

LETTER OF THE DAY

Traditional food can boost tourism

The tourism industry has not only been one of the rapidly growing sectors of the world economy, but it has also brought about economic development in a number of countries.

There is a type of tourism called culinary tourism. This focuses on the traditional cuisine in a certain destination. It means visiting a place with the sole purpose of trying out food.

Uganda boasts of food variety with the different regions of the country having a well defined food culture and specific foods. Culinary tourism is common in countries with well known cuisines such as the Italian, Mexican, Indian, etc.

When well popularised, food tourism may influence visitors positively and this can lead to tourism attraction. One of the factors that tourists consider in choosing their destination is food. Local foods play a leading role in impressing tourists and increase the tourist attractions in a region. Many cities around the world have had their names etched on the tourism guide maps because of food specialty.

In Uganda, the Uganda Tourism Board, should tap into food tour-



ism premised on the local foods associated with different parts of the country. For instance, Busoga in eastern region, is known as the home for potato and groundnuts. Western Uganda is known as the land of millet, matooke and dairy products. Bugishu sub-region is famous for its local delicacy called *Kamaleya*, which is prepared from bamboo off shoots.

Central Uganda has a niche in preparing different dishes and food wrapped in banana leaves to produce a unique aroma. The

north produces a variety of vegetables, tubers and millet. On the whole, Uganda is endowed with a variety of food stuff.

Therefore, Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) should play a vibrant role in the local as well as five star hotel industry. It should be seen playing a role in the growing of restaurants in different parts of the country. Many of tourists visit small restaurants to have a true taste of local foods.

UTB should promote the serving of foods in traditional ways in local restaurants. A tourist will not enjoy food served in a buffet set up. In China, Hong Kong, and other countries, chicken, snakes, dogs are slaughtered while the excited tourists are watching before preparing it. Ugandans have different ways of preparing and serving food, which could be very attractive to tourists.

With respect to the significance of food in the promotion of tourism, paying particular attention to food and the way it is prepared and served are very important. Such are things that tourists look for beyond wild life, beautiful sceneries, hospitality, etc.

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