

Slow Tourism

การท่องเที่ยวที่ไร้ความเร่งรีบ

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Abstract

The principles of slow tourism can be exploited so that goods and services can be better developed. In order to help the service owners to correctly identify and serve the specific needs of tourists. If this process is effectively administered, slow tourism can become sustainable, and its sustainability can inevitably affect the well-being of all people whose lives are related to the slow tourism. A proper amount of time should be allotted for the tourists to accomplish the following: 1) to absorb the elements of the environment and 2) to learn to appreciate the local ways of life, the local history & culture, and the beauty of the tourist areas. Because appreciation is not simply fostered by simply reading a sign or by seeing a poster on the wall, activities in the slow tourism areas should encourage tourists to use all five of their senses. Therefore, those individuals, who are engaging in the development of slow tourism should pay close attention to the following principles for successful slow tourism which are : 1) Sustainability, 2) Learning about Local, 3) Organic, 4) Wellness, 5) Time, 6) Opportunity, 7) Understanding, 8) Responsibility, 9) Appreciation, 10) Satisfaction, and 11) Movement.

Keywords : slow tourism, sustainable tourism, alternative tourism

บทคัดย่อ

แนวคิดและหลักการการท่องเที่ยวที่ไร้ความเร่งรีบสามารถนำมาประยุกต์ใช้ในการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวที่ตรงกับความต้องการของนักท่องเที่ยวในปัจจุบันได้รวมทั้งเพื่อพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวเพื่อไปสู่ความยั่งยืนอันจะก่อให้เกิดประโยชน์ต่อของผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียในการท่องเที่ยว ทั้งนี้ต้องเป็นการเดินทางท่องเที่ยวที่ใช้ระยะเวลาที่นานเพียงพอในแหล่งท่องเที่ยวเพื่อผ่อนคลายความตึงเครียดและเสริมสร้างพลังงานโดยใช้เวลาและโอกาสในการสัมผัสประสบการณ์ ในขณะที่ท่องเที่ยวเพื่อที่จะได้เกิดการเรียนรู้และเกิดความเข้าใจในธรรมชาติ ประวัติศาสตร์ และวิถีชีวิตความเป็นอยู่ของคนในท้องถิ่นโดยเน้นคุณภาพของประสบการณ์ที่ได้รับจากการท่องเที่ยวและพบปะผู้คนในท้องถิ่นและสถานที่ใหม่ด้วยการสัมผัสโดยประสาททั้งห้า มิใช่แค่สิ่งที่มองเห็นโดยสายตาเพียงอย่างเดียว จากกรณีวิเคราะห์เอกสารในประเด็นของหลักการการท่องเที่ยวที่ไร้ความเร่งรีบ สามารถสรุปหลักการที่สามารถจะทำให้เกิดการท่องเที่ยวที่ไร้ความเร่งรีบที่ประสบความสำเร็จได้ดังนี้ 1) ความยั่งยืน 2) เรียนรู้กับท้องถิ่น 3) อาหารปลอดภัย 4) ส่งเสริมการมีสุขภาพดี 5) เวลา 6) โอกาส 7) ความเข้าใจ 8) ความรับผิดชอบ 9) ความประทับใจ 10) ความพึงพอใจ 11) การเคลื่อนไหว

คำสำคัญ : การท่องเที่ยวที่ไร้ความเร่งรีบ การท่องเที่ยวอย่างยั่งยืน การท่องเที่ยวทางเลือก

Introduction

The rapid growth of tourism and infra-structure affected the environment and natural resources including the tourism vehicle that caused an increase of carbon hydroxide in the air. Research results in tourism industry showed that transportation released the highest amount of carbon hydroxide at 87 per cent, followed by 9.1 per cent from the accommodations and 4 per cent from tourism activities respectively (Peeters, 2007). These causes affected the climate change, environment and sea level. From these negative tourism impacts, researcher and tourism policy makers were interested in studying the tourism's impact on environments and inhabitants (Lea, 1988) by focusing on sustainable development in tourism, and this led to a creation of new type of tourism called Slow Tourism.

Slow Tourism was a result from an anti-fast food in Italy in 1986. This event aimed to protect nutritious consumption, preserve local cuisine tradition and support local livestock affecting local ecosystem, consequently, slow food trend occurred. This effort was put into stage from international supports with 100,000 members from 150 countries (Slow Food International, 2014) with 2,000 convey slow food networks. These communities followed slow food principle by preserving cuisine culture and tradition, for example cooking, and traditional cuisine production and consumption (Petrini, 2003). The integration of slowness principle with tourism created change in travel behavior and types of tourist as Esichaikul & Songsunthonwong (2012) proposed that slow tourism helped tourists to experience attractions in details which cannot be seen in the rapid case. The tourism attractions should offer, invite and create program and activities based on the route, for example trekking, cycling in rural sites, visiting ancient community and interacting with local people in the tourism activities. This slow tourism was considered new target market for tourists who needed new experience. Characteristics of this type of tourist had positive effect on environmental, social and economical contexts in the visited community. All tourism stakeholders should disseminate knowledge about sustainable tourism used in environment, social and economic including creating campaign in environmental friendly tourism and social responsibility.

Slow Tourism's definitions

Studying research literature, related to slow tourism, it is attributed to a desire to reduce the problems that have an impact on the environment when living one's own life. Slow tourism tends to minimize the trip distance resulting in the consumption of less fuel. It involves the least amount of co2 emissions into the air, but allowing tourists to still

fully enjoy their trip. In Italy, the idea of slow tourism has been gaining increased public interest since 1986. In the same year, there was a public demonstration against the opening of a McDonald's restaurant, the American fast-food chain. The demonstration called for people to support the eating of healthy or slow food which is more beneficial to health as compared to fast-food. That fast-food strike also echoed the global needs for people to live slower lives. The idea of a slow life was disseminated into different working fields, including slow traveling; an alternative tourism that cares for the sustainability of the local culture, economy, community, and environment (Conway & Timm, 2010).

Esichaikul & Songsunthonwong (2012) viewed that slow tourism is a slow travel to relax and boost up energy. Tourists spend time and absorb experience while travelling and learning from nature, local way of living through five senses. Matos (2004) focused on time spent at the accommodation while Dickinson, Robbins & Lumsdon (2010) added speed referring to using the transportation. However, Caffyn (2009) pointed at the limited use of technology and machine and travel in environmental friendly and sustainable way for the benefit of the tourists themselves and locals. In contrast, Lumsdon and McGrath (2011) found that tourism activities must be decreased and taken direct experience instead. These authors proposed five characteristics of slow tourism 1) selection of low carbon hydroxide in mode of travel, 2) creating slowness, 3) bringing new travel experience, 4) raising environment consciousness and 5) focusing on sense of place e.g. cultural exchange through five senses. From the review of literature, Caffyn (2009) and Lumsdon & McGrath (2011) added culture and environment issues referring to slow tourism as a result of tourism collaboration including contacting people, attraction, culture, food, heritage and environment. Matos (2004) suggested that there must be relaxing move to generate the power by staying at very simple accommodation, consuming nutritious food and using slow activities. However, slow tourism from views of Blancheton & Marchi (2013), Dickinson, Robbins & Lumsdon (2010) and Dickinson & Robbins (2008) were different. These authors viewed slow tourism as an alternative travel that decreased carbon dioxide, avoiding air and land transportation to the attractions following the concept of "slow on land, long stay and minimum travel". This concept mainly used vehicle that released a few amount of carbon dioxide e.g. train, boat and bicycle. Considering slow tourism in Italy, the emphasis was on quality tourism experience through relaxation and thorough understanding and learning in the community under "slowness". Characteristics of slow tourists are in four types : 1) slowness means spending time at the attraction, 2) travel experience means participating in community activities, 3) environment consciousness means selecting low carbon dioxide vehicle and 4) slow label means concentrating on local culture to attract high quality

tourists. Attraction development based on slow tourism philosophy increased the quality of the attractions, environment and social image (Robinson & Heitmann, 2011).

In summary, slow tourism is the tourism that has decreased number of attractions, emphasizing on tourism activities to increase high quality experience for valuable holiday. This can increase or slow travel rate, but create relationship with the locals, and learn history and highlight of the attractions in-depth in a limited time (Cook, Yale, & Marqua, 2010:336 ; Matos, 2004 : 95-96 ; Esichaikul and Songsonthonwong, 2010 : 13 ; Yoopetch, 2012 : 5). Characteristics of slow tourism are displayed in Table 1 as below.

Table1 : Characteristics of Slow Tourism

Theorists	Characteristics of slow tourism
Matos (2004)	- Taking Time
	- Attachment to particular place
Dickinson & Lumsdon (2010)	- stay longer
	- Low speed
	- Travel less
Caffyn (2009)	- Decreasing travel period (at least by car/plane)
	- Increasing effectiveness in travel
	- Relaxing and mind recovering
	- In-depth survey and searching
	- Contacting local, culture and heritage
	- Connecting local communities
	- Food-local restaurant, local drinks market e.g. beer and wine
	- Children (creative and play)
	- Learning new skills
	- Using less technology and machine
	- Limiting only local brand products
	- Quality of experience and reality
	- Environmental friendly- decreasing carbon dioxide in the air
	- Good for oneself
Conway and Timm (2010)	- Low carbon dioxide
	- Using eco transportation
Lumsdon and McGrath (2011)	- Slowness and value of time
	- Locality and activities at the destination

Theorists	Characteristics of slow tourism
	- Mode of transport and travel experience
	- Environmental consciousness
Esichaikul and Songsonthonwong (2012)	- Nature
	- Local Culture
	- Slow Vehicle
	- Interaction with Local
	- Participation and Support community
	- Intangible Product
	- Multi
	- Story
	- Interpretation
	- Passive Activity
	- Low Impact
	- Time and Opportunity
Slow Tourism Network (2013)	- Time
	- Slowness
	- Contamination
	- Authenticity
	- Sustainability
	- Emotion

Dickinson & Lumsdon (2010 : 75) stated that slow tourism is an alternative tourism that is coherent with a system of communication. Furthermore, it generates many different forms of tourism that can be classified as follows :

Table 2 : The differences between mainstream tourism and slow travel

Contemporary tourism	Slow travel
Speed transit	Slow travel times
Prevailing modes of the car and airline	Wider range of modes including bus and train
Immediacy	Slowness
Resource intensive	Resource reduction
Journey is corridor	journey is the thing
Consumption of many attractions	Localness
Maxi zing visits	Staying awhile

Contemporary tourism	Slow travel
High-carbon	Low carbon
Commoditization	De-commoditization
Standardized hospitality dominates	Slow food and beverage

Source : Dickinson & Lumsdon (2010 : 191)

However, Tongsong (2015) pointed that slow tourism should consist of 10 concepts (10 Slow : 10S) as follows. 1) Slow Activity means doing longer activities at each tourist spot. 2) Slow Logistic refers to leisure, safe and environmentally friendly travel. 3) Slow Food is delicate cooking using fresh, clean and safe materials. 4) Slow Stay is to have more overnights at a tourist area and do suitable touristic leisure activities. 5) Slow Place/City refers to residing at a community tourist area or a peaceful small town with no pollution. 6) Slow Money is a fair division of expenses between travel entrepreneur and tourists. 7) Slow Development entails small-scale development that supports tourist activities. 8) Slow Accommodation is about peaceful, clean, and safe accommodations with good environmental management. 9) Slow Life refers to spending time peacefully in nature and to a rustic life style. 10) Slow Energy refers to tourist activities that save energy.

Slow Tourism Activities

Dickinson & Lumsdon (2010) explained that slow tourism can be a trip that is involved with mainly with travelling, basically a short distance, or it can be making stops for different activities at different tourist attractions that are spread along the route of the trip. Moreover, this kind of slow trip may be seen in the following forms : 1) walking tourism, 2) cycling tourism, and/or 3) train tourism. Taking a train can be a tour on its own merit as you can enjoy the ride and see the impressive scenery that commuting by train brings you. Also, it can be a trip for touring when taking a train as a means to help you reach your tourism destination. Taking a train trip speaks to the idea of Low-carbon Tourism due to the fact that the trains are vehicles that produce the fewest amounts of co2 emissions compared to other forms of transportation, such as airplanes and cars.

Esichaikul & Songsonthonwong (2012) view that slow tourism encourages exercising, eating local foods, learning about local cultures, and geographically studying about the existing seas and mountains. It exempts tourists from lives of depression, congestion, and loud noises associated with cities. Tourists therefore, are given chance to rejuvenate their physical and mental health through relaxing activities, such as, rowing canoes, rafting, and trekking through forests. Similar ideas were found in Esichaikul (2013) regarding the extent

that cultural tourism encourages slow mobility among tourists. Some examples of cultural tourism can be seen from visiting historical parks via trains or trailers, cycling through cultural villages, visiting temples & community museums, chatting with monks in a temple, learning about herbs in the temples, or sailing a boat in the channel. Other activities include inspecting light & sound performances, interacting with the local people, exploring around community market of the walking street, or practicing local handicrafts.

As described in Lee, Packer & Scott (2015) popular slow tourism activities involving food preparation include buying foods from the sub-scaled producers, eating local foods, and shopping local products in a local market. In addition, whenever possible, slow tourists design flexible schedules for their trip so that they can spend longer time at one place. By doing this, it helps to increase the interacting time with the locals. It was also found that slow tourists prefer to stay in an apartment with a kitchen and cooking utensils, so that they will be able to cook. Slow tourists love to buy cook books and are especially interested in learning to cook local dishes.

Based on the review of literature above, it can be concluded that the factors which contribute to slow tourism are as follows: 1) the vehicles used in the trip, 2) the involvement in the activities available at tourist site, and 3) the time spent at each tourist site. The combination of these factors generates slow tourism.

Given that slow tourism has now been developed more concretely, the business can attract huge sums of foreign currency to Thailand. Some crucial keys to the development of Thailand's slow tourism rely upon on taking strict control of the standards of services by preventing over-exploitation and the deterioration resources. This can be accomplished by strengthening measures regarding the capacity of carrying and zoning for tourism. Following these measures is what is needed to get Thailand to "stand out" regarding its tourism business for the future. Based on its latent capacities with respect to slow tourism, the future for Thailand is promising with regard to retaining its status.

Slow Tourists

The connection between slow tourism and places that tourists are visiting is based on the following : 1) how well the tourist hub encourages the tourists to see the routine of local life, 2) how attractive the site is in making tourists want to try its local foods, and 3) how well the tourist are encouraged to become cultural experts about the place they are visiting. From what have been said thus far, it can be concluded that the key concept of slow tourism is that it is a kind of tourism that conforms to the local practices to reflect the slowness of the community, such as slow foods and a slow city. Slow tourism

should have the following components: 1) Its main activities should involve transportation and commuting to new places. 2) Slow tourism should be used for sustainable tourism. 3) Statements should be made showing why it is worthwhile to take a slow trip in the tourist area. Furthermore, these statements should be emphasized and displayed on the labels of goods and services.

Yurtseven & Kaya (2011) classified “slow tourists who take a slow tour in a slow city” by basing their classification on a method developed by Cittaslow. Based on this classification, three groups of slow tourists are presented : 1) Dedicated Slow Tourists, 2) Interested Slow Tourists, and 3) Accidental Slow Tourists. More details of each type of tourist are now discussed. The Dedicated Slow Tourists tend to do the following : 1) be open to the slow tourism experience, be interested in exploring, and be aware of cultural diversities & local identities ; 2) be educated and well-equipped with knowledge regarding cultural backgrounds, as well as be knowledgeable and understand the Principle of Slowness ; 3) organize one’s own trip by one’s self ; 4) possess high expectations about the place(s) they are visiting ; and 5) be joyful to try the foods that are eco-gastronomic. Similar ideas about slow tourists can be observed in Yoopetch (2012 : 6) who postulates that slow tourists should incorporate the following characteristics : 1) to like to take in new experiences about the visiting place without hurrying, to be eager to find new things in the culture and new places that are different from one’s own ; 2) to become knowledgeable and interested in culture and the principle of slow life ; 3) to be independently selective in deciding on where to visit without having to follow the crowd or to be free from the illusion of the reputation of the tourism destination ; 4) to have high expectations about the places they are visiting & the new things they can learn from the visit ; and 5) to have a desire to taste foods or products typical to the visiting area.

In addition, Salvo (2013) makes a comparative study about the characteristics of repellent tourists and slow tourists. The objectives of Salvo’s study were to analyze the results of slow tourism and its effectiveness in attracting new batches of slow tourists. It was observed that the slow tourists were able to absorb new touring experiences better than the repellent ones. Salvo’s research shows the characteristics of slow tourists. It emphasizes the fact that slow tourism is a brand new form of tourism that affects consumption and the commute. Salvo has listed key differences between slow tourists and the lay-tourists as follows : 1) Slow tourists are quality oriented but not quantity-oriented travelers. Since they usually seek for great content trips rather than symbolic trips, they hold that holidays are for privacy and that taking holiday vacation is a socially uplifting moment. 2) With positive incentives, slow tourists can absorb new cultural experiences via

their trip. 3) Slow tourists are good consumers, they make careful selections regarding the destination and they know upon arrival what they should or should not do at their selected destination. 4) Slow tourists look for the true working value or concept of the locals and tend to stay away from the commercial environment. 5) Slow tourists are highly responsible and are very sensitive regarding the consumption of delicate and rare resources. Also, they are good moral practitioners who are willing to follow social moral prescription. 6) Overall, slow tourists are different from lay tourists with regard to their behaviors, slowness, and the selections for commute forms and traveling destinations.

It is righteous to say that slow tourists are one of the factors that have born slow tourism forward, and slow tourists have been influential in developing the tourist attractions toward their sustainability (Yurtseven & Kaya, 2011).

The development of slow tourism should be taken into account by considering the wise use of resources so as to avoid the evolution of future problems. As its history has shown, the business of Thai tourism has mainly emphasized the expansion of its business without paying attention to preserving unique local cultures and environments. As a result, many problems have arisen from these acts of carelessness. Slow development, which is a development that cares for the local culture and the preservation of the environment, should be introduced side by side with the improvement of slow tourism.

Principles for the Success of Slow Tourism

Some principles, which have been extracted from the papers relating to the development of slow tourism, are listed and presented in Figure 1.

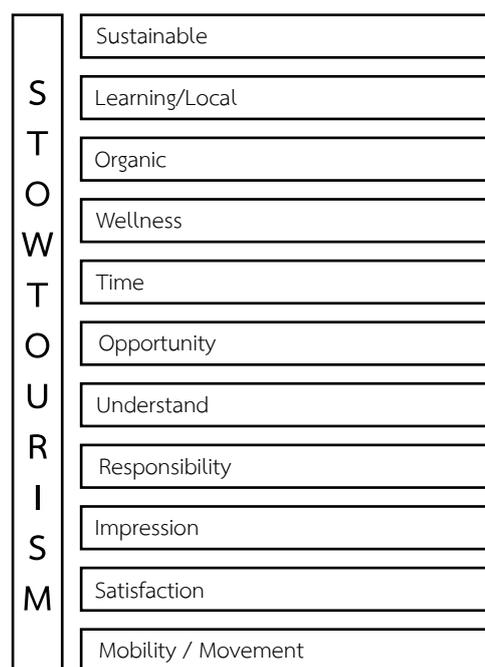


Figure 1 The Principles of Sustainable Slow Tourism

S – Sustainable

In order for slow tourism to become sustainable, tourism should be effectively administered. To be more specific, natural resources in the tourism areas must be maintained intact and kept as tempting as possible. All tourism activities should be eco-friendly and should support the preservation of local culture. Moreover, the sense of local ownership should be strengthened and incorporated into the development and on-going management of slow tourism.

L - Learning about Local

Slow tourism activities should encompass local ways of life. The presentation of the activities for slow tourism should exploit resources that are locally available. For example, products, such as local costumes, seasonal fruits, local recipes, and foods, should be presented to the slow tourists. The process of selling these products should be done in a way that carefully protects the local culture, local ecological systems, and local resources.

O - Organic

Foods, that are obtained locally, are the products of the local ecological system. These must be outstanding products from the tourism area that differ from the products in other areas. Therefore, marketing should be encouraged for these types of products, and at the same time, they must be well-preserved. Organic foods are identified in the following ways : 1) products from plants that have not been grown by using chemical fertilizers, and 2) products that have not been cultivated from the genetically modified seeds. In order to foster the food markets, supporting slow tourism, more organic crops should be germinated and grown.

W- Wellness

The process of fostering “well-being” and the conditions for a “state of wellness” means providing conditions under which tourists can be provided with good food, good accommodations, good company, and high quality products in each tourist area.

T-Time

There should be more time allotted for touring and exploring local areas and attractions. Having more time to spend at tourist attractions can expand the slow tourists’ chances of learning and gaining a greater appreciation of the local culture and history, as well as the natural beauty of the area.

O - Opportunity

Being located in tourism area, local residents are blessed with the chance to have a better quality of life. Most often tourism can be a big boon to the incomes of families.

U- Understand

With respect to the struggle experienced in developing slow tourism in any area, the residents and all concerned parties can take the opportunities to learn and to further understand the importance of slow tourism.

R - Responsibility

Slow tourism should denote the importance of being responsible. When taking tours, the tourists themselves should be conscious and aware. When touring, it is important to take responsibility because, by doing so, the growth of the economy and the community, as well as the protection of the environment, can be accelerated.

I - Impression

In tourism industry management, the concept of making a good impression should be endorsed. When the tourists have an appreciation of the tourist attraction, they will return to the same attraction again and again.

S - Satisfaction

A sense of satisfaction should be created for both the tourists and the local residents. The tourists should be left with the feeling that they have not only received great service, but they have been served with high quality products. Similarly, the hosts should feel that it has been worthwhile for them to have good guests.

M - Mobility / Movement

In a slow tourism market, inert movement through various activities, such as meditation and yoga should be provided. Slow activities, such as these, are necessary for slow tourists who want to ponder their lives and to absorb some of the natural power and beauty that surrounds them. By doing so, they can relax both physically and mentally.

Conclusion

In order to help the service owners to correctly identify and serve the specific needs of tourists, the principles for slow tourism can be exploited so that goods and services can

be better developed. If this process is effectively administered, slow tourism can become sustainable, and its sustainability can inevitably affect the well-being of all people whose lives are related to the slow tourism. A proper amount of time should be allotted for the tourists to accomplish the following : 1) to absorb the elements of the environment and 2) to learn to appreciate the local ways of life, the local history & culture, and the beauty of the tourist areas. Because appreciation is not simply fostered by simply reading a sign or by seeing a poster on the wall, activities in the slow tourism areas should encourage tourists to use all five of their senses. Therefore, those individuals, who are engaging in the development of slow tourism should pay close attention to the following principles for successful slow tourism which are : 1) Sustainability, 2) Learning about Local, 3) Organic, 4) Wellness, 5) Time, 6) Opportunity, 7) Understanding 8) Responsibility, 9) Appreciation, 10) Satisfaction, and 11) Movement.

Currently, many forms of tourism are being carried out to please the customers. However, the primary aim of tourism development is always to reach a state of sustainability. For tourism to be sustainable, development of the local economy, society, and the local environment should be fostered. The future of tourism lies in the hands of all the parties involved in tourism management. These individuals need to look at all the tourism factors and incorporate them into their tourism development plan. Furthermore, for each locality, the appropriate plans should be tailored as necessary. In order to secure a successful future for the tourism industry, members of the tourism administration should take actions to lessen the risks by learning from any mishaps that have happened in the past.

Recommendations

Based on the information previously discussed, sections of the government and entrepreneurs in businesses should promote slow tourism by implementing the following strategies :

Firstly, activities designed for each trip should encourage that a longer time period be spent at the site being visited. By so doing, the tourists will be able to fully acquire mental and physical relaxation. In addition, spending a longer time period at each tourist attraction encourages the spending of additional revenues and supports the flow of money to local businesses. It is, therefore, crucial for the activities, conducted at each of the tourist attractions, to be culturally and historically diverse. Furthermore, they should encourage learning for and among the tourists because this will make it worthwhile for the tourists to spend a longer time there. The activities should also reflect the local identity and should be tempting in order to get the tourists' attention.

Secondly, the accommodations, that encourage slow tourism, should be made appropriate for slow tourists who basically stay longer than 2 nights. Therefore, the accommodations should be diversified and there should be a variety of choices, such as home stays, farm stays, guesthouses, and serviced apartments. Also, hotels and resorts of different sizes should be included. A variety of accommodations can better serve the needs of the slow tourists with different economic backgrounds.

Thirdly, foods for slow tourism should be “slow foods” made from clean and well-selected ingredients. The ingredients should be obtained locally while the cooking methods and tastes should be original. Since slow foods are prepared using local ingredients, the local farmers should be respectively encouraged to produce highly hygienic agricultural products. As a consequence, the process speeds up the flow of money to local businesses. It is also a wise way to conserve the culture of the food for the next generation.

Finally, the vehicles, used for slow tourism, should be safe and environmentally friendly. It is recommended that the modes of transportation utilized by slow tourism should use clean energy. Tourists should be encouraged to use public transportation, such as trains and buses. The locally-owned vehicle services should also be supported because this would be a successful way to bring in more income for the local entrepreneurs and communities.

If the clear development plans for slow tourism are implemented, it can be concluded that Thailand can become a successful and sustainable hub for slow tourism. Plans for this development should be drafted by keeping in mind the diversity of the local cultures. Most importantly, the master key is the cooperation of all stakeholders. This cooperation has the ability to unlock the successful development of Thailand’s slow tourism industry so that the utmost benefits can be derived and the outcomes can be sustainable.

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