



Industrial park sets higher standards

Excellent facilities and location make it a top draw for business and culture, **Fu Chao** reports.

Suzhou Industrial Park, one of the most important and successful cooperation projects between China and Singapore, has become an impressive new venue of international standards after 20 years of development.

The industrial park's Jinji Lake is making headlines these days because the 2015 World Table Tennis Championships will come to the city's International Expo Centre, which is located along the lake.

The Jinji Lake Scenic Area is the only 5A scenic area in China that focuses on business tourism. The 5A ranking is the highest for scenic areas.

The lake and its scenic area are a renowned tourism spot in the country. In the past 20 years, the industrial park has built a variety of business and cultural facilities around the lake, making the lakeside a hub for business, culture and tourism.

The Suzhou International Expo Centre and the Suzhou Culture and Arts Centre, operated by the Suzhou Culture and Expo Centre, play a significant role in the city's emerging meetings, incentives, conferences and events industry, also known as MICE.

The two centres have improved facilities and services to be fully ready for the coming championships. The international expo centre, opened in 2004, is the major player of the city's MICE industry. The centre has hosted more than 1,000 events in the past 11 years.

According to the international expo centre, the largest advantage the centre has to appeal to the championships is its variety.

The international expo centre offers a range of competition venues, as well as a media centre, meeting rooms and other facilities, creating "one stop" services in a single cluster.

The culture and arts centre will be the venue of the opening ceremony on Saturday. During the championships, the centre will present a range of performances and cultural activities. Visitors and athletes from around the world can enjoy a ballet, a musical, a movie, or an art exhibition after watching a competition.

In 2012, Suzhou Culture and Expo Centre combined the expo centre and arts centre under its operation, an innovative move to explore new ways to develop the MICE industry in Suzhou.

Industry insiders said that the combination brings more possibilities and business opportunities to the industry. The city's booming culture and art scene will be a large attraction for its MICE industry, and MICE will also bring more opportunities to the tourism industry.

Suzhou has long been renowned for its abundant cultural and historic heritage. Its classical gardens, ancient streets, canal, Kunqu Opera and other traditional folk arts create a unique appeal for the city's MICE industry.

Suzhou Culture and Expo Centre makes full use of these local resources and advantages through the combination of the two centres, endeavoring to develop the nation's demonstration area for business travel in the industrial park. The scenic landscapes and historic relics along Jinji Lake are no longer silent fossils of history. They are now alive with art performances, community activities and exhibitions.

Suzhou Culture and Expo Centre also has a range of projects underway in sectors including hospitality, entertainment and tourism, aiming to offer more various services.

The commercial plaza, iStation, which opened on March 27, is the city's new shopping, dining and entertainment destination.

According to Suzhou Culture and Expo Centre, construction of the city international conference centre and a Novotel hotel will be complete by October. The expo centre's exhibition and conference facilities will be improved to reach a level that can serve international events such as APEC and the World Economic Forum.

Suzhou Culture and Expo Centre launched a program in 2014 to offer better information services. The entire international expo centre has high-speed Wi-Fi. Exhibitors will receive updated information on the venue and event schedule during the expo. The centre will also launch a program that can record and analyze the number of visitors to each booth as well as the time they have spent there.

China's MICE industry is booming in major cities such as Shanghai and Beijing. As a close neighbor of Shanghai, Suzhou can share some business opportunities with Shanghai.

The World Table Tennis Championships this year offers Suzhou Culture and Expo Centre an opportunity to further promote itself on the global stage.

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A night view of Jinji Lake in Suzhou Industrial Park. PHOTO BY GU YIMING / FOR CHINA DAILY

SCENIC SITES AROUND SUZHOU'S LAKES



The Gate of the Orient, a 301.8-meter-tall skyscraper in Suzhou Industrial Park.



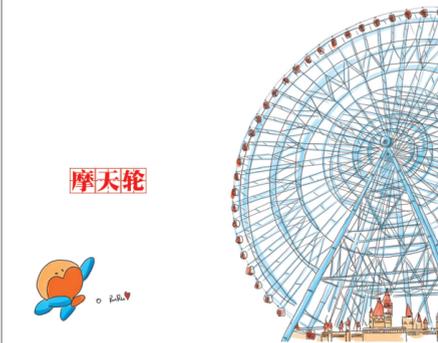
Yangcheng Lake is famous for its crabs.



A church by the side of Dushu Lake in Suzhou.



Night life is also colorful here in Suzhou.



The ferris wheel near Jinji Lake is another tourist attraction. ILLUSTRATIONS BY JIA RU

Lakes add to park's unique appeal to business investors

By **FU CHAO**
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In addition to Jinji Lake, two other famous lakes can be found in Suzhou Industrial Park, adding to the park's unique appeal.

Dushu Lake and the Yangcheng Lake have picturesque natural landscapes and play different roles in the functioning of the industrial park.

Dushu Lake

The pronunciation of *Dushu* is similar to the Mandarin word for "reading". Coincidentally, the lakeside area is renowned for its education and innovation industry.

Dushu Lake Library, which opened in 2005, is the center for most cultural activities in the lake area.

In 2012, the library renovated and developed its 15 community branches in the industrial park.

According to the industrial park, 25 national and foreign institutes have offices in the Dushu Lake area. Among them are the University of Science and Technology of China, Renmin University of China, Nanjing University, the University of California, Berkeley, and the National University of Singapore.

Top academic institutes include the Suzhou Institute of Nano-tech and Nano-bionics, jointly founded in March 2006 by the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the local government, the National University Science Park, BioBay, a



Students enjoy a moment of reading in Suzhou Industrial Park.

biological and the nanotechnology park, as well as many other high-tech industry incubators.

The lake area just set up an association of universities earlier this month. Twenty-three universities that have branches or institutions in the area — including Renmin University of China, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University and Soochow University — have joined the association. The association will offer students and teachers integrated study resources.

As one of the regular programs at the lake area, the Lakeside Forum features scholars and industry insiders from around the world to discuss major topics in culture, business and politics. The monthly event has been running for nine years and is one of the most popular cultural activities in the lake area.

The world-renowned Cold Spring Harbor

Laboratory, the cradle of major breakthroughs in molecular biology, has partnered with the Industrial Park to set up a conference center near Dushu Lake. The program has initiated a series of international scientific conferences and courses at the lake area since 2010, later becoming the Cold Spring Harbor Asia Conferences. A total of 12 Nobel laureates have given speeches at the conference. What is more impressive is that four of the scholars received Nobel Prizes after attending the conference.

Yangcheng Lake

While Dushu Lake is where people read and learn, Yangcheng Lake is where they can relax and spend their vacations.

Every autumn, gourmets flock to Yangcheng Lake to taste its famous Yangcheng Lake crab.

The extensive transportation system, cluster of accommodation facilities, and famous tourism spots such as Chongyuan Temple and historic site Caoxie Mountain attract many tourists to the lake area every year.

During the crab harvest season, the local market offers the best Yangcheng Lake crabs in the country, and visitors can also enjoy the authentic local cuisine at farm stays.

There is also a bicycle trail along the lake where people can rent a bicycle and go for a ride.

The Yangcheng Lake area has now positioned itself as a destination for leisure activities and is already a leading player in this sector among the surrounding regions.



Ligong Causeway (with pagoda), which crosses Jinji Lake is 1,400 meters long. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Chongyuan Temple by Yangcheng Lake has a history of more than 1,000 years.