



RURAL TOURISM IN VIETNAM: CURRENT DEVELOPMENT, SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS, AND DIRECTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

Rural tourism is increasingly recognized as an important pathway for diversifying rural economies and supporting the development of new rural areas in Vietnam. With rich resources in landscapes, agriculture, traditional crafts, local culture, and community life, rural areas have considerable potential to develop distinctive tourism products and generate additional value from local resources. This paper uses secondary data analysis, drawing primarily on official statistics and reports from the General Statistics Office of Vietnam, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, and relevant government policy documents, to examine the current development of rural tourism in Vietnam. The findings indicate that rural tourism has expanded considerably in recent years, reflected in the growing number of agricultural and rural tourism models, the expansion of the One Commune One Product (OCOP) programme, and stronger linkages between tourism, traditional craft villages, local products, and new rural development. Nevertheless, the sector continues to face challenges related to product quality, service capacity, human resources, value-chain linkages, digital transformation, resource management, and destination governance. Based on these findings, the paper proposes several directions for developing rural tourism around a multi-value approach, stronger community involvement, closer integration with local products, cultural conservation, and green transformation. These directions are expected to enhance the socio-economic value of rural tourism and contribute to more sustainable rural development in Vietnam.

Keywords: rural tourism; agricultural tourism; OCOP; traditional craft villages; rural development; sustainable development.

1. Introduction

As Vietnam continues to restructure its rural economy and implement the new rural development programme, rural areas are facing an increasing need to move beyond an economic model that relies primarily on agricultural production. There is growing interest in diversifying rural economic activities by creating value from landscapes, local culture, indigenous knowledge, agricultural products, and traditional crafts. In this context, rural tourism has received increasing attention as a means of connecting agriculture, services, culture, and tourism markets.

The scale of the rural population highlights the importance of rural areas to Vietnam's socio-economic development. According to the 2024 Mid-Term Population and Housing Census, as of 1 April 2024, 62.5 million people lived in rural areas, accounting for 61.8% of the country's total population. On an annual average basis, the rural population was approximately 62.3 million in 2024, representing 61.5% of the total population. This large population base, combined with diverse natural conditions, agricultural systems, and community-based cultural resources, provides a broad foundation for the development of tourism products rooted in rural areas.

The national tourism market has also recovered strongly following the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2024, Vietnam welcomed approximately 17.5 million international visitors and served 110 million domestic tourists, while total tourism receipts reached approximately VND 840 trillion. These figures refer to the tourism sector as a whole and

should not be interpreted as the revenue generated specifically by rural tourism. Nevertheless, the size of the national tourism market provides a favourable context for rural destinations to expand their access to visitors, particularly as demand for nature-based experiences, local culture, agricultural activities, and community-based experiences continues to diversify.

The development of rural tourism has also been explicitly incorporated into Vietnam's new rural development policy. Decision No. 922/QĐ-TTg, issued by the Prime Minister on 2 August 2022, approved the Rural Tourism Development Programme within the New Rural Development Programme for the 2021–2025 period. The programme established a policy framework for linking tourism with agriculture, culture, ecology, and local communities.

Against this background, examining the development of rural tourism is relevant not only to the tourism sector but also to livelihood diversification, rural industries, cultural conservation, and the enhancement of local resources. This paper therefore examines the current development of rural tourism in Vietnam, its socio-economic contributions, and the major challenges and directions for future development, based on available secondary data from official sources.

2. Research Approach and Secondary Data Sources

This paper adopts a secondary-data research approach based on documentary analysis and the synthesis of official statistics, government reports, and policy documents. The principal sources include publications from the General Statistics Office of Vietnam, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, and relevant government agencies responsible for cooperative economic development and rural development. The analysis also draws on official policy documents, particularly Decision No. 922/QĐ-TTg, which approved the Rural Tourism Development Programme within the New Rural Development Programme for the 2021–2025 period (Prime Minister of Vietnam, 2022).

The analysis covers several groups of indicators, including rural population, income and employment; the national tourism market; the number of OCOP products; agricultural and rural tourism models; traditional crafts and craft villages; connections between craft villages and tourism; and policy orientations for rural tourism development. These indicators are used to examine the resource base, current development, socio-economic relevance, and policy context of rural tourism in Vietnam. The selection of indicators is determined by the availability of official secondary data, as a comprehensive national statistical system specifically measuring rural tourism performance is not available in the sources examined.

In interpreting the evidence, the paper distinguishes between observed statistical figures, aggregated figures reported by government agencies, and targets established in policy documents. For example, official figures reported for September 2025 indicate that Vietnam had nearly 17,400 OCOP products rated three stars or higher and more than 600 agricultural and rural tourism models in operation (Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, 2025). These figures describe the reported scale of programme implementation rather than the economic performance of individual tourism destinations. Similarly, national statistics on population, employment income, and rural development are used to establish the broader socio-economic context (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2025a, 2025b).

National tourism statistics are used to describe the broader market context rather than being treated as direct indicators of rural tourism performance. National figures on tourist arrivals and tourism revenue cannot, by themselves, establish the number of visitors to rural destinations or the revenue generated specifically by rural tourism. The analysis therefore avoids attributing national tourism trends or changes in rural livelihoods directly to rural tourism without separate supporting evidence. This approach provides a consistent basis for interpreting the available data while acknowledging the limitations of secondary statistical sources.

3. Potential for Rural Tourism Development in Vietnam

One of the major strengths of rural tourism in Vietnam is the scale and diversity of its rural spaces. The country's rural areas encompass lowland agricultural regions, midland and mountainous areas, coastal communities, and locations characterized by different agricultural production systems and ecological conditions. In 2024, Vietnam's rural population was estimated at 62.3 million, accounting for approximately 61.5% of the national population (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2025a). This demographic scale provides an important context for examining the role of rural resources in tourism development. Nevertheless, rural Vietnam should not be regarded as a homogeneous destination. Differences in landscapes, production practices, agricultural products, and cultural traditions create

opportunities for locally differentiated tourism products rather than standardized accommodation and sightseeing services.

Another advantage lies in the potential connection between agricultural production and tourism experiences. Rural visitors can engage with landscapes and everyday production activities through planting, harvesting, food processing, cooking, and learning about local livelihoods and cultural practices. Such activities can provide opportunities to extend the value of agricultural production beyond the sale of raw materials or processed goods. However, the transformation of everyday rural activities into tourism experiences requires appropriate organization, visitor services, safety management, and community participation. The existence of agricultural resources alone does not guarantee that a destination can develop commercially viable tourism products.

The One Commune One Product (OCOP) programme provides another important foundation for connecting local production with tourism markets. By September 2025, Vietnam had nearly 17,400 OCOP products rated three stars or higher, developed by more than 9,300 participating entities. During the same period, more than 600 agricultural and rural tourism models were reported to be operating nationwide, an increase of 235 models compared with 2022 (Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, 2025). These figures demonstrate the expanding scale of the two programmes and suggest opportunities to connect locally produced goods with tourism experiences. OCOP products can potentially serve as retail goods, tourism gifts, ingredients in local culinary experiences, and representations of the production traditions of particular destinations. Nevertheless, the number of OCOP products does not directly measure the extent to which they have been incorporated into tourism itineraries or the additional revenue generated through tourism-related sales.

Traditional crafts and craft villages also represent an important resource for rural tourism. Craft production can connect visitors with local materials, traditional techniques, artisan knowledge, and the cultural meanings associated with particular occupations. Unlike attractions based exclusively on scenery, craft villages can offer opportunities to observe production, interact with artisans, participate in practical activities, and purchase locally made products. These characteristics create potential links between tourism, local manufacturing, cultural preservation, and household livelihoods. However, the scale of this potential should not be inferred from the total number of recognized craft villages alone. A reliable assessment requires verified information about the number of villages actually receiving visitors, the types of tourism services available, and the extent to which tourism contributes to local economic activity.

Taken together, agricultural production, OCOP products, traditional crafts, rural landscapes, and community knowledge constitute a diverse resource base for rural tourism in Vietnam. Their significance lies not simply in their existence but in the possibility of connecting them through coherent tourism experiences and local value chains. When agricultural products, traditional occupations, and cultural practices are appropriately integrated into destination development, the value generated by local resources may extend beyond production to include services, retail, visitor experiences, and destination promotion.

4. Current Development of Rural Tourism

4.1. A Shift from Individual Attractions towards Integrated Tourism Products

One of the important directions in Vietnam's rural tourism development is the integration of multiple local resources into a single tourism product. Rather than relying exclusively on one attraction, rural destinations can combine landscapes, agricultural production, local food, cultural activities, OCOP products, and experiential services. This approach reflects the distinctive character of rural tourism, in which destination attractiveness often depends on the interaction between the rural environment, local production systems, and the activities through which visitors experience them.

The reported increase to more than 600 agricultural and rural tourism models by September 2025 provides an indication of the expansion of this form of tourism (Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, 2025). However, an increase in the number of models does not necessarily demonstrate improvements in product quality, visitor satisfaction, economic performance, or environmental sustainability. The available aggregate figure does not provide information about the distribution of visitors, revenue, length of stay, or profitability across individual destinations.

The next stage of development therefore needs to move beyond the establishment of additional models towards improving the quality and integration of existing products. Destinations need to develop coherent visitor experiences that connect attractions with food services, accommodation, local transportation, cultural activities, and opportunities

to purchase local products. Such integration may help increase the value generated during a visitor's stay, although its actual effects need to be assessed through destination-level evidence rather than inferred from the number of operating models.

4.2. Increasing Integration between Rural Tourism and OCOP Products

The OCOP programme has created an important institutional platform for promoting locally produced goods and strengthening rural economic activities. The nearly 17,400 OCOP products rated three stars or higher reported in September 2025 demonstrate the expanding scale of the programme (Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, 2025). In the context of tourism, these products can serve several functions: they can be sold directly to visitors, incorporated into tourism gifts, used in culinary and production experiences, or presented as part of the cultural and economic identity of a destination.

The potential contribution of OCOP to tourism extends beyond direct product sales. When products are presented within their original production environments, visitors can learn about their origins, production processes, local ingredients, and cultural significance. For example, a tourism experience involving a local agricultural product may combine a visit to a production site, an explanation of processing techniques, product tasting, and opportunities to purchase goods directly from producers. This approach can create a more meaningful connection between the product and the destination than selling the same item without contextual information.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Environment has also reported that 60.7% of OCOP entities with products rated three stars or higher experienced average annual revenue growth of 17.6%, while 42.3% expanded their workforce. The same report indicated that 40% of participating entities were women-led and 19.6% were ethnic minority producers in mountainous and disadvantaged areas (Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, 2025). These figures suggest that the OCOP programme has economic and social dimensions beyond product recognition. However, they should not be interpreted as evidence that tourism caused the reported revenue or employment outcomes, because the figures do not isolate tourism-related sales from other commercial activities.

To strengthen the connection between OCOP and rural tourism, destinations need to integrate product promotion with visitor experiences and distribution channels. Tourism itineraries can include production facilities, local markets, cooperative outlets, culinary activities, and opportunities to interact with producers. At the same time, destination managers and local authorities need to consider product quality, food safety, packaging, pricing, and reliable supply. The objective should be to create mutually supportive relationships between tourism and local production rather than assuming that a large number of recognized products will automatically generate tourism demand.

4.3. Traditional Craft Villages as an Important Component of Rural Destinations

Traditional craft villages can provide a distinctive foundation for rural tourism by connecting production activities with local knowledge, cultural identity, and visitor experiences. Their appeal lies not only in finished products but also in the techniques, materials, skills, and social relationships associated with traditional occupations. These characteristics can support tourism products ranging from guided visits and artisan demonstrations to hands-on production activities, product purchases, and participation in community cultural events.

The integration of craft production into tourism can potentially extend the economic value of traditional occupations. Visitors may purchase products, pay for experiential activities, use local services, or remain longer in destinations that offer a combination of craft experiences and other attractions. Such opportunities may benefit artisans, household businesses, cooperatives, and supporting service providers. Nevertheless, these benefits depend on the design and management of tourism activities and should not be assumed to occur uniformly across craft villages.

Craft-village tourism also creates challenges related to the protection of production spaces, environmental management, visitor safety, and cultural authenticity. Production activities may generate waste, noise, or other environmental pressures, while increased visitor numbers may disrupt the normal operation of workshops and households. Tourism can also encourage the presentation of traditional practices primarily for commercial purposes, potentially weakening their connection with everyday community life.

For these reasons, craft-village tourism should be developed in ways that respect local production processes and the interests of artisans. Tourism activities need to complement rather than displace traditional occupations. Community participation, appropriate visitor management, environmental safeguards, and fair distribution of economic benefits are therefore important conditions for connecting craft villages with rural tourism sustainably.

5. Socio-Economic Contributions of Rural Tourism

One of the principal potential contributions of rural tourism lies in its capacity to extend the value of resources already available within local communities. In conventional agricultural production, economic returns are generated primarily through the production and sale of agricultural goods. When these resources are connected with tourism, they may also support sightseeing, experiential activities, accommodation, food services, transportation, retail, and other supporting services. Rural tourism can therefore create additional opportunities for local producers to participate in service activities and diversify their sources of income.

This potential is relevant in the context of differences in labour income between rural and urban areas. According to the General Statistics Office of Vietnam (2025b), average monthly labour income in 2024 was VND 6.7 million in rural areas, compared with VND 9.3 million in urban areas. These figures indicate a continuing difference in average labour income between the two areas. They provide a broader socio-economic context for considering livelihood diversification, although they do not establish the causes of the income gap or demonstrate that tourism would necessarily reduce it.

The contribution of rural tourism to household income must therefore be interpreted carefully. National statistics on labour income do not identify the proportion of income generated specifically by rural tourism. They also do not establish whether households participating in tourism earn more than otherwise comparable households that do not participate. Rural tourism is more appropriately understood here as a potential additional channel for expanding markets and diversifying economic activities among households, cooperatives, local producers, and rural businesses. Establishing its actual contribution requires evidence on tourism participation, business revenue, employment, household income, and the distribution of benefits.

From a social perspective, rural tourism can create opportunities for residents to participate in service activities and local economic networks. Household businesses, cooperatives, craft producers, farmers, and OCOP entities may contribute to the tourism value chain through accommodation, food provision, guiding, cultural activities, and product sales. The extent to which these opportunities generate inclusive benefits depends on access to markets, participation in decision-making, ownership of tourism businesses, and the distribution of costs and returns among local actors.

From a cultural perspective, tourism can provide additional economic incentives for maintaining traditional occupations, food practices, architecture, festivals, and local knowledge. Visitors' interest in local culture may create demand for traditional products and activities that would otherwise have limited commercial markets. However, cultural preservation is not an automatic consequence of tourism growth. If cultural practices are used mainly as promotional attractions without appropriate community involvement, tourism may encourage staged representations or excessive commercialization. Sustainable outcomes therefore depend on the ability of local communities to retain control over cultural resources and determine how they are presented and used.

Overall, rural tourism should be considered a potential component of livelihood diversification and local economic development rather than a universal solution to rural income disparities. Its socio-economic contribution depends on the quality of tourism products, the strength of local value chains, market access, community participation, and the capacity of destinations to manage economic, social, and environmental impacts.

6. Rural Tourism and New Rural Development

Rural tourism has been incorporated into Vietnam's broader rural development policy framework rather than being treated solely as an independent tourism activity. Decision No. 922/QĐ-TTg, issued on 2 August 2022, approved the Rural Tourism Development Programme within the New Rural Development Programme for 2021–2025 (Prime Minister of Vietnam, 2022). This policy framework establishes a formal connection between tourism development and the wider objectives of rural development.

Progress in new rural development provides an important context for understanding the conditions under which rural tourism can develop. Official reporting for 2024 indicated that 6,318 of Vietnam's 8,155 communes had achieved new rural development standards by the end of November, equivalent to approximately 77.5%. Among these, 2,204 communes had achieved advanced standards and 482 had achieved model standards (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2025a). These figures describe progress under the rural development programme. Improvements in infrastructure, transport connectivity, public facilities, and local living conditions may create more favourable

conditions for tourism, although the reported figures do not directly measure the effect of rural development programmes on tourism performance.

The relationship between rural development and tourism can be understood as potentially reciprocal. Improvements in roads, public spaces, environmental sanitation, and local services may make rural destinations more accessible and attractive to visitors. In turn, well-managed tourism can create additional markets for agricultural products, traditional crafts, local food, and household services. Tourism may also provide economic incentives for maintaining landscapes and cultural resources that contribute to destination attractiveness. However, the realization of these benefits depends on how tourism activities are organized and how their costs and returns are distributed.

Rural tourism should not become the sole objective of rural development. The primary purpose of improving rural infrastructure and living conditions should remain the well-being of residents. Infrastructure developed to support visitors should also serve local needs, while the use of land, water, energy, and other resources should be accompanied by appropriate environmental safeguards. Tourism development should also take account of the capacity of local communities and ecosystems to accommodate visitors without undermining residents' quality of life.

Consequently, rural tourism is most appropriately integrated into new rural development as one possible means of strengthening local economies and diversifying livelihoods. Its contribution should be assessed alongside broader indicators of rural well-being, environmental quality, cultural continuity, and the participation of local communities in development decisions.

7. Challenges to Rural Tourism Development

Despite the expansion of agricultural and rural tourism models, the number of operating models alone provides limited information about the overall quality and market performance of rural tourism in Vietnam. Differences in local resources, infrastructure, management capacity, and access to tourism markets mean that destinations may experience different development trajectories. Some destinations may rely heavily on natural scenery or a single attraction, while others may face difficulties connecting accommodation, food services, experiential activities, transportation, and local product sales into a coherent visitor experience. These issues should be assessed through destination-level evidence rather than assumed to characterize all rural tourism models.

Human resource development is another important consideration. Rural tourism often involves households, community groups, cooperatives, and small-scale producers whose knowledge of local environments and cultural practices can be a significant asset. At the same time, the provision of tourism services may require additional capabilities in product development, service management, marketing, foreign languages, digital commerce, food safety, and quality assurance. Training programmes should therefore respond to the practical needs of tourism providers and the characteristics of individual destinations. The scale and severity of these skill gaps, however, require further empirical assessment.

Another challenge concerns integration across local value chains. Agricultural products, OCOP goods, and traditional crafts may possess distinctive value but are not necessarily connected to tourism itineraries or distribution networks. Visitors may purchase local products without learning about their production, or visit a craft village without access to related activities and supporting services. Such gaps can limit opportunities for local producers to benefit from tourism spending. Stronger coordination among producers, tourism businesses, cooperatives, destination managers, and local authorities may help develop more integrated experiences and improve connections between tourism demand and local production.

Digital transformation also presents an important development consideration. Digital information, online booking, electronic payments, social media, and customer feedback systems can support destination promotion and market access. However, the adoption of these tools requires appropriate infrastructure, digital skills, reliable information, and coordination among local service providers. Digital transformation should therefore be approached as part of destination management rather than simply as the publication of promotional information online. Its effectiveness should be assessed in terms of improved market access, visitor services, operational efficiency, and the ability of local businesses to engage directly with customers.

Environmental and cultural management are equally important. Uncontrolled tourism growth can create pressure on waste management, water resources, transport systems, landscapes, and local infrastructure. Excessive commercialization may also weaken the cultural practices and community relationships that contribute to destination

attractiveness. These are potential risks that need to be assessed according to the specific characteristics of each destination rather than assumed to occur at the same intensity throughout rural Vietnam.

Addressing these challenges requires a balanced approach that combines product development, human resource development, market integration, digital capabilities, environmental protection, and community participation. The objective should not simply be to increase the number of rural tourism models but to strengthen their ability to generate locally retained value while maintaining the quality of rural environments and cultural resources.

8. Directions for Rural Tourism Development in Vietnam

In the coming period, rural tourism development in Vietnam needs to move from a primary focus on establishing more destinations towards generating greater value from existing resources and improving the quality of visitor experiences. The number of operating models remains a useful indicator of programme implementation, but it should be complemented by measures of economic performance, employment, local participation, environmental management, and visitor satisfaction. This would provide a more comprehensive basis for assessing whether rural tourism contributes to sustainable rural development.

First, tourism products should be developed around the distinctive characteristics of individual localities. A uniform model is unlikely to reflect the diversity of rural Vietnam. Tea-growing areas can develop experiences involving tea cultivation, processing, tasting, and local tea culture. Fruit-growing areas can organize seasonal agricultural activities, while craft villages can focus on traditional production, artisan knowledge, and hands-on experiences. Areas with valuable ecological resources can consider nature-based activities and community-based accommodation where these are compatible with environmental protection and local needs. Product differentiation should therefore be based on locally available resources and the capacity of communities to manage tourism activities.

Second, stronger connections should be established between tourism, OCOP products, agriculture, and traditional craft villages. A tourism experience need not end when visitors leave an attraction. It can create opportunities for continued consumption of local products through direct sales, online channels, repeat purchases, and tourism gifts. Integrated itineraries connecting production areas, processing facilities, attractions, restaurants, homestays, and OCOP outlets may help distribute visitor spending among a wider range of local businesses. However, such integration requires coordination, product quality assurance, reliable supply, and appropriate arrangements for sharing the benefits generated.

Third, local communities should be placed at the centre of tourism development. Residents should not participate solely as employees or providers of low-value services. They should have meaningful opportunities to contribute to decisions concerning product development, the use of local resources, the organization of services, cultural representation, and the distribution of benefits. Community participation is particularly important in tourism models that depend on collective resources, traditional knowledge, and local cultural practices. Local authorities and tourism organizations should therefore create appropriate mechanisms for consultation, participation, and accountability.

Fourth, human resource development should become more practical and destination-specific. Training can address visitor services, food safety, homestay management, destination storytelling, digital marketing, online sales, foreign languages, and environmental management. The content and delivery of training should reflect the actual activities and capabilities of different groups of rural tourism providers. In addition, training should be accompanied by practical support, mentoring, and opportunities to apply new skills in business operations rather than relying exclusively on standardized theoretical courses.

Fifth, digital transformation should be integrated into destination development. Rural destinations need appropriate digital information systems, destination maps, online booking arrangements, electronic payments, digital marketing, and visitor feedback mechanisms. These tools can help improve market access and service coordination, but their benefits depend on the capacity of local businesses to maintain accurate information and respond to customer needs. Digital development should therefore be linked to operational improvements and stronger connections between local tourism providers and markets.

Finally, rural tourism should be integrated with local spatial planning and resource management. Tourism development needs to consider land use, transportation, water supply, waste management, landscape protection, and the conservation of cultural spaces. Decisions about new tourism facilities should reflect the characteristics of the local environment and the needs of residents. Areas with sensitive ecological systems or valuable cultural resources may

require specific controls on visitor numbers, construction, and commercial activities. Integrating tourism into local planning can help reduce conflicts between tourism investment, agricultural production, environmental protection, and community life.

These directions require coordination among government agencies, local authorities, tourism businesses, cooperatives, agricultural producers, and community organizations. Their effectiveness should be assessed not only by the number of tourism models established but also by whether they strengthen local economic linkages, improve residents' opportunities, conserve rural resources, and provide sustainable visitor experiences.

9. Conclusion

Rural tourism in Vietnam is supported by a substantial rural population, a diverse base of agricultural and cultural resources, and policy initiatives linking tourism with rural economic development. In 2024, the rural population was estimated at 62.3 million, accounting for approximately 61.5% of the national population (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2025a). By September 2025, nearly 17,400 OCOP products rated three stars or higher and more than 600 agricultural and rural tourism models had been reported nationwide (Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, 2025). These figures demonstrate the scale of the rural resource base and the expansion of programmes relevant to rural tourism development. However, they do not independently establish the economic effectiveness, inclusiveness, or sustainability of individual tourism models.

The central challenge for the next stage of development is therefore not simply how many tourism models can be established, but how effectively these models connect with local production, create opportunities for residents, support the conservation of cultural and natural resources, and maintain their attractiveness over time. The expansion of OCOP products and agricultural and rural tourism models creates opportunities for stronger connections between tourism and rural economic activities, but these opportunities need to be translated into coherent products, viable businesses, and locally retained economic benefits.

Rural tourism should consequently be understood as one potential mechanism for increasing the value of rural resources by connecting agriculture, culture, traditional crafts, local products, services, and markets. Its contribution to sustainable rural development depends on the quality of destination management, the participation of local communities, the integration of local value chains, and the protection of environmental and cultural resources. Further research using destination-level and household-level data is needed to establish the extent to which rural tourism contributes to employment, income diversification, community well-being, and resource conservation across different regions of Vietnam.

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