



Tourists from home and abroad sample grapes and experience traditional winemaking. Ju Chuanjiang



Overseas tourists at the Changyu Wine Culture Museum in Yantai. Ju Chuanjiang



The wine cellars of the Junding Chateau in Yantai. Ju Chuanjiang

## Port city shifts from red wine to 'blue' tourism

By ZHAO RUIXUE

Red is the colour most frequently associated with Yantai, due to the ever-popular Changyu wine sourced from the region, but that may change – if the city succeeds in its bid to become a “blue tourism” resort.

Yantai, the largest seaport in the northeastern Shandong province, is now looking to fully exploit its marine resources and establish itself as an international travel and leisure resort.

Explaining the move, Yin Guowen, director of the Yantai Tourism Bureau, said: “Yantai sees fully utilizing its coastal resources as crucial to building itself into an international tourism destination, and mak-

ing the best use of its many unique features.

“The sea around Yantai is home to more than 50 islands. We also have a 300 km-long beach, part of our 900 km-long coastline that constitutes one third of the total length of Shandong’s coast. The combination of these elements is sure to make Yantai a popular destination for holiday-makers from China and beyond.”

In order to boost the prospects for its nascent tourism industry, the local authorities have drawn up a series of guidelines aimed at boosting its “blue tourism” offer. The adoption of these protocols will be a key part of its transition into a tourism-led economy.

During the first half of the year, some 12 million tourists came to experience the city,

with around 172,000 of them coming from overseas. This represents a 15.24 and 3.78 percent respective increase over the same period last year. These visitors generated a total revenue of 11.88 billion yuan, again showing a year-on-year increase, this time of 16.94 percent.

The advent of the summer season gave the city’s tourism initiatives added momentum. Its 41 major scenic spots welcomed 4 million tourists in July, an increase of a massive 63.3 percent over the same period last year.

### Tourism advantages

Yantai was listed among the first tranche of Excellent China Tourism Cities in 1998. In the wake of this, the city’s four prefecture-level counties

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Director of the Yantai Tourism Bureau

– Penglai, Longkou, Qixia and Haiyang – were also acknowledged as Excellent China Tourism Cities. The nearby Changdao island county has

also been designated as one of the country’s premier tourist destinations. All of these have made Yantai the most feted tourism destination in Shandong.

With its position as the resort of choice for visitors to Shandong now unequivocally established, the city has developed five provincial-level tourism sites, all set against stunning ocean and mountain backdrops.

Revenues generated by just four of the five sites – Jinshtan, Yangmadao, Penglai and Haiyang – are now estimated at 5.63 billion yuan per annum.

With the “blue tourism” initiative set to become a reality, another eight coastal resorts are now at the planning stage.

Away from its coastal charms, the city has a number of inland attractions that have long proved popular with visitors.

These include a 100 km-long “grape belt”, the source of its wine stocks, and an array of health-enhancing hot springs. Most popular of all, though, is its Nanshan Golf Club, which boasts 270 holes, making it the largest in the world. Last year, the golf club welcomed 175,000 players of which 134,000 were from overseas.

Besides its more recently introduced leisure facilities Yantai’s cultural heritage is also a major highlight for visitors to the city.

During the time of the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907), Dengzhou, a suburb of Yantai was the embarkation point for

China’s ancient “maritime silk road”. To showcase its rich array of offshore relics, the Yantai authorities have constructed a dedicated aquatic sightseeing route, encompassing visits to the Penglai Pavilion, the Sanxian Mountain (“Three fairies Mountain”) and the Kunyu Mountain.

Its rich tourism resources have made Yantai an attractive prospect for both Chinese and overseas investors.

Businesses from more than 20 countries and regions, including South Korea, Japan and Singapore, have to date signed 114 contracts with the city authorities, representing a total investment of 73.9 billion yuan in its tourism industry. Of these projects, 47 are already under construction, involving funding of 28.8 billion yuan.

## Vintage year looms for third Yantai wine festival

By LI JIAXIA

YANTAI: The Third Yantai International Wine Festival will be held in Yantai, in the northeastern Shandong province, on September 23.

At the time of going to press, there are already more than 100 exhibitors lined up for the event, with more than 310 booths already confirmed – including 90 from overseas companies. It is expected that 2,000 business delegates from outside China will participate in the event.

The exhibitors and organizations attending the festival have been largely drawn from the world’s top 10 wine producing countries and China’s top 10 wine producing regions.

At present, there are more than 100 wine-related enterprises from China and all around the world signed up

to participate, including delegates from France, Germany, Australia and Chile.

Those attending include the French Champagne Association, the Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation and the Spanish Wine Market Research Association.

A number of overseas embassies in China have also confirmed they will be sending a delegation to the event. Representatives from France, Australia, Chile, South Africa, and Moldova will be in attendance, as will government delegations from the Loire region of France and Langen City in Germany.

A number of China’s leading wine producers – including Changyu, Great Wall, Baiyanghe and 100 other associated businesses have also confirmed their participation. Tianjin, Yinchuan, Foshan, and Tonghua are also

expected to send representatives.

This festival will focus on highlighting the strengths of the national and international wine industry, as well seeking to build its reputation among Chinese and foreign consumers.

The exhibition will be divided into several different sections – including imported wine, domestic wine, brewing processes, brewing and storage craft, brewing machinery and equipment, packaging and processing technology and equipment, wine labeling and wine containers, grape seeds, cultivation techniques, and means of production.

In addition, there will be a number of workshops and panel discussions held during the course of the event.

Highlights are said to include the International Wine Industry Development Forum and the Leading Wine Enterprises Summit. These will focus on issues such as “The Wine Industry and Sustainable Development and “Economic Globalization and the International Wine Trade”.

More than 20 different kinds of event are promised during the course of the festival, including cultural, economic and trade talks, wine tastings and wine cultural tours.

The fair has been co-sponsored by the International Vine and Wine Organization, the China Alcoholic Drinks Industry Association and the People’s Government of Shandong.



High-speed boating at the Penglai Pavilion. Ju Chuanjiang

## Grape expectations: wine culture tourism proves a winning formula

By WANG QIAN

As the grape harvesting season approaches, increasing numbers of tourists are heading to Yantai to explore for themselves the city’s vast expanse of coastal vineyards. Here they can observe the traditional skills of the city’s winemaking industry, help pick the grapes and, most temptingly, sample some of its excellent vintages.

Yantai’s “wine culture” tourism has become one of the most fashionable styles of vacations for visitors to the northeastern Shandong province. The Changyu Wine Culture Museum plays host to more than 12,000 visitors from at home and abroad every day.

In the corridors of the Changyu Castel Chateau, tourists are able to sample

fine wines, whilst enjoying its excellent sea views. It is fast becoming the favorite pastime of overseas visitors.

Hong Yuyan, general manager of the Changyu International Wine City, said: “The interest that overseas visitors take in the wine culture of our city is quite staggering. Over the past three years, the number of foreign visitors has doubled annually.”

According to local statistics, the Changyu Wine Tour is the only one of the city’s attractions to have attracted 130,000 tourists in the first eight months of the year.

Yantai is the only place in Asia to be acknowledged as an “International Grape and Wine City”, a rare honor bestowed by the International Office of Vine and Wine. As a result, Yantai has now become one of the major destinations for China Wine

Culture Tourism.

Considered as the world’s seventh-largest grape coast, Yantai is viewed as the traditional birthplace of China’s wine industry. Its output of wine accounts for over 30 percent of the total produced in the country.

Along the 100 km coast is some 250,000 mu (16,675 hectares) of vineyards, complete with picturesque chateaux bestriding the landscape. The city is home to more than 10 chateaux, including such fine examples as the Changyu Castle, Nanshan and Junding chateaux. Such is their popularity, that there are now 20 new wine chateaux under construction. Chateaux of all description are now a major attraction for the increasing number of foreign visitors heading to Yantai every year.

A series of wine-related projects are also under construction. These include the World Wine Expo Center and the Wine-Style Street, which, it is hoped, will attract wine entrepreneurs from all around the world to invest in the city, according to Yin Guowen, director of the Yantai Tourism Bureau.

Yin says: “Yantai’s wine tourism is designed to integrate sightseeing, leisure holidays and wine culture, making it extremely competitive in the modern tourism industry. The city’s reputation as the Oriental Wine Coast has also acted as a lure for tourists from all over the world.”

Since 2007, an International Wine Festival has been held annually in Yantai, providing a further boost to both the local tourist industry and the popularity of the city.



A bird's eye view of the coastal city's seaside tourism resort.



The coastal view of Yantai. Hou Heliang