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COLLABORATIVE TOURISM STUDY OF THE "AROMATIC WELLNESS TRIP" IN INTEGRATING WELLNESS TOURISM AND CULTURAL TOURISM BY LOKANANTA AND RUMAH ATSIRI IN SOLO

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Abstract:

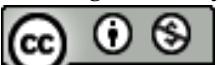
The post-COVID-19 pandemic growth of wellness tourism has created opportunities for destinations to offer travel experiences that are not only recreation-oriented but also support tourists' physical health, mental well-being, and spiritual wellness. This study examines the collaborative tourism program "Aromatic Wellness Trip" as an effort to integrate wellness tourism and cultural tourism through cooperation between Lokananta as a historical and music tourism destination, Rumah Atsiri as an essential oil edu-recreation destination, and Atsiri Jawa as a culture-based wellness destination in the Solo-Tawangmangu area. The research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through a literature review, participant observation, and in-depth interviews with the managers of Lokananta, Rumah Atsiri, and Atsiri Jawa. The findings indicate that the collaborative packages – Day Experience and Cultural Wellness Journey – are able to create a holistic travel experience that combines music-history education, essential-oil exploration, wellness activities, and the internalization of Javanese cultural values. This collaboration contributes to strengthening Solo's image as a cultural and wellness destination, increasing economic value added for the participating destinations, and preserving historical heritage and local wisdom. Nevertheless, challenges related to program sustainability, human resource capacity, and promotional intensity still require a more structured collaborative management strategy. The findings are expected to serve as a reference for developing sustainable collaborative tourism models in other destinations across Indonesia.

Keywords: Wellness Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Collaborative Tourism, Aromatic Wellness Trip

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, wellness has become a key aspect in the development of the global tourism industry. Lifestyle shifts, rising awareness of physical and mental health, and the need for post-pandemic recovery have led tourists to increasingly choose trips that not only provide recreation but also deliver holistic restoration for the body and mind (Voigt & Pforr, 2017). The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) notes that before the COVID-19 pandemic, wellness tourism was among the fastest-growing segments of global tourism, and this trend has strengthened again as the world transitions into the post-pandemic era (Global Wellness Institute, 2021). GWI's latest report further projects that the wellness tourism market will continue to expand in the coming years, creating substantial opportunities for destinations and industry actors to develop innovative and sustainable wellness-based tourism products (Global Wellness Institute, 2023).

In Indonesia, the potential for developing wellness tourism is closely linked to the country's rich natural resources and cultural diversity. Traditional practices such as herbal medicine, jamu, healing rituals, yoga, meditation, and spa experiences rooted in local wisdom have long been part

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of community life and are now increasingly adapted into culture-based wellness tourism attractions. This approach aligns with the principles of community-based tourism, which positions local communities as central actors in the sustainable management and utilization of tourism resources (Asker et al., 2010). At the same time, cultural tourism plays a strategic role in sustaining identity and cultural heritage, particularly as tourists show interest in historical narratives, arts, music, and local traditions (Butler & Hinch, 2007). Integrating wellness tourism and cultural tourism, therefore, presents a strategic opportunity to create holistic tourism experiences that are not only health-enhancing but also educational and culturally meaningful.

Solo is one of Indonesia's most visited destinations and is widely recognized as a cultural city with a strong historical legacy. Amid ongoing destination development, a collaborative initiative titled the "Aromatic Wellness Trip" has emerged, integrating Lokananta—an iconic site in the history of Indonesia's music industry—with Rumah Atsiri and Atsiri Jawa as an essential oil education and nature-based wellness tourism area. This collaboration offers a series of activities that combine music heritage experiences, cultural interpretation, and essential plant education, while also providing relaxation, aromatherapy, and creative activities that support tourists' physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Such an approach aligns with post-pandemic tourist demand for more authentic, personalized, and value-added travel experiences.

Several prior studies have examined the integration of wellness tourism and local culture; however, most have focused on mapping potential and conceptual challenges at the regional level. Raras Wening et al. (2025), for example, analyze opportunities and challenges in integrating wellness tourism with local culture in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, emphasizing the importance of balancing tourism modernization, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. Their findings suggest that the success of culture-based wellness tourism depends heavily on a destination's capacity to maintain authenticity, manage cultural commodification, and ensure active local community involvement. Meanwhile, Ni Luh Putu Ening P. et al. (2024) develop a collaboration model for sustainable tourism development in Selumbung Village, Karangasem, arguing that cross-stakeholder collaboration—encompassing government, businesses, and local communities—is a prerequisite for adaptive and inclusive destination management.

Nevertheless, studies that specifically examine the form, dynamics, and implications of cross-tourism collaboration—particularly between wellness tourism and cultural tourism—at the level of concrete tourism products remain relatively limited. Much of the existing literature highlights regional potential or conceptual frameworks rather than integrated tourism products that have been implemented as tangible travel packages. The "Aromatic Wellness Trip," which links Lokananta, Rumah Atsiri, and Atsiri Jawa, offers a distinctive empirical context by combining a historic music destination, essential-oil agro-tourism, and wellness facilities within a single travel sequence. It opens space for analysis of how cross-destination collaboration is designed, how cultural and wellness narratives are blended into the tourist experience, and how such integration influences destination competitiveness, tourism sustainability, and the strengthening of Solo's identity as a cultural and wellness destination.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine in depth the collaborative tourism program "Aromatic Wellness Trip" in integrating wellness tourism and cultural tourism through the partnership among Lokananta, Rumah Atsiri, and Atsiri Jawa in Solo. Specifically, the study seeks to: (1) analyze the concept and design of the tourism experience built through inter-destination collaboration; (2) identify the forms of value added generated for tourists, destinations, and stakeholders; and (3) explore how this collaboration contributes to strengthening sustainable



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tourism and destination branding for Solo as a city that combines cultural richness with contemporary wellness practices. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of scholarship on collaborative tourism grounded in wellness and culture, while also serving as a practical reference for policymakers and tourism industry actors in designing innovative, sustainable, and competitive tourism products.

Conceptually, this research is also driven by the need to bridge theoretical discourse and field practice in the development of alternative tourism in Indonesia. To date, discussions of wellness tourism, cultural tourism, and collaborative tourism have tended to remain within a normative domain—often limited to arguments about the importance of cultural preservation, community empowerment, or tourism product diversification (Asker et al., 2010; Butler & Hinch, 2007). Studies examining how these concepts are operationalized concretely in the form of real tourism packages, such as the Aromatic Wellness Trip, are still relatively scarce. Accordingly, this article not only presents a case description but also seeks to unpack the relationship between wellness, culture, and inter-destination collaboration as an integrated set of mutually reinforcing dimensions. The article is structured systematically, beginning with an introduction and literature review, followed by the research methodology, the presentation of findings and discussion, and concluding with conclusions and recommendations for the future development of collaborative tourism.

Wellness Tourism. Wellness tourism is generally understood as a form of travel aimed at maintaining or enhancing well-being through activities that engage physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions. Voigt and Pforr (2017) describe wellness tourism as a set of experiences that combine relaxation, health interventions, lifestyle improvement, and personal development. From this perspective, wellness travel is not limited to spa services; it also includes meditation, yoga, therapeutic retreats, herbal treatments, and other structured holistic healing activities packaged within a tourism product.

The Global Wellness Institute (2021, 2023) notes that before the COVID-19 pandemic, wellness tourism was among the fastest-growing segments of global tourism, and this trend has strengthened again in the post-pandemic period. This growth has been driven by increasing public awareness of healthy lifestyles, the need for stress recovery, and the search for travel experiences that generate rejuvenating effects for both body and mind. In this context, wellness tourism is viewed as a strategic opportunity for destinations to develop products oriented not only toward recreation but also toward transformation and improvements in tourists' quality of life (Global Wellness Institute, 2021, 2023).

In Indonesia, the development of wellness tourism is closely connected to the country's abundant natural resources and local wisdom. Traditional health practices such as jamu, massage, herbal therapy, spice baths, and spiritual rituals have long been deeply rooted in community life. When these practices are packaged as tourism attractions, the wellness experiences offered not only address physical aspects but also mental and spiritual dimensions, thereby reflecting health traditions that have been passed down across generations within Indonesian culture.

Cultural Tourism and Wellness-Based Cultural Experiences. Cultural tourism focuses on travel motivated by tourists' interest in cultural heritage, arts, traditions, and the ways of life of local communities. Butler and Hinch (2007) emphasize that cultural tourism enables tourists to engage with local narratives, symbols, and cultural expressions, while also contributing to the preservation of identity and cultural heritage. In Indonesia, cultural tourism is commonly associated with visits to historical sites, traditional arts performances, handicrafts, and local culinary experiences.



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In recent years, cultural tourism has increasingly been linked more explicitly to wellness, particularly when traditional health practices become embedded within cultural rituals. Experiences such as customary ceremonies, the use of medicinal plants, aromatherapy based on local ingredients, and contemplative activities in heritage-oriented spaces can be positioned as part of “wellness-based cultural experiences.” In this sense, wellness is not viewed merely as an individual health practice, but also as an entry point for understanding a community’s history, collective memory, and philosophy of life.

The concept of the “Aromatic Wellness Trip” illustrates how wellness tourism can be integrated into a broader cultural narrative. Solo is positioned as a city with a strong cultural identity, while Lokananta, Rumah Atsiri, and Atsiri Jawa serve as nodes connecting music history, essential oil heritage, and nature-based wellness practices. Through this integration, cultural experiences (heritage, music, historical narratives) are combined with wellness experiences (aromatherapy, relaxation, creative activities), resulting in a holistic tourism package.

Collaborative Tourism and Sustainable Destination Development. Collaborative tourism refers to tourism products and governance arrangements that are jointly developed by multiple stakeholders—such as destination managers, local communities, businesses, and government—to create shared value. Within the community-based tourism framework, collaboration is viewed as an essential mechanism to ensure that tourism development remains economically viable, socially inclusive, and environmentally responsible (Asker et al., 2010).

In Indonesia, collaborative approaches are increasingly promoted as a strategy to align tourism growth with sustainability principles. The integration of wellness and cultural tourism packaged into collaborative trips is seen as an innovation within alternative tourism landscapes, seeking to balance economic development, cultural preservation, and environmental protection. Collaborative trips enable multiple destinations with different characteristics (for example, music heritage, essential-oil agro-tourism, and wellness facilities) to be combined into a curated travel flow, thereby enriching the visitor experience while distributing economic benefits to a wider range of actors.

Ni Luh Putu Ening P. et al. (2024) developed a conceptual-participatory collaboration model for sustainable tourism development in Selumbung Village, Karangasem. Their findings indicate that collaboration rarely involves a single actor; each stakeholder brings distinct interests and capacities. Collaboration effectiveness can be assessed through indicators such as business partnerships, communication, knowledge sharing, trust, dialogue, perceived benefits, and continuous evaluation. Their qualitative analysis, supported by NVivo mapping, suggests that a participatory collaboration model—where all village components are actively involved—offers the strongest potential for achieving sustainable tourism development, although challenges remain related to funding, human resource capacity, and information-technology infrastructure (Ni Luh Putu Ening P. et al., 2024).

These findings are relevant for interpreting the collaborative design of the “Aromatic Wellness Trip.” The partnership among Lokananta, Rumah Atsiri, and Atsiri Jawa through the Day Experience and Cultural Wellness Journey packages reflects a multi-stakeholder effort to synergize heritage preservation, wellness innovation, and economic value creation. The combination of travel narratives (shuttle services and storytelling), educational components on music history and essential oils, and participatory wellness activities demonstrates a co-created tourism product that goes beyond a single-destination visit.



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Previous Studies on Wellness-Culture Integration and Tourism Collaboration. Raras Wening et al. (2025), in their study titled “A Study of Opportunities and Challenges in Integrating Wellness Tourism and Local Culture” in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY), employed a qualitative approach drawing on both primary and secondary data, including in-depth interviews and a literature review. The findings indicate that DIY has strong potential to develop wellness tourism integrated with local culture, supported by natural attractions and cultural diversity that enable wellness experiences addressing physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions. However, the study also highlights several challenges, particularly the need to maintain a balance between tourism modernization and cultural preservation, the risk of excessive cultural commodification, and environmental sustainability concerns arising from rapid tourism growth (Raras Wening et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, Ni Luh Putu Ening P. et al. (2024), in their research on a “Collaboration Model for Sustainable Tourism Development in Selumbung Village, Manggis District, Karangasem,” focused on formulating a collaboration model to support village-level sustainable tourism. Using qualitative methods and NVivo-assisted analysis, the study mapped key collaboration variables—such as communication, trust, mutual understanding, shared benefits, and continuous evaluation—and identified constraints related to limited funding, human resource capacity, and ICT infrastructure. The main recommendation is a participatory collaboration model that connects all village components to generate positive impacts on sustainable tourism development (Ni Luh Putu Ening P. et al., 2024).

Both studies provide important conceptual foundations for the present research. Raras Wening et al. (2025) emphasize the strategic integration of wellness and local culture at the regional level, while Ni Luh Putu Ening P. et al. (2024) offer a framework for sustainable collaboration at the village level. Nevertheless, both studies primarily focus on mapping potential, conceptual challenges, or regional modeling, and do not specifically examine a concrete tourism product that integrates wellness tourism and cultural tourism in the form of an operational collaborative travel package.

Research on the “Aromatic Wellness Trip” addresses this gap by analyzing how wellness-culture integration is realized in practice through collaboration among Lokananta, Rumah Atsiri, and Atsiri Jawa, including how the experience design is developed, how tourists experience the integration, and how it influences destination competitiveness, sustainability, and the strengthening of Solo’s branding as a cultural and wellness city.

Conceptual Framework. Conceptually, this study is grounded in three main pillars: wellness tourism, cultural tourism, and collaborative tourism. Wellness tourism is understood as a travel experience that focuses on enhancing physical, mental, and spiritual well-being through intentionally designed activities such as relaxation, meditation, aromatherapy, and healthy lifestyle practices (Voigt & Pforr, 2017; Global Wellness Institute, 2021, 2023). In the context of the Aromatic Wellness Trip, the wellness dimension is reflected through activities that utilize essential oils, natural settings, creative engagements, and reflective spaces offered by Rumah Atsiri and Atsiri Jawa.

Cultural tourism, on the other hand, places cultural heritage—whether in the form of tangible artifacts, historical narratives, music, or traditional practices—at the core of the tourism experience (Butler & Hinch, 2007). Lokananta serves as a strong representation of this dimension, as it preserves the collective memory of Indonesia’s music recording history and sound archives that played a significant role in the development of national broadcasting media. When tourists are guided



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through thematic spaces, engage with curatorial storytelling, and listen to recordings released by Lokananta, they are essentially entering a cultural learning space packaged within a tourism format.

The third pillar is collaborative tourism, which views destinations not as stand-alone entities, but as interconnected nodes within a broader network. The collaboration among Lokananta, Rumah Atsiri, and Atsiri Jawa can be interpreted as an applied form of the participatory collaboration model described by Ni Luh Putu Ening P. et al. (2024), where each actor contributes specific assets, interests, and capacities, and then integrates them into a shared product that generates greater value for both tourists and destinations. Within this framework, the concept of a co-created tourism product becomes central: tourism experiences are no longer solely the result of a single party's design, but rather emerge from dynamic interactions among managers, local communities, and tourists (Asker et al., 2010).

Based on these three pillars, the study's conceptual framework can be described as a mutually reinforcing relationship. Wellness tourism provides a recovery dimension and strengthens tourists' well-being; cultural tourism provides narratives of identity, history, and meaning; while collaborative tourism provides governance and management mechanisms that enable the sustainable integration of the two dimensions. The Aromatic Wellness Trip is positioned at the intersection of these pillars: a curated travel package that connects wellness and culture through experience design, while simultaneously functioning as a collaborative instrument across destinations to support the development of alternative tourism in the city of Solo. This framework then serves as a reference for formulating the research focus, selecting data collection techniques, and developing thematic categorization during the analysis stage.

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach because its primary objective is to provide an in-depth description of the collaborative tourism program, Aromatic Wellness Trip, and to interpret how the collaboration between wellness tourism and cultural tourism is designed and implemented by destination managers. A qualitative approach enables the researcher to capture narratives, experiences, and perspectives of research participants in their natural context, drawing on both spoken accounts and written documents, so that the phenomenon can be understood holistically without being reduced to statistical figures. A descriptive design is selected because the study does not seek to test quantitative hypotheses, but rather to construct a comprehensive understanding of the attractions, travel flow, and collaboration dynamics embedded in the tourism package.

The research was conducted in Solo, Central Java, with the main sites being Lokananta as a cultural tourism destination grounded in the historical legacy of Indonesia's music industry, and Rumah Atsiri as an edu-recreation and wellness destination centered on essential oils within the Solo-Tawangmangu corridor. These two destinations function as key nodes within the Aromatic Wellness Trip, making them highly relevant contexts for exploring how cultural tourism and wellness tourism are integrated and positioned as an alternative form of tourism. Research participants were selected purposively, namely the managers of Lokananta and Rumah Atsiri, who were directly involved in designing and implementing the tourism package. These key informants were chosen because they possess the most in-depth knowledge regarding the background of the collaboration, the product design process, and their perceptions of the benefits and challenges that arise.



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Data were collected using several complementary techniques. First, a preliminary study was conducted through a review of relevant literature and prior research on wellness tourism, cultural tourism, and collaborative tourism in order to establish the theoretical foundation and map research gaps. Second, participant observation was carried out by directly joining the Aromatic Wellness Trip to observe the sequence of activities, the forms of attractions at each destination, interactions between managers and tourists, and the overall atmosphere of the tourism experience. Third, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the managers of Lokananta and Rumah Atsiri to explore the collaboration background, the objectives behind developing the package, operational strategies, perceived benefits for both destinations and tourists, and their views on the future potential of collaboration-based alternative tourism. Fourth, documentation was used to collect supporting materials such as destination profiles, tour package brochures, promotional content, activity photographs, and information from official websites, which served both as a means of verification and as complementary data to strengthen findings from observation and interviews.

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively following an interactive process. Data from field notes, interview transcripts, and documents were first reduced through selection, categorization, and focusing on themes relevant to the research objectives, namely attractions and trip flow, forms and patterns of collaboration, and the impacts of collaboration on destination development. The reduced data were then presented in narrative form and thematic matrices to facilitate the identification of patterns and relationships across categories. From this display, the researcher drew provisional conclusions, which were repeatedly verified by returning to the raw data to ensure that the final findings were grounded in consistent empirical evidence.

Data trustworthiness was ensured through several strategies, including source triangulation by comparing information from Lokananta managers, Rumah Atsiri managers, and official documents; method triangulation through the combination of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation; and member checking by confirming key summaries of findings with the principal informants. In addition, the entire research process was conducted with careful attention to qualitative research ethics. Key informants were provided with an explanation of the research purpose, the expected form of participation, and the use of collected data. Participation consent was obtained through informed consent procedures, either verbally or in written form, and personally sensitive identities were not explicitly disclosed in the article. The researcher also sought to minimize interpretive bias by maintaining detailed field records, storing interview recordings as an audit trail, and rereading transcripts before thematic coding. Thus, the methodological approach in this study is oriented not only toward the depth of data but also toward research integrity and the protection of research participants.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the Aromatic Wellness Trip represents a form of collaborative tourism that explicitly combines wellness tourism and cultural tourism within a single travel sequence. This collaboration is packaged as an open trip connecting Lokananta and Rumah Atsiri Indonesia, with the main focus on integrating educational experiences related to the history of Indonesian music and the historical development of essential oils. Transportation is provided through an exclusive shuttle with a capacity of approximately 10 participants. Key activities include tracing the historical narratives of destinations along the route, listening to music releases from Lokananta during the journey, and learning about the relationship between music and aroma as a



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guiding tourism narrative. The program operates regularly every Friday from July to December 2025, with reservations made through the link in Lokananta's Instagram bio or by contacting the Lokananta Gallery.

Two types of trips are offered: Day Experience and Cultural Wellness Journey. The Day Experience package includes visits only to Lokananta and Rumah Atsiri, whereas the Cultural Wellness Journey adds Atsiri Jawa as a third destination. As a result, the second package offers a stronger emphasis on wellness and village-based cultural dimensions through additional activities at Atsiri Jawa. The itinerary is designed as a structured sequence beginning at Lokananta as the meeting point, followed by shuttle travel accompanied by historical storytelling, site visits and activities at Rumah Atsiri, and—depending on the package—continuing to Atsiri Jawa before returning to Solo.

In terms of service components, this collaborative package is positioned as an experience-based alternative tourism product. With prices ranging from approximately IDR 390,000 to IDR 490,000, each trip includes lunch, dinner, and all activities at the participating destinations. For the Cultural Wellness Journey package, tourists receive added value through creative workshops such as batik-making or producing body oil, with the resulting products serving as take-home souvenirs. Both destinations offer integrated packages that include shuttle transport, activities at Lokananta, and visits to Rumah Atsiri.

The rationale behind developing this collaborative tourism product is closely linked to the shared characteristics of the participating destinations as history- and education-oriented sites. As described in the review document, this common educational foundation creates multiple points of convergence for program development, generating positive impacts not only for tourists but also for the continued visibility of Lokananta and Rumah Atsiri Indonesia. It is reinforced by statements from Rumah Atsiri's management, emphasizing that the collaboration serves as a strategic step to strengthen the existence of history- and education-based tourism destinations in Solo. It reflects a shared commitment to developing and preserving local historical heritage, while also attracting tourists from various age groups—particularly young people—by encouraging them to learn about history and education through a distinctive experiential format.

Observations and documentation drawn from the general profiles of Lokananta and Rumah Atsiri further indicate that both destinations possess strong assets as collaborative nodes. Lokananta is Indonesia's first state-owned recording company, which, since 1956, has played an important role in producing and distributing broadcast materials for Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI). It holds an extensive collection of historical recordings and artifacts and has been revitalized into a music-heritage tourism destination featuring thematic spaces and supporting facilities. Rumah Atsiri, in contrast, is an edu-recreation complex located along the Solo-Tawangmangu corridor. It was developed through the restoration of a former Indonesian-Bulgarian citronella factory and now offers aromatic garden tours, an essential oil museum, an essential oil-themed restaurant, and a range of workshops. This combination of music heritage and essential oil-based edu-wellness experiences forms the empirical basis for positioning the Aromatic Wellness Trip as a collaborative tourism product in Solo.

In summary, the findings confirm that: (1) the Aromatic Wellness Trip has been operationalized as a concrete tourism package integrating Lokananta, Rumah Atsiri, and—in certain packages—Atsiri Jawa; (2) the package design includes itinerary arrangements, participant capacity, educational and experiential activities, as well as an all-inclusive pricing scheme; and (3) the



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collaboration is driven by shared educational orientations and the need to strengthen the presence of history- and wellness-based destinations in Solo.

Conceptually, the empirical evidence on the Aromatic Wellness Trip demonstrates how the integration of wellness tourism and cultural tourism can be operationalized in a tangible tourism product rather than remaining at the level of discourse. The travel narrative that links Indonesia's music history at Lokananta with the historical development and contemporary utilization of essential oils at Rumah Atsiri reflects the holistic character of wellness tourism described by Voigt and Pforr (2017), encompassing physical, mental, emotional, and reflective dimensions. The combination of historical interpretation, music, aroma-based experiences, and creative activities (such as essential-oil workshops or batik-making) enables tourists to engage in relaxation while simultaneously gaining cultural learning. It aligns with global trends noted by the Global Wellness Institute (2021; 2023), which highlight a shift in wellness tourism toward curated, personalized experiences grounded in local narratives.

From a cultural tourism perspective, this trip illustrates how heritage can be repackaged without losing its historical essence. Lokananta is not presented merely as a music archive, but as a living cultural experience space through thematic tours, music listening sessions, and historical contextualization delivered to visitors. Similarly, Rumah Atsiri is not framed solely as essential-oil agro-tourism, but emphasizes educational and wellness dimensions through aromatic garden tours, an essential-oil museum, and hands-on workshops that engage senses such as smell and touch. This integration is consistent with Butler and Hinch's (2007) view that culturally sensitive tourism design can deliver authentic experiences while contributing to the preservation of local identity.

When positioned against previous studies, the findings both reinforce and extend the work of Raras Wening et al. (2025), who emphasize opportunities and challenges in integrating wellness tourism with local culture in Yogyakarta, particularly the need to balance tourism modernization with cultural preservation and to mitigate risks of uncontrolled cultural commodification. In the Aromatic Wellness Trip, commodification is present through a paid package with a curated itinerary; however, educational and preservation elements are arguably strengthened—for example, by foregrounding Lokananta's significance as Indonesia's first state-owned recording label and highlighting Rumah Atsiri's restoration as a historic essential-oil industrial site. In this sense, the trip can be interpreted as an example of the careful and collaborative integration recommended by Raras Wening et al. (2025), where economic benefits are pursued without undermining cultural value and sustainability.

In terms of governance and collaboration, the field findings on the motives and forms of cooperation between Lokananta and Rumah Atsiri align with the conceptual participatory collaboration model proposed by Ni Luh Putu Ening P. et al. (2024). In their model, sustainable tourism collaboration is assessed through indicators such as business partnerships, communication, shared knowledge, trust, mutual understanding, and continuous evaluation. The collaboration within the Aromatic Wellness Trip exhibits several characteristics consistent with this framework: a shared vision to strengthen history- and education-oriented destinations in Solo; a clear division of roles (Lokananta as the music-heritage cultural node, Rumah Atsiri as the essential-oil and wellness node); and the joint development of an integrated tourism product through a package itinerary and pricing scheme designed collaboratively.

Furthermore, this collaboration can be positioned as a strategy to enhance destination competitiveness through a co-created tourism product approach. Rather than offering a simple visit to two or three sites, the trip constructs a narrative flow that connects music, aroma, history, and



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wellness into a coherent experience. It supports Asker et al.'s (2010) argument that community-based and multi-stakeholder collaborative tourism products tend to generate higher value for tourists while distributing benefits across a broader range of local actors. The documentation suggesting that this collaborative tourism initiative "creates many opportunities to be further developed as a reference for new alternative tourism" also indicates the potential for replicating similar models in other destinations that combine heritage and wellness assets (Heykal et al., 2024).

Critically, the study also underscores that long-term sustainability strategies must follow early success. Ni Luh Putu Ening P. et al. (2024) note that tourism collaboration models often face constraints such as limited continuity of planning, capital limitations, lack of investors, uneven human resource capacity, and restricted access to information technology infrastructure. Similar challenges may emerge in the future development of the Aromatic Wellness Trip, especially if the program seeks to scale up, reach broader market segments, or be replicated elsewhere. Strengthening human resource capacity, developing long-term business planning, and integrating the initiative more systematically into Solo's destination marketing strategy, therefore, become important considerations for both future research and practical development agendas.

Overall, this discussion positions the Aromatic Wellness Trip as: (1) an empirical example of an operational wellness-culture integration that can be examined directly through a concrete tourism product; (2) a practical application of sustainable tourism collaboration principles discussed in the literature; and (3) a potentially replicable alternative tourism model for other Indonesian destinations, provided that sustainability, cultural preservation, and local empowerment are consistently maintained.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications. From a theoretical perspective, the findings provide several important implications for advancing scholarship on wellness tourism and cultural tourism in developing-country contexts. First, the Aromatic Wellness Trip demonstrates that wellness-culture integration does not need to be understood dichotomously as a separation between "health tourism" and "cultural tourism," but rather as a continuum of experiences that mutually reinforce one another. It expands the prevailing understanding of wellness tourism – often strongly associated with spas, retreats, or modern health facilities – by incorporating historical narratives and cultural heritage as integral components of tourists' recovery and reflective experiences. Second, the study underscores the importance of viewing tourism products as outcomes of inter-destination collaboration rather than as outputs produced by a single business unit. The notion of a co-created tourism product, evident in the Aromatic Wellness Trip, opens opportunities for developing new analytical models that foreground destination networks, narrative travel flows, and tourists as active actors in the construction of tourism meaning.

From a managerial standpoint, this research offers several practical lessons for destination managers and local governments. For Lokananta and Rumah Atsiri, the findings suggest that cross-destination collaboration can serve as an effective strategy to expand market segments, extend tourists' length of stay, and increase the perceived value of tourism packages without requiring large-scale investment in new physical infrastructure. Strengthening a shared narrative – such as the overarching theme of the "Aromatic Wellness Trip" connecting music, aroma, and memory – can be used as a foundation for integrated communication campaigns across digital and offline channels. For local governments, collaboration models of this kind can be adopted as an instrument for more targeted alternative tourism development, for instance by facilitating stakeholder forums, providing regulatory and promotional support, and encouraging connectivity among tourism nodes with similar synergy potential.



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Another equally important implication concerns the need to strengthen human resource capacity in managing thematic and narrative-based tourism experiences. Tour guides, frontline staff, and curatorial teams need to be equipped with storytelling skills, knowledge of local history and culture, and sensitivity to tourists' wellness needs. Investment in training and human resource development will be critical for ensuring consistent experience quality. In addition, destination managers should begin to leverage information technology to support program sustainability, for example, through integrated reservation systems, tourist database management, and digital documentation that reinforces the brand footprint of the Aromatic Wellness Trip. By integrating these theoretical and managerial implications, the collaborative tourism model examined in this study has strong potential to serve as a concrete reference for other regions seeking to develop sustainable wellness- and culture-based tourism.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Aromatic Wellness Trip represents a prototype of collaborative tourism that successfully operationalizes the integration of wellness tourism and cultural tourism into a concrete tourism product in the city of Solo. The collaboration among Lokananta, Rumah Atsiri, and – within certain packages – Atsiri Jawa not only produces a travel sequence that connects music history, essential-oil heritage, and wellness activities, but also offers a holistic tourism experience encompassing education, recreation, reflection, and cultural preservation. The two main packages – Day Experience and Cultural Wellness Journey – demonstrate how itinerary design, small-group capacity, and experience-based activities can be directed to build an alternative form of tourism that differs from conventional mass tourism.

From a destination development perspective, the Aromatic Wellness Trip generates several positive impacts. First, the collaboration strengthens the image and visibility of Lokananta and Rumah Atsiri as history- and education-oriented destinations that remain relevant for younger generations, rather than functioning merely as static heritage sites. Second, the participatory nature of the tourism experience – through thematic tours, workshops, and engagement with village environments – encourages tourists to connect more deeply with history, culture, and local wisdom, thereby contributing to preservation efforts. Third, packaging the trip within an all-inclusive pricing scheme and a curated travel narrative suggests that collaborative tourism can serve as an instrument for strengthening Solo's branding as both a cultural and wellness destination, while also creating opportunities for added economic value among stakeholders.

Theoretically, this research enriches the discourse on wellness-culture integration and collaborative tourism in Indonesia. It addresses a gap in prior studies that have largely remained at a conceptual level or focused on regional mapping by offering an empirical example of how collaboration and integration models are implemented at the level of an actual tourism product. The findings related to collaboration motives, partnership forms, and resulting impacts contribute to the development of a conceptual framework for alternative tourism grounded in cross-destination and cross-tourism-type collaboration.

Nevertheless, the findings also indicate the need for greater attention to long-term sustainability aspects, such as program continuity, strengthening human resource capacity, funding mechanisms, and more systematic integration with destination marketing strategies and technological infrastructure. Future research could therefore explore tourists' experiences in greater depth, measure socio-economic and environmental impacts quantitatively, and examine the potential for replicating the Aromatic Wellness Trip model in other destinations with different



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heritage and wellness characteristics. In this way, the Aromatic Wellness Trip is not only significant as a local case study but also as a practical reference for developing sustainable collaborative tourism in Indonesia.

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