTCAO Personnel (Tables 25–32)

Table 26. This accords with Novkovic's (2023) findings, which emphasize that effective pricing strategies, such as transparency, fairness, and value-based pricing, strengthen customer trust and improve business competitiveness in tourism destinations. By adopting such strategies, Malabon's food establishments can attract more visitors, increase satisfaction, and elevate the overall gastronomic tourism experience.

Table 27. This aligns with the findings of Sheremet, Rangus, and Fenswick (2025), who emphasized that effective place and distribution strategies enhance customer accessibility and improve overall tourism experiences. By ensuring that food establishments offer accessible online ordering options, Malabon can strengthen its competitiveness as a gastronomic destination and enhance visitor satisfaction, making it easier for tourists to access and enjoy local culinary offerings.

Table 28. According to a study by AX Team (2023), active promotional strategies, including loyalty programs, coupons, and tickets, significantly increase repeat purchases and encourage return visits among tourists. Such promotions not only attract new visitors but also maintain sustained interest in local food offerings. Implementing structured loyalty programs and incentives could effectively encourage repeat visits, enhance customer satisfaction, and sustain Malabon's growth as a food tourism destination.

Table 29. According to Grönroos (2020), well-trained and motivated staff are essential for enhancing customer satisfaction in gastronomic tourism. Knowledgeable personnel, friendly service, and professional complaint handling significantly contribute to positive dining experiences and overall destination appeal. In light of the findings, the results suggest that Malabon's food establishments could further strengthen their people management practices by investing in staff training and development.

Table 31. According to Saiphet's (2022) study, marketing practices emphasizing processes emphasize efficient service delivery, organized operations, and systematic procedures to enhance customer satisfaction, and effective process management helps improve the overall dining experience and encourages repeat visits. Improving service efficiency and operational procedures may help enhance customer satisfaction and support the development of Malabon's gastronomic tourism.

Table 32. The findings agree with the study conducted by Sahara Group Foundation (2021), which emphasized that consistent quality and efficient staff performance are key drivers of productivity in gastronomic destinations. In relation to the findings, the relatively lower rating for performance monitoring suggests that while establishments in Malabon maintain acceptable productivity, the regular evaluation of staff performance and service quality may not be fully realized. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation practices could help ensure consistent service standards, improve operational efficiency, and further enhance visitor satisfaction in Malabon's culinary tourism sector. The results support the theory of Lovelock and Wirtz about the important role of technology in service productivity. Low technological productivity in the customer journey could hinder Malabon City's gastronomic destinations, resulting in poor service and delays.

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Summary of Principal Findings

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The respondents' demographic profile indicates that the majority are in the 31-40 age bracket. (48% of business owners/managers/supervisors and 32.40% of tourists/consumers/tourism staff). These results indicate that individuals currently employed and therefore economically active are most likely to be involved in Malabon City's Gastronomic Tourism industry. In terms of gender, most respondents were female (56% of business owners, managers, and supervisors and 52.80% of all tourists/consumers), indicating that women play an important role in both managing and participating in gastronomic establishments and food tourism activities within Malabon City. Regarding civil status, most business owners and managers are married (64%), indicating stability and a long-term commitment to their operations, while the majority of tourists and consumers (51.20%) are single. However, one can reasonably assume they have fewer family obligations and therefore have greater flexibility and interest in traveling and visiting gastronomic destinations. The majority of respondents earn between ₱10,001 and ₱20,000 each month. This represents 40% of business operators and 35.20% of tourists/consumers. This shows that most respondents are lower-middle-class income earners. These figures may also affect their ability to spend money on or participate in Gastronomic Tourism activities. Lastly, 40.40% of those surveyed visit food establishments often (3–4 times/month), indicating that Malabon's Gastronomic Destinations experience consistent customer patronage and sustained interest in the City's Culinary Tourism Offerings.

Organizational Profile of the Gastronomic Destinations

The organizational structure of the gastronomic establishments in Malabon City shows that the majority (92%) are sole proprietorships. This indicates that the local gastronomic destinations are categorized as individually owned or managed businesses. In terms of workforce size, most establishments employ 10 or fewer employees (44%), followed by 11–15 employees (32%), suggesting that many gastronomic businesses operate on a small-to-medium scale with limited workforce capacity. Regarding the years of existence, many establishments have been operating for 21–30 years and 31–40 years (36% each), indicating that several gastronomic businesses in Malabon have long-standing operations, established reputations, and sustained customer patronage. All of these factors contribute to the stability of the Gastronomic Tourism Industry in the City.

In terms of the type of gastronomic destinations, restaurants make up the majority (48%), suggesting that the bulk of Malabon's gastronomic tourism consists of dining establishments. This indicates that Malabon's gastronomic tourism is based on local, traditional, unique Filipino cuisine, while also offering a small degree of variety for its customers. Lastly, most establishments offer Filipino cuisine (48%), indicating that Malabon's gastronomic tourism is primarily centered on local and traditional Filipino culinary heritage, while still offering some diversity.

Marketing Practices of the Selected Gastronomic Destinations in Malabon City

Table 33 summarizes the highest-and lowest-rated indicators under each of the 8Ps, as assessed by business owners, managers, and supervisors (Tables 12–19) and by tourists, consumers, and CTCAO personnel (Tables 25–32). Quality, freshness, respect, cleanliness, and operational consistency emerged as strengths, while menu variety and renewal, segmented pricing, non-digital and peer-to-peer channels, parking, brand-reflective design, and technology and performance monitoring were the weakest areas.

Table 33. Highest- and Lowest-Rated Indicators per Dimension of the 8Ps (Weighted Mean)

Dimension	Business: Highest	Business: Lowest	Tourists: Highest	Tourists: Lowest
Product	Product quality (3.60)	Variety (1.92)	Fresh, high-quality ingredients (3.71)	Regularly updated menu (1.84)

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Price	Promotional pricing (2.40)	Segmented pricing (1.72)	Price transparency (3.72)	Competitive pricing (2.72)
Place	Retail (3.76)	Peer-to-peer (1.96)	Access via public transport or major roads (3.55)	Online ordering or delivery (2.18)
Promotion	Vlogs (2.92)	Posters/billboards (1.04)	Active social media use (2.75)	Loyalty programs or incentives (2.21)
People	Respect (3.88)	Customer service skills (2.48)	Professional complaint handling (3.21)	Well-trained, friendly staff (2.70)
Physical Evidence	Exterior design (2.96)	Parking (1.80)	Cleanliness and hygiene (3.33)	Design reflecting brand and theme (2.26)
Process	Safety and security (3.36)	Handling requests/complaints (2.44)	Organized, consistent operations (3.10)	Efficient, customer-oriented service (2.54)
Productivity	Staff efficiency and workflow (3.08)	Technology, tools, equipment (2.32)	Consistent taste and service quality (3.52)	Regular performance monitoring (2.57)

Limitations of the Study

As stated in the scope and delimitation, the study was limited to the seven (7) gastronomic destinations recognized by the CTCAO and the Department of Tourism and did not include non-gastronomic tourist spots in Malabon City, such as historical, cultural, or recreational attractions. The analysis was confined to descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and rank); no inferential tests, such as correlation or comparative analysis, were performed, because the main goal was to describe the respondents' assessments and to formulate a strategic promotional plan.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the aforementioned findings of the study, the following conclusions were derived:

1. The demographic profile of the respondents shows that gastronomic tourism in Malabon City is mainly supported by working individuals in their prime years. This indicates that those with stable incomes are more likely to join and support food tourism activities. The findings also emphasize the important role of women. They actively manage food establishments and participate as consumers and tourists, which helps sustain the local culinary tourism sector. Regarding civil status, many business owners and managers are married. This may indicate stability and commitment to running their businesses. In contrast, a significant number of tourists and consumers are single, giving them greater freedom to explore food destinations and try different cuisines. Most of the respondents belong to the lower-middle-income group. This suggests that affordability and value play a role in their participation in food activities. Furthermore, regular visits to food establishments demonstrate ongoing interest and engagement with Malabon City's gastronomic offerings, which help grow its culinary tourism sector.

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2. The organizational profile of the city's gastronomic destinations reveals that most businesses are individually owned, suggesting the dominance of small businesses in the city's gastronomic tourism industry. Most businesses have a few employees, suggesting they operate on a small-to-medium scale, although their services support local tourism, which is undeniable. The fact that most businesses have been operating for a long time implies they have built a reputation, which has contributed to the development of gastronomic tourism in the city. Most businesses are restaurants, followed by other food businesses, suggesting that the city's gastronomic tourism is primarily focused on restaurants. However, the dominance of Filipino restaurants suggests that the city has focused more on developing local tourism, though the menus offered by businesses show some diversity.
3. The findings indicate that Gastronomic Destinations in Malabon City maintain high standards of food quality, cleanliness & safety, as well as operational consistency, which positively contribute to the experience of customers and tourists when visiting these destinations. Both business operators and customers also agree that the use of fresh ingredients, consistent food quality, organized service, respectful staff, and the accessibility of these establishments are the major strengths of each destination. But there are still areas for improvement, such as menu diversity and innovation, flexible pricing strategies, promotional efforts, and customer loyalty programs. Other issues that need to be addressed are providing better training for customer service, enhancing digital services like online ordering, improving the physical environments of their restaurants, such as the parking and ambiance, and utilizing more technology and performance measurement systems. The results are positive, but they can be further improved by enhancing their marketing strategies, improving customer service, and utilizing more technology. Malabon City's gastronomic destination will enhance its competitiveness and support the growth of the city's Gastronomic Tourism industry. The proposed Tourism 8P's strategies will be presented to selected local stakeholders, particularly the Tourism Office of Malabon City, for validation, collaboration, and possible implementation to support the development of gastronomic tourism initiatives in the City. Enhancing collaboration among local government units, tourism stakeholders, and business operators can help to improve the city's culinary identity and contribute to long-term regional economic development.

Recommendations

After a thorough investigation and consideration of the study's findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are presented. Recommendations 1-4 are classified as short-term strategies as they are geared towards immediate operational and promotional improvements. Recommendations 5-8 are considered long-term strategies, as they involve continuous planning, cooperation, and sustainable tourism development in Malabon City.

1. Gastronomic Destinations in Malabon City should implement a variety of pricing schemes such as discounts for students, families, and tourists through promo calendars, seasonal offers, and loyalty programs. Also, stakeholders need to strengthen their promotional digital marketing efforts by partnering with delivery apps, building official websites or social media pages for the selected destinations, training employees in digital tools, and developing a centralized Malabon Gastronomy website featuring the mentioned establishments.
2. Gastronomic destinations should implement QR code menus and integrate social media booking systems to enhance the customer experience, improve efficiency, and boost digital engagement with both tourists and local customers.
3. Gastronomic Establishments can use off-peak discount strategies (e.g., promotions from Tuesday to Thursday) to get customers to come out on weekdays, increasing demand during the week and helping small, family-run businesses be sustainable and profitable.
4. Practical examples such as the implementation of social media food campaigns, loyalty reward programs, themed culinary events, and online reservation systems must be aligned with the 8P's OVER Promotional

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Plan. Stakeholders can also introduce a pilot project plan that combines aspects such as product innovation, promotional strategies, people engagement, process improvement, and place enhancement to determine the effectiveness of the 8P's in improving gastronomic tourism development.

5. Malabon's Gastronomic Businesses must improve destination accessibility by enhancing strategic locations to cater to a larger target market through retail or service outlets. Investing in staff training to enhance professionalism, courtesy, and customer engagement is vital to creating a positive experience, building relationships, and fostering loyalty, thereby contributing to the development of gastronomic tourism in Malabon.
6. Malabon City's Local Government Unit (LGU), in collaboration with local businesses and Tourism Planners, should implement a unified marketing campaign to promote Malabon's gastronomy through a single branding program (common logo and tagline) where the LGU is responsible for leading the campaign and providing funding for it while the businesses take the lead in promoting their signature dishes. In addition, businesses will increase their competitiveness by improving their menus, enhancing their restaurant's overall ambiance/facility, such as parking, and providing continued training to employees to improve customer service and communication with customers/tourists.
7. The proposed strategic promotional plan for enhancing Malabon's gastronomic tourism may be adopted by selected establishments by aligning with the O–V–E–R Framework: Offering / Value / Experience / Relationship. Stakeholders can utilize the strategic promotional plan by making ongoing modifications to their marketing actions through promotional campaigns, improving service delivery systems, and developing more relevant & targeted marketing content.
8. Future research may explore other marketing areas related to the selected Gastronomic Destinations in Malabon City to better address the evolving demands of today's local tourism. In particular, future researchers may focus on specific areas, such as Digital Marketing, which is becoming increasingly popular and influential, and on a longitudinal study of the environmental impact of increased tourism in Malabon City, particularly on waste management and sustainability issues related to Gastronomic Tourism Activities.

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