



Editor's note: Every summer, visitors flock to Qingdao to indulge themselves at the seaside Laoshan Mountain or sailing on the ocean's whitecaps. The city also offers a variety of festivals in addition to its beautiful scenery and often cool temperatures. Along with the renowned Qingdao International Beer Festival, the city will also host an international sailing week and the Inter City Music Festival in August — welcoming visitors with a passion for sports, art, music and beer.

Qingdao beer fest brimming with events

Biggest in Asia, the 16-day carnival is set to begin

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An ideal escape from the sweltering summer heat often includes a glass of beer, and Qingdao never fails to complete the experience due to its renowned century-old brewery

and the grand festival that carries its name. Along with the fresh sea breeze, the aroma of beer in the air is a heady experience for everyone during the citywide Qingdao International Beer Festival revelry even if they don't drink. Now in its 22nd year, the

beer festival will begin in the second weekend of August at Beer City in Century Square of Laoshan district. A grand opening ceremony will kick off 16 days of carnival-like festivities on Aug 11. "After 21 years of experience, the festival is Asia's largest and has evolved into an impressive city signature event combining tourism, culture, trade, sports and a carnival," said Wei Shengji, general director of the news office for the Qingdao

municipal government. "Ganbei — or cheers — with the world is the eternal theme of the event. This slogan displays Qingdao's open and inclusive culture, and its citizens' passion and hospitality," he added. According to the organizing committee, an estimated 4 million visitors will consume 1,200 tons of beer this year, consolidating the festival's status as the largest of its kind in Asia and the top tourism event in China. The main venue has been relocated to Century Square, less than 2 kilometers north of the old Beer City, which is undergoing renovation and will resume its host function in 2015.

A grand opening ceremony, beer tasting, a carnival, performances, artistic parade, drinking competition, trade events and the closing ceremony will all take place in the square. Xia Zhengqi, commander in chief of the 22nd Qingdao International Beer Festival, said that 300 kinds of beer including 25 world-class brands from 16 countries will be provided for visitors throughout 12 grand tents this year, breaking records in a range of categories compared with previous festivals. "We have designed the 'Munich Style Drinking Area' to enhance the festival's international participation," he said. A "Crystalline Munich Palace" will even be built at city's International Convention and Exhibition Center to demonstrate the authentic Bavarian culture and lifestyle. With a wealth of beer brands from across the globe, the festival is brimming with diverse cultures, artistic performances and sports. "The festival is an occasion to transcend, transmit and mix different cultures and civilizations, which in turn form the unique character of the festival," said Wei. "And Qingdao people, immersed in its intrinsic Confucius culture, also embrace and renew themselves through this cultural diversity."

Xu Baofeng, deputy director of the Qingdao exhibition industry development office, said that in addition to the boisterous scene at Laoshan district, the other eight districts and county-level cities will also organize beer-themed events to meet robust demands from visitors and locals to be involved in the bash. Along Dengzhou Road, the 1,000-meter-long Tsingtao Beer Street is dubbed an everlasting beer festival that welcomes some 10,000 visitors daily and 3 million visits during the three summer months alone. Its amenities include a



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An intoxicating atmosphere, even for those who don't drink.

wide range of bars, restaurants, museums and leisure facilities. On July 20, Sifang Beer Street was officially opened to the public just across the river from the Tsingdao No 2 Brewery. Its location guarantees the freshest original beer.

On July 21, the third Qingdao West Coast (Golden Beach) Beer Carnival was as a prelude to the Qingdao International Beer Festival with over 10 world-renowned brands on offer including big names like Trappist, Valentine and Adler.

TSINGTAO OR QINGDAO? EITHER WAY, A BEER ICON

Tsingtao Brewery's century of history and worldwide reputation are the backbone of the Qingdao International Beer Festival. Though the old-fashioned spelling Tsingtao differs from the present-day rendering Qingdao, the beer is sometimes a much more recognized icon than the city itself. "The brand of the beer has already infiltrated into the blood of Qingdao residents. Many tourists know of Qingdao because of its beer. What's behind the beer is the vibrant culture and rich history that grows along with

the city," Tsingtao Beer Chairman Sun Mingbo said. Founded in 1903 as a joint venture by German and British settlers, the Tsingtao Beer brand is now valued at more than 63 billion yuan (\$9.9 billion), the top among Chinese brewers, and big enough to join the ranks of the Fortune 500. It is now sold in more than 70 countries and regions around the world, and ranks sixth globally in production, according to the Barth Report, an authoritative beer industry compilation. Sun said that Tsingtao

Beer's next goal in the not too distant future is to produce 10 million kiloliters yearly through mergers and acquisitions and expanded local output, while ramping up innovation and enhancing product quality. "We will continue to implement our three-in-one marketing strategy to boost market share through brand communication, product sales and consumer experience. Internally, we will strengthen quality control and stress on innovation in technology and business models," said Sun.

Full steam ahead as Asia's top yachting venue

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Now known by the world from its glory days as sailing host of the 2008 Olympics, Qingdao boasts a spectacular oceanfront playground for all kinds of water sports along its 863 kilometers of shoreline. Starting in 2009, Qingdao International Sailing Week has been held from the third Saturday in August and lasts 16 days. This year's event will begin on Aug 18 and conclude on Sept 2 at the Qingdao Olympic Sailing Center. Lin Zhiwei, head of the Qingdao Sports Federation and executive secretary of the committee for major sailing competitions and festivities in Qingdao, said this year's sailing week themed "Sailing capital to boost the blue transformation" has more than 40 activities. Divided into eight components, they include international sailing competitions, Olympic cultural exchanges, promotion of sailing knowledge and culture, sailing industry events and experience exchanges

among youth sailors. "At the forefront of China's opening up policy and the bridgehead of the Shandong peninsula blue economic zone, Qingdao will leverage its sailing week to promote communication with the international sailing community to develop the city's high-end sailing equipment manufacturing and related industries," said Lin. The event's Helmsman Series of exchanges include a Sailing Celebrity Dialogue, Sailing Star Challenge and an awards ceremony for the world's top players in the sport to share their sailing experiences and present the latest industry developments. Qu Chun, member of the race management committee of the International Sailing Federation and vice-secretary general of the Chinese Yachting Association, said the sailing week will also include activities to popularize sailing sports in schools and local communities. "We will hold sailboat and sailing experiences at the main site and three sub-venues to promote sailing to the youth, local citizens and tourists. This sport will develop into a prom-



Qingdao has gained a global reputation for its international sailing events.

ising industry, driving the city's sports and leisure economy." As the cradle of sport sailing in China, Qingdao has hosted international events ranging from the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Sailing Competitions to the Clipper Round the World race, the Volvo Ocean Race and the Extreme Sailing Series. More recently it was announced that Qingdao will host the Asia leg of the International Sailing Federation's ISAF Sailing World Cup in 2013 and 2014, according to ISAF. The concentration of sailing competitions has put Qingdao on course to lead as the top sailing destination in Asia. At the

same time, the local government is providing coaching to young sailors so they can carry on its Olympic legacy, expecting all-round prosperity by greater participation. Equipped with 1,050 sailboats and 200,000 sailing manuals, 138 sailing institutions ranging from public schools to yacht clubs had been founded by 2011. There are more than 10,000 young sailors in the city and 300 teachers who have passed national exams to be certified as sailing instructors. The Qingdao Olympic Sailing City Promotion Committee was founded in 2010 and the city joined the World Union of

Olympic Cities at the same year. Since 2009, the Qingdao Sailing Association has sent delegates to various sailing events across the globe, forging links with sailing associations in more than 20 countries and regions and the noted maritime cities of Incheon, South Korea, Kiel, Germany and Brest, France. Following the 2008 Olympics, International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge remarked that great changes had taken place since his previous visit to Qingdao in 2005. The city has become one of the world's top sailing venues with an excellent working team, he added.

Music gala ready to rock the peninsula

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As Qingdao basks in the limelight as nation's capital of sailing and the city of films, it has also written a score to become the peninsula of music. A string of top-notch cultural events in the city this summer includes the fourth Inter City Music Festival that opens on Aug 12. Japanese-Brazilian singer Lisa Ono will kick off this year's music festival on the night of Aug 12 with a bossa nova concert at the Qingdao Grand Theater. Other activities will be concentrated in a three-day carnival on Golden Beach in Huangdao, part of Qingdao's Economic and Technological Development Zone. The island is linked to downtown Qingdao by the world's longest sea bridge and a underwater tunnel. More than 100 artists from the United States, Canada, Germany, France and China are set to perform, including Powerman 5000, Louise Burns and Peaches. Cui Jian, known as the godfather of rock music in China, will continue his campaign against the lip syncing scandals of recent years by the

nation's entertainment celebrities. A massive stage named Gemini just completed at a large cost will ensure the audience can enjoy the spectacle at its best, said event officials. In addition, a photography exhibit featuring 50 years of rock 'n' roll in the United Kingdom will also be held during the festival.



FACTS
Location: East China's Shandong province
Size: 10,645 sq km
Population: 8.5 million
GDP in 2011: \$105.03 billion

QINGDAO
MONTHLY