



Vernacular Homestay: In Comparison of ASEAN Standard Homestays' Physical Housing*

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were to ascertain the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) physical housing conditions for supporting tourists through "ASEAN Homestays." This was achieved by comparing and analyzing the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2011-2015, the Final ASEAN Homestay Standard 2015, and the empirical fieldwork data. Fieldwork data was collected through participant observations in Homestay communities. The populations of this research included all 100 Homestays which are listed in the ASEAN Homestay Directory 2010, which consists of the ASEAN standard Homestays in the following 8 countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. By utilizing a purposive sampling technique, a sample was taken from each of the 8 Homestay countries. The 8 ASEAN standard Homestay samples are (1) Baitul Wajihah Homestay - Mukim Pengalan - Brunei Darussalam (2) Chiphat Homestay – Koh Kong – Cambodia (3) Jati Homestay - Bali - Indonesia (4) Ban Phonsim Homestay – Savannaket – Laos. (5) Miso Walai Homestay – Sandakan – Malaysia (6) Papaw Village – Ngaung Chwe – Myanmar (7) Koh Yao Noi Homestay – Phang Nga – Thailand (8) Homestay at Mr.Dao Thanh's house – Sapa – Vietnam. The hosts of the sampled ASEAN Homestays, each of which have already conformed to the 2010 ASEAN Homestay standard, were informed to adjust their characteristics to comply with the new 2015 ASEAN Homestay Standards. Improving the ASEAN Homestay management in order to meet the new ASEAN Homestay standard is necessary, but the existing physical house and surrounding area must have minimal disturbance. The fieldwork data shows that 75 percent of Homestays architecture conforms to the meaning of "Vernacular Homestay."

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Developing a tourism experience and product that will encompass regions for the major areas were identified in the strategy plan including cultural and heritage tourism. Not only will the Vernacular Homestay and the authenticity way of life will be harmonized to the cultural ASEAN tourism strategy, but developing a common set of principle needs in the house and their architecture should also be harmonized.

Keywords: Vernacular Homestay, Homestay Standard, Physical Housing, ASEAN Tourism Strategy

Introduction

The ASEAN Member States are about to enter a period of development in the ongoing evolution of the regional community. Taking into consideration the importance of the external trade of ASEAN and the need for the ASEAN community as a whole to remain outward looking, The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) envisages the following key of Characteristics: (a) a single market and production-based, (b) a highly competitive economic region, (c) a region of equitable economic development and (d) a region fully integrated into a global economy. An ASEAN single market and production-based comprises five core elements: (i) free flow of goods; (ii) free flow of services; (iii) free flow of investment; (iv) free flow of capital; and (v) free flow of skill labor. ASEAN industrial sectors included in the single market and production base comprise the twelve priority integration sectors: agro-based product, air transport, automotive, e-ASEAN, electronics, fisheries, healthcare, rubber-based products, textiles and apparel, wood-based products, logistics and tourism. (ASEAN Secretariat, 2011) It is recognized that there are a wide range of issues to be considered within this community. Tourism has been identified as one of the twelve priority sections that will help to hasten the integration of the ASEAN countries by 2015. The potential of tourism as a major socio-economic driver for growth and tools for development in the ASEAN region, the new ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) for 2011 – 2015 has been prepared to achieve the need on ASEAN tourism vision and the needs of 10 different member states.



To achieve the creation and implementation of ASEAN tourism standards is one of the ATSP's objectives. To date, there have been important achievements by the Task Force on ASEAN Tourism Standards with the specific requirements for 6 ASEAN tourism standards developed and agreed to by the ASEAN National Tourism Organizations (ASEAN NTOs). These standards include: Homestay, green hotels, food and beverages services, public restrooms, eco-tourism and tourism heritage. ASEAN Homestay Standard 2010 is one of the six ASEAN Tourism Standards, belonging to 7 major criteria, 34 requirements. It must be stressed that these are generic principles as opposed to specific standards that can be objectively measured and compared with other jurisdictions. ASEAN Homestay Standard 2010 has been dealt with at a generic level. Standard Homestay candidates were proposed by the 10 member states. However, the basis of and the procedures used for the assessment and selection process were not clearly revealed. At this point there is no way to determine whether the standards or not the assessment are comparable from country to country. What has occurred must not be seen as a certification process but rather than an awards program-based on a process of trust that nominated standard Homestays are comparable in quality from country to country (ASEAN Secretariat, 2011). The list of the ASEAN standard Homestay in ASEAN Homestay Directory 2010 showed some pictures of the multi-different direction in Homestay development as figure 1. Underneath the ASEAN Homestay Standard 2010 was completed in agreement with previous scheme of ASEAN Tourism Integration Plan (2010).

The new ATSP was completed to achieve the overall goals of ASEAN tourism including the new ASEAN Homestay Standard which developed the indicators and requirements conformed to the main ATSP. Eventually, Housing's physicality and the common set of principal needs of standard Homestay should be harmonized and reflected the ASEAN's authenticity as the "Vernacular Homestay" in the same developing direction with the new ATSP and the Final Homestay standard 2015.

As above meaning could become the appearance of the research question: "How does the physical housing should be performed for the new ASEAN Homestay standard (2015) and the Main ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (2011 – 2015) which reflect the ASEAN's way of life and its authenticity?



Baitul Wajihah Homestay, Brunei



Delta Homestay, Indonesia



Banghuris Homestay, Malaysia



Ban Phonsim Homestay, Laos

Figure 1. ASEAN nominated standard Homestay 2010. Adapted from “ASEAN Homestay Directory 2010” by Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand, 2010.

Research objectives

This research aims at accomplishing to inspect and compare the physical housing of the ASEAN Standard Homestay in Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam with the ASEAN Homestay Standard 2015 throughout the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015.

Literature review

ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan

Special Working Group on ASEAN Tourism Integration made a decision to prepare the new ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) for 2011 – 2015 to achieve the overall goals of the ASEAN community in 2015. The overall objective is to develop a blueprint defining the policies, programs and project of ASEAN NTOs in the area of, investment, marketing, communication,



human resources development, product development and standards among others. The blueprint will be developed using world recognized sustainable and responsible tourism principles and practices.

ATSP Direction

Based on ASTP Vision "By 2015, will provide an increasing number of visitors to the region with authentic and diverse products, enhanced connectivity, a safe and secure environment, increased quality of services, while at the same time ensuring an increased quality of life and opportunities for residents through responsible and sustainable tourism development by working efficiently with a wide range of stakeholders" and discussions throughout the ATSP development process the following three strategic directions (ASEAN Secretariat, 2011).

- 1) Develop experiential regional products, creative marketing and investment strategies.
 - 1.1 Develop and implement a tourism marketing strategy for the ASEAN region.
 - Develop an ASEAN tourism marketing strategy which will create a brand, target markets, communication strategy, distributing approach and implementation structure.
 - Establish a market research group to provide analytical information on tourism trends and situation on a regular basis.
 - 1.2 Develop Experiential and creative regional/sub regional circuits & packages together with investment strategies.
 - Develop packages for regional corridors, circuits and clusters for nature-based tourism, heritage tourism, community-based tourism, cruise tourism and river-based tourism.
- 2) Strategically increase the quality of services and human resources in the region.
 - 2.1 Develop a set of ASEAN tourism standards with a certification process.
 - Revise and develop an ASEAN green hotel standard, Homestay standard, public toilet standard, spa services standard with a certification process.
 - Develop ASEAN tourism security and safety guidelines.
 - Enhance the ability of ASEAN tourism to address the climate change issue.
 - 2.2 Implement the MRA on ASEAN tourism professionals and its requirements.
 - 2.3 Provide opportunities for increase knowledge and skill development.
- 3) Enhance and accelerate travel facilitation and ASEAN connectivity.
 - 3.1 Advocate for a single visa for the ASEAN region.



- Continue to work towards a single visa for the region by identify obstacles and opportunities and working with the relevant groups within ASEAN.

- Define the case for and advocate the implementation of an e-visa system.
- Explore the possibility for innovative visa arrangements that facilitate travel.

3.2 Work with other ASEAN bodies to expand connectivity through air, water, rail and ground transportation.

ASEAN Homestay Standard 2015

The ASEAN Homestay Standard is part of the Strategic Direction of the ATSP which aims to increase the quality of tourism services and human resources in the region. The indicators of the ASEAN Homestay Standard are the criteria, sub-criteria and requirements. The indicators contained in the checklist are based upon the ASEAN Member States-approved. Before an assessment is conducted, the ASEAN Homestay Assessment Committee should ensure that all applicants meet the prerequisite entry requirements. If unable to do so, the Homestay organizations/providers are immediately disqualified from applying for the ASEAN Homestay Standard (MTCM, 2013).

The prerequisite entry requirements as following:

1. The village shall have a minimum of 5 registered Homestays.
2. The Homestay must be in operation for at least 2 years at the time of application.
3. All Homestay providers shall be free from criminal record.
4. All Homestay providers shall be in good general health.

ASEAN Homestay Criteria and Sub-Criteria (MTCM, 2013) as following:

Main Criteria 1 – Host (Weightage: 5%)

1. The village and community
2. Homestay Provider

Main Criteria 2 – Accommodation (Weightage: 10%)

3. The house
4. The bedroom
5. The Toilet/bathroom.

Main Criteria 3 – Activities (Weightage: 20%)

6. Village and community based activities
7. Surrounding Activities



8. Authenticity

Main Criteria 4 – Management (Weightage: 15%)

9. Leadership
10. Organization
11. Database
12. Capacity building and training

Main Criteria 5 - Location (Weightage 5%)

13. Accessibility

Main Criteria 6 - Hygiene and cleanliness (Weightage 15%)

14. House (bedroom, kitchen and toilet)
15. Surrounding compound
16. Food preparation

Main Criteria 7 – Safety and Security (Weightage 10%)

17. Safety training
18. Safety features for facilities / activities
19. Briefing on safety aspects
20. Emergency rescue and evacuation

Main Criteria 8 – Marketing and Promotion (Weightage 10%)

21. Promotion activities
22. Partnership with tour operators
23. Web marketing

Main Criteria 9 – Sustainable (Weightage 10%)

24. Economic sustainability
25. Environmental sustainability
26. Socio cultural sustainability

The ASEAN Homestay Standard for the year 2015 consists of 4 prerequisite entry requirements, 9 criteria, 26 sub-criteria and 90 requirements. The significant indicators will obtain more weightage in scoring. Because of the differential numbers of sub-criteria and requirements also the different weightage proportion on criteria affect to the weightage proportion on each requirement as shown on table 1 :



Table 1. Weightage Proportion on ASEAN Homestay Standard's Criteria, Sub-Criteria and Requirements

No	Criteria	Weight (%)	Sub-Criteria	Weight (%)	Nos of Requirement	Weightage per each Requirement (%)
1	Host	5%	Village and Community	2.50	3	0.83
			Homestay Provider	2.50	1	2.50
			House	3.33	6	0.56
2	Accommodation	10%	Bedroom	3.33	5	0.67
			Toilet-Bathroom	3.33	3	1.11
			Community-based Activities	6.67	2	3.34
3	Activities	20%	Surrounding Activities	6.67	2	3.34
			Authenticity	6.67	3	2.22
			Leadership	3.00	1	3.00
			Organization	3.00	2	1.50
4	Management	15%	Database	3.00	3	1.00
			Training	3.00	2	1.50
			Collaboration	3.00	1	3.00
5	Location	5%	Accessibility	5.00	2	2.50
			House	5.00	5	1.00
6	Hygiene and Cleanliness	15%	Surrounding Compound	5.00	3	1.67
			Food Preparation	5.00	7	0.71
			Safety Training	2.50	1	2.50
7	Safety and Security	10%	Safety Feature	2.50	4	0.63
			Briefing on Safety	2.50	4	0.63
			Emergency Rescue	2.50	4	0.63
8	Marketing and Promotion	10%	Promotion Activities	3.33	4	0.83
			Partnership	3.33	2	1.67
			Web Marketing	3.33	2	1.67
9	Sustainability Principles	10%	Economic	3.33	8	0.42
			Environment	3.33	6	0.56
			Sociocultural	3.33	4	0.83
Total		100%		100	90	1.11



Vernacular Homestay, Modern Homestay and ASEAN Standard Homestay

Vernacular Homestay

Vernacular Homestay is combined two words “vernacular” and “Homestay”. Though the term of vernacular architecture, it has been used in many types of building which have not been professionally designed (Oliver, 2003). Vernacular house is defined as comprising the house of the people, related to their environmental contexts and available resources they are customarily owner – or community – built, utilizing traditional technologies. All forms of vernacular house are built to meet specific needs, accommodating the values, economies and way of life of the cultures that produce them (Lee, R. B. and Daly, R., 1999). On the other hand, Merriam Webster Dictionary (2012) defines a Homestay as a stay at a residence by a traveler and especially by a visiting foreign student who is hosted by a local family. The Homestay tourism program is one of the community-based tourism that offer the experience of nature and local countryside lifestyle to tourists (Jabil, M. and Kadir, D., 2010). In Homestays, the physicality of the traditional environment, the elusive quality of home and the social beliefs of the people are used to construct the tourist hospitality experience. In other words, it re-conceptualizes spatio-social-cultural resources as tourism goods in which a complex system is packaged for sale for the short duration of the tourist’s visit. This point resembles the concern of combining home and work in the same place (Hochschild, 2001).

Modern Homestay

From the research of Rawiwan O. (2012), it was found that Homestay development brought together the traditions of home and Homestay. While both occur as a simultaneous process, their aims and characteristics are opposing. As families develop financially, they may desire an extension of home and Homestay, and as a result, both tend to increase in size, number and architectural styles. In terms of style, a Homestay family may wish to develop the home in a modern way, while also needing to limit the choice for Homestays to a traditional style which tourists prefer. In some villages, one Homestay may put guests in a newer modern house for the sake of comfort and luxury, while another may put guests in a traditional hut in favor of its indigenous characteristics. All these different choices create a chaotic environment in which the traditions of home and Homestay are amalgamated and hybridized, thus affecting the identity of place and the continuity of vernacular tradition, as critically noted by many scholars of vernacular architecture in the 21st century (Vellinga, 2006).

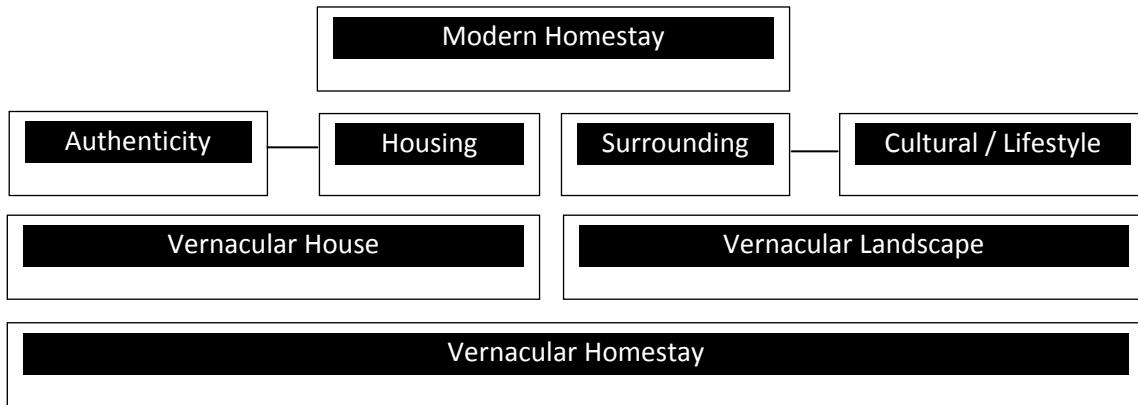


Figure 2. Conceptual Definition of “Modern Homestay and Vernacular Homestay”

ASEAN Standard Homestay

Several facilities that would never normally exist in rural Homestay villages, for example a number of toilets and a comfortable bedroom, continue to appear - bizarre and incongruous structures that consume land and other natural resources. The ex-ASEAN Homestay Standard 2010 are only 7 criteria and 34 requirements, to minimized the basic requirements for supporting the rural Homestays. In term of accommodation criteria, there are only 6 requirements for being a standard Homestay. (1) The use of local design and materials for accommodation, furniture and interior decoration are required. (2) The accommodation must be maintenance. (3) Good ventilation. (4) Clean bedroom and accessories. (5) Clean toilet and (6) regular check for insects and nuisance animals (ASEAN Secretariat, 2010). All these basic requirements create a modern and luxurious Homestay with the local furniture and interior decoration could be reached the ASEAN Homestay standard. The new ASEAN Homestay Standard 2015 is developed to be solved this problem and to be improved in other categories.

Methodology

The methodology employed in this study involved secondary resources, the ASEAN tourism policy document such as ASEAN Economic Community Fact book, ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015 and also the Final ASEAN Homestay Standard 2015. The content analysis process will be summarized whereby firstly, the existing data will be reduced into



several of categories that generalized the themes of ASEAN Homestay development direction. Categories of the data are created and then assessed and evaluated through the existing Homestay standard to derive the finding and secondly, analyzed and compared with empirical fieldwork data which were collected through the participant observation technique in Homestay. The populations of this research are the total of 100 Homestays listed in the ASEAN Homestay Directory 2010, consists of the standard Homestays in the 8-country: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. The 8 Homestay samples were sampling by purposive sampling technique, one Homestay sample of each country. The 8 standard Homestay samples as following:

1. Baitul Wajihah Homestay, Mukim Pengalan, Brunei
2. Chiphat Homestay, Koh Kong, Cambodia
3. Jati Homestay, Bali, Indonesia
4. Ban Phonsim Homestay, Savannaket, Laos
5. Miso Walai Homestay, Sandakan, Malaysia
6. Papaw Village, Ngaung Chwe, Myanmar
7. Koh Yao Noi Homestay, Phang Nga, Thailand
8. Homestay at Mr.Dao Thanh's house, Sapa, Vietnam

The categories of observation were done on the Homestays' physicality. Confirmatory factor analysis was the main method which done through the existing ASEAN Homestay factor as their criteria, sub-criteria and requirements.



Results

The finding on the ASEAN Homestay accommodations were done throughout the observation on their sub-criteria as mention in the ASEAN Homestay Standard 2015 which are (1) house (2) bedroom and (3) toilet/bathroom of the 8-different Homestay as shown on figure 3.

1. Baitul Wajihah Homestay - Mukim Pengalan, Brunei



2. Chiphat Homestay - Koh Kong, Cambodia



3. Jati Homestay - Bali, Indonesia



Figure 3. House, bedroom and toilet at the Homestays in Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia Myanmar Thailand and Vietnam, pictured by researcher on December 2014



4. Ban Phonsim Homestay - Savannakhet, Laos



5. Miso Walai Homestay - Sandakan, Malaysia



6. Papaw Village - Ngaung Chwe, Myanmar



Figure 3. House, bedroom and toilet at the Homestays in Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia Myanmar Thailand and Vietnam, pictured by researcher on December 2014 (Cont.)



7. Koh Yao Noi Homestay - Phang Nga, Thailand



8. Homestay at Mr. Dao Thanh's house – Sapa, Vietnam



Figure 3. House, bedroom and toilet at the Homestays in Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia Myanmar Thailand and Vietnam, pictured by researcher on December 2014 (Cont.)

The comparison of eight ASEAN Homestays in the field of physical accommodation with the ASEAN Homestay Standard 2015 are done through the houses, bedrooms and toilets as shown on table 2.



Table 2. The comparison of eight ASEAN Homestays in the field of physical accommodation with the ASEAN Homestay Standard 2015

ASEAN Homestay Requirements	Malaysia	Brunei	Indonesia	Myanmar	Cambodia	Thailand	Vietnam	Laos	%
<u>The House</u>									
1. The structure of the house is in good and safe condition.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
2. Design and materials reflect local architecture and identity.	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	75
3. Separate guest bedroom.	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	62.5
4. Minimum 1 bathroom for the guest.	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	87.5
5. Electricity supply in the house.	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-	62.5
6. Adequate clean water supply inside the house.	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	87.5
<u>The Bedroom</u>									
1. Basic amenities such as fan, desk, cupboard, mirror, electric socket etc.	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	50
2. Maximum of four bedrooms allocated to guests.	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	87.5
3. Standard beds with mattresses and pillows.	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	62.5
4. Windows fitted with a mesh frame.	-	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	37.5
5. Clean and fresh bed linen for every guest.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
<u>The Toilet/Bathroom</u>									
1. Sitting or squatting toilet inside or outside, but close the house.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
2. Basic toilet and bathroom facilities.	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	87.5
3. Adequate clean water provided at all times.	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	87.5



The semblances of eight Homestays could be classified as (1) vernacular style: 6/8 numbers of Homestay (75%) e.g. Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam and the remaining 2 Homestays are (2) modern style: one from Brunei, the concept is closed to the luxurious house and another one from Indonesia is closed to the small hotel.

For the bedrooms' requirements, some Homestays are incomplete such as, 5/8 numbers of the bedrooms (62.5%) no have a mesh frame at the window, 4/8 numbers of the bedrooms (50%) are lack of some basic amenities, 3/8 numbers of the bedrooms (37.5%) are no have standard beds with standard mattresses and standard pillows and 3/8 numbers of the bedrooms (37.5%) are no separated bedroom for guests but most of the toilets/bathrooms, 7/8 numbers, (87.5%) are developed in the modern way.

As reviewing the ASEAN tourism policy documents found that the ASEAN Tourism Strategy's themes are pointing to emphasize "the authentic diverse and qualitative tourism product". Categories of the Homestay standard's requirements, the criteria could be separated to a part of "authentic diverse tourism product" and a part of "qualitative tourism product" for the tourists' recognition as table 3:

Table 3. Categories of ASEAN Homestay Standard's Criteria

Authentic Diverse Tourism Product	Qualitative Tourism Product
1. Accommodation (house)	1. Host
2. Activity	2. Management
	3. Location
	4. Hygiene and Cleanliness
	5. Safety and Security
	6. Marketing and Promotion
	7. Sustainability Principles



Discussion

Homestay accommodation in the term of “authentic” and “diverse” tourism product is a home-away-from-home (Verstrate, 2007) but guests could reside in not only differentiate from their accustomed behavior but also difference in life style and housing style. Vernacular Homestay or rural Homestay could be presented by coherently appearance and the guest could be recognized throughout the physical housing, surrounding and activities. It also exhibits the ongoing process of transferring knowledge and value through generations. (Tuan, 1989) The commoditization of rural village worldwide has been noted for its socio-culture impacts, especially the issue of consuming tradition and manufacturing heritage. (Alsayyad, 1995) On the other hand, the urban Homestay emphasizes the “quality” by developing a common set of principles to guide the formulation and implementation of regional quality for a wide range of tourism facilities and amenities as noted by Douglas (1991) ‘home’ and ‘hotel’ are opposite ideas and when the two concepts are combined in the realm of home, the home setting become complicated and is highly affected.

As the results, some of the ASEAN Homestays’ physicality is not conformed to the new ASEAN Homestay Standard (2015) especially houses’ semblance and bedrooms but inclined to the vernacular Homestay concepts. The main standards are exposed as comfortable position, closed to the hotel standards which are described in many requirements regarding the amenity of accommodations.

In vernacular Homestays, the physicality of the traditional house and environment including the social beliefs of the people are used to construct the tourist hospitality experiences as a diverse tourism strategy. Their own “Vernacular Homestay standard” separated from the “Main ASEAN Homestay Standard” will be executed for supporting the ASEAN implementation as the ASEAN Tourism Strategy.

ASEAN Homestay in the role of ASEAN tourism strategy was situated in general above the both kind of concepts which shown in their ASEAN Homestay Standard’s requirements. With distinctness on the Homestay development direction, the convenient/urban Homestay and the vernacular Homestay should be separated as of the tourism target market is different, not only the prominent points on tourism experience but also the target tourists.



Conclusion

This research discusses ASEAN Homestay in the particular context of physical vernacular Homestay through the semblances and the bedrooms as the ASEAN tourism strategy. The remaining of vernacular housing and its functional tradition reflects the spatial, social and culture values of community. From the research it was found that some accommodations are pointing towards emphasizing authenticity. This authenticity is achieved by keeping the traditional architecture in favor of its indigenous characteristics and physical interior and good quality management. Qualities such as hygiene and cleanliness, safety and security, marketing and promotion, and sustainability principles are all supporting the vernacular Homestay standard and the ASEAN tourism goal.



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