

CULTURAL INFLUENCES IN ACEH PEMULIA JAMEE CUISINE

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research provides solutions and information in the knowledge of intercultural local wisdom in Aceh. the relationship between diverse cultural phenomena in food that is collaborated on Acehnese culture. The purpose of this study is to explain the knowledge and information about Acehnese culinary fusion that shows the history, creativity, and resilience of the island. Each bite tells a story of cultural exchange, adaptation, and the power of food to unite traditions. A prime example of how diverse cultural influences combine to create a vibrant culinary tradition. Jamaican culinary culture reflects its rich history of colonization, migration, and trade, drawing on Indigenous, African, European, Indian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern influences. Its cuisine relies heavily on strong and aromatic spices such as pimento, nutmeg, thyme, and Scotch bonnet peppers, which blend with a variety of culinary styles. From grilling (Indigenous) to steaming (Chinese), Acehnese cooks adapt methods from various cultures to suit local ingredients. The multicultural community encourages innovation and collaboration in the kitchen. This fusion is implemented at a gathering for jamee breeders. This tradition is a legacy from our ancestors to provide the best hospitality for guests.

Keywords: *Kulture, Influences, Pemulia Jamee.*

INTRODUCTION

Culture refers to the shared beliefs, customs, practices, values, behaviors, and artifacts that define a group of people or a society. It

encompasses everything that shapes the way a community lives, interacts, and expresses itself, and it evolves over time as people interact with each other and their environment. Aspects of Culture a Material Culture Physical objects, tools, buildings, and artifacts that a society creates and uses. As example is Clothing, art, technology, and architecture. Non-Material Culture Intangible aspects such as beliefs, values, norms, and traditions. As example an Language, religion, music, and customs. Language a crucial element for communication and passing knowledge across generations. Often considered the backbone of cultural identity. Traditions and Customs as Rituals, festivals, and practices that are passed down, reflecting a community's values and history. Example an waiting for the bridegroom, accepting the bride's bachelorhood and agreeing to the customs.

Aceh is a blend of rich cultural heritage, natural beauty and strong religious spirit, making it one of the most unique regions in Indonesia (Nelissa et al., 2020); (Jamee, 2022). The Custom of Pemulia Jamee in Aceh is a typical tradition of the Acehnese people that shows respect for guests (jamee) (Design et al., 2023); (Sains & Nyak, 2022). In Acehnese culture, guests are considered as people who must be respected and treated well because they are considered to be bringers of blessings (Lisa, 2023); (P. Budaya, n.d.). The term "Pemulia Jamee" seems to be related to the Acehnese concept of "Pemulia Jamee", which means "to honor or honor a guest." This tradition is deeply rooted in the culture of Aceh, Indonesia, and reflects their values of treating guests with respect, hospitality, and warmth (No, 2022); (Identity, 2022).

Despite modernization, the tradition of honoring guests remains a vital part of Acehnese identity (City et al., 2024); (Santoso & Jafar, 2022). (Aceh, 2021). The tradition of Pemulia Jamee in Acehnese culture is not just about hospitality but a holistic way of life that intertwines social norms, religion, and cultural identity (Meliza et al., 2024). The Acehnese practice of Pemulia Jamee is heavily influenced by Islamic values (Nasir & Juliandi, 2021). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized the importance of honoring guests, as seen in a hadith (D. A. N. Budaya, n.d.).

"Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honor his guest."

This teaching is deeply embedded in the Acehnese way of life, making hospitality not only a social obligation but also a spiritual obligation. Cultural Heritage in Aceh is a major trade and cultural center frequented by traders, clerics, and travelers. The tradition of honoring guests grew as a way to build trust and demonstrate the generosity of the Acehnese (P. Budaya, n.d.)

METHODS

This research method aims to explain or study the cultural culture of a region. This qualitative approach method explains that the nature of culture is complex, dynamic, and highly dependent on the social context. This method focuses on in-depth study of a particular culture or social group through participant observation. This research also analyzes the cultural development of a region by tracing its history and social changes. This study examines the development and customs of the Acehnese people, such as Pemulia Jamee.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Aceh, located on the northern tip of Sumatra in Indonesia, is renowned for its rich culinary heritage, deeply rooted in its history and culture. One of the most distinctive aspects of Acehnese cuisine is the concept of *Pemulia Jamee*, which translates to "honoring guests." This tradition reflects the Acehnese values of hospitality and respect, often expressed through food. Aceh is known as the "Verandah of Mecca" due to its early adoption of Islam in Southeast Asia (Meliza et al., 2024). Islamic values play a significant role in shaping Acehnese cuisine. Dishes prepared for *Pemulia Jamee* emphasize Halal practices, with careful attention to permissible ingredients and methods of preparation. Ceremonial meals for guests often include symbolic foods that reflect spiritual significance, such as dates, goat meat, and rice dishes (No, 2022).

Historical trade routes brought Indian and Arab traders to Aceh, whose culinary practices merged with local traditions. Spices like cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, and cumin are staples in Acehnese cooking, evident in dishes like *gulai kambing* (spiced goat curry) and *nasi briyani Aceh* (fragrant spiced rice). These elements are central in feasts prepared for guests.



Figure: 1. Gulai kambing Khas Aceh

The richness of the taste of Acehnese goat curry comes from the influence of Malay, Indian and Arabic cultures that have blended into Acehnese culinary traditions. This dish is a symbol of warmth and respect in the Pemuliah Jamee

tradition. Goat Gulai is one of Aceh's traditional dishes that illustrates the richness of Indonesian spices (Lemak et al., 2018). (Aisyah et al., 2020). This dish is made from goat meat cooked with spices and coconut milk, resulting in a rich, savory, and slightly spicy taste. This gulai is often served at traditional events, holidays, or as a special dish for guests.

As part of the broader Malay cultural sphere, Acehnese cuisine shares similarities with other Southeast Asian cuisines. The use of coconut milk, turmeric, and chili paste is widespread. Iconic dishes like *rendang* and *ayam tangkap* (spiced fried chicken with aromatic leaves) often feature prominently in guest meals, showcasing shared culinary techniques.



Figure: 2. Rendang Khas Aceh.

Although rendang is better known as a typical Minangkabau dish, Aceh also has a version of rendang that is rich in flavor and full of regional spices. Acehnese rendang is characterized by the use of stronger spices, as well as a unique cooking method to produce a rich flavor and tender meat (Putih et al., 2023).

Chinese traders also left their mark on Acehnese cuisine. Stir-frying techniques and ingredients like soy sauce and tofu have been integrated into Acehnese dishes. For instance, *mie Aceh* (spicy Acehnese noodles) combines local spices with a nod to Chinese-style noodle dishes. Acehnese hospitality is deeply tied to local customs. Guests are often served dishes prepared with *ikan kayu* (smoked fish) or *kuah pliek u* (vegetable curry with fermented coconut). These dishes reflect the resourcefulness of Acehnese people, using locally sourced ingredients to create meals that are both flavorful and symbolic of their culture.



Figure: 3. Mie Aceh

Aceh noodles, or *Mie Aceh*, is a flavorful and spicy noodle dish from Aceh, a province in the northernmost part of Sumatra, Indonesia. Known for its rich and aromatic spices, this dish is a favorite in Indonesian cuisine. The dish is bold and spicy, with a slightly sweet and savory taste from the mix of spices and soy sauce. It embodies the culinary influences of Indian, Arab, and local Indonesian flavors.



Figure: 4. Keumamah (Ikan kayu)

Keumamah, also known as Kayu Fish, is one of the famous traditional dishes of Aceh. This dish is made from dried fish, usually mackerel or tuna, which is then processed with typical Acehnese spices. The drying process makes this fish last longer, so it used to be often carried by sailors or Acehnese people on long journeys. Keumamah has a savory taste with a little sourness from the sunti acid, plus a strong aroma of spices. This dish is perfect for lovers of richly spiced dishes.



Figure: 5. Kuah Pliek U

Kuah Pliek U is one of Aceh's traditional dishes, rich in flavor and cultural significance. This dish is a vegetable curry that uses *pliek u* as its main ingredient, a fermented grated coconut unique to Aceh. Kuah Pliek U is known for its rich blend of spices and vegetables, making it highly nutritious and distinctively aromatic.



Figure: 6. Sie Reboh Khas Aceh

This dish is often served at traditional ceremonies, communal feasts, or special occasions in Aceh. The uniqueness of Sie Reboh lies in its cooking process, which preserves the natural flavor of the meat without adding many complex seasonings. Sie Reboh, also known as Acehnese Boiled Beef, is one of Aceh's traditional dishes that is simple yet rich in flavor. This dish is prepared by boiling beef with Acehnese spices, resulting in a savory and aromatic taste.

During the Dutch colonial era, European techniques and ingredients found their way into Acehnese kitchens. Cakes, pastries, and baked goods like *kue lapis* (layered cake) and *kue bingkang* (baked pudding) are often served to guests as part of *Pemulia Jamee*. These desserts reflect a fusion of Acehnese and European culinary styles. Acehnese cakes often have symbolic meanings

in customs and culture, such as respect for guests, a sign of gratitude, or a symbol of blessing. The taste of these cakes tends to be sweet with a touch of savory coconut milk, reflecting the richness of flavors that come from natural ingredients.



Figure: 7. Kue Bingkang Khas Aceh

Bingkang Cake is one of Aceh's traditional delicacies, well-known for its sweet flavor and soft texture. This cake is typically served at special occasions, such as communal feasts (*kenduri*), major celebrations, or family gatherings, especially as a treat during *pemulia jamee* (honoring guests).



Figure: 8. Kue Thimpan Khas Aceh

Thimpan Cake (or Timphan) is one of Aceh's traditional cakes, widely popular and regarded as a symbol of Acehnese hospitality. This delicacy is typically served as a treat for guests (*pemulia jamee*) or during traditional ceremonies and major celebrations, such as Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Adha.



Figure: 9. Kue Bhoi Khas Aceh

The *Pemulia Jamee* tradition in Aceh is a vivid reflection of its multicultural history, blending Islamic, Indian, Malay, Chinese, and local influences into a unique culinary identity. By honoring guests through food, the Acehnese not only showcase their cultural heritage but also foster bonds of friendship and respect. Acehnese hospitality emphasizes abundance and generosity. Meals served to guests are typically large and elaborate, with multiple dishes reflecting the host's respect and gratitude. Sharing food during these occasions symbolizes community and solidarity.

CONCLUSION

Pemuliah Jamee is more than just a cultural practice in Aceh, it is a reflection of the region's rich history, deep-rooted Islamic beliefs, and enduring commitment to social harmony. It embodies the spirit of warmth and respect of the Acehnese people, leaving a lasting impression on guests and reinforcing Aceh's cultural identity as a land of generosity and kindness. The Jamee Breeding Tradition emerged in response to the influx of travelers, traders, and scholars, who encouraged an environment of mutual respect and cultural exchange. Jamee ranchers continue to be pillars of the community, strengthening social networks, promoting tourism, and preserving the area's unique cultural identity. Pemuliah Jamee encapsulates the ethos of the Acehnese people, namely humility, generosity, and faith, making it a characteristic of the region.

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