



Developing Craft Village Tourism in the Red River Delta by 2035: Forecasts and Some Recommended Solutions

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Abstract

Tourism is an essential driver of economic growth in the Red River Delta, yet the development of craft village tourism remains underutilized. This article assesses the current status and potential of craft village tourism and forecasts its development until 2035. The vital improvements are anticipated in tourism management, the diversification of craft village tourism products, and the enhancement of human resource training to meet ASEAN standards. Infrastructure development and environmental protection will also be prioritized for sustainable growth. The article outlines six recommendations to strengthen craft village tourism, aiming to align its potential with regional development goals and ensure long-term economic benefits. These recommendations focus on improving policies, boosting local craftsmanship, and enhancing tourist experiences in the Red River Delta.

Keywords: forecasting, tourism development, craft village tourism, Red River Delta, planning, orientation

1. Introduction

The Red River Delta consists of 10 provinces and cities, of which the capital Hanoi is the political, economic, and cultural center, a particularly important strategic area of the Region and the whole country. The Region has great potential and is expected to develop craft village tourism leading the country with a long-standing historical and cultural tradition, imbued with national identity; many famous landscapes and traditional craft villages attract domestic and foreign tourists to visit.

In recent times, local authorities in the Region have promoted the implementation of projects and strategies to develop tourism into a true spearhead economic sector, creating a driving force to promote the development of other sectors and fields, contributing to the formation of a modern economic structure. However, the current status of craft village tourism development in the Red River Delta is not commensurate with the potential and expectations. Therefore, based on the current situation, potential and orientation, the article forecasts the development of craft village tourism in the Red River Delta region until 2035. The content of the article suggests that local Party committees and authorities research and issue solutions for tourism development and serve as reference materials in teaching tourism economics in schools today.

2. Basis for forecasting the development of craft village tourism in the Red River Delta by 2035

The Red River Delta has great potential and outstanding advantages in tourism development. There are diverse ecological regions and a long history, creating favourable conditions for the development of traditional craft village tourism. According to the Vietnam Craft Village Association, the country currently has more than 5,400 craft villages, of which the Red River Delta accounts for 1,500 villages (300 villages have been recognized as traditional craft villages). The craft villages have more than 50 craft groups with hundreds of years of development history such as Van Phuc silk, Ngu Xa copper, Chu Dau pottery... In

addition, the region also has agricultural production craft villages such as Hanoi Flower Village, Vi Khe Ornamental Plant Village (Nam Dinh), Hung Yen Longan Specialty Craft Village, and Thanh Ha litchi (Hai Duong). Through its long history, the Region is also the birthplace and preserver of traditional crafts with handicraft products that converge the quintessence of national culture, along with the values of heritage and architecture, bringing great potential for tourism development.

Not only having strengths in natural conditions and culture, the Red River Delta also has advantages in human resources serving tourism. The Region has a large human resource, a high level of education, a concentrated team of good intellectuals, and people with a tradition of hard work and creativity. According to the General Statistics Office, the Red River Delta is the place with the largest concentration of economic and administrative units with 1.6 million units and attracting 8.4 million workers, accounting for 26.0% of the number of units and 30.9% of the labour force nationwide. According to the Ministry of Education and Training, each province in the Region has universities and colleges. The rate of trained workers working in the economy in the Red River Delta is very high, increasing from 20.7% in 2010 to 28.4% in 2016 and 31.5% in 2021.

Despite its great potential, the current development of craft village tourism in the Red River Delta is not commensurate. Support policies and attention from sectors and levels are not effective; tourism infrastructure is poor in quality, lacking in quantity, and small in scale; service business activities in craft villages are spontaneous, fragmented, and lack specific planning. In addition, although products are diverse, their designs are monotonous and do not closely follow market tastes; there are not many supporting activities and services to meet the needs of tourists. The local community and workers in the tourism industry are friendly and enthusiastic but not yet professional. Promotion and advertising to domestic and international travel agencies and tourists have not been regularly and effectively implemented. Linking craft villages to exchange experiences and create product chains that attract tourists has not been implemented. Environmental sanitation in craft villages has not been addressed. Tourism development as a factor that depends on the development of craft villages has led to chaos in the organization of craft village space, threatening the sustainable development of both craft village culture and tourism.

Based on the potential and reality, to contribute to the development of the Red River Delta, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism sets a target that by 2030, the total number of tourists to the provinces and cities in the region will reach over 120 million, including over 20 million international visitors; tourism revenue will reach about 276,000 billion VND, equivalent to 12 billion USD. Implementing Resolution No. 08-NQ/TW dated January 16, 2017, of the Politburo on "Developing tourism into a spearhead economic sector", the Party Committees and local authorities in the region have had many policies and measures to promote the development of craft village tourism and urgently develop a project to restructure the tourism industry. Typically, Hanoi City has issued many documents guiding the development of craft village tourism. Resolution No. 06 (dated June 26, 2016) on "Developing tourism in Hanoi Capital for the period of 2016 - 2020 and the following years" and "Planning for tourism development in Hanoi City to 2020, with a vision to 2030" have determined that the

development of Hanoi tourism products will focus on several main groups such as visiting craft villages, the old town, festivals; developing shopping centres associated with the system of craft villages, tourism connecting craft streets and traditional craft villages along with several typical craft villages. Not only Hanoi, but the provinces and cities in the Region have also organized the selection, and support for the construction and development of community tourism destinations associated with traditional craft villages; encouraged the development of farm economy, invested in the construction of several pilot models applying high technology, green technology, production and business according to the value chain associated with educational experiential tourism - school tourism, ecotourism; culinary tourism... At the same time, promote the digital transformation process, build smart agricultural and rural tourism villages to create connections to stimulate the endogenous strength of local communities and external links; promote and promote tourism products associated with traditional craft villages; improve the quality of tourism human resources; develop and implement policies to support investment in developing agricultural and rural tourism associated with building new rural areas in the area. On that basis, many travel businesses have built tourism programs for domestic and foreign tourists to combine sightseeing and experience at some typical traditional craft villages of the Red River Delta such as the weaving village, incense-making village, and carpentry village (Hung Yen, Hai Duong).

3. Forecast of the development of craft village tourism in the Red River Delta by 2035

Firstly, the quality of tourism management activities will be improved.

To preserve and develop craft villages, local leaders and authorities will organize delegations to visit and learn from the experience of developing craft village tourism in some typical localities across the country. At the same time, coordinate with local departments and branches to strengthen training in marketing knowledge, technical knowledge and product design for craftsmen and find markets for craft village products. Localities will also develop a benefit-sharing mechanism to closely connect managers, scientists, and businesses with people in the process of developing craft village tourism in the area.

The capacity of state management of tourism in the area will be increasingly improved. Localities will focus on improving capacity in planning and management, investment management, development and construction of tourism products, management of promotion, training and development, and management of the tourism environment. At the same time, direct the strengthening of linkage, cooperation and coordination mechanisms in tourism activities between local sectors; and between localities in the region to create quality tourism products, with characteristics of the Red River civilization and high competitiveness. At the same time, develop and promulgate specific incentive policies for enterprises developing craft village tourism such as tax incentives; priority, tax exemption and reduction; deferred tax payment for a period of time; land tax reduction; and loans with preferential interest rates. Increase encouragement and support for the community to participate in developing tourism products associated with the conservation and promotion of the resource values of the Region. In addition, local authorities will promote the

organization of programs to introduce tourism products of craft villages in the Red River Delta to the international community. The Departments of Culture, Sports and Tourism in the region will preside over and coordinate with relevant agencies to organize tourism promotion programs; and introduce tourism products, destinations in each locality, and programs to explore the Red River civilization. The promotion and advertising of tourism to the world will focus on key markets such as France, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Singapore, and the US to attract a large number of international tourists to visit and experience. At the same time, I actively and proactively participate in international tourism fairs. Coordinate and integrate with propaganda activities, and promote the image of tourism in the Red River Delta with tourism nationwide implemented by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

Secondly, build a system of diverse and attractive craft village tourism products to meet the needs of tourists.

In addition to traditional products, craft villages will create many new products to meet the tastes of customers. To create convenience and maximum satisfaction for tourists in purchasing Craft Village products, the tour guide team will introduce product samples for tourists to choose from, and then the production facilities will create products according to customer requirements. Thanks to that, tourists will directly witness the products created by traditional artisans and craftsmen. Localities will focus on building facilities to display and introduce craft villages and craft village products. Websites introducing craft villages and craft village tourism in the Red River Delta will be designed with all necessary information such as the history of formation and development, outstanding products, relics, scenic spots of the village and surrounding areas, places providing tourism services... to promote the image of craft villages, promote the development of craft village tourism.

Localities in the Region will proactively establish tourism product groups in traditional craft villages including Groups of traditional craft cultural tourism products (exploiting the history of craft development, production process, product quintessence, and customs related to the craft); Group of agricultural cultural tourism products (experiencing farming such as catching shrimp and fish, harvesting vegetables and fruits); Group of tourism products of architectural heritages and landscapes (bamboo hedges, banyan trees, communal houses, pagodas, shrines, ancient houses, home gardens, wells, village ponds, stone bridges, markets, shops); intangible cultural products (cuisine, performing arts, costumes, customs, festivals). The development of many tourism products as above comes from the dual goals of "developing professions" and "developing tourism". This process will witness the gathering of designers, industrial designers and artisans to enrich the shape and design of craft village tourism products. The region will complete the digital transformation process in the tourism industry, digitize information and documents about destinations, build digital content repositories, and form and develop a smart tourism ecosystem. The content of science and technology in each craft village tourism product will therefore also be increased.

Thirdly, the quality of training and fostering human resources for craft village tourism is improved, reaching ASEAN standards.

Due to the impact of the scientific and technological

revolution and the trend of international integration, human resources for craft village tourism in the Region will be trained more fundamentally and in-depth, especially in vocational skills, foreign language proficiency and professional ethics. The foreign language ability of tour guides will be improved, meeting the needs of international tourists to learn and explore the culture and traditional history of craft villages. There will be more schools (majors) training human resources for tourism established, meeting the demand for quantity and quality of human resources for developing craft village tourism. The programs and output standards of tourism human resource training schools (majors) will also be standardized according to the national vocational standards for tourism, compatible with ASEAN standards, meeting the increasing demands of tourists as well as the requirements for improving the quality of the country's human resources in the new era.

The training of young, skilled, dynamic, creative, and dedicated craftsmen from the craft village community will be focused on by local authorities towards the sustainable development of the Region. Vocational training programs will have the coordination of artisans in craft villages with training institutions to increase training efficiency. In addition, craft villages will have policies to attract tour guides, especially local people, to promote local resources. Localities will also promote cooperation with training institutions to open tour guide classes for local youth, completing the dual goal of "both creating jobs for villagers and solving the shortage of human resources". Craft village communities in the Region will participate more actively in guiding visitors, combining with tour guides to create a friendly, unique and attractive craft village cultural tourism environment.

Fourthly, the infrastructure system is built synchronously, the craft village environment is enhanced to protect sustainable development.

According to the development trend, the tastes of tourists will increase and demand more strictly for facilities and tourism infrastructure. Therefore, the road system of craft villages will be paved with ASPHALT and expanded. At the same time, the Region will focus on building and expanding the number of specialized seaports and inland waterway ports in areas with favourable conditions for developing sea and river tourism (Hanoi, Hai Phong, Quang Ninh, Nam Dinh). The drainage system will be built synchronously to ensure the environmental landscape, overcome the pollution of craft villages, and serve the development of tourism activities. The communication system in craft villages will also be built, upgraded synchronously, and modernized. In particular, localities will focus on building public internet access points (5G) and developing communication channels for craft villages. At the same time, the government will focus on expanding and developing local medical facilities, including opening more medical points to serve tourists visiting and shopping in the craft village.

The region will also promote the construction and renovation of restaurants and hotels to serve the dining needs of tourists, ensuring hygiene, civilization and attractiveness. The system of motels and hotels will be newly built and placed in the overall planning, ensuring both the cultural space of the craft village and the convenience of tourists. The restoration and embellishment of historical and cultural relics of the craft village will receive more attention to create a space imbued

with the traditional values of the craft village. The planning and organization of the village and commune space will be integrated with the tourism space to create uniformity and harmony in architecture, creating attractiveness for tourists. At the same time, connecting tourism products of traditional craft villages with destinations in the tour itineraries and routes of the province and region is also focused on by localities to better meet the needs of tourists.

Localities will focus on developing sustainable tourism, environmentally responsible tourism, and green tourism. Closely combining economic development with socio-cultural development and environmental protection of craft villages. Craft villages will have a waste treatment system that meets standards, including clearly defining the stages of collection, classification and hygienic treatment. Organize forces to regularly collect waste to avoid waste congestion, unsanitary conditions and affecting the landscape of craft villages. Build a system of standard public toilets to serve visitors. Propaganda and education activities to raise awareness of people and tourists in maintaining environmental hygiene and craft village landscapes are enhanced. Local authorities will promote sustainable management, exploitation and protection of resources. This is a local action but has a national scope to promote the tourism economy of the Take-Off Region.

4. Recommendations for developing tourism in craft villages in the Red River Delta by 2035

Firstly, improve the quality of tourism management activities.

To preserve and develop tourism craft villages through the construction and organization of tourism routes associated with craft villages. To implement the program of preserving and developing craft villages, tourism management agencies in the region need to organize delegations to visit and learn from experiences in some regions and localities with many diverse traditional craft villages in the country. Coordinate with departments, branches and localities to strengthen training in marketing knowledge, technical knowledge and product design for craftsmen; implement preferential investment policies, support interest rates and taxes for establishments and enterprises operating in rural areas and seek markets for craft village products to increase product value and aim to attract tourists to visit craft village tours. Currently, there needs to be management to put craft village tourism activities on the right track and operate effectively.

Secondly, do a good job of propaganda and education.

Propaganda and education so that people understand the role of inheriting and developing traditional crafts is the task and responsibility of individuals and communities in preserving and promoting traditional cultural values. Specifically, for the development of craft village tourism, propaganda and education about its meaning and importance for economic development in the region in general and improving people's lives, in particular, is extremely necessary. Especially for young people, when they no longer have the love and passion for traditional manual work, it is even more necessary to propagate to them to understand the meaning and good purpose of craft transmission activities. This not only contributes to creating diversity and richness for traditional cultural values in the region but also creates jobs, income, and economic development for the community.

Thirdly, build a system of technical facilities and infrastructure to serve tourism.

The road system of craft villages needs to be concreted and expanded. In addition, it is also necessary to design a lighting system and a decorative lighting system to increase aesthetics. Build and upgrade the communication system in the village such as: building public internet access points, and public telephone stations, and developing media such as radio stations of craft villages. Develop the commune's medical facilities and open several additional medical points to serve tourists and people. Proceed to build and renovate restaurant facilities to serve the dining needs of tourists, ensuring the quantity and quality of service. The system of newly built accommodation facilities must be placed in a specific plan to ensure both the cultural space of the craft village and the most convenient use for tourists. The work of restoring, embellishing and protecting historical and cultural relics of craft villages and their surroundings must be given attention to creating a craft village space imbued with traditional values.

Fourthly, building a system of craft village products to serve tourism.

In addition to the traditional products of the craft village, it is necessary to create new products to meet the tastes of tourists. During the time the products are made, tourists can take the opportunity to visit the craft village or go shopping. To create convenience and satisfy the maximum needs of tourists for purchasing products, it is possible to introduce product samples for tourists to choose from, and then the production facilities will create products according to the requirements of customers. Building a facility to display and introduce the craft village and its products has a great effect on the psychology of tourists. Websites introducing craft villages and craft village tourism in the Red River Delta region with a vision to 2035 need to be built with all necessary information such as history of formation and development, outstanding products, relics, scenic spots of the village and surrounding areas, places providing tourism services... to promote the image of the craft village, promote the development of craft village tourism.

Fifthly, training and fostering human resources for craft village tourism.

It is necessary to train a team of young, skilled, dynamic, creative, and dedicated craftsmen from the children in the village to aim for sustainable development. Vocational training programs have the coordination of artisans in the village with training institutions to increase the effectiveness of vocational training for the local young generation. In addition, craft villages need to have policies to attract tour guides, especially children in the village. Cooperate with training schools to open tour guide classes for local children. Using this team of tour guides can both create jobs for villagers and solve the shortage of human resources. Moreover, a deeper understanding of the craft village and a love for the village and the craft is the foundation for them to stick with their work.

Sixthly, protect the landscape and environment of craft village tourism.

Craft villages need to build a waste treatment system that ensures standards, in which it is necessary to clearly define

the stages of collection, classification and hygienic treatment. There needs to be a regular force to collect waste to avoid waste congestion, unsanitary conditions and affecting the landscape. Build a system of public toilets to serve visitors. In addition to ensuring quantity, these facilities must ensure quality, and hygiene and be conveniently located so as not to affect the feelings of tourists when travelling to craft villages. Strengthen propaganda and education to raise awareness of people and visitors in maintaining environmental hygiene and craft village landscapes. To be effective, propaganda activities must have appropriate forms and methods so that people have a deep awareness of environmental issues, thereby becoming conscious of protecting their living environment.

5. Conclusion

The Red River Delta is an important economic region with many strengths in developing craft village tourism. In recent times, the Region has paid attention to developing craft village tourism, however, the quality has not been commensurate with the potential and expectations. From that situation, local authorities have had many policies and measures to turn tourism in general, and craft village tourism in particular, into a spearhead economy, making an important contribution to building a modern economic structure of the Region.

The development of craft village tourism in the Red River Delta by 2035 is forecasted to be: the quality of tourism management activities is improved; the Region builds a diverse and attractive system of craft village tourism products to meet the needs of tourists; the quality of training and fostering human resources for craft village tourism is improved and the infrastructure system is built synchronously, the craft village environment is strengthened to protect towards harmonious and sustainable development. By 2035, craft village tourism in the Red River Delta will play an important role in the tourism economy, contributing to promoting the economic growth of the region and leading the country.

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