



UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT SETS GUIYANG APART

The Qingyan ancient town is a popular tourist destination in Guiyang. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Guiyang, capital of Guizhou province, is focusing on ecological protection, infrastructure improvements and integrating industries to build itself into a world famous tourism city.

Featuring a cool climate, rolling hills, sufficient rainfall and low ultraviolet radiation, Guiyang has been known for years as one of the best summer travel destinations in China.

It was awarded the best ecological tourist destination 2017 by the China National Travel magazine earlier this month, and has been a national civilized city since 2011.

About 139 million tourists from home and abroad visited the city in the first nine months of this year, increasing 36.8 percent from the same period last year. Tourism revenue reached 160 billion yuan (\$24.4 billion) during the period, up 42.4 percent year-on-year.

Yuan Yunlong, director of the Guiyang Tourism Development Committee, said the city's ecological resources are its key competitive edge, which will play an important role in further development.

Guiyang has a climate that is never too hot in summer or too cold in winter. Its average temperature stays at about 15.3 C throughout the year. Statistics from the Ministry of Environmental Protection show that Guiyang's air quality ranked among the top five in a list of 74 major Chinese cities over the first nine months this year.

By 2020, Guiyang's forest coverage is forecast to reach 60 percent. About 90 percent of days every year will have good air quality. The average density of PM2.5 pollutant particles in the air will remain around 35 micrograms per cubic meter. The water quality in 82 percent of the city's rivers and lakes will meet the national standard. These goals are all outlined in the city's official plan.

In addition, the city will improve its transportation network and infrastructural facilities to attract more tourists.

Guiyang Longdongbao International Airport has opened air routes to all the major Chinese mainland cities and Taiwan, as well as cities in South Korea, Japan and Singapore.

Stunning landscapes, clean air and water make for the perfect summer excursion in Southwest China



A US tourist displays Guiyang traditional handicraft with a local master.

The airport is currently undergoing an expansion project and is estimated to welcome 32 million to 40 million passengers a year by 2018.

According to the Guiyang Tourism Development Committee, the city will complete the construction of a tourism center in three to five years, serving visitors who want to

visit the rest of Southwest China surrounding Guizhou.

There are 56 star-rated hotels in Guiyang. The local authorities have also recognized 32 high-quality summer resorts.

Yuan said tourism is not only a service industry in the traditional manner, but an engine to promote the

development of the local economy by integrating different industries.

The city has released several rural tourism projects in the many villages within its administration, attracting 43.7 billion yuan in revenue since 2011.

It has organized cultural events, including the opening of a Confucius School, Yangming Cultural Festival, traditional arts performances and tea-themed activities to highlight its unique culture.

Based on its scenic and extensive mountain areas, the city has developed many outdoor sports for tourists, including drifting, cycling, hiking and marathons. The many local springs contribute to the city's branding as a leisure and relaxing tourism destination.

Jay Ellenby, chairman of the American Society of Travel Agents, said that in the past he only knew big cities of China, such as Beijing and Hong Kong, but now he believes the architecture, culture, food and natural landscapes in Guiyang are all worth promoting in overseas markets.

Ari Marom, CEO of Vered Tours, said the ethnic customs and natural landscapes will attract more tourists.

The city said it will also construct catering clusters and introduce more hotels, camping areas, motels, hostels and country inns to improve accommodation services. Duty free shops will sell local specialties. By 2020, the number of tourists is expected to hit 230 million, driving annual revenue of more than 320 billion yuan.

Listed as a national civilized city of China for three years, Guiyang is emphasizing improved livelihoods for local residents during its development.

About 710,000 volunteers provide services at the airport and train stations, plant trees, and take care of left-behind children, disabled and elderly people who live alone.

About 800 old residential communities were renovated, improving the living environment for about 400,000 people.

Stories of local moral models have been promoted among the public to advocate a spirit of kindness, honesty, righteousness and filial piety.

Official statistics show that 95 percent of citizens feel satisfied with the effects of these civilization construction projects.



Jiaxiu Pavilion in southern Guiyang was first built in 1598. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Travel packages open door for foreign visitors

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Guiyang, capital of Guizhou province, released five travel packages this month targeting the North American market, highlighting mountain adventures and folk customs.

The customized trips offer four to six-day tours for foreign visitors to experience both the natural landscapes and cultures of Guiyang and other cities, according to Yang Hui, director of marketing at the Guiyang Tourism Development Committee.

Discounts on flights, accommodation and entrance tickets for attractions will be open to tourists on the tours throughout 2018, he said.

The new packages were especially designed for the ASTA China Summit 2017 held by the Guiyang government, the Guizhou Tourism Development Committee and the American Society of Travel Agents from Nov 5-11.

At the event, ASTA awarded Guizhou the title of 2018 Key Strategic Destination Partner in China, and recognized Guiyang as The Most Promising Tourism City of China in 2018.

Guizhou features a mountainous landscape with the Yangtze and Pearl rivers flowing through it, and is home to 49 ethnic groups. It made the New York Times' list of 52 Places to Go in 2016.



International tourists visit Guiyang's Qingyan ancient town.

Robert Duglin, vice-president of ASTA, said in his speech at the summit that the massive green hills, blue sky, white clouds and various ethnic cultures of Guizhou represent the real China, which United States visitors will absolutely fall in love with.

As a travel organization covering 80 percent of the US market, ASTA has about 8,000 members, including travel agencies, hotels, car rental suppliers and individual tour guides, serving more than 140 countries and regions.

During the weeklong event, about 130 travel agents from the US and 200 from China visited major scenic spots in Guiyang, and attended aca-

demic forums and business negotiations.

Duglin said the place not only provided an ideal cross-border travel product, but a cultural feast for audiences.

During their visit to Qingyan ancient town, attendees took photos of temples and pavilions in traditional architectural styles from the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911).

Women from the Miao ethnic group played folk drum music to welcome guests at the Multicolor Art and National Costume Museum.

Travel agency operator Bonnie Becker said the smiling faces and passionate gestures of the female dancers were very appealing, and

the Miao embroidery they saw at a folk museum recorded the living scenery and history of the ethnic group.

Guizhou released its three-year plan to develop inbound tourism earlier this year. The number of foreign tourists visiting the province increased 17 percent last year, most of whom were from the US, according to a US outbound tourism market report unveiled at the summit.

Yuan Yunlong, director of the Guiyang Tourism Development Committee, said local tourism had mainly targeted Asia-Pacific regions in the past. Through the event, customers from North America may gain a better understanding of Guiyang in future, he added.

Guiyang travel agents signed cooperative agreements with their US peers to attract visitors, promote tourism and research travel products at the event.

Members of the Guiyang Tourism Association will attend a promotional event in the US. Experts from ASTA will help promote training, market exploration, travel products and high-end hotel development.

The local government is also working on opening international airlines connecting Northern American countries and Guiyang. Details of the five travel packages will be announced to the public through magazines, websites and conferences in 2018.

It's all aboard for tourist extravaganza, adventure

By ZHANG ZHAO
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Nearly 80 major sightseeing attractions in Guiyang, capital city of southwestern Guizhou province, will be linked up with a planned 210-kilometer ring road — part of the local government's efforts to build a world renowned tourist destination highlighting ecological friendliness.

The road has started construction and is expected to complete by 2019. It will allow a maximum speed of 60 km per hour.

The attractions will include the maple valley, the Longjia Mountain, the Baihua Lake, the Panlong karst cave and the Guiyang Forest Wildlife Zoo, as well as a number of villages and townships in rural areas featuring natural beauty.

The new sightseeing route, along with many other roads planned in the countryside, is also part of Guiyang's poverty alleviation strategy.

Li Zaiyong, a member of the standing committee of the CPC Guizhou provincial committee and the Guiyang Party chief, called for optimized tourism routes and integrated planning for roads and villages.

"The roads will link Guiyang's most beautiful mountains, forests, fields, rivers and lakes, and along the roads there are many sightseeing areas, agricultural industry zones and resorts," he said at a meeting on Oct 30.

"We will improve the environment in rural areas and local people's living conditions, and build high-end resorts with Guiyang characteristics and ethnic flavors."

He also suggested that innovative financing channels be developed by integrating government and social capital with market forces.

In 2007, the Chinese Meteorological Society honored the title of China's "summer capital" to Guiyang. Over the following decade, the city's tourism focused on the branding to develop products and services.

Now, people increasingly think of Guiyang when looking for a destination to spend their summers.

Yuan Yunlong, head of the city's tourism commission, said Guiyang

“The roads will link Guiyang's most beautiful mountains, forests, fields, rivers and lakes.”

Li Zaiyong, member of the standing committee of the CPC Guizhou provincial committee and Guiyang Party chief

is not only a tourist destination in its own right, but is also a tourism hub linking more other destinations.

"Guiyang has the best tourism resources and services in the province, with advanced transportation infrastructure, which allow it to become a regional tourism center," Yuan said.

"Guiyang will serve as an engine to drive the socioeconomic development of the province."

He added that Guiyang often introduces tourism products from other places in Guizhou, and even regions outside Guizhou, in its own tourism promotional campaigns.

"Guiyang is unique, but it can't stand out by itself," Yuan said. "We need joint efforts from all sides to make a bigger cake, to make Guiyang truly an international tourism city and let all sides share the benefits."

A survey in 2016 showed that Guiyang had 6,494 tourism sites, and another 2,833 sites with potential tourism resources were found that year.

During this year's National Day holiday, commonly known as the "golden week" lasting from Oct 1-7, Guiyang welcomed 9.6 million tourists from China and abroad, a 40.38 percent increase from last year, and tourism revenue hit 7.1 billion yuan, up 42.52 percent.

This marked the 10th consecutive year the city enjoyed growth rates higher than 30 percent in the both figures.