

# Research on Hangzhou Qiaoxi Historical and Cultural District Cultural Tourism Development

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## ABSTRACT

In order to improve the current situation of weak regional competitiveness and lack of characteristic tourism model in Hangzhou Qiaoxi historical and cultural district, for the optimization of the cultural tourism industry in the district methods and countermeasures, research to understand the current development status and cultural content of Hangzhou Qiaoxi historical and cultural district and its cultural tourism industry, SWOT analysis of its advantages, disadvantages, development facing opportunities and challenges, found that the cultural tourism industry has a single form of cultural and creative, low social visibility and other problems. Based on its own advantages and environment, this paper proposes the integration of existing cultural resources, the construction of cultural creativity, marketing, development, revitalization and other means of improvement.

**Keywords:** *Hangzhou Qiaoxi historical and cultural district, cultural tourism, countermeasures, SWOT*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the development of economic globalization and integration, tourism has become an important support and driving force for the high and stable growth of the world economy. The comprehensive and interrelated nature of tourism determines that tourism relies on multiple industries in order to develop in a coordinated manner. The deep integration of culture and tourism helps the cultural tourism industry to have a deeper cultural connotation, stronger participation and interaction, a longer industrial chain and stronger economic benefits[1]. Since the reform and opening up, while satisfying the basic material needs of life, people have begun to increasingly pursue the richness of spiritual life, and cultural tourism has gradually become a hot spot for people to focus on consumption. Cultural tourism helps to promote and inherit China's excellent traditional culture by enhancing people's cultural foundation and connotation through understanding regional historical background and traditional culture in the form of tourism.

## 2. THE DEVELOPMENT STATUS OF CULTURAL TOURISM IN HANGZHOU'S QIAOXI HISTORICAL DISTRICT

In recent years, with the growing living standard of residents, China's tourism industry has entered a rapid

development stage. After the establishment of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the national policy reflects the direction of integrated development and coordinated development of culture and tourism. Recently, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism announced the "14th Five-Year Plan" for the development of culture and tourism, which calls for improving the system of cultural heritage protection and heritage utilization, and promoting the integrated development of culture and tourism. As a carrier that can reflect the traditional appearance and national and local characteristics of a certain historical period in a more complete way, governments around the world have also begun to pay attention to the protection and upgrading of historical and cultural districts. The Hangzhou Municipal Government has completed the implementation of the "Implementation Plan for the Protection of the Historic and Cultural District of Qiaoxi" to maintain and renovate the buildings and streets in the area west of Gongchen Bridge, in order to strengthen the protection and promotion of the cultural heritage of the Grand Canal and to play an organic role in the development of the city.

Hangzhou Qiaoxi historical and cultural district cohesion of the times, carrying precious memories, the community sentiment, for its protection and development, the public has been closely concerned about the situation. Gongchen Bridge Street Party Working Committee took the Qiaoxi historical and cultural district as an important

node of the canal culture demonstration circle in Gongchen Bridge area, and the key project led by the Party Secretary, and implemented the whole area of Qiaoxi landscape enhancement. Recently, the historical district of Qiaoxi was successfully selected as the provincial "street appearance demonstration street" in 2020. Hangzhou continues to implement the canal comprehensive protection project, promote the construction and improvement of the project of the historical building street of Qiaoxi and the commercial area along the river. The project is aimed at improving the environment of the river basin and revitalizing the shipping and water conservancy functions in Qiaoxi. Also develop canal tourism and cultural products, and actively organize cultural activities such as canal temple fairs and canal culture weeks. To further develop the historical and cultural district of Qiaoxi, it is necessary to realize the effective combination of cultural resources and production factors, form an integrated organizational management and development plan, and improve the new governance model[2].

### 3. CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURAL TOURISM IN HANGZHOU'S QIAOXI HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL DISTRICT

Hangzhou Qiaoxi Historical and Cultural District is located on the west bank of the main channel of the Grand Canal (Hangzhou section), from the first cotton spinning mill in Hangzhou in the north to Deng Yun Road in the south, from Xiaohe Road in the west to the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal in the east, covering an area of 7.83 hectares. During the Tongzhi period of the Qing Dynasty, Hangzhou Qiaoxi Historical and Cultural

District became a water and land transportation hub of the canal by relying on Gongchen Bridge, forming a characteristic river town economy, thus forming a historical and cultural district where urban residents gathered, and is an important area reflecting the historical scenes along the Grand Canal (Hangzhou section), which has preserved many intact residential buildings along the river in the late Qing and early Ming dynasties, as well as a large number of modern industrial remains. The buildings of the West Bridge Historical and Cultural District are laid out in a dotted and scattered manner, with a large number of streets and lanes and traditional courtyards retaining their texture, extending from the western riverside to the interior, forming characteristic lane spaces and bridgehead businesses[3].

"Memories of Jiangnan, Hangzhou is the most memorable." Hangzhou is named after water, moistened by water, and flourished by water. Qiaoxi historical and cultural district has a strong regional traditional art atmosphere, depicting the unique Jiangnan characteristics of the Grand Canal culture and expressing the intelligent, resourceful and worldly Wu-Yue culture. The historic and cultural district of Qiaoxi integrates the ancient canal culture, and on the basis of the original factory ruins, three major national museums of industry have been reconstructed - China Knife, Scissors and Sword Museum, China Fan Museum and China Umbrella Museum, which have become an important platform for the dissemination of Hangzhou canal culture. The Fang Huichun Hall (a Hall refers to a traditional medicine store in China) and Tianlu Hall in the district have been famous for their authentic medicinal materials, fair prices and exquisite medical skills for several years. They have formed a canal culture with national medicine, health and wellness, and traditional craftsmanship as the main features.



Figure 1 Tianlu Hall (Photo source: Taken by the author)



**Figure 2** Fang Huichun Hall (Photo source: Taken by the author)

At the end of the 19th century, the establishment of the national industrial enterprise Tongyi Gong Yarn Factory created an urban residential area centered on the yarn factory in Qiaoxi, which led to a large number of merchants, dock porters and factory workers gathering here, gradually forming a food and commercial and living facility mainly for the lower and middle classes of the city, and forming a modern cotton textile industrial culture with canal characteristics of production, storage and transportation. The establishment of the Japanese Concession in 1895 led to the settlement of many Japanese merchants in the area and the complex social structure, forming the rich characteristic canal culture of Qiaoxi neighborhood today[4]. Hangzhou had a full-scale renovation and upgrading of the architectural streets of the Qiaoxi neighborhood, restoring the public buildings with local folklore characteristics such as the Zhang Daxian Temple, the Temple of the God of Wealth (a Temple refers to the place dedicated to a god or a famous person in China) and the Central Set Shi Tea Material Association Public House, preserving the modern industrial plants and traditional commercial stores such as the First Cotton Spinning Mill, the Honglei Silk Weaving Factory, and the Souvenir Warehouse, and restoring the Jing Sheng Li lane style buildings constructed into a joint courtyard style with waterfront characteristics of traditional residential houses. At the same time, the comprehensive preservation project of Qiaoxi historical district adopts the relocation method to recreate the living condition of the aborigines living by water, preserving the simple and pleasant folk customs, and retaining the original old lifestyle and ritual food culture of the canal area to the greatest extent.

#### **4. ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL TOURISM INDUSTRY IN HANGZHOU'S QIAOXI HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL DISTRICT**

##### ***4.1. Strengths: Rich Cultural Heritage And New Industrial Model***

Hangzhou's Qiaoxi historical and cultural district has a strong cultural atmosphere and a large number of museums concentrated. Through a cluster of arts and crafts museums with Hangzhou characteristics and canal features, the museums will gather and attract visitors, and through this form, promote the development of the economy and facilities in the area of Qiaoxi historical and cultural street, and drive the development of the surrounding tourism and business model. At the same time, a handicraft live demonstration area is set up, where the production techniques of Hangzhou traditional Zhang Xiaoquan scissors, Wang Xingji fans, West Lake silk umbrellas and other intangible heritage are demonstrated on site, passing intangible cultural heritage to the audience through visual and auditory senses, allowing visitors to gain an in-depth understanding and experience of traditional handicrafts[5]. It also provides on-site display and sales of related handicrafts and production experience, so that visitors can learn to make these crafts themselves, making the tour process participatory and interesting.

At the same time its well preserved and restored buildings of the late Qing Dynasty and Republic of China period, preserved the original labor life scenes, preserved the courtyard buildings with white walls and black tiles,

wooden doors and windows and the green stone streets, restored the shipping dock ruins, showing the history of freight dock handling development, enhancing tourists' understanding of dock life and the experiential nature of tourism. The use of traditional residential buildings to renovate old stores creates a quaint and authentic atmosphere of slow life. Transforming museums on industrial sites gives cultural heritage a new type of character and charm[6].

Modern elements are reasonably integrated into the block, organically combined with the traditional business, and new business ecology is introduced. Through the integrated business model, the popularity of the whole block is driven, and new vitality is injected into the cultural block. Infrastructure is relatively completely, within the blocks help introduce Hangzhou restaurant, restaurant, cafe and calligraphy studio, boutiques, pottery room, bar, embodies the slow way of life of leisure, not only satisfy the neighborhood residents required for life, also offers tourists visit to have a rest at the same time, cultural experience, at the same time reasonable balancing the needs of the population and urban leisure tourists.

#### ***4.2. Weaknesses: Lack Of Distinctive Features, Promotion Is Not In Place***

The homogenization of Hangzhou Qiaoxi historical and cultural district is serious, the public leisure space pattern is similar and the functions are convergent, copying the development mode of the same type of cultural district, adopting the same business model, lacking uniqueness and innovation, and unable to attract foreign tourists to visit. Although the ancient buildings are protected, they do not create a spatial landscape with regional characteristics to bring out the local characteristics to the greatest extent.

With the continuous development of modern communication technology and diversification of communication forms, a good promotion mode will bring a strong impetus and huge economic benefits to the regional tourism industry. And Qiaoxi neighborhood does not rely on network television and other media to do a good job of communication and promotion of Qiaoxi neighborhood, resulting in less visibility, less traffic, and unable to form a large-scale tour mode.

Hangzhou Qiaoxi neighborhood lacks in-depth excavation of traditional industrial culture core, the connotation of cultural products is thin, lacking selling points and attractiveness, blindly introducing other cultural types of products, the form of cultural activities is single, without forming a characteristic business model and regional cultural activities[7]. The correlation between the industries in the neighborhood and the cultural theme of the neighborhood is not strong, the integration is not strong, no integral characteristic

business system is formed, and it is impossible to create a cultural card with regional characteristics.

#### ***4.3. Opportunities: Overall Locational Advantage***

Hangzhou, as a key scenic tourist city and historical and cultural city, it has many special locational advantages. Hangzhou is the transportation hub of Zhejiang Province, with dense railway and aviation lines. It has a good economic foundation and active private capital, so there are enough funds to promote the innovation and development of the tourism industry. The city has high popularity, sufficient tourism resources, and comprehensive construction of basic service facilities, so the number of the tourists is large and the passenger flow is stable. These locational conditions provide a strong guarantee for promoting the development of cultural tourism industry in the Qiaoxi historical and cultural district, and has a strong location advantage for promoting the Qiaoxi historical and cultural district.

The Hangzhou Municipal People's Government implemented the Regulations on the Protection of Historic and Cultural Districts and Historic Buildings in Hangzhou on October 1, 2013, and issued the Rules for the Implementation of the Regulations on the Protection of Historic and Cultural Districts and Historic Buildings in Hangzhou on April 11, 2014. It is evident that the Hangzhou government attaches great importance to the protection and development of historical and cultural districts, so that when further carrying out the protection and management of the announced historical lots in the administrative area of the city, it can obtain strong policy support from the government and carry out its work in a reasonable and orderly manner under the overall guidance of the higher authorities.

With the improvement of the economic level and the national sense of cultural identity, more and more people begin to pay attention to cultural tourism travel, and the historical and cultural district, as a comprehensive cultural heritage form with a certain scale with regional and contemporary characteristics formed in the process of urban development, has become one of the preferred destinations for popular cultural tourism, which is extremely favorable for the development of the historical and cultural district.

#### ***4.4. Threats: The Threat Of "Homogenization" Itself And Similar Historic And Cultural Districts***

Hangzhou city has a long history and rich tourism resources. Hangzhou West Lake, Leifeng Pagoda and Lingyin Temple are well known and also attract many travelers, making the tourism industry of Qiaoxi Historical and Cultural District facing challenges. At the same time, Hangzhou Qiaoxi Historical and Cultural

District is also threatened by other historical and cultural districts, also located in Hangzhou City are the Southern Song Dynasty Imperial Street, Xiaohuzhi Street, in cities closer to Hangzhou, Shanghai Xintiandi, Ningbo Drum Tower, Suzhou Pingjiang Historical and Cultural District, etc. are also distinctive in their own way. In order to get long-term development, Hangzhou Qiaoxi historical and cultural district needs to seek and adhere to the development method with its own characteristics, so as to improve the attractiveness of tourists, avoid homogenization, and avoid copying the landscape construction, business model and publicity form of other historical and cultural districts.

## 5. CULTURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF HANGZHOU'S QIAOXI HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL DISTRICT

### 5.1. Enriching Cultural Activities And Cultural Derivatives

In combination with the cultural tone within the general regional environment of Hangzhou, emphasis should be placed on tapping the traditional cultural core of the Qiaoxi historical and cultural district, extracting the unique canal landscape elements, neighborhood architectural elements and arts and crafts elements in the area. At the same time, focus on investigating the preference of the main visitor flow for different types and functions of cultural and creative products, and develop core cultural derivatives[8]. Invite famous designers or hold design competitions to revitalize and innovate cultural and creative products, which will not only effectively boost economic growth, but also play a role in promoting the culture within the neighborhood to the society.

In response to the needs of visitors of different age groups and characteristics, cultural activities and art exhibitions are held with a sense of experience and participation by integrating folk traditions and modern forms. For example, we invite folk artists to perform live Chinese opera and calligraphy and tea art during the water bus rides[9].

### 5.2. Strengthen Publicity And Promotion Efforts

According to the survey, 76% of the people get tourism information through the network channel, so it is extremely crucial to make use of new media such as new media with low cost and good communication effect. Newspapers, public numbers, short video APP and other communication methods suitable for different groups can be used to build channels for tourists to understand neighborhood information, vigorously promote regional culture with characteristics, attract more local residents and foreign tourists, and achieve the purpose of revitalization. It can focus on creating publicity

highlights with the museum as the main feature, and attracting visits from parents of students from all over the world through its pro-entertainment activity features and educational significance. Paper brochures with visual impact and commemorative collections such as neighborhood maps and postcards can also be designed to attract visitors' attention and achieve promotional purposes through artistic infections.

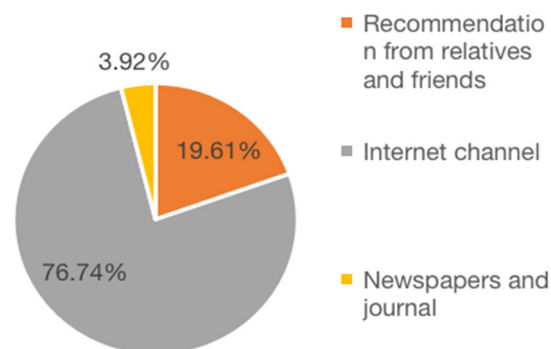


Figure 3 Channels of Qiaoxi District's tourists to get tourism information

### 5.3. Optimize District And Industry Structure

According to the survey, 68% of the population believes that the optimization of cultural tourism development in the historical and cultural district of Qiaoxi should start with the formation of regional characteristics of the tourist landscape. Therefore, we should protect the diversity of landscape architectural style of Qiaoxi historical and cultural district, and pay attention to the survival and protection of buildings and environment of different periods in order to maintain the integrity and continuity of Qiaoxi historical environment in time. At the same time, public facilities and guiding signs in the neighborhood should not be homogenized, but should extract regional cultural elements, adopt excellent ideas for systematic visual design, introduce stores with cultural characteristics of the neighborhood, create a unique cultural atmosphere within the neighborhood, make its cultural connotation deep into the hearts of tourists, and create a regional business card by strengthening its own image[10].

## 6. CONCLUSION

In the context of the era of mass tourism, the cultural tourism industry has received widespread attention from the society as it strengthens the cultural output and increases the sustainability of tourism at the same time. As an important treasure in the development process of the times, we should preserve its original historicity and authenticity, but also keep pace with the times and focus on its innovative development, so that it can adapt to the development requirements of today's society. At present,



although there are many historical and cultural districts in China, most of them fail to create regional characteristic culture, the cultural tourism industry development model is similar and lacking in attractiveness, and the imperfect spatial planning leads to the inefficiency of tourists' visit and cannot realize the expected functions. Based on the SWOT analysis model, this thesis analyzes and proposes optimization strategies for the cultural tourism industry of Hangzhou's Qiaoxi historical and cultural district as a case study, in order to be able to publicize and promote canal culture, protect and promote cultural heritage, activate the cultural tourism industry of Qiaoxi historical and cultural district, and at the same time provide ideas and references for the optimization paths of historical and cultural districts in other regions, so that the historical and cultural district can give full play to its historical value.

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