

High-rise buildings in Taiyuan are exquisitely decorated with light to celebrate the National Day.
SHI XIAOBO / FOR CHINA DAILY



Tributes to China mark national holiday

Period is an occasion for patriotic education, awakening people's love of the country



Residents visit a pedestrian street in the city of Yuncheng during the National Day festivities. YAN XIN / FOR CHINA DAILY



Tourists take pictures at a chili-drying ground in Bapanshan village in Liulin county. WANG FENGYUN / FOR CHINA DAILY



A child visits Taiyuan Museum along with her parents during the National Day vacation. WANG RUIRUI / FOR CHINA DAILY



From left: Travelers tour the ancient city of Pingyao. LIANG SHENGEN / FOR CHINA DAILY Tourists visit the Bell Tower Street in the Shanxi provincial capital of Taiyuan. LI ZHAOMIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Cities in Shanxi province have taken on a new appearance since the end of September, with streets, public squares and buildings decorated with red flags, Chinese knots, lanterns and a variety of flowers. The face-lift was designed to celebrate the National Day on Oct 1 and was aimed to create a festive atmosphere for visitors during the seven-day vacation that followed.

In the city of Yuncheng, many residents and visitors were attracted to Yudu Park, which was transformed into a fairyland with colorful lights, flowers and fountains, especially when night fell.

"The exquisite use of lighting is the unique selling point of the park," said Xie Yusheng, head of the park's administrative office.

"We have an illuminated water curtain for movie shows, we have fountains with colorful lights and we have lights on the trees, on the lawns and along the pathways.

"The lights have turned our park into a landscape that is totally different from what it looks like in the daytime," the official said.

In Lingshi county, the unique offering was groups of sculptures made from flowers on the square in front of the eastern railway station.

The sculptures formed a series of bonsais depicting mountains and rivers.

"The mountains and rivers may represent a landscape in abstract form," said Zhang Jianpu, an official at the gardening center of Lingshi. "They can be seen as the terrain of our country, or the varied landforms of our mother country in a broad sense."

During the National Day vacation, there were plenty of shows and performances in the provincial capital of Taiyuan. On Oct 1, a show of intangible cultural heritage opened in the Taiyuan Botanical Garden.

There were artists making wood carvings, paper-cuts, embroidery and dough figurines on the site, which attracted the attention of a great number of visitors.

"These things had been with us when we celebrated festivals in our childhood and now they are still with us," said Sun Yuxia, a local resident. "We are happy to see that these traditional legacies have been preserved. And we hope they can still shine in the future."

There were also novel shows of festivity in the rural areas of Shanxi.

In the village of Baijiashe in Yangqu county, for instance, the farms of broom sedge



China Shanxi

became a new attraction to tourists during the vacation.

Broom sedge is an emerging gardening plant in Shanxi. Its leaves turn red in September and October, turning the farms into great expanses of red and attracting tourists to see the sights and take pictures.

While offering an opportunity for residents to see the sights and relax, the National Day period is also an occasion for patriotic education, awakening people's love of the country, their respect of the forerunners who shaped the nation and their great expectations for the future.

When strolling on the streets on Oct 1, Li Dan, a resident in Taiyuan, said she was glad to see the red national flags everywhere in the city.

"Every time when I saw the national flags fly in the air, I couldn't hide my pride in the nation and I couldn't help but pray for the peace and prosperity for our people," Li said.

Red Tourism, featuring tours of sites related to the nation's revolutionary history, was popular among National Day vacationers.

A resident from Changzhi, whose surname is Han, took his son to visit the Taihang Eighth Route Army Museum in the county of Wuxiang.

Led by the Communist Party of China, the Eighth Route Army had been actively engaged in the fight against the Japanese in North China during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression in the 1930s and 1940s.

The county of Wuxiang, at the heart of the Taihang Mountains, was home to the headquarters of the army and a museum has been built at the site of the headquarters.

"A visit to the museum has given my son an opportunity to better learn about history," Han said. "Prior to visiting the museum, we toured the mountains in its vicinity, where the rising cliffs are known as 'the iron walls of Taihang'."

"And now we know the term 'iron walls of Taihang' is not only a description of the landscape, but also a tribute to the heroes who protected the nation by fighting the Japanese invaders. When the nation and the people were at their most critical moment, the warriors of the army honored their pledge to 'build a new Great Wall with their very flesh and blood,'" Han said.

Zhang Zhigang and Li Shu contributed to this story.



Residents visit a flower-decorated park in Changzhi city.

LIANG DONG / FOR CHINA DAILY



The broom sedge farms in the county of Yangqu become a new attraction for tourists when the plants' leaves turn red in autumn. LI ZHAOMIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

