Island promotes small-town sojourns

T he tropical island Hainan aims to be a top international tourism destination by 2020, according to a recent tourism development plan. One of the ways to achieve this is by popularizing the natural charms of the small towns and villages scattered across the island.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Hainan was cut off from the mainland and became a region of Southeast Asia with a distinct culture. After the 18th century, Hainan was opened up to the West, and a number of foreign missions came to the island. The town has experienced the changes firsthand.

“Before, the majority of my clients were local students in Qiongzhong. Now I have clients from Northeast China, who have been on vacation,” said Wang.

According to the overall plan for the province’s tourism development from 2020 to 2030, Hainan will develop as a tourism destination that promotes cultural and natural resources and produces souvenirs and handicrafts based on the village’s distinct characteristics.

Yuansheng Peng and his wife run a homestay in Beireng village in Qiongzhong town. The couple has seen a change in the village since they started a homestay.

“Development in the village and tourism have helped the villagers make a living without leaving their homes. This is especially important for the residents here,” Peng said.

The village has more than 300 ethnic minorities, and two Hainan villages known for their ethnic culture are selected. Hainan province is home to many ethnic groups, with the Li and Miao people prominent on the island.

The village has a number of activities for tourists to enjoy, including homestays, excursions, and other activities. Peng said that his homestay has made more than 5,000 yuan in one day.

First lady brings fame to Beireng

By HUANG YIMING

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Beipeng village in Qionghai city, Hainan province, attracts many visitors due to its picturesque views, rural lifestyle and surrounding scenic spots such as the Guantang scenic spot.

In the last two years, the fishing port of Beipeng, located on the eastern part of the island, attracted 450,000 visitors a day on average, and more than 10,000 during the weekends, with its fresh seafood and well-known soul-food dishes.

Recently, the China National Tourism Administration and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Rural Development released a list of 157 model tourist towns and villages. Zongrenqiao, Beihai and Beipeng towns in the island and two Hainan villages known for their ethnic cultures were selected.

Hainan’s tourism industry in the next decade,” added Wang. The provincial and county governments, the village has taken on an entire new look, with the repairing of dilapidated homes and barbecue area.

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Retreat to a village in the clouds

By HUANG YIMING

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Located at an altitude of more than 600 meters, Shitan village nestles among clouds in a mountainous region in Qionghai county in the central part of Hainan province.

The village has more than 260 ethnic Miao and 220 ethnic Li. It is used to be the most impoverished village in the county due to inconvenient transport, remote location and a backward economy.

However, since 2018, thanks to financial support from the provincial and county governments, the village has taken on an entire new look, with the repair of dilapidated houses and construction of public facilities such as a square, inns, and barbecue area.

For the others, the residents live in modern homes and have extra rooms they can use as homestays.

Although many rooms have no air conditioning, the village is an ideal place to escape the summer heat as it is cool at night due to the altitude.

In all, the village offers 15 homestay rooms, with prices ranging from 80 ($12.50) to 100 yuan per day, and two inns with 70 beds in total, with rooms ranging between 80 and 100 yuan per day. Visitors can also camp in the open air for 20 yuan per night.

Wang Gaomin, who owns a homestay in the village, said he hosted about 300 visitors during the Spring Festival, and made more than 3,000 yuan in one day from meals.

Visitors can enjoy authentic Miao and Li delicacies, including wild vegetables and bamboo shoots, fresh from the mountains, as well as Hong, everyday fare with a twist.

Shitan village in Qionghai, with its natural scenery and culture, is the perfect getaway from the stresses and strains of city life.