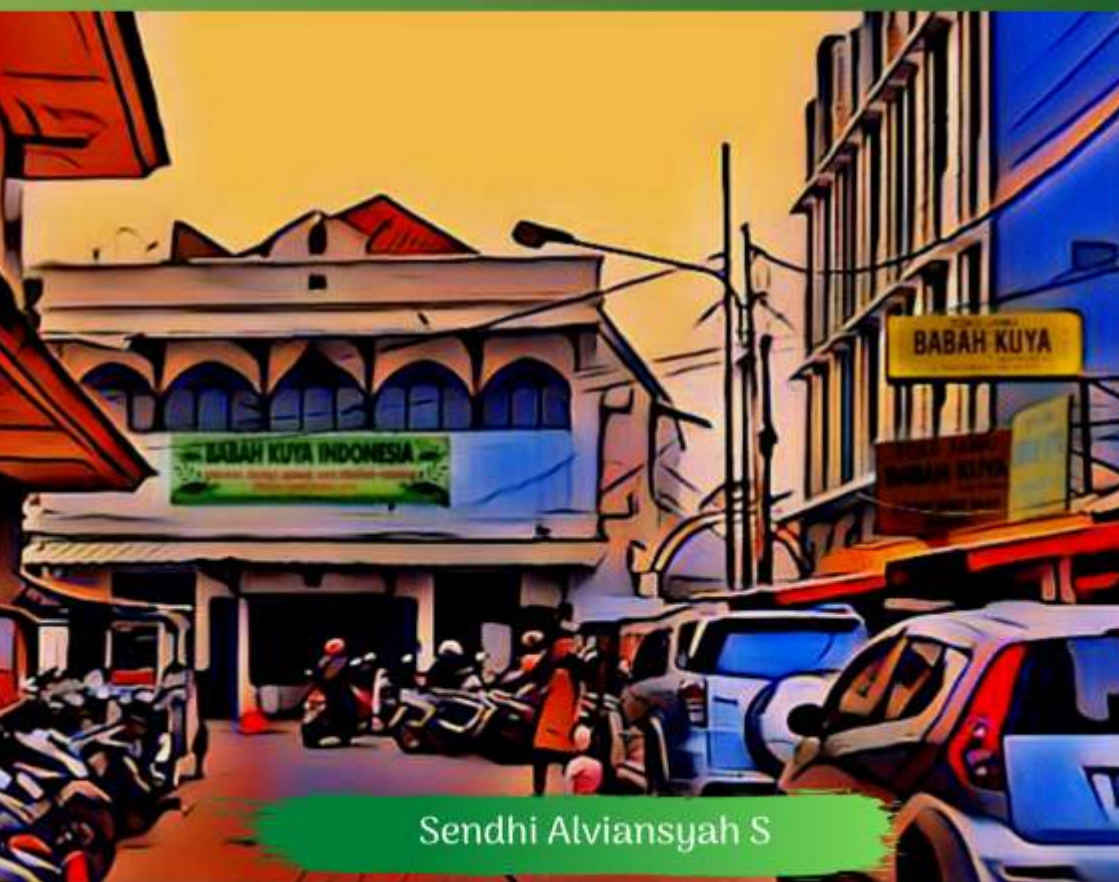




Babah Kuya

A Tree through the Ages



Sendhi Alviansyah S

Babah Kuya
A Tree through the Ages

The Department of English
Politeknik Negeri Bandung



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Preface

This informational book conveys the information about the oldest herbs and spices shops in Bandung; Babah Kuya. This book aims to provide the information about Babah Kuya shops for the readers. This book was written to comply with the requirement of Diploma III English Study Program in Politeknik Negeri Bandung.

The process of collecting data involved in three methods; interviews, observation, and library study. The interviews were done with the owners of Babah Kuya shops and the customers. The process of interviews and the observation was conducted at Babah Kuya shops. Then, the library study relied on the information from Museum Kebudayaan Tionghoa, videos on YouTube, and Newspapers.

The process of writing this book also involved in the supervision of the supervisors who gave precious advice, sincere guidance, and wise motivation, so this book can be well-written. Nobody has a perfect picture, and so does this book. Optimistically, this book brings insightful information for the readers.



Introduction

This book entitled “Babah Kuya: A Tree through the Ages” is an informational book about Babah Kuya. The title is an analogy to portray Babah Kuya shops as the oldest shops in Bandung. Besides, it symbolizes a prayer for Babah Kuya to maintain the legacies through the ages. Written in English, the objective of this book is to inform traditional herbs and spices to the readers especially those who understand English.

This book possesses five chapters. Chapter one explains the stories of Babah Kuya. Chapter two discusses the two shops of Babah Kuya. Then, chapter three focuses on the best-selling products of Babah Kuya shops. Chapter four provides the viewpoints from the customers. Last but not least, chapter five called “The Fame of Babah Kuya” is about the reasons for their fame.



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“May Babah Kuya grow as a tree through the ages”



Chapter I

Babah Kuya

Chapter One

Indonesian Herbs, Spices, and *Jamu*



Figure 1 the Maps of Indonesian Archipelago
Source: Good News from Indonesia

As a tropical archipelago country, Indonesia is widely well-known for its diverse richness of herbs and spices. Starting from the beautiful Sabang to the exotic Merauke, every region in Indonesia has its native herbs and spices. They may just grow unwantedly in fertile grounds or intentionally be cultivated in a certain area. The use of herbs and spices in Indonesia varies,

depending on the different needs and purposes. For instance, most Indonesian ancestors used herbs and spices for enhancing the pleasant taste of foods.

In the same way, various herbs and spices are also cultivated as an alternative remedy to look after the health, revitalize internal organs, and build up stamina. According to the study conducted by Medical anthropology researchers from Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah (2014), there are approximately 300 types of Indonesian herbs and spices that effectively function to heal 118 different types of physical diseases. Due to healing characteristics inside Indonesian herbs and spices, they have been verified and considered as alternative remedies by medical studies.

For that reason, the Indonesians like to consume herbs or spices in the form of a special traditional drink called *Jamu*. It is mixed herbs or spices traditionally formulated as an alternative medication and produced in various forms of garden-fresh *Jamu*, dried or powdered herbs, and instant beverages. The word itself comes from the Javanese language which means healing.

In Bandung, there are shops where you can find *Jamu* and the ingredients easily. They are the most trusted, oldest, and well-reputed herbs and spices shops named Babah Kuya. Babah Kuya shops have been providing any kind of herbs, spices, and *Jamu* collected from all over regions in Indonesia and some other countries such as India and China for approximately 200 years.



Figure 3 Toko Jamu Babah Kuya Indonesia
Source: Personal Documentation



Figure 2 Toko Jamu Babah Kuya
Source: Personal Documentation

Established by a Chinese-born man named Tan Sioe How, the shops are located on Jalan Pasar Baru Kota Bandung among the crowd of trading and business activities in the Pasar Baru area. In Babah Kuya shops, you can find more than 1000 types of herbs, spices, and *Jamu*. Without any further ado, let's get to know about Babah Kuya.

What a Name without a Meaning



Figure 4 Tan Sioe How
Source: Personal Documentation

A name is a reflection of hopes, desires, and prayers. Containing a group of words, a name carries a special meaning and philosophy as well as represents the whole stories in the unity of words. For that reason, Babah Kuya is not just a name without a reason, but it is also the representative of multicultural diversity between Chinese and Sundanese culture.

According to the Chinese literature, Babah means a father or man while another word, Kuya, comes from the Sundanese language which means turtles. Back in the 1800s, the first generation of Babah Kuya, Tan Sioe How, was known as an amiable and gregarious man.

His small eyes, white-colored skin, and small-pointed nose reflected and defined *Babah* or a wise father in himself. Tan Sioe How also put his interest in having turtles as his lovely pet, so

eventually he became a well-known man with his turtles who sold diverse herbs and spices as alternative remedies.



Figure 5 Tan Sioe How's Turtle
Source: Personal Documentation

However, there was a meaningful philosophy behind all of his turtles. The philosophy of turtles symbolized eternal life, precious wisdom, and continuous prosperity. As his appearance and interest became his uniqueness, most costumers started to call him Babah Kuya. Ever since that, the name has become the uniqueness of the business and been used through the generations.

The Family Tree of Babah Kuya

Like a tree through the ages, Babah Kuya has grown as an old family business with an interesting story behind its name, especially in the process of the business inheritance. Not many people know that the original Babah Kuya has become Toko Jamu Babah Kuya and Babah Kuya Indonesia as time goes by. This story, therefore, will answer your curiosity about the split.

Back to the past, the first generation of Babah Kuya, Tan Sioe How, lived at Jalan Pasar Baru No. 10 (now No.44) to start his business in traditional herbs and spices as alternative remedies. Years to years, his business became well-known and prosperous. His success in business was also accompanied by his family. Not long after establishing the business, he was finally blessed with a precious son, Tan Seng Hap.

Growing up in a family with a background of business, Tan Seng Hap was enthusiastically involved in many activities at his father's shop, such as dealing with the customers or just cleaning the shop. Perhaps, he did not realize if he was indirectly honed to have the characteristics of a business person to carry on his father's business one day in the future.

The wind of change whispered Tan Sioe How to consider the new generation since he was not young anymore. He declared to appoint his son as the second generation of Babah Kuya and took over the business. It was such an honor for him to carry on his father's precious legacy, however, he turned it down. Instead of that, he independently decided to set up his own shop at Jalan Pasar Baru No. 24.

Tang Seng Hap began his new life as the second generation of Babah Kuya. His life was then complete with the presence of a son named Tan Soe Ek and a daughter named Tan Koen Nio. They lived happily as a small family. His son and daughter were also taught to formulate traditional herbs and spices so that one day they could continue their family's business.



Figure 6 Tan Koen Nio and Her Husband
Source: Personal Documentation

Time flew to where the siblings grew up. They were mature enough and ready to take over their father's business and make them become the third generation of Babah Kuya.



Figure 7 the Family Tree of Babah Kuya
Source: Personal Documentation

Tan Soe Ek lived at his grandfather's shop (at Jalan Pasar Baru No.10) while his sister decided to live with her father at Jalan Pasar Baru No.24. Although they were siblings, both of them independently ran their own business.

Tan Koen Nio got married and blessed with six children. Two of them were named Sie Tjoe Liong or Iwan Setiadi and

Sie Oen Yan or Yanuar. Her brother, however, still did not have a child. Worrying about the future of his brother's business, therefore, Tan Koen Nio let her brother adopt one of her children.

Sie Oen Yan (Yanuar) then officially became the stepson of Tan Soe Ek and lived with his grandfather at Jalan Pasar Baru No.10. He changed his family name from Sie Oen Yan to Tan Oen Yan. A few years later, he finally became the fourth generation of Babah Kuya who continued running the business at Jalan Pasar Baru No.44 (previously No.10).

Meanwhile, Sie Tjoe Liong (Iwan Setiadi) was also appointed as the fourth generation of Babah Kuya in the 1987s. He established his own shop, Babah Kuya Indonesia, at Jalan Pasar Baru No.33 and is still running the business up to now with his wife Han Pek Hoa (Memey Maria Heryati) on his side.

After Tan Oen Yan (Yanuar) passed away, his son Tan Han Liang (Hendra Tanuwirja) worked hard to continue the business. This made him officially become the fifth generation of Babah Kuya. He has been carrying on the business since the 1980s with her mother on his side. He also added a little change in the name of the shop; becoming Toko Jamu Babah Kuya.



Chapter II

Toko Jamu Babah Kuya and Babah Kuya Indonesia

Chapter Two

After learning about the history of Babah Kuya, let's get to know about each shop of Babah Kuya; Toko Jamu Babah Kuya and Babah Kuya Indonesia. Let's go.



Figure 8 Toko Jamu Babah Kuya
Source: Toko Jamu Babah Kuya

Toko Jamu Babah Kuya is located at Jalan Pasar Barat No. 44, Bandung. Standing along with the old-style shops in the Pasar Baru area, this white-dominated shop is easily noticed with a big bright yellow sign on its rooftop.

Address: Jl. Pasar Barat No.44, Kota Bandung, Jawa Barat 40181
Phone: 0878-2284-7099
Owner: Hendra Tanuwirja

Toko Jamu Babah Kuya



Figure 9 inside Toko Jamu Babah Kuya

Source: Imelia's Documentation

When stepping inside the shop, the pleasant fragrance of bitter herbs and exotic spices hypnotizes every nose and welcomes every customer to come in. Looking around the shop, your eyes will see various herbs and spices stored in opened barrels, wooden-made containers, and heavy sacks of dried herbs. Besides, the minimalist building of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya has only a two-way aisle, so you have to arrange yourself in a line with other customers coming or leaving the shop at the same time.



While waiting for your turn, you can try to sniff or grab the dried herbs or spices around you just like most customers here. Your queue won't be boring because the antique legacies of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya always accompany you. Are you really fascinated to know each of the legacies? Here you go.



The Antique Legacies of Babah Kuya

Many antique legacies from the previous generations of Babah Kuya are stored in Toko Jamu Babah Kuya. There are the old shop sign, petrified turtles, and abacus. Each of them has appealing stories to tell.

The Shop Sign

The ancient stained-sign of the shop, which has been eaten by the ages, witnessed an interesting story of the shop; the change of the shop's number.



Figure 10 the Shop Sign

Source: Imelia's Documentation

Once, Babah Kuya shop was located on Jalan Pasar Baru Barat 10. Because of the new building establishment in the area, the number was changed to forty four. Also, the name of Mrs. Ekatanuwirya (the wife of the owner) was written to show the ownership of Babah Kuya.

“Years ago, there were only few shops in the Pasar Baru area and could be counted by fingers. Perhaps, there were not more than ten. At that time, the number of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya was ten. However, the growth of the Pasar Baru area was massive and crowded, so our shop was changed from ten to forty-four” Hendra, the owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, said.

The Turtles



Figure 11 the Turtles

Source: Imelia's Documentation

Besides the old sign, Toko Jamu Babah Kuya also stores indigenous petrified turtles. The legendary turtle was once Tan Sioe How's lovely pets which became the origin of the name “Babah Kuya”. The turtles and the business of herbs and spices have been like peas and carrot since the beginning of the business. Now, the turtles become the trademark of Babah Kuya and are hanging on the wall in the shop. The presence of the

turtles not only symbolize the name of Babah Kuya but also decorate and the shop.

The Abacus



Figure 12 the Abacus

Source: Imelia's Documentation

The last one is the abacus. It is a traditional wooden calculation tool that consists of a four-sided wooden frame. An antique Chinese abacus hangs on the wall and becomes the witness of every activity taking place over the years here. It is one of the most antiques and authentic legacies from the first generation of Babah Kuya.

“In the past, we did not have a digital calculator, so we used this abacus to help our business activities,” Hendra explained.

The Current Owner

The shop is carried on by the fifth generation of Babah Kuya namely Hendra Tanuwirja (Tan Han Liang). He has been running the business since the 1980s. Before working at Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, Hendra had a herbs and spices business on Jalan Kelenteng. After his father passed away, he took over the legacy in order to carry on the well-known business as well as keep it well-existed through the ages.



Figure 13 Hendra Tanuwirja

Source: Toko Jamu Babah Kuya

Together with his mother, Mrs. Ekatanuwirja, Hendra Tanurwirja currently runs the business and maintains the quality of all the secret-formulated herbs. He gains appropriate expertise in formulating herbs from his experience.

“My childhood was almost spent on paying attention to my father. The previous generations of Babah Kuya also learned about herbs and spices from literature or books, including my father. Because of that, I know all the benefits of herbs, spices,

and *Jamu*. I always explain to my loyal customers what herbs are suitable for certain diseases,” Hendra said.



Figure 14 the Shopkeeper Preparing the Herbs

Source: Toko Jamu Babah Kuya

Currently, some shopkeepers are working at Toko Jamu Babah Kuya. They are always ready to give the best experience for the customers. Here, they are responsible for packing the dried or powdered herbs in plastics, cutting the dried herbs into small pieces, and resupplying the availability of the herbs and spices.

“We have five shopkeepers here. Each of them has their responsibility. For example, the men usually work to pick up the arrival of herbs and spices collected from East Java. Then, they bring them to the storage room. For the woman shopkeeper, she usually packs the powdered herbs in plastics. She is also responsible for explaining the prices of herbs or spices to the customers,” Hendra said.

Babah Kuya Indonesia



Figure 15 Babah Kuya Indonesia

Source: Detik.com

Walking a few steps out of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, there is another Babah Kuya shop which also provides traditional herbs and spices. At Jalan Pasar Selatan No. 33, the building is dominated by white and green. Precisely in the middle of the building, the obvious shop sign welcomes every customer to come in. It says Babah Kuya Indonesia.

Address: Jln. Pasar Selatan No. 33, Pasar Baru Kota Bandung 40181 Bandung Jawa Barat
Phone: (022) 4238517
Owner: Iwan Setiadi and Memey Maria



Stepping inside the shop, you will notice the strong aroma of various herbs and spices. More than 1000 types of herbs and spices are provided in this shop. These herbs and spices are collected from all regions in Indonesia as well as some other countries such as China and India. Most herbs and spices here are stored in paper barrels, plastic containers, boxes, and jars.





The storage of herbs and spices depends on the types. Dried leaves, seeds, and roots are stored in the paper barrels. They are used in order to avoid water as well as maintain the expiration of the herbs and spices. Each paper barrel is coated with aluminum foils. In the head of the barrels, there is a circular filter to circulate air and prevent dust. These dried herbs and spices can last up to twelve months if they are stored in a dried place.

They are labeled with the name of the herbs and spices to make the shopkeepers and customers easily look for and find what they need. If customers want to buy the dried herbs or spices, the shopkeepers will weigh and put them in plastics. For the powder forms, they are already packaged in transparent plastics. Then, they are stored in shelves. To make them recognizable and easy to find, the shopkeepers write the name of the herbs or spices on the plastics using a black marker. Most powder forms have been measured and weighed in the ounce scale.

The Current Owner



Figure 16 the Owners

Source: Personal Documentation

Since time rolls by and tries to replace the old ones, there is always a time for another new generation to carry on great legacies from the previous ones. Without their efforts to maintain the legacies, everything established and accomplished in the past will be just buried memories. It also happened to the current owner of Babah Kuya Indonesia.

As the fourth generation of Babah Kuya, it is such an honor for Iwan Setiadi to carry on what has been passed on through years. With his wife Memey Maria Heryati on his side, he has remained the secret formula of herbs and spices as alternative remedies since 1987s.

Becoming the owner of Babah Kuya shop requires certain skills and knowledge to formulate herbs and spices to be alternative remedies. It motivated Iwan Setiadi to dive deeper to learn, and he went to the Netherlands for that. He found a book about Indonesian herbs and spices and went back to Indonesia with more knowledge and new skills gotten from his journey. Similarly to his husband, Memey Maria Heryati also learned to formulate herbs and spices from courses, books, and seminars. Besides, she gained knowledge from her parents because her parents also had a herbs-and-spices business in Subang.

Only heaven knows what the future looks like including health. At the age of 87, Iwan Setiadi has gracefully aged and stayed healthy even though he is not able to manage his shop. How lucky he is to have such a loyal wife. Currently, Memey Maria has continued her husband's family business and handled everything. Helped by her one and only daughter, they work together to remain the family business alive.

Recently, five loyal shopkeepers are working at Babah Kuya Indonesia. "We have five shopkeepers working here. They are responsible for the customers and the production of our herbs and spices. The process of drying herbs and spices takes place here, so they are responsible for that. I am here as a cashier monitoring my employee," Memey Maria said.

The Best Time to Visit

Toko Jamu Babah Kuya and Babah Kuya Indonesia open every day at 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM except for Sunday. It is better to visit the shop around 10:00 AM in order to avoid the crowd of customers. At that time, the shopkeepers and the owners are not really busy, so you have a longer time to consult the best herbs and spices for you.

“I think it’s better to visit our shop around 9.30 AM or 10.00 AM because we just open the shop, and there are few customers around that time. After 11.00 AM, there is a terrible traffic jam in Pasar Baru area, and there are a lot of motorbikes parked outside the shop,” Hendra, the owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, said.

Because Pasar Baru area is narrow, the owner of Babah Kuya Indonesia suggests that the customers should ride a motorbike or use public transportation.” The parking lot is limited here. If you want to drive your car to get here, it is better to contact us first, so we will tell the parking attendant to provide a space for your car,” Memey Maria, the owner of Babah Kuya Indonesia, explained.



Chapter III

The Best-Selling Products

Chapter Three



Figure 17 the Herbs

Source: Imelia's Documentation

Babah Kuya shops as an initiator of herbs and spices in Bandung have been well-known for its legendary secret-formulated herbs as an alternative remedy. They sell the dried and powdered herbs as *Jamu*. Therefore, this chapter explains the information related to the products at Babah Kuya shops.

The Products

Herbs, spices, and *Jamu* have become the signature products of Babah Kuya since the 1800s. The legacy from the first generation remains the same until today. The herbs, spices, and *Jamu* here are produced in forms of powders and raw-dried herbs or spices. First for the raw-dried herbs and spices, they have to be dried and dehydrated under the direct sunlight for days to preserve the quality and durability. Then, they are cut into small circular pieces or cubical pieces.



Figure 18 the Dried and Powdered Herbs

Source: Imelia's and Widhihumaira's Documentation

“The process of drying the herbs and spices takes a few days depending on the types of herbs and spices. After the process of drying, we have the process of cooling down for the herbs and spices. We leave them at room temperature for three days. This process is important because if we directly keep the herbs and spices in containers after the process of drying under the sun, the durability and quality are not so good,” Memey Maria explained.

For grinding the herbs and spices into powders, there is a machine used to grind them. The process of grinding the herbs and spices takes place outside the shop. Particularly, most herbal powders have been formulated and combined with other herbs to produce a traditional remedy for certain diseases. That’s what you call it powdered *Jamu*.

General Direction to Serve *Jamu*

Although there are more than 1000 types of herbs, spices, and *Jamu* at Babah Kuya shops, the process of serving and using the dosage of traditional *Jamu* are relatively the same.

“We always advise our customers to consume our *Jamu* twice a day; one glass in the morning and another glass in the evening after breakfast and dinner. This usual dosage can be implemented for all *Jamu* with different purposes and functions. If the customers have more serious diseases, we always suggest that they have to consume one more glass, so they consume three times a day; in the morning, afternoon, and evening,” the owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, Hendra, said.

To lessen the strong bitterness of *Jamu*, you can add one tablespoon of brown sugar or honey.” The customers except for diabetic patients can add one tablespoon of brown sugar or honey to reduce the bitterness. Also, honey is not so good for customers with gastric problems. Do not add any white sugar because it is not good for our body,” Memey Maria, the owner of Babah Kuya Indonesia, explained.

How to store powdered and dried herbs

“It is really easy to keep powdered or dried herbs. First, keep them in a clean and dry jar to avoid the contamination of water or fungal growth. If we keep them in dry and clean containers, they approximately have a shelf of life up to ten or twelve months. Then, store the jar in room temperature. Keeping them in a moist temperature will trigger the growth of fungus,” Memey Maria explained.

Bawang Putih Tunggal

Solo Garlic

First, let's get to know about *Bawang Putih Tunggal*. In English, it is called solo garlic. What is the difference between solo garlic and any other garlic in traditional markets? Well, solo garlic has only one bulb and clove while the other garlics have more than 10 to 20 cloves. Apparently, the shape of solo garlic is more cylindrical and 1-2 cm in size.



Figure 19 Bawang Putih Tunggal

Source: Imelia's Documentation

To know the benefits of solo garlic for your health can knock your sock off. “The advantages of solo garlic especially for health are to lower cholesterol level, prevent cancer cells, and relieve cough or flu,” Hendra, the owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, said.

According to The University of North Carolina reported in CNN Indonesia (2020), the active substance named *diallyl trisulfide* in solo garlic is good to fight against the growth of cancer cells. People consuming solo garlic regularly have a 66, 67 % lower risk to suffer from cancers and 50 % to prevent the risks of cancers. Besides, another active substance named *allicin* can stimulate the production of insulin in the pancreas if it is combined with vitamin B and *thiamin*. For sure, it is good for diabetic patients.

To consume solo garlic is relatively easy. “You can eat raw solo garlic up directly because they have active antibacterial substances, or you can add them for your daily food as seasonings,” Hendra explained.

Secang

Sappan Wood

Next, the best-selling product is *Secang* or Sappan Wood in English. At Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, *Secang* is sold in a form of dried and shaved wood. The color of *Secang* is a vibrant orange. Usually, it is consumed as a curative traditional drink.



Figure 20 Secang

Source: Imelia's Documentation

“*Secang* is also the best-selling product here. It is used as a traditional drink to maximize the immune system, improve blood circulation, and prevent diarrhea,” Hendra, the owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, explained.



Figure 21 Secang

Source: Inelia's Documentation

The claims of *Secang* explained by Hendra are supported by clinical research. According to Puji (2018), the extracted wood and water of *Secang* consist of an antitumor substance that is effective to prevent the growth of cancer cells. Another active substance found in *Secang* is *brazilin*; the pigment of *Secang* enriched with good antioxidant works to strengthen immunity.

To serve *Secang* as a traditional drink is so easy. “Just boil *Secang* with five glasses of water. Then, drink it regularly. The water will be light pink,” Hendra said. Besides a traditional drink, *Secang* can be used as natural dyes. The pigment produced by *Secang* is beautiful pinkish purple.

Temulawak

Javanese Gingers



Figure 22 Temulawak
Source: Imelia's Documentation

Temulawak is the most popular herb in Indonesia. Mostly, it is used for seasonings, traditional drinks, beauty treatment, and natural dyes for fabrics. You probably get twisted by the difference between *Temulawak* and *Kunyit*, don't you? According to Andini (2019), the physical appearance of *Temulawak* is bigger than *Kunyit*. The trunk of *Temulawak* can grow approximately 40-100 cm while *Kunyit* can grow up to 2,5m.



At Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, *Temulawak* is sold in a form of powders and dried ones. It has good benefits, especially for your health. “*Temulawak* is effective to build up the appetite, cure digestion problems, detoxify toxins, and rejuvenate bodies,” Hendra said.

The benefits of *Temulawak* have been proved by a scientist. The journal of Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology cited by Andini (2018) stated that *Temulawak* contains *curcumin* which is an efficient stimulant for people with a lack of appetite. Also, *Temulawak* has good antioxidants working properly to detoxify toxins.

Jahe Merah

Red Gingers

Jahe Merah or Red Gingers are the most popular ingredient in Indonesia. They are mostly used for any kind of traditional drinks, such as *Wedang*, *Bandrek*, *Bajigur*, and *Sekoteng*. Recently, the pandemic of Covid-19 causes the high demand of *Jahe Merah* at Toko Jamu Babah Kuya because most customers believe that *Jahe Merah* is an alternative way to strengthen their immunity.



Figure 23 Jahe Merah

Source: Imelia's Documentation

The vice owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, Mrs. Tanuwirja, said that *Jahe Merah* is good to relieve headache and cough as well as strengthen the immune system and protect heart function. Her claims about the miracle benefits of *Jahe Merah* supported by research. Fadli (2020) stated that *Jahe Merah* is enriched with vitamin C and a special bioactive compound; *gingerols* that are effective to strengthen immunity. Likewise, *gingerols* work properly to prevent gastrointestinal cancer.

Kayu Manis

Cinnamon Sticks

Kayu Manis known or Cinnamon Sticks are the most popular and essential ingredient for curries, barbecues, and cakes. The pleasant aroma obtained from *Kayu Manis* is great for the taste of any food. At Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, Cinnamon Sticks are sold in forms of dried sticks and powders.



Figure 24 Jahe Merah

Source: Imelia's Documentation

The vice owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, Mrs. Ekatanuwirja said that Cinnamon Sticks are worthy solutions for fungal infections, diabetes, and hypertension. Her statement about the advantages of *Kayu Manis* particularly for health is supported by a clinical test. James (2018) said that a natural antioxidant; *polyphenol* is effective to prevent heart attack, diabetes, and the growth of cancer cells. This antioxidant is able to fight against free radicals and maximize blood circulation.

Daun Katuk

Herbilogy Sweet Leaves

Daun Katuk or Herbilogy Sweet Leaves are well-known especially among the breastfeeding mothers. Consuming *Daun Katuk* can increase the quantity of breast milk. In addition, Herbilogy Sweet Leaves have good benefits for health.



Figure 25 Daun Katuk

Source: Imelia's Documentation

“Most Indonesian women particularly mothers traditionally consume *Daun Katuk* to improve the process of breastfeeding. Besides, *Daun Katuk* possesses high vitamin A which is good for visibility as well as to prevent anemia, improve immune system,” the vice owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, Mrs. Ekatanuwirja explained. The claims of *Daun Katuk* for health have been clinically tested. Kalis (2018) explained that *Daun Katuk* comprises vitamin A, vitamin C (higher than guavas), and calcium which are good to prevent anemia, strengthen bones, improve immunity, and visibility.

Binahong

Heartleaf Maderavine Madevine

Binahong or known as Heartleaf Maderavine Madevine leaves are heart-shaped leaves growing in the forest, bushes, or fences. The characteristics of *Binahong* leaves are bright, clean, and plump. At Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, there is the dried version of *Binahong* leaves. They are believed to have good effects, particularly for health. “We have the dried *Binahong* here. They are consumed to prevent diabetes, help skin problems, reduce cholesterol and relieve asthma,” Hendra, the owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, said.



Figure 26 Binahong

Source: Imelia's Documentation



The benefits of *Binahong* for health have clinically been observed. According to Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang cited in Hariandja (2020), *Binahong* leaves possess high vitamin C and *potassium* which are able to produce *collagen* and energy. Similarly, *Binahong* leaves are enhanced with *flavonoids*, *alkaloids*, and high antioxidants which are good for acne. For diabetes, *Binahong* leaves can control the level of blood sugar, and heal the wounds effectively.

Rumput Mutiara

Oldenlandia

Rumput Mutiara known as *Oldenlandia* is one of the most popular herbs introduced by traditional Chinese medication. It is usually used for any kind of infection such as liver diseases, hepatitis, and animal bites. According to the owner of Babah Kuya Indonesia, Memey Maria, there are two forms of *Rumput Mutiara* sold at her shop; the powdered and the dried ones.



Figure 27 Rumput Mutiara
Source: Imelia's Documentation



“*Rumpun Mutiara* has some benefits for our health. It is good for blood circulation, cancer prevention, and infections. In the past, the indigenous ancestors used *Rumpun Mutiara* for fever,” Memey Maria, the owner of Babah Kuya Indonesia, said.

The benefits of *Rumpun Mutiara* have been observed scientifically. According to the study of Pharmacy, UGM (2000), *flavonoid glycoside* found in *Rumpun Mutiara* works properly to block the process of carcinogenesis; the transformation of normal cells into cancer cells. Besides, *flavonoids* can also detoxify active carcinogens in our bodies.

Putri Malu

Shame Plants / Sensitive Plants

Putri Malu or shame plants are one of the most recognizable plants in Indonesia. When *Putri Malu* is touched or shaken, it will fold its leaves inward to protect itself from the predators. That's why almost the Indonesians call it *Putri Malu* as if a princess is shy.



Figure 28 Putri Malu

Source: Personal Documentation

Surprisingly, *Putri Malu* is helpful for your health. “*Putri Malu* is usually used for stopping diabetic bleeding, relieving cough, preventing insomnia,” Memey Maria said. The claims are proven by research conducted by a student of Universitas Diponegoro. According to Haq (2009), *melatonin*; a sedative substance in *Putri Malu* is able to beat insomnia.



The owner of Babah Kuya Indonesia has the recommended dosage to consume Putri Malu in hopes of maximizing the benefits, especially for health. “For the dried *Putri Malu*, grab one handful of *Putri Malu*. Then, boil it with five glasses of water. Drink it when the quantity of water is approximately two glasses. For the powdered Putri Malu is easier than the dried ones. Just add one tablespoon of Putri Malu. Then, pour hot water in a mug,” Memey Maria explained.

Daun Sirsak

Soursop Leaves

Daun Sirsak or Soursop Leaves have been used for years as an alternative remedy. Usually, Soursop Leaves are consumed as a traditional tea. “Soursop leaves are widely well-known for their richness in vitamin C and antioxidants. They are used for insomnia, hypertension, arthritis, and back pain,” Memey Maria said.



Figure 29 Daun Sirsak

Source: Personal Documentation



A researcher from UGM, Ramadhany (2016) stated that *annonaceous acetogenin* found in Soursop Leaves is known as an anticancer, antiphlastic, and antiviral substance. However, consuming Soursop Leaves must be wise because there are some side effects such as dehydration, gastric problems, and liver diseases.

As a solution to prevent overdose, the owner of Babah Kuya Indonesia, Memey Maria explained that the dosage of consuming Soursop Leaves as a traditional tea is twice a day; one glass in the morning and another glass in the evening after breakfast and dinner.

Kayu Angin

Linchen dasypogus

Kayu Angin known as Linchen dasypogus is a lichen; the combination between fungi and algae. Mostly, it is found in soils, rocks, and woods living either in an area with less or more sunlight. For health, it is believed to minimize allergy symptoms, and wounds.



Figure 30 Kayu Angin

Source: Personal Documentation

“*Kayu Angin* is also good for medication. It is served as a traditional drink believed as a medication for respiratory problems, infections, common cold, and wounds,” Memey Maria said.

The active substance found in *Kayu Angin* is strongly believed to fight against bacteria especially *Candida albicans*; a fungal disease. Prapanca (2020) explained that the main active substance; *usnic acid* works effectively as antifungal and antibacterial medication for certain fungi; *Candida albicans*.

Daun Kirinyuh

Siam Weed

Daun Kirinyuh or Siam Weed is a wild plant growing in a humid and subtropical area. According to The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources in Australia (2019), *Daun Kirinyuh* or Siam Weed is categorized as one of the world's worst seed due to its ability to grow fast and the cause of terrible bushfire in Australia.



Figure 31 Daun Kirinyuh

Source: Personal Documentation

However, in Indonesia, *Daun Kirinyuh* is used as a traditional medication for cough, mouth ulcer, sore throat, wounds, and hypertension. According to Nirwanto, Eriadi, and Arifin (2018), *Daun Kirinyuh* is enriched with *tannin*, *flavonoid*, and *saponin*. The extract ethanol of *Daun Kirinyuh* stimulates the process of healing wounds faster.

Meniran

Chamber Bitter



Figure 32 Meniran

Source: Personal Documentation

Meniran is a bush plant growing throughout tropical areas. The benefits of *Meniran* has been traditionally used for medication. “*Meniran* is usually used for pancreas problems and hypertension,” Memey Maria, said.

Meniran consists of active substances; *flavonoid quercetin*. Wahjuni (2017) explained that *flavonoid quercetin* as active antioxidants and antihyperglycemic is efficient to repair the damages of the pancreas and reduce glucose level.

Prevention of Covid 19

For a couple of months, the whole world has suffered from severe Covid-19. This lethal virus has not only infected millions of people in the world but also paralyzed everything including the wheel of economy, tourism, and daily activities. The recent data per 8th July 2020 from *Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan Covid-19* (2020) showed that 68.079 reported cases were found in Indonesia. The huge number of infected patients has led Indonesia to become the highest confirmed Covid-19 cases in Southeast Asia. Consequently, all of us must have prepared for preventive actions to stop the domino effect of Covid-19.

Wearing a sterile mask, staying sanitized, and keeping our distance are some vivid examples of preventive actions to stop passing on the virus. However, have you ever thought to build up and boost our immunity as a way to fight against the virus? To answer this question, this part will demonstrate how to make *Jamu* or traditional drink with the epic combination of bitter leaves (*Sambiloto*) and *Brotowali* as the main ingredients. Prior to moving on further, let's get to know what Bitter Leaves (*Sambiloto*) and *Brotowali* are.

Sambiloto

Bitter Leaves

Bitter leaves or well-known as the king of bitterness or *Sambiloto* in Indonesia are wild green leaves grown and mostly found in South and Southeast Asian countries. The ancestors conventionally used bitter leaves for any kind of diseases including the inflammatory and infections. The owner of Babah Kuya Indonesia, Memey Maria believed that bitter leaves are efficacious to prevent any kinds of diseases particularly the common symptoms of Covid-19.



Figure 33 Sambiloto
Source: Liputan 6

Characteristics of *Sambiloto*

1. *Sambiloto* mostly grows in open or humid places.
2. *Sambiloto* has many branches with square-shaped green leaves and pink flowers.
3. The height is approximately 30-110 cm.

Benefits

1. *Sambiloto* is effective to prevent common cold and cough.
2. The active substances in *Sambiloto* work to boost immunity and prevent cancer cells.
3. *Andrographolide* found in *Sambiloto* is efficient to prevent the inflammatory, viruses, and bacteria.

Brotowali

Brotowali or *Tinospora crispa* is a traditional leaf which has been used to treat many kinds of diseases such as hypertension and diabetes. Mostly, this heart-shaped leaf is served as a traditional drink. The strong bitterness of *Brotowali* is enriched with active substances to revitalize the function of internal organs.



Figure 34 Brotowali

Source: Greeneers.Co

Characteristics of *Brotowali*

1. *Brotowali* has heart-shaped and roundish leaves.
2. *Brotowali* is a climbing plant or wall shrub with pairing branches.
3. The height of *Brotowali* can reach 2.5 m.

Benefits

1. *Brotowali* works efficiently to maintain the blood sugar level.
2. Malaria can be treated well with *Brotowali*.
3. Muscle or physical pains can be lessened with *Brotowali* as well.

How to Make Sambiloto and Brotowali Drink

Ingredients

1. 1 tablespoon of *Sambiloto* and *Brotowali* powder
2. 400 ml warm water
3. Brown sugar (not for diabetic patients)

Equipment

1. 1 tablespoon
2. 1 mug (500 ml)

Steps

1. First, add one tablespoon of *Sambiloto* and *Brotowali* powder into the mug.
2. Second, pour 400 ml of warm water.
3. Then, stir well and add the brown sugar to lessen the bitterness level.
4. *Sambiloto* and *Brotowali* drink is ready to serve.
5. Finally, drink it regularly in the morning and afternoon to maximize the benefit of *Sambiloto* and *Brotowali*.



Chapter IV

The Customers' Viewpoints

Chapter Four

The Customers' Viewpoints

Existing for almost 200 years as the oldest herbs and spices shop in Bandung, Babah Kuya has customers from all walks of life. Coming from different regions in Indonesia, the customers discover Toko Jamu Babah Kuya and Babah Kuya Indonesia from other people's testimonies and experiences. They mostly believe that secret-formulated herbs are effective for health. Babah Kuya shops also become the retailer for several traditional health specialists such as traditional massagers, traditional herbal drink sellers, and herb and spice resellers. The following is the viewpoints of some loyal customers.

I knew Babah Kuya from my parents. They told me that traditional remedies certainly have lesser side effects on health due to their natural substances. Then, I am motivated to consume medicated herbs from Babah Kuya. Thank God, I am healthier.

Zulaikha from Tasikmalaya, West Java

Babah Kuya shop provides various dried herbs and spices. Here, we can find everything starting from herbs as alternative remedies or spices for cooking. I usually buy cinnamons and gingers here because the quality of the products is well-maintained. Besides, the long-aged existence of Babah Kuya is credible and undoubtedly great.

Ahmad from Ciamis, West Java

I have been a loyal customer of Babah Kuya for thirty years. Because I work near Pasar Baru, I always visit this shop and buy some herbs and spices. Mostly, I buy *secang* or sappan wood for maintaining my health and stamina. Here in Babah Kuya, the herbs or spices are relatively affordable. Consuming traditional herbs and spices routinely increases my stamina, so I can be more productive.

Roman from Cimahi, West Java

I was so desperate about my health. I came to every alternative medication, but my health did not show significant improvement. My aunt told me that Babah Kuya shop provides various *Jamu* or medicated herbs for any kind of diseases. Ever since that, I've been becoming its loyal customers for five years. Gratefully, my health is more stable and better.

Aisyah from Bandung, West Java

Babah Kuya shops are incredibly helpful for my health. Consuming red gingers and solo garlic for years helps me get healthier. I can find spices for cooking as well. The service is great, and the owner is amiable and reliable.

Annisa from Subang, West Java

I am from Tasikmalaya. Today, I've just bought *Daun Tapak Gajah* and turmeric powder for my daughter. She's suffering from uterine diseases. She feels terrible pains when she's in a monthly period. That's why my friends, relatives, and family recommended Babah Kuya shop as alternative remedies. Here, there are various herbs with their characteristics. The owner and his employees are helpful. I can consult what I need and look for. Thank you Babah Kuya Indonesia.

Djajang from Tasikmalaya, West Java

I know Babah Kuya from my parents. They said that traditional herbs are effective for any kind of diseases. Besides, I also consume traditional herbal drinks. Thank God, my health condition is getting better day by day. This may be the reason why our ancestors consumed traditional herbs to maintain their health.

Agus from Garut, West Java

I have become a loyal customer of Babah Kuya since I was a little girl. My mother advised me to consume traditional herbal drinks to maintain my health. Thank God, my blood sugar level is relatively more stable and healthier. Here, the prices are affordable. For the service, the owner is friendly and hilarious.

Nurjannah from Bandung, West Java

I believe that traditional herbal drinks are able to maintain our internal organs and maximize their functions. I have been consuming traditional herbal drinks for years. Now, my health is better, and I can be more productive. Thank you Babah Kuya Indonesia.

Arman from Bandung, West Java

I've become a loyal customer of Babah Kuya shop since elementary school. I know that traditional herbs are effective to maintain health as well as stamina and immune. That's why all of my family members consume traditional herbal drinks. Today, I've just bought sour soup leaves.

Mulyadi from Soreang, West Java



To give an easy access to the costumers, Toko Jamu Babah Kuya and Babah Kuya Indonesia also provide an alternative purchase method; online services via WhatsApp. This application is able to connect the owners and their customers. Mostly, the customers consult what herbs or spices they need for certain purposes.

After that, the customers make an online purchase and the payment is transferred via banks. The ordered herbs or spices will be sent off by logistic courier services, such as JNE, J&T, and Go-Send. This online purchase is considerably recommended for customers who buy large quantities of herbs or spices or live in other cities.

Be Aware of Fake Products and Frauds!

As the leading suppliers of herbs and spices shops in Bandung, Toko Jamu Babah Kuya and Babah Kuya Indonesia have experienced and received plenty of news from their customers about fake products labeled Babah Kuya.

“We never produce and sell capsules, pills or anything labeled Babah Kuya. We only sell herbs, spices, and *Jamu* here on Jalan Pasar Baru,” Hendra said.



Figure 35 Fake Product

Source: Toko Jamu Babah Kuya

Besides the products, Babah Kuya Indonesia especially has received an info from the customers about an unknown man claiming himself as a son of Iwan Setiadi.

“We heard the info from our customers about a man claiming himself as the son of my husband. In fact, we only have a daughter. That fraud man actually opened *Panti Pijat* or traditional massage treatment. After the massage, his victims were served with a glass of *Jamu*, so he told his innocent victims that he’s the son of Babah Kuya. Sadly, all of them believed in his mendacious words. At the end of the day, he promised to buy *Jamu* for them. Instead of that, he defrauded his customers’ million rupiahs and disappeared. Until today, he has not been found because none has his identity,” Memey Maria explained.

From the information about the frauds and fake products labeled Babah Kuya, it is a reminder for you to buy the original products only at Toko Jamu Babah Kuya or Babah Kuya Indonesia to avoid any disadvantages, especially health. When you buy directly at the shops, you are able to assure the authenticity and quality of the products.



Chapter V

The Fame of Babah Kuya

Chapter Five



Figure 36 Babah Kuya Indonesia on Local Newspaper

Source: Personal Documentation

The long existence of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya and Babah Kuya Indonesia has attracted more people from all walks of life to come. Besides the customers, domestic or foreign tourists, students, researchers, and journalists are the other common examples of their visitors.

“The visitors of Babah Kuya Indonesia are various. For instance, when the school or the public holiday comes, groups of both domestic and foreign tourists visit our shop. Usually, they come here to satisfy their curiosity about traditional herbs, spices, and *Jamu*. If it is necessary, we also serve cups of *Jamu* here as the testers, so they can try to drink our *Jamu* on the spot. At the end of their tour, they buy some herbs, spices, and *Jamu* as the souvenirs,” Memey Maria explained,



Figure 37 the Visitors

Source: Retno S Azizah

Different from the tourists, most students come to Toko Jamu Babah Kuya and Babah Kuya Indonesia to conduct their research about traditional herbs, spices, and *Jamu*. “The pharmacy students from reputable colleges such as ITB or UNPAD always take the objects of their research about traditional herbs and *Jamu* here. They use our herbs and spices to analyze the complex substances to be developed into new inventions of science,” Memey Maria added.

The owner of Toko Jamu Babah Kuya, Hendra Tanuwirja, also agreed with that statement. “Chemical analyst students come here to find out the characteristics of the herbs and spices. I don’t mind that because it makes our herbs, spices, and *Jamu* scientifically tested”.



Figure 38 the Students and the Owner

Source: Toko Jamu Babah Kuya

Babah Kuya Indonesia and the Japanese Researchers

It has been years for the owner to hold the family business. All the ups and downs of life have scored the couple of Iwan Setiadi and Memey Maria's lives. These memories will be retold to all of their grandchildren on and on.



Figure 39 Tanaman Saga

Source: Klikdokter.com

In the 1990s, a Japanese man named Prof. Dr. Shigetoshi Kadota from Toyama Medical and Pharmaceutical University came to Babah Kuya Indonesia to look for natural sugar substitutes.

“He intended to use our herbs and spices as the material of his research in order to pursue his full professor, so we offered him an alternative herb from *tanaman saga* or a red bead tree

(*Adenanthera pavonina*) to substitute the use of sugar.” Memey Maria explained.

On May 1st, 1996, Iwan Setiadi received an appreciation letter from Dr. Shigetoshi Kadota with the title professor before his name. He was thankful that Iwan Setiadi had contributed to his career.



Figure 40 Letter from Shigetoshi Kadota

Source: Babah Kuya Indonesia

“In the following years, we received a letter from Prof. Dr. Shigetoshi Kadota. He was so thankful to work with us because our products would be analyzed for his research. There is one thing stealing our attention. He called my husband Prof. Iwan Setiadi, even though he does not possess the title. I think that is the way he expressed his thankfulness,” Memey Maria said.

Wall of Fame

Aged and experienced by time, the existence of Babah Kuya has drawn attention from various media starting from local newspapers such as *Pikiran Rakyat*, *Tribun Jabar* to English-published newspaper including *The Jakarta Post*. The information mostly discusses the existence of Babah Kuya, loyal customers, and the benefits of herbs and spices for health.

The pieces of newspapers are framed and hung on the walls of Babah Kuya Indonesia. It aims to reminisce and to tell the customers that the existence of Babah Kuya has been through the ages. It also shows that the traditional herbs and spices sold at the shop have helped many people with different needs and purposes.



“Most articles from local media showed how credible and fascinating Babah Kuya is. We think they are very helpful for our brand awareness. For that reason, we put all the articles about Babah Kuya on the walls so all the customers can see and read them. Because they are getting yellowed and fragile by ages, we used the frames to protect them,” Memey Maria explained.

The Jakarta Post



Figure 41 the Jakarta Post

Source: Personal Documentation

Who does not know The Jakarta Post? One of the most reputable and prestigious English newspapers in Indonesia was on the edge of its seat to find out what Babah Kuya Indonesia looked like. In 2008, The Jakarta Post delegated a journalist named Yuli Tri Suwarni to come across and interview Soe Tjoe Liong (Iwan Setiadi) and his wife.

The interview focused on how Babah Kuya Indonesia as the oldest herbal shop in Bandung has provided traditional herbs and spices for any purposes and needs.

From the interview, there were some important points. First, Iwan Setiadi wanted to provide affordable herbs and spices for people from all walks of life. Besides, he confirmed how cautious and selective he was to formulate herbs and spices for his customers.

Not only interviewed the owner, but Suwarni also asked some customers to share their experiences and viewpoints about Babah Kuya Indonesia. One experience came from Siti Aminah. Every time she delivered a baby, she might come here to buy traditional herbs for their affordable prices and fewer side effects.

Arif was interviewed as the customer. Suffering from liver disease, he could not have any medical treatment anymore because of the expensive costs. However all roads lead to Rome, he found Babah Kuya Indonesia as his traditional treatment. In 1995, he completely recovered from his disease

She continued, “After it published an article about us, we received so many phone calls asking about our herbs, spices, and *Jamu*. The foreign people were really curious about *Jamu*. There was one foreign visitor from the Netherlands, and he was so fascinated to know herbs and spices. Fortunately, my husband could communicate with him because he had ever studied in the Netherlands.”

“We always welcome everyone who wants to work with us. Once, there was a German man who came here to write a book about Babah Kuya. If I am not mistaken, the book was written in the German language. He started collecting data here, asking questions, and taking pictures of herbs and spices. Unfortunately, we could not get the book, so we did not have any presents for our partnership with him,” Memey Maria said.

In Memoriam



Iwan Setiadi

The Fourth Generation of Babah Kuya

18th February 1933- 28th July 2020

In our memory, you are always loved. May your soul rest in
peace.

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About Author



Years ago precisely on October 18th, 1999, a little angel named Sendhi Alviansyah Sugiyono was born in so-called Paris Van Java; Bandung. Blessed with curiosity to learn new things, heaven

knew that he fell in love with foreign languages especially English and French. In 2017, he wrote his own ticket to study English language at Politeknik Negeri Bandung.

His biggest dream is to work as a tour guide or to set himself up as a successful business person. To go after it, he always believes one old Arabic proverb; *man saara ala darbi washala* or whoever walks on the right path will get to the right direction.

Hit him up on Instagram @trulywiseman

