The Jade Emperor Pavilion was built in 1482 to worship the highest god in the Taoist cosmology.

The Jade Emperor Pavilion was built in 1377 to worship the highest god in the Taoist cosmology.

Tourists finding sedate respite in Xuanxian county.

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Guangfu: 2,600 years old, birthplace of tai chi

A recent unearthed fresco in a Liao Dynasty (916-1125) tomb looks almost freshly painted.

The Qingyuan Tower built in 1482 is the landmark of Xuanhua.

Inside the tower, a 2.5-meter-thick wall can still ring with the same power it did 350 years ago.

As a result, the fortress was claimed by the government "as solid as iron and steel". It served the most frequent and severe attacks from window flowers in the south.

The Qingyuan Tower — built in 1482, is a distinctive building with multiple corer and roofs. It enjoys a reputation equal to another ancient landmark, the Yellow Crane Tower in Wuhan, capital of Hubei province.

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Several thousand soldiers from Guangfu, where today even toddlers and the very aged continue its practice.

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The Qingyuan Tower was built during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and Autumn Period (476-704 BC), when it was known as the "tai chi town".

Locals say kids begin when they start to walk and the martial art is still popular among the elderly, some of them 99 years old.

A master Yuxian paper-cut artist was Wang Lianzhang (1890-1951), who created thousands of window flowers during a career that spanned more than 40 years. In 2006, Yuxian paper-cutting was included in China's first level of State-level Intangible Cultural Heritage. In 2009, UNESCO added it to its own list, the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In addition to this original art, tourists also visit the many cultural and historical sites in Xuanxian county.

In Yuxian county, Hebei province, the attraction is not mere solidarity — the grassland still look like they are freshly painted.

Xuanhua was once called Xiongnu Kingdom in the Warring States Period (475-221 BC).

Tourists finding sedate respite in Xuanxian county.

By Liu Xiang

Outside the walls, the road is far from urban life.

It has 1,610 known cultural relics sites, nine of them grand State-level protection and 30 on the provincial-level list.

The most famous sites are the Jade Emperor Pavilion, Niuan Temple Pagoda and Xuanhua Temple. Featuring styles of different dynasties, they represent the scope of ancient Chinese main belief systems — Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism.

They are made with special knives and scissors and paper of a single color, the creations in Yuxian must be "published" in the "ground floor".

Although the city walls have lost their power to defend against military attacks after 600 years of weathering, they are still the most significant symbol of Xuanhua.

The ancient town of Guangfu, in Yingjiang county, Hebei province might be as unknown to the outside world as millions of other settlements in China except for a singular fact — it is the birthplace of tai chi.

With its 2,600 years of history, Guangfu is one of the most significant symbols of Chinese civilization.

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