

HOLIDAY TRAVEL



Sea gulls are seen flying over Erhai Lake in Dali in Southwest China's Yunnan province. ZHANG KUN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Seeing Dali on a bike top choice for tourists

By YANG FEIYUE and LI YINGQING

One of the best ways to explore Dali, in southwestern Yunnan province, is cycling.

Cycling around Dali's Erhai Lake is relaxing and suitable for individual travelers, who can also experience folk customs of the Bai ethnic people living along the bank.

The lake ring road offers great cycling conditions and is much less physically demanding than roads around other high-altitude lakes.

Also, one can easily get access to food and drinks along the way. And it's a treat to cycle past local residences and bustling fairs that have distinctive local specialties.

The lake road runs for about 120 kilometers, so it's better to



explore small sections at a time.

For first-timers to Dali, they can start from the Dali ancient town and cycle 3 km to Caicun village, which used to be a port for goods transportation between the eastern and western sides of the lake. Besides, one can visit a shrine for a local water god in the north of the

village before continuing on a 2.5-km lake road that is ideal for observing sea gulls and wild ducks.

The next 20-km section of the lake road features village, farmland and river bank elements and is good for photography.

Haishe Park sits at the end of this section and offers free entry to travelers. From here, one could reach Xizhou ancient town after heading 3.5 km to the west of the park. In the town, residences from the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) offer visitors an interesting perspective.

For those who want to go further, they can cycle 8 km to Zhoucheng village to the north, along the Dali Highway.

The village is the biggest of its kind along Erhai Lake and known for its butterfly spring, a local attraction.

For cyclists who seek more tranquil lake and mountain views, they should take the road section along the east of Erhai Lake.

For this, you should start off at Shaping and cycle about 5 km to Jiangwei in the east.

A little east of the Huanhai road intersection there is a Guanyin (Goddess of Mercy) Pavilion, where a big banyan tree is located.

Cycling ahead, one can see stunning wetlands along a 2-km lake road.

Then, about 10 km to the south, cyclists can see the well-known Shuanglang town with its distinctive streets and the Feiyan Temple that was built by Nanzhao Kingdom (AD 738-937).

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Road along Chishui River becomes tourism hot spot

By YANG FEIYUE and YANG JUN

A road along Chishui River in Chishui, Southwest China's Guizhou province, has become a tourism hot spot.

The Chishui River Road is flanked by the Danxia landform (steep red sandstone cliffs). The road was developed in 2016 to boost tourism and involved a total investment of 4.5 billion yuan (\$671 million).

Also, the local government then shut down a group of polluting and energy-guzzling plants in the area. And many river sections were treated to improve water quality, with the local flora and fauna plants and historical sites protected during the development.

The river road now runs 160 kilometers from Guizhou's Maotai town to Chishui's downtown area. And it has cycling lanes, rest points, sightseeing platforms and stone sculptures.

Many sports events have been staged in the area since the road's inauguration.



Bing'an, an ancient town, is located on the banks of Chishui River in Southwest China's Guizhou province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

On April 6, cross-country cycling and canoeing races for business school students were held covering more than 20 scenic spots, including a former campsite of the Red Army and a national forest park.

"It was the best experience I've

had," says Hu Che from Nanjing University.

Hu was impressed by the river valleys, fresh air and beautiful landscape he encountered during the races.

To date, the road has integrated culture, industry, health preservation elements and increased local income.

Speaking about the road, Zunyi Culture and Tourism Group's deputy general manager Li Tingjuan says: "It (the road) is like a chain embedded in the Chishui river bank, connecting all the scenic spots along the way."

The road saw about 200,000 visitors in the first half of 2018, says Li. Meanwhile, some formerly unknown attractions have gained popularity since the road opened.

And the tourism has also encouraged locals to start up agri-tainment businesses or sell bamboo works and paper umbrellas as souvenirs.

Xie Nana and her husband used to work away from their home near Chishui River.

But they decided to open a small restaurant when they heard the local government was aiming to turn the road into a tourism hot spot.

Now, her restaurant is often been fully booked and can earn her family an annual income of 300,000 yuan.

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Pedaling into the authentic countryside of South China

By ZHANG LI in Nanning zhangli@chinadaily.com.cn

Yangshuo county, located in Guilin, the capital of the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, is mostly featured in ink paintings thanks to its karst mountains, winding rivers and beautiful scenery.

Now, outdoor activities like rock climbing, cycling and rafting are growing popular with tourists there, and biking is considered to be the easiest way to explore the Yangshuo countryside.

Ronald, who used to be a computer engineer in the Netherlands and is now a guesthouse owner in Yangshuo, says 90 percent of his guests go cycling during their stay there.

A ride, starting from the guesthouse, going past the Yulong River to Fuli bridge, a 2-kilometer route, is highly recommended by Ronald.

"The road is all paved, therefore it

is quite relaxing for new comers. And you can take a stop at the riverside, look at the water buffaloes, and you can't miss the ancient villages," he says.

Xiatang village, situated in the Yulong scenic area, has old houses built in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

The village, which is away from the main road, has a dozen of households, hardly any vehicles, and not many visitors. But, Ronald is quite a regular there.

"Most of the villagers have moved to new place leaving the village incredible peaceful. To show my guests the old houses is my favorite part," he says.

The journey ends at Fuli bridge, a stone-arched bridge fully covered with vines where offers a panorama of the karst landscape, a clear river and tranquil villages.

According to Scott Spencer, an Australia cyclist, there are many



Foreign tourists cycle in the countryside of Yangshuo county in the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

villages like Xiatang in Yangshuo.

Spencer decided to settle down in the area in 2003 and started a club Bike Asia in the county specialized in professional cycling.

His club makes tour plans for

1,000 clients annually, among which 90 percent are foreigners from all over the world.

Spencer, who has been engaged in the tourism business for years, says he has finally found out what foreign

Greenways give Zhuhai a unique touch

Cycling culture is taking root in city as more people become enthusiasts

By ZHENG CAIXIONG in Zhuhai, Guangdong zhengcaixiong@chinadaily.com.cn

After Chen Hongjun stops and parks his bike by the roadside, he takes out his mobile phone and snaps pictures of the natural scenery along Qinglyu Road, which translates as lovers' greenway in Chinese, in the southern metropolis of Zhuhai.

"I cannot help taking photos when I see such beautiful scenery," says Chen, a cycling enthusiast.

In addition to the subtropical scenery, beaches, blue sea, palm trees, and a statue of woman fishing, the road also gives you a view of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge that was officially opened to traffic last year, according to Chen, who cycles there every weekend.

Chen, a local resident, says he put his photos on his WeChat moments to tempt more friends to join him on the beautiful greenways.

The Qinglyu Road has now become a major scenic spot in Zhuhai, in Guangdong province that borders Macao. And pictures taken along the 28-kilometer-long coastal road are a must for newlyweds. As a result, many couples are now found having their wedding photos taken along the road during the day and taking a walk hand-in-hand at night.

"Cycling along the greenway is one of my favorite choices for exercise and leisure during weekends and holidays," he says. And Chen is not alone.

Huang Hsu Fong, a Taiwan resident who was granted a temporary residence permit for Zhuhai recently, also frequently cycles along the greenways in the city. "The Qinglyu Road greenway is one of my favorite routes when I am in Zhuhai," says Huang.

Xiao Chunying, the secretary-general of the Zhuhai Bicycle Sports Association, says that in addition to enjoying the beautiful scenery when cycling along the city's greenways, the sport can also help cyclists

After cycling along the city's greenways, I now know that Zhuhai actually has many historical sites, former residences of celebrities and ancient villages."

Xiao Chunying, secretary-general of the Zhuhai Bicycle Sports Association

meet people and understand Zhuhai's culture and history.

Xiao says she and her husband have been riding their bikes to every corner of Zhuhai since 2011.

"Previously, I knew Zhuhai only as a prosperous special economic zone. But after cycling along the city's greenways, I now know that Zhuhai actually has many historical sites, former residences of celebrities and ancient villages."

According to Xiao, her association has organized many cycling events along the city's greenways in recent years, and that has helped promote the city's cycling culture and attract more locals to become cycling enthusiasts.

The Zhuhai Tourism Development Center says the greenways provide ideal spaces for leisure, recreation and outdoor events, and help further boost the city's image, playing a big part in promoting the city's tourism industry.

According to the Zhuhai Bureau of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the city had a total of 1,098 kilometers of greenways and 58 service centers at the end of 2018. And the city's greenways network link more than 380 scenic spots and parks in the city.

Huang Jiewen contributed to this story.



A resident cycles along a greenway in Zhuhai in South China's Guangdong province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

it has endless biking routes for all levels, and one can easily rent a bike from a hotel or club to tour ancient villages to get local vegetables and fruits from farmers," says Spencer.

It is interesting that cycling in Yangshuo was discovered by foreign visitors.

In the 1980s, when the county was opened to foreigners and attracted backpackers around the world. They began to organize tours in early 1990s and because of the dirt paths, bicycles became the best tool to explore the countryside and many routes were developed at this time.

However, domestic tourists soon outnumbered foreign tourists by around 2005.

According to the local tourism bureau, the county received 17.5 million tourists from home and abroad in 2018, a 13 percent jump from the previous year.

As for the future, Spencer says: "With more people coming and the increasing fame of the county, cycling in Yangshuo will grow more popular than before."



visitors really want to see in China.

"They are quite familiar with Beijing, Shanghai, Xi'an or Chengdu, and the modernity of China, but they are very fascinated with the past and like a countryside tour."

Yangshuo is an ideal destination to explore the authentic countryside of South China.

As for what makes Yangshuo a biking paradise, Spencer says: "Now