

# COMMUNITY TOURISM PROMOTING CULTURAL STRENGTH, STABILIZING LIFE

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*Community tourism is now an attractive type, thriving globally and bringing many benefits to the local community, contributing to poverty reduction. In Vietnam, community tourism is also expected to be one of the advantages to bring tourism into the spearhead economy. Therefore, the Tourist Law of 2017 has reserved 1 Article (Article 19) on community-based tourism in which The State will facilitate the participation of local communities in tourism development. This will be conditions for the development of community-based tourism, not only promote the strength of local culture, but also contribute to stabilize people's lives.*

**Keywords:** Community tourism; Tourism model; Economic development; Develop a community tourism development plan; Cultural preservation.

In recent years, community tourism has been present in many localities in Vietnam. Many provinces and cities have built attractive and successful tourism models such as: Hoa Binh, Quang Ninh, Ha Giang, Lao Cai, Vinh Phuc.

Starting in the 1990s, Mai Chau district was the first locality to explore this type of tourism. Up to now, had 7 operational points and develops typical community tourism in here, in which the activities in Lac village are quite strong, with an annual average of 30-40,000 visitors per year. Realizing that this is the strength of the locality, Hoa Binh province has also developed the plan of community tourist spots, promoting the preservation of indigenous culture, calling for investment in infrastructure construction, guidance the people are ensuring environmental sanitation in order to attract more and more tourists to Hoa Binh. Or in Lao Cai, with beautiful natural scenery, rich culture, diverse cuisine, community tourism model in Den Village (Sa Pa district) also welcome from 3 to 3,500 visitors per year, annual turnover is from 3 to 4 billions Dong. Households holding homestay also have an average income of 1-3 million Dong per month.

Ba Vi district (Ha Noi) has also been in the form of community tourism since the early 1990s. Because of this, it meets the values of natural landscape (Tan mountain, Da river, national forest, rich flora and fauna...), the history, geography, spirituality, mixed with cultural color of the Dao and Muong ethnic groups... In 1993, the district has built a project to develop community tourism in Ba

Vi to exploit the specific tourist potential as well as comparative advantages of the region to build some unique and attractive tourist community products, thus contributing to changing the appearance of the region and improving the economy and stabilize people's lives in here. Up to now, the model of community tourism in Ba Vi attracts not only international tourists, but also a large number of Hanoi people to visit and relax on the weekend.

Particularly in Ha Tinh, there are also new rural areas to form a model for tourism. Based on the results obtained during the construction of the new rural population model and model gardens, the idea of turning rural villages into tourist products has been introduced and implemented by the leaders of Ha Tinh province. The province selected three communes: Tien Dien (Nghia Xuan district), Nam Son village, Thinh Loc commune (Cam Loc district) as a site for community experience tours. If Tien Dien commune was selected thanks to the World Cultural Heritage Nguyen Du and this locality are preserving traditional cultural and arts, Nam Son village was selected thanks to its proximity to Cua Sot Vinpearl, and Cam Nhung are selected by the reputation of Cam Nhung fish sauce processing village. This unique and rustic model has been started since 2017, so far has been rhythmic and harmonious in welcoming and serving visitors.

Surveying the forms of community ecotourism in our country at this time can be seen as: Homestay tourism, cultural activities, cultural performances with indigenous people, visiting ethnic villages, find

indigenous people's way of life and culture, study tours of biodiversity... take place in some places such as Lac village - Mai Chau, Chiang Yen - Son La, Cat Ba National Park, Cu Lao Cham - Hoi An... In recent years, the number of visitors to natural tourist sites, find out the life of the community in Vietnam is increasing, but often spontaneous organized and not in essence.

In addition, some localities conceived the development of community tourism associated with economic development based on their regional advantages. Dong Thap takes advantage of pristine landscapes with immense lotus fields in Thap Muoi district to develop the model of ecotourism associated with lotus: Capture photos with lotus ponds, participate in harvesting and processing products from lotus... In Tra Que Vegetable Village (Hoi An, Quang Nam), visitors can experience agriculture by participating in vegetable cultivation, making rice, harvesting agricultural products... Thereby, learn lifestyle, habits and visitors are directly involved in the specific economic development of the locality.

Community tourism development is one where localities find out unique features, mobilize communities to participate, create products where visitors experience the daily life of the community, enjoy, feel the cultural values of indigenous identity. The model enhances and encourages the participation of local communities in tourism activities, in order to help visitors gain more knowledge and love for the culture, environment, customs and lifestyle of the people. Besides promoting the beauty of indigenous culture, the biggest thing of community tourism is the life of the people themselves improved.

According to experts, in recent years, community tourism has developed fast, has many breakthroughs in attracting tourists as well as building new tourism products, not only contribute directly to the orientation of sustainable development, preservation and promotion of natural values, the promotion of the national cultural identity of each local community, but also the improvement of the life of the indigenous people. Three community sites have been awarded the ASEAN Community Tourism Award, which is a community tourist site in Pom Coong village (Mai Chau town, Mai Chau district, Hoa Binh province); Tourist site of Thanh Toan (Thanh Thuy commune, Huong Thuy district, Thua Thien Hue province); Tourist site of Triem Tay village (Dien Ban district, Quang Nam province).

Despite these promising start-ups, community tourism still reveals the constraints that make travel peoples, especially for experts, feel sorry for the tourism potential that has not been

exploited effectively and thoroughly. Typically, the preservation and promotion of indigenous cultural values in tourism exploitation is limited; Community tourism products are less popular, reflecting the unique identity of the local community; The environmental sanitation conditions in many tourist destinations are not really guaranteed to meet the needs of tourists; The issue of distribution and sharing of benefits from the provision of tourist services at community tourist spots remains inadequate; Human resources for community tourism development are insufficient in quantity and quality to meet the requirements.

It can be said that although the development of community tourism products is appropriate to the trend and the number of visitors to these tourism products is increasing, in fact, community tourism in Vietnam still carry spontaneity, unorganized. The new mode of operation is only meant to visit, less attain the purpose of raising awareness, educate the environment and feel special characteristics in the culture of indigenous communities. Some localities are too focused on economic development, so the organization is still fragmented, moving too quickly to tourism services, but not enough attention to the sustainability of this activity. To develop community tourism, the most important is the community of each locality deeply aware of the unique values of culture and localities, thus transmitting to visitors these values with love, respect and trust.

Participating actively, directly and consciously of people in the model of community tourism over the last time has added a lot of tourism pictures of many localities. However, it is only the initial step, the community is really sustainable, the authorities should organize survey and full evaluation of this model in the area, from which building plan and appropriate development policies.

In Quang Binh, community tourism started in 2011 and has attracted a large number of foreigners to stay in homestay and farmstay models. Up to now, there are more than 50 homestays and farmsteads in Phong Nha and neighboring communes. Previously, many people in the Son Trach, Hung Trach, Cu Mon, Phuc Trach... living by the cultivation, breeding and forestry, now has a new career: Tourism services. This occupation has contributed to raising incomes, improving people's living standards and reducing the pressure on the protection of heritage forests. Nevertheless, the development of community tourism in Quang Binh is still spontaneous and has not become a specific movement or program, so there are still limitations to overcome.

In Ha Tinh, the development of community tourism in new rural areas is modeling the people's

anxiety about the economic efficiency brought about by this type of tourism. Many families have become regular destinations of tourist groups, but the number of visitors is very modest. According to the insiders, the lack of attracted crowded guests is due to the monotony of the type of production in the locality, so most of the current homestay only meet the demand of stop and rest; The demand for exploring and experiencing the production life of the working people is almost impossible to meet. The cultural and artistic products that serve tourists are not regular and unprofessional, because in addition to their passion for themselves, the members of the entertainment team do not have any incentives to engage serving the community.

This is the general condition of most of the current community tourism models in Vietnam. Finding solutions to these shortcomings will open the way for community tourism to explore the full potential of the locality, as well as help develop sustainable tourism and help people develop their economy, extensive local characteristics to the community.

To promote the development of this kind of tourism in the community, localities need to change to bring new colors to their local. There are a number of suggestions made by the experts that the State should develop specific mechanisms and policies on community tourism planning and strategy and support infrastructure construction. In addition, human resource training solutions need to be developed to develop community tourism, while preserving and promoting the cultural identity of each locality. By doing so, it creates a boost for community tourism development, contributing to promoting socio-economic development and facilitating poverty reduction for people in many disadvantaged areas.

Together with removing obstacles as a barrier of community tourism, scientists need to coordinate research and guide indigenous people to build attractive products, not duplicate, to preserve the landscape, the environment, avoid the snatching, destroying the cultural characteristics of indigenous identity. In order to limit the spontaneous development of community tourism as it is now, it is necessary to have concrete and clear planning, strengthening the state management functions. However, it should be noted that state management is not the management or tightening but must guide and create conditions for the people to properly and effectively form this tourism...

The handshake of the local government with the people is considered to be the most necessary and practical way to promote the development of

community tourism today. Typically in Hanoi, community tourism has been identified with the advantage of many ancient villages, traditional villages and unique culture. From the initial model in the ancient village of Duong Lam (Son Tay town), the Hanoi Department of Tourism has attempted to coordinate the local authorities in training and fostering knowledge for the people to exploit this advantage. Farmers in Cuu village (Van Tu commune, Phu Xuyen district), when taking part in a training class, are experts in explaining human factors in tourism activities, especially in the community, from gift sellers. to the owners of old houses need to behave when there are guests; How to communicate in accordance with the principle of tourism, but still retain the beauty of rural culture... Training class coordinated by the Department of Tourism and Phu Xuyen District People's Committee has helped people understand: Want to travel must start from the change of thinking. Each family in the Cuu Village if know how to preserve and promote the value of heritage, cultural history and development of traditional village products; Know how to communicate, behave, promote culture, the legacy is forgotten will have the potential to profit. People in Dao Thuc Village (Thuy Lam commune, Dong Anh district) are also allowed to study "to travel" to receive more professional visitors. In 2017, many communities have learned how to travel: Co Loa commune (Dong Anh district), Lai Xa photographic village (Hoai Duc district), Me Linh commune (Me Linh district), Huong Son commune (My Duc district). Department of Tourism has selected the localities with strength, potential and in accordance with the Tourism Planning to organize training courses for people to do tourism. In 2017, 16 classes were held; This work continues to be accelerated in 2018.

Beside success, community tourism still has certain limitations. In many localities, community tourism is not planned and oriented towards sustainable development, the new stop at the spontaneous level, the latter looking first to open the homestay while lacking the skills to do tourism, foreign language, so effective not match the potential. On the other hand, infrastructure facilities and tourism infrastructure have not been focused on investment and lack of synchronism; The power outage, the lack of clean water often affects the residence of tourists, especially foreign guests. Therefore, to expand and promote the effectiveness of this type of tourism, there should be the participation of the authorities and functional sectors.

It is no coincidence that the new Rural

Development Program has chosen the “target” of developing community tourism as a potential pathway for high and sustainable economic performance in rural areas. The coordinators of the program also affirmed that it is necessary to have the mutual efforts of the local authorities in planning and developing community tourism in villages and communes. Linking with the national program of each commune a product will certainly bring

about significant economic effects, contributing significantly to product consumption and income generation for local people. Along with the general trend of tourism, community tourism in rural areas is increasingly proving the attraction for both domestic and foreign tourists. Taking advantage of this opportunity to shift careers to farmers is also a sustainable direction in new rural construction.

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## DU LỊCH CỘNG ĐỒNG PHÁT HUY THỂ MẠNH VĂN HÓA, ỔN ĐỊNH ĐỜI SỐNG

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**Tóm tắt:** Du lịch cộng đồng hiện nay là loại hình du lịch hấp dẫn, phát triển mạnh trên toàn cầu và mang lại nhiều lợi ích cho cộng đồng địa phương, góp phần xóa đói giảm nghèo. Ở Việt Nam, du lịch cộng đồng cũng đang được kỳ vọng là một trong những lợi thế để đưa du lịch nước nhà trở thành ngành kinh tế mũi nhọn. Vì thế, Luật Du lịch năm 2017 đã dành 1 Điều (Điều 19) quy định về du lịch cộng đồng, trong đó nhà nước sẽ tạo điều kiện khuyến khích sự tham gia của cộng đồng dân cư vào phát triển du lịch. Đây sẽ là cơ sở để các loại hình du lịch dựa vào cộng đồng có điều kiện phát triển, không chỉ phát huy được thể mạnh văn hóa địa phương, mà còn góp phần ổn định đời sống người dân.

**Từ khóa:** Du lịch cộng đồng; Mô hình du lịch; Phát triển kinh tế; Xây dựng kế hoạch phát triển du lịch cộng đồng; Bảo tồn văn hóa