

China Travel

—inviting the world to experience a real China

Contents

Chapter 1

“China Travel” Takes the World by Storm2

Chapter 2

“China Travel” Offers a Direct Insight into the Achievements of
Chinese Modernization
..... 8

Chapter 3

“China Travel” Presents China as a Country Worthy of Trust,
Love, and Respect
..... 16

Chapter 4

“China Travel” Promotes Inter-civilizational Exchanges and
Learning
.....21

Introduction

Travel reflects humanity's hope and pursuit of a beautiful life and serves as a vital pathway to discovering the novel and the unexplored. Since entering the new era, China has focused its efforts on improving its modern tourism industry system and accelerating the construction of a strong tourism nation. Its tourism industry is becoming an emerging strategic pillar that is playing an ever-greater role in, among others, improving life quality, stimulating economic growth, nurturing a spiritual home, projecting China's image, and fostering inter-civilizational learning.

Since the beginning of 2024, China has further expanded its list of visa-free entry countries and made payment, communication, and travel more convenient for inbound tourists. This has led to a substantial surge in the number of international visitors to China, the "China Travel" trend gaining momentum on global social media platforms. The array of measures China has adopted to facilitate travel for foreigners is not only promoting a better and faster growth of the culture and tourism sectors, but also stands as a living testament to China's steadfast pursuit of high-level international openness.

Tens of millions of tourists hailing from across the globe have witnessed China's openness, confidence, civilization, and security and have experienced firsthand the monumental achievements of China's modernization. This has helped change the one-sided stereotypes of China imposed by the U.S. and some other Western countries, fostering exchanges, mutual recognition, and learning between different civilizations.

China Travel has introduced the world to a country that is trustworthy, endearing, and respectable—a China that is more genuine and closer to reality.

Chapter I

“China Travel” Takes the World by Storm

Since the beginning of 2024, China has rolled out an array of measures to facilitate travel for inbound international visitors, continuing to optimize the channels for foreigners to visit the country. Along with the continuing flow of these policy dividends, there is a steady upsurge of tourists from abroad, with a spiraling number of inbound visitors. “China Travel” has become a trending topic on international social media platforms while the number of hits for related content keeps soaring.

Concurrently, there is a noticeable shift in the pattern of China Travel by international tourists: moving from cursory sightseeing trips to more tailored, immersive experiences. International tourists are now not only drawn to the allure of China’s fine cultural heritage, but also exposed to the achievements of Chinese modernization, leading to a more holistic, genuine, and multifaceted perception of the nation. China leverages inbound tourism as an important opportunity to display its national image and foster cultural exchanges. It has worked diligently to address the difficulties and pain points for foreign visitors, improve tourism services, and narrate stories of China in the new era to better bolster high-level international openness and drive high-quality development.

1.1 A Surge in the Number of Foreign Visitors to China

With China’s further expansion of its tourism sector to international travelers, the market for inbound tourism is witnessing a swift rebound, attracting more and more foreign visitors eager to immerse themselves in the dynamic and genuine experience of China. The latest figures from the National Immigration Administration (NIA) reveal that in the first half of 2024, the number of foreigners entering China through all ports soared to 14,635,000, a staggering year-on-year increase of 152.7%.

Among those visitors, a significant 8,542,000 individuals availed themselves of visa-free entry, representing a 190.1% year-on-year growth. Continuing this trend, the third quarter of 2024 saw 8,186,000 foreigners arriving in China, which was a 48.8% rise compared with the same period in the previous year; of these, 4,885,000 million entered through visa-free channels, an impressive 78.6% increase year-over-year. These statistics collectively signal a robust resurgence in China’s inbound tourism. With continuing policy optimization and further opening of its market, it is expected that China’s inbound tourism market will

sustain this strong growth trajectory, contributing further to the recovery and development of the global economy.

Traveling in China has allowed foreign visitors to feel firsthand the numerous new developments in China's services such as transportation, payment, and booking. In transportation, China has rapidly resumed its regular international passenger flights and the railway department has optimized the 12306 website, including the introduction of an online identity verification service for foreign passports. In payment, convenient methods like "large transactions by card, small by QR code, and cash as a last resort" have been phased in. In bookings, cities like Shanghai, Beijing, Nanjing, and Changsha have announced that, with few exceptions, reservation requirements in the majority of tourist spots have been lifted across the board. These user-friendly services have greatly enhanced the comfort of travel for international visitors.

Contrary to some Western media portrayals of China as having a poor and dirty environment and serious safety concerns, the reality is that China's streets are clean and well-maintained, its people warm and welcoming, and its cities vibrant and safe at night. Many foreigners who visited China captured their travel experiences in short videos and shared them on social media, showing not only the country's stunning landscapes and culinary delights, but also its efficient public transport, safe living conditions, and warm, friendly citizens. These posts have sparked great interest among many who have yet to visit China. According to data from international social media platforms, "China Travel" has become a trending search term, with related topics garnering over 700 million views. With each exclamation of "What a Super city!" from international friends, the unique allure of China Travel is constantly on display.

1.2 The Continuing Flow of Dividends from Facilitation Measures

To attract and better service visitors from abroad, China's tourism industry has introduced a myriad of innovations and enhancements in products and services, particularly by way of optimized visa and immigration policies, increased payment convenience, and enhanced digital tourism services. These initiatives have not only streamlined entry procedures and lowered the barriers to China Travel, but also significantly improved the overall experience for foreigners visiting the country and elevated the service standards across the tourism sector.

As for visa policies for entering China, as of the end of November 2024, China had reached full visa exemption agreements with 25 countries and declared, in tranches, its unilateral visa-free entry policy for nationals of 38 countries such as France and Germany. The National Immigration Administration has rolled out

over 110 policies aimed at easing the process for foreigners coming to China and has continued to optimize, on a regional basis, policies on visa-free entry or transit and port entry visas. This has resulted in a continuing surge in the number of foreign nationals visiting China. Notably, the 144-hour visa-free transit policy has been extended to apply to 35 ports of call and 54 countries.

In mobile payment, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has prioritized four types of tourist venues: national star-rated scenic areas, provincial-and-above tourist resorts, national-level tourism leisure streets and blocks, and major national rural tourism towns and villages. The ministry is promoting moves to improve reservation and verification processes for foreign national documents and payment methods, offering international visitors the flexibility of choosing from diverse payment options, from bank cards to cash to mobile payment, thus making their travels through China seamless.

The People's Bank of China and the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) have directed major payment institutions nationwide to streamline identity verification procedures, boost the efficiency of card binding, and raise the transaction limits to \$5,000 per transaction and \$50,000 per year, facilitating daily consumption for foreigners through QR code payment. In addition, the "whitelist" of premium merchants has been expanded to ensure that the payment needs of foreigners in critical areas such as accommodation, education, and healthcare are well catered for. Moreover, the steady advancement of online foreign card-acquiring services has further diversified the payment options available to foreigners shopping online while in China.

Local governments across China, leveraging their regional characteristics and urban identities, have actively promoted the extension and refinement of convenience measures for foreign visitors. These initiatives have effectively increased the appeal of inbound tourism.

In its ongoing effort to build a free trade port, Hainan Province offers a visa-free entry policy to visitors from 59 countries, permitting stays of up to 30 days for short-term purposes such as tourism, trade, family visits, official visits, medical treatment, conferences and exhibitions, and sports events. Since May 2024, a visa-free policy for foreign tourists arriving by cruise ship has been in effect, allowing visitors entering through the cruise ship ports of call of 13 coastal cities, including Haikou and Sanya, to enjoy a 15-day stay without a visa.

Starting from July 30, a 144-hour visa-free policy for foreign tour groups entering Hainan from Hong Kong and Macao officially took effect. To further enhance visitor experience, Hainan is continuing to expand passenger inspection channels, improve customs clearance efficiency, and offer multilingual services to ensure that international tourists receive efficient and convenient immigration

entry and exit services.

Heilongjiang Province, an important region of China for border tourism with Russia, has been actively developing border tourism under the Belt and Road Initiative. To date, in border cities like Heihe, several distinctive travel routes focusing on health and leisure have been developed. Statistics show that the number of Russian tourists arriving in China surpassed 90,000 in the first ten months of 2024, highlighting the vibrancy and success of China-Russia border tourism.

In the Chengdu-Chongqing region, Sichuan Province and Chongqing Municipality have implemented a collaborative port visa mechanism, achieving a streamlined process known as “Sichuan-Chongqing Interoperability”. By virtue of information sharing and mutual recognition of qualifications, this mechanism has helped improve the management of itineraries for inbound tourist groups. It has adjusted the previous requirement of “entry and exit only through Chongqing” to a more flexible “entry or exit through Chongqing”, offering foreign visitors a variety of entry and exit options. This move has beefed up policy support for tourism collaboration between the two areas.

1.3 Broad Prospects for the China Travel Market

Tourism is an integrated industry. In China, the development of the tourism sector is a critical handle for high-quality development and serves as a vital driver of regional economic growth. Against the backdrop of China’s resolve to build itself into a global tourism powerhouse, the China travel market holds vast potential and plays a pivotal role in driving global economic development.

China is a big country that boasts abundant tourism resources. In terms of the diversity of its tourism resources, it offers experiences that span from the icy landscapes of the North to the tropical coastlines of the South, from bustling metropolises in the East to the majestic plateaus, mountains, and rivers in the West. This geographical richness makes China a uniquely captivating destination for international tourists. In tourism philosophy, as travel becomes an essential aspect of a better life for people worldwide, China prioritizes tourism elements such as natural greenery, cultural heritage preservation, and technological innovation, elements that offer a relaxing, comfortable, and enjoyable experience for global visitors. When it comes to innovating tourism products, new demand for emerging trends and niche markets is driving the development of creative tourist venues, facilities, products, and services. From the perspective of tourism’s vital role in boosting international trade and cooperation, with the gradual recovery of the inbound travel market, some companies are seeing a return to pre-2019 levels in

the number of tourists they serve. For promotion and marketing, China's organization of various international exchange events and its cooperation with the World Tourism Organization has significantly elevated the visibility and appeal of the "China Travel" brand on the world stage.

The development of the tourism industry is conducive to further opening the tourism services trade sector and increasing its competitiveness. By gradually removing international trade barriers, the opening creates a more liberalized and convenient investment environment, thereby attracting foreign capital to China's tourism market. In the early years of reform and opening up, China leveraged inbound tourism as a platform to present to the world China's society and business environment. Today, the continuous optimization of visa-free policies is set to further attract more foreigners to China for travel, business, work, study, or living, thus fostering economic and cultural exchanges and facilitating the cross-border movement of various elements.

According to Zhang Yansheng, Principal Researcher of the China Center for International Economic Exchanges (CCIEE), the unilateral visa-free policies are crucial for promoting cross-border movement and have a noticeable effect on foreign capital utilization. These policies will further the level and efficiency of trade in goods and services, transportation, capital flows, and data and information exchange through liberalization and facilitation.

Luigi Gambardella, President of ChinaEU, pointed out that the visa-free policy makes it easier for small and medium-sized enterprises in Europe to visit China for business and exhibitions, among other activities. In the midst of a sluggish global economic recovery and rising protectionism, China's ongoing efforts to simplify its visa policy allow foreign investors to visit and observe the field, grow in interest, and reduce investment uncertainties. Undoubtedly, this policy has further boosted confidence, providing greater momentum for global economic revitalization and globalization.

According to the report entitled "Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2024: Global Trends" published by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), China has emerged as the world's second-largest tourism market and is projected to surpass the United States as the largest within the next decade. Promoting the high-quality development of "China Travel" can accelerate supply-side structural reforms in the tourism industry, enhance the availability of quality tourism products, and continuously improve the tourism product supply system. It also boosts the deep integration of culture and tourism, drives growth in related industries such as cultural entertainment, accommodation, dining, and transportation, and enhances the quality control of travel services and comprehensive market oversight within the industry, thus significantly

strengthening the governance capabilities and standards of the tourism industry. China's image in the new era will be presented in a more colorful, tangible, and relatable manner to people around the world.

Chapter II

“China Travel” Offers a Direct Insight into the Achievements of Chinese Modernization

In July 2024, the 20th CPC Central Committee adopted at its third plenary the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) on Further Deepening Reform Comprehensively to Advance Chinese Modernization. This resolution explicitly proposes facilitating management for outbound and inbound tourism and expanding international cultural exchanges and cooperation. The Chinese government remains committed to deepening the reform comprehensively and expanding the benefits of the visa-free entry policy to welcome with open arms friends from overseas to enter and tour China extensively, to foster mutual understanding and connections between China and the rest of the world. With its time-honored history, splendid culture, magnificent mountains, long rivers, and diverse customs, China offers foreign visitors a direct, immersive experience of its profound culture and the achievements of its modernization drive, gaining heartfelt acclaim from them for the miracles in the country's development.

2.1 Experiencing the Charm of Chinese Culture Which Fuses the Past and Present

According to a dedicated survey by the China Tourism Academy on inbound tourist satisfaction, over 60% of respondents cited experiencing Chinese culture as their primary reason for visiting China. Chinese civilization has a long and uninterrupted history, making it the only continuous civilization that has developed to the present day. The China of today places great importance on preserving its historical and cultural heritage while creatively transforming and innovatively developing its outstanding traditional culture. Visitors from abroad can enjoy in China a cultural feast that seamlessly blends tradition and modernity at every turn. The unique charm of Chinese culture is becoming a core attraction for China as an international tourism destination.

Dunhuang, a key hub on the ancient Silk Road, is where diverse cultures converge. In October 2024, a sightseeing group of over 1,000 international tourists embarked on a fully packed eye-dazzling cultural and natural exploration tour of Gansu's Dunhuang as part of the Beautiful China Tour: Thousand-people

Inbound Tour to Gansu. At the Mogao Grottos, a UNESCO World Heritage site, they were introduced to the cave art born of cultural exchanges across civilizations; each mural and sculpture seemed to narrate stories that went back centuries before. The visitors were not only awed by these exquisite artworks, but also gained a direct appreciation of the brilliance of Dunhuang culture and the vastness and depths of Chinese civilization.

From showcasing at Mogao Caves the exchanges between civilizations along the ancient Silk Road to representing the spirit of the Chinese nation on the Great Wall, from reflecting the court culture of the Ming and Qing dynasties at the Palace Museum to displaying a culture of reclusion among ancient scholar-officials in the classical gardens of Suzhou—China boasts 59 UNESCO World Heritage sites today, including 40 cultural heritage sites and four natural-cultural heritage sites. These diverse and cultural riches leave foreign visitors thoroughly impressed and full of praise.

Classic masterpieces of traditional Chinese culture, after being reimaged in the digital age, now vividly convey the values of Chinese culture and its people. In Shanxi's Tiefs Temple, Yuhuang Temple, and Yanqing Temple, Italian “foreign Wukong” artist Ale was wielding a custom-made iron shaft, pausing now and then to pose with a striking silhouette. With China's first domestically produced AAA game *Black Myth: Wukong* becoming a calling card for the international dissemination of Chinese culture, more foreigners are now following the footsteps of Wukong the Monkey King on a journey through Shanxi. Ale said, “I feel like I'm the ‘chosen one’ in the game, climbing mountains, crossing rivers, and overcoming challenges until finally finding the ‘treasure’ —these grand traditional Chinese architectures that lie before my eyes.”

Not only do tangible cultural heritage sites captivate foreign visitors, but the intangible cultural heritage deeply rooted in Chinese civilization also leaves a lasting impression. Intangible cultural heritage also radiates with the splendor of the times.

In September 2024, the Workers' Sanatorium at the Wudalianchi Scenic Area in Heihe City, Heilongjiang Province greeted a group of tourists from Russia. Here, they explored the volcanic landscape, sampled mineral spring water, and basked in the sun, enjoying a leisurely vacation. They also sought out experiences of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), an important component of China's intangible cultural heritage.

Acupuncture and massage therapies attracted Valeria to line up for a try. Larisa, her compatriot, was already relishing the benefits of cupping therapy. “I feel great after the treatment. I plan to stay in Heihe for 14 days this time to have a deeper experience of TCM treatments along with some sightseeing,” she said.

Xu Biao, director of the rehabilitation hospital at Wudalianchi Workers' Sanatorium, noted that an increasing number of Russians were showing interest in TCM and the number of repeat visitors was on the rise. During peak periods, the facility hosts about 1,500 Russian tourists daily."

In March 2024, Tim, an Australian video blogger, was focused intently on filling a metal pendant with blue mineral pigment at a cloisonné enamel-making intangible cultural heritage workshop in Shenzhen. He wanted to take this self-made cloisonné art piece back home as a gift for his mother.

Today, more and more foreign visitors are showing keen interest in intangible Chinese art techniques such as TCM, tea culture, clay sculpture, and colored painting. They are eager for hands-on experience in the processes and feel the rich and unique meaning behind them. Through travel, people can feel the culture and deepen their understanding while China's vibrant social and economic development and cultural charm are fully shown as a result.

2.2 Experiencing New Scenes of Life-transforming Technology

Amid the current "China Travel" boom, countless foreign visitors, drawn by China's historical sites and traditional culture, have set foot on this land. They are also amazed by the magnificent tapestry of its rapid development and the omnipresent technological achievements.

Transportation is a vital carrier of tourism. "Traveling through China by high-speed train" has become an increasingly popular choice among foreign visitors. China's extensive high-speed rail network, comprising eight vertical and eight horizontal lines, has gradually formed a tight grid. Stretching from the snowy northern regions to the water towns of the South, from the eastern coast to the western plateaus, this extensive rail network covers vast expanses of China, facilitating easy access for travelers to their destinations. Foreign tourists can swiftly shuttle between different attractions on high-speed trains, enjoying stunning landscapes outside their windows while experiencing the intelligence and convenience of China's advanced rail technology.

"Traveling in China with a smartphone" has made all journeys more relaxing and efficient. In 2024, British global travel blogger Chris Hutchinson took his family on a China tour. They experienced a transition from cash payment to mobile payment. Hutchinson remarked, "Once we had learned how to use WeChat and Alipay, everything became so much simpler. You can do everything with your phone—even pay for street food by scanning a QR code. It's truly incredible!" By the time they got to Shenzhen, the Hutchinsons enjoyed food delivery by a drone. Strolling along the Bund in Shanghai at night, they enjoyed the city's dazzling

lights, describing them as follows: “The entire city was surrounded by technology. We saw skyscrapers shooting up like rockets into the clouds. Even the bridges featured ever-changing holographic projections.”

Another pair of British travel bloggers Tez and Libby took their high-tech payment exploration a step further. In Shenzhen, they turned on the facial recognition payment function for subway rides without keying in a password and experienced the convenience of “entering the station in a second”. Tez said, “We’ve never experienced using our faces as subway tickets anywhere else. It feels as if we had been transported to 2050!”

The modernity and technological sophistication of Chinese cities deeply impressed tourists. At Gangxia North Subway Station in Shenzhen, a young foreign couple was astonished by its ingenious tech-savvy interior architectural design. Their first-person perspective video on TikTok gained widespread popularity, with comments overflowing with praise: “It’s as beautiful as an interstellar station!” “This is a train to the future world!”

Mount Huangshan has embraced digitalization through its “International Visitor-friendly Scenic Spots” immersion initiative to enhance tourism experiences. Foreign visitors simply need to scan a QR code to access a mini-program that offers a detailed travel guide. Through Alipay’s built-in translation service, they can have the travel guides translated into 16 languages including English, French, German, Spanish, Malay, Arabic, and Italian with just one click. This mobile optimization service not only helps global tourists enjoy Huangshan with ease, but also deepens their understanding of Huizhou culture.

In 2024, New Zealand tourist Arne Herman revisited Shanghai after 28 years and he kept marveling at the city’s dramatic transformation: “When I looked at Pudong from the Bund back then, the Oriental Pearl Tower was the only high riser across the river. Now, it is surrounded by numerous skyscrapers in Lujiazui.” This transformation exemplifies Shanghai’s rapid development as a global center for technology and economy.

2.3 Entering the Happy Lives of Chinese Urban and Rural Residents

Amid the China Travel boom, foreign tourists are not only captivated by the diverse natural landscapes, historical architecture, and folk cultures of Chinese cities, but also eager to immerse themselves in the everyday lives of urban and rural residents, exploring local markets, neighborhood parks, and morning exercise squares, experiencing the changes in the life of common folks in China today. These live street scenes are becoming a new favorite among foreign visitors.

In recent years, cultural consumption among urban and rural residents in

China has shown a trend toward greater diversification, personalized choices, and high quality. A rich array of cultural products and services from reading and listening to music to binge-watching dramas and movies, from visiting exhibitions and performances to exploring famous landmarks, has enriched the cultural lives of Chinese residents, urban and rural. The beautiful lives that urban and rural dwellers enjoy are seen by visiting tourists as part of the beautiful scenes. Both domestic and international tourists are increasingly entering the daily life scenes, with local markets on a par with museums, galleries, and theaters in terms of popularity.

In the first eight months of 2024, Shanghai welcomed 2,908,600 foreign tourists, a 1.4-fold increase compared with the same period of 2023. Tourism routes and products that showcase the happy contemporary lives of Shanghai's residents have become particularly favored by international visitors. After visiting the bustling Bund, Swiss tourist Philipp ventured into the ancient water town of Zhujiajiao on the riverine outskirts of Shanghai. He explored the quaint old streets, sampled local delicacies like Granny's Zongzi (sticky rice dumplings) and Xiaolongbao (soup dumplings), enjoying the peaceful charm of this traditional town.

Lauren Gasset, an American girl, participated in a unique Companion Tour in Shanghai—a participatory visit to Caoyang New Village. In just one day, she and her groupmates learned how to make local delicacies such as wontons after “Shanghai aunties”, had a table tennis “duel” with local residents at a community center, and strolled through a bustling local market, experiencing what it truly felt to be “Shanghai locals”.

In the vibrant food street of Jiefangbei CBD in Chongqing, an array of delicious food assembled here dazzled visitors while the flashing neon lights were mixed with enticing aromas, creating a lively local ambience. Indonesian tourist Jajarlwin Setiyabudi is particularly fond of the barbecues and desserts here. He said that while he had been to many major cities in China, Chongqing not only offers a great variety of street food, but also gives visitors a sense of relaxation.

Thousands of kilometers away in northeastern China, an increasing number of Russians are choosing to experience the exotic customs and participate in cultural activities in Heihe City, Heilongjiang Province, including touring morning markets, tasting local cuisine, and shopping for specialty souvenirs. According to the Heihe Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism, the city received 659,400 international and domestic tourists in the first ten months of 2024, marking a year-on-year increase of 160.12%.

With the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy and integrated urban-rural development, China's countryside is showing its infinite charm with a

fascinating blend of ancient local traditions and modern lifestyles. More and more foreign tourists are shifting their focus from first-tier cities on the eastern coast to the vast rural areas in central and western China. They go deep into rural China to immerse themselves in the culture and customs of this ancient land to acquire a multifaceted image of the country. American photographer Adam Clayton, who has a deep love for traditional ancient villages in China, has spent the last few years traveling through rural China searching for charming ancient dwellings. One of his favorite traditional Chinese structures is the Mansion of the Huangcheng Chancellor in Jincheng City, Shanxi Province, known for its commanding grandeur and intricate architecture.

Ctrip, a major Chinese travel agency, launched a unique experience product for foreign tourists called “Stay at a Holiday Farm and Be a Chinese Farmer for a Day”, a well-received tourist program that combines farming experience with cultural entertainment, allowing tourists to engage in activities like fruit picking, fabric dyeing, rice planting, wheat harvesting, etc. More and more foreign visitors are entering the peaceful beauty of rural settings and diving into such authentic local culture. Even Chinese netizens proclaimed, “This wave of foreigners knows better how to enjoy themselves!”

2.4 Enjoying the Beautiful Tapestry of Ecological Advancement

China not only draws the world’s attention with its profound cultural heritage, but also mesmerizes countless foreign visitors with its myriad breathtaking natural landscapes. From the majestic Tianshan Mountains to the picturesque water towns south of the Yangtze River, from the banks of the mighty Yellow River to the mysterious Xizang Plateau, every inch of this land is imbued with the infinite charm of nature. Since the advent of the new era, China has achieved a historic, transformative sea change in ecological conservation. The pace of building a beautiful China has accelerated, fostering the vigorous development of a modernization that features the harmonious coexistence of man and nature. In China, the sky is bluer, the mountains greener, the water clearer, and the vast land more vibrant and colorful than ever before.

With their lenses, bloggers from overseas frequently capture and praise the breathtaking beauty of China. At Zhangjiajie, Hunan Province, a Korean tourist gazed at the range of staggered mountain peaks and exclaimed from the bottom his heart, “This is a paradise on earth that only gods could create.” Belgian blogger Yiji hiked through Jiuzhaigou in Sichuan to film its breathtaking lakes and mountains while a British photographer ventured deep into Xinjiang to capture the snow-capped forests at the foot of Tianshan Mountains. . . . A stream of videos

showcasing China's hidden natural wonders has garnered countless likes on international social media platforms.

Harbin, reputed as an “Ice City”, is China’s northernmost provincial capital. Each winter, it attracts a huge influx of domestic and international tourists with its unique cultural and tourism resources, including ice sculptures and winter sports. In February 2024, Canadian blogger Steve and his wife Ivanna visited the Harbin Ice and Snow World, where they were greeted by ice sculptures of traditional Chinese architecture, Western castles, Ferris wheels, arches, city walls, and slides, all built and carved with ice blocks.

As night fell, these intricately designed beautiful “ice structures” were illuminated, transforming the entire park into a dazzling fairy-tale world. Visitors enjoyed ice skating, skiing, spinning tops, and cycling in this winter wonderland. Steve remarked, “It's so cool! Even as a Canadian, I've never seen such a magical world of ice and snow. People who come here have only two choices: either be in awe of the sights you've never seen before or keep taking pictures and videos all the time.”

As one of the countries with the biggest number of World Natural Heritage and Mixed Heritage sites, China has always been committed to protecting its ecosystems and preserving its natural heritage. By persisting in having culture and ecology as the drivers and innovating resource preservation and utilization models, China has integrated its cultural background and the important “green is gold” concept into the entire process of tourism development. Many international friends who visit China invariably use their cameras or videocams to capture the beautiful landscapes along their journey with the photos and videos they take and vividly present to the world China’s achievements in ecological governance and green development.

In Yucun Village, Anji County, Zhejiang Province, the swaying bamboo and flowing streams form layers of green, creating a refreshing and tranquil atmosphere. As the place of origin of the concept that “lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets”, Yucun started implementing the Green Rural Revival Program in 2005 to phase out heavy-polluting enterprises while transforming the village into a leisure tourism destination with farm stays. In 2021, Yucun was selected as one of the first Best Tourism Villages by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). In 2023, Yucun entertained over 1,150,000 visitors and achieved a total collective income of 22,470,000 yuan.

The Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture of Yunnan Province has leveraged its rich biodiversity endowment and built itself firmly on the traditional ecological concept that “forests collect water, water brings fields, fields produce food, and food nourishes people”. Focusing on building “waste-free tourist

destinations” to move forward the green, “no-waste” transformation and upgrading of its tourism industry, Xishuangbanna has integrated the development of green tourism with its 4A-rated scenic area –Dai Minority Park in a bid to develop green tourism in a comprehensive manner. In the first ten months of 2024, the region had hosted 1.97 million visitors, a 20% increase compared with the same period of 2023.

Chapter III

“China Travel” Presents China as a Country Worthy of Trust, Love, and Respect

China is advancing high-quality and high-level development of inbound tourism so that more international tourists are able to, hope to, and want to visit the country. Through firsthand experiences and exploration, they will fall in love with a country that is trustworthy, lovable, and respectable, form an accurate understanding of the country, and further engage with and share in China's development opportunities.

3.1 Effectively Breaking Down Stereotypes and One-sided Impressions

Inbound tourism is an important way for international visitors to gain a direct and deep understanding of China. It is also an effective way to shape a national image through people-to-people exchanges. Many people outside of China learn about the country through the media, but some Western media, for various purposes, either remain silent or fail to report objectively and fairly on China, resulting in an inability for many foreigners to get a full picture of a real China. In contrast, inbound China travel, based on personal experience on the spot and interactive exchanges, offers more international visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in the vastness of China. This experience is far more direct and tangible than what the media conveys. It is more conducive to forming an accurate, multi-dimensional, and panoramic image of China.

The booming "China Travel" has opened a new window and pathway for the world to learn about and understand China. For many foreign visitors, the joyful "China Travel" has become a "journey to break down stereotypes", with a "sense of contrast" being the most immediate impression after experiencing China's stunning landscapes and breathing China's air of vibrant culture. The urban landscapes and time-honored architecture, combined with the rich historical underpinnings and the everyday lives of its people, offer a fresh firsthand perspective that helps overturn the misconceptions. Being there in person enables a better, real understanding. Some international travel vbloggers even proclaimed, "We've been deceived by the Western media!" More and more visitors shared what they felt directly, "China is not what we once imagined", asserting that they had "discovered a side of China that Western media rarely show".

American vlogger Chris is a perfect example. A three-day trip to Beijing totally changed his view on China. He experienced the warmth and friendliness of the Chinese people, the convenience of high-tech advancements, and the improvement in people's life quality. These experiences even led to an idea germinating in his mind about residing in China long-term.

Upon his return on a Shanghai visit recently, Hidetoshi Tashiro, Chief Economist of Infinity LLC, Japan, said that he had seen none of the "sights of depression" depicted by Western media but instead, witnessed in the Chinese city gasoline-powered vehicles and electric ones traveling side by side on the streets and observed significant changes in infrastructure updates. He also noticed that various sectors in China are embracing digitalization, from cashless payment to smart traffic systems, with the whole society rapidly moving toward modernization and digitalization. He deeply felt that China is making strides, step by step, toward a leadership position in the world.

3.2 Demonstrating China's Commitment to Opening up

Opening up is a defining feature of contemporary China and a great dividend that China brings to the world. International tourism, which developed rapidly after World War II, particularly with the propulsion of the globalization process, has become an integral part of the global economy. In 2019, the tourism industry contributed \$9.6 trillion to global GDP, accounting for 10.3% of the total; it also created 10% of global jobs. In the same year, international tourist spending reached the \$1.8 trillion mark, representing 6.8% of total exports. After experiencing the shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic, by 2023 global tourism export revenue had rebounded to 96% of pre-pandemic levels. However, compared with regions like Europe, the Americas, and Africa, the pace of tourism recovery in the Asia-Pacific region remains relatively low.

As an indispensable part of the global tourism industry, China offers unique and diverse travel products to international visitors. Opening up to the world, the Chinese tourism industry not only shares with the world stories of a dynamic China full of opportunities, but also provides Chinese experience and solutions to raise the overall service standards of global tourism. The thriving development of "China Travel" will contribute Chinese wisdom and strength to the prosperity of the global tourism industry.

To better welcome international tourists, several travel agencies in Guangdong Province have launched new inbound tourism routes. For example, GZL International Travel Service offers tours ranging from half-day to six-day packages, featuring a variety of options such as the Guangzhou Fast Classic Tour,

Walking Exploration Tour, Slow-Paced City Tour, Tech and Folk Culture Tour, and Cultural Experience Tour. The itineraries cover everything from city life and suburban leisure activities to exhibitions, commerce, and trade. The routes include both in-depth tours of Guangzhou proper and multi-city packages combining Guangzhou with other cities in the Greater Bay Area. According to an executive of GZL International Travel Service, during peak periods like the Canton Fair in spring and autumn, these tourism products are expected to become an integral part of the “Guangzhou lifestyle” for exhibitors and business people from abroad.

In the Yangtze River Delta region, Shanghai has partnered with surrounding cities like Hangzhou and Suzhou to launch a regional tourism model featuring “144-hour visa-free transit + city tours”. Experts believe this model has broken the limitations of a single city and will be effective in promoting the recovery and development of the inbound tourism market in the Yangtze River Delta. Since June 2024, more than 3,000 cultural venues in Shanghai have lifted reservation requirements, allowing foreign tourists to visit with a passport or other valid identification, significantly enhancing their experience.

Beijing has launched a contactless gate entry service for foreign bank cards, allowing international passengers to directly use MasterCard and Visa to get onto subway platforms without the need to purchase a separate ticket. The same fare applies to every passenger, with no distinction based on passengers' nationality. For its part, Shanghai has upgraded its public transport system to support international bank cards through the bus code. International passengers only need to bind their foreign cards and activate the bus code through Tencent's WeChat app. This service is available across multiple modes of transportation in the city, including buses, subways, ferries, and maglev trains, offering a more convenient digital travel experience for international visitors.

At the 2024 China International Travel Mart (CITM), domestic and foreign business representatives were engaged in exchanges and interactions, showcasing to each other their most attractive cultural and tourism resources. The participants listened to presentations, explored various projects, and discussed potential collaborations. They experienced the strong momentum injected into the global tourism economy by China's high-level opening up and came to better appreciate China's unwavering commitment to expanding its opening up.

3.3 Sharing Development Opportunities of the Chinese Market

“When relationships are built on benefits, they dissipate once the benefits are exhausted; when relationships are built on power, they collapse once the power wanes.... Only when relationships are built on the heart can they endure for the

long term.” China has always adhered to the philosophy of “harmony under heaven” and “one world, one family.” Always open and inclusive, it has been absorbing diverse cultures, seeking common ground while putting aside differences, and engaging in mutual respect. China welcomes more international friends to China, to foster exchanges and create more exciting stories about them, and to discover more vibrant and mutually beneficial opportunities for cooperation. Inbound tourism benefits from China's unwavering policy of expanding opening up, advancing in tandem with China's development.

From bustling urban landscapes to ancient rural charm, from dynamic industrial parks to cutting-edge innovation hubs, China's multifaceted image fascinates the ever-growing influx of foreign nationals. As their understanding of China deepens, some international visitors perceive promising opportunities for development and have decided to invest in this land of opportunities, integrate into local life, and find platforms for their career development. They will become an integral part of this multicultural society.

In 1984, Chicago-born Brian Linden first came to China. He was deeply captivated by the local customs and culture, and he developed a profound affection for rural China. In 2008, he chose to open a guesthouse in Dali, Yunnan and thus established a platform to promote traditional Chinese culture. Here, he witnessed China's rapid development. He remarked: “Forty years ago, I knew nothing about China; now I know how to write Chinese calligraphy with a writing brush. China has now become my home.”

Invited by a friend, French photographer Jeremy Walter Grinan visited Hainan over a decade ago. Enchanted by the local scenery, he decided to stay. The small eateries in old streets, the coconut palms and sunsets in the park, and surfers on the sea.... Grinan used his camera to capture the daily life here and gradually found his passion. From photography to video production and eventually film direction, Grinan continues to pursue and fulfill his dreams in Hainan, a land full of opportunities.

Nine years ago, Allan Denis Naymark came to Jingdezhen from New York. As a ceramic enthusiast, he gave himself a Chinese name Ni Deming. The Chinese character "Ni," which is pronounced similar to the "Nay" in his name, means clay, the main component in ceramics. Ni was deeply drawn to the charm of the local ceramic culture and found his own career here. In 2015, the Taoxichuan International Art Center in Jingdezhen launched the “Migratory Bird Program”. Every year, artists from over 50 countries and regions are invited here to create and leave their works here. Ni said, “I am fascinated by the ubiquitous atmosphere of ceramic art at Jingdezhen and the warm, delicate, and liberal living environment here. I will continue to work and live here”.

Since the beginning of 2024, foreign envoys and other diplomats from many countries who are stationed in China have made study visits to Heilongjiang, Shanghai, and Gansu, among others. With the aim of discovering new opportunities to write together a new chapter of development through cooperation, they gained a deeper understanding of local economic development, cultural characteristics, and social conditions during these visits. Peter Lizak, Ambassador of Slovakia to China, remarked during a visit to Heilongjiang: “The Snow Town has successfully transformed its ice and snow resources into a consumer phenomenon. The environment and atmosphere here remind me of my hometown. We also have many small towns like this, which can be developed for winter tourism. This has great potential.”

In June 2024, 30 foreign envoys and other senior diplomats from 22 countries who were stationed in China visited Lanzhou and Dunhuang in Gansu Province to inspect and learn about the development of local green industries. The diplomatic delegation visited the burgeoning green energy industry at the Dunhuang Photovoltaic Industrial Park, located on the Gobi Desert. Arlindo do Rosario, Ambassador of Cabo Verde to China, was amazed by the “super-mirror power plant” and proclaimed, “The Gobi Desert was once barren, but China has used the mighty force of nature and technology to breathe life into the Gobi Desert and create an incredible miracle.”

In August 2024, an Indonesian delegation composed of government officials, entrepreneurs, and experts visited the energy-rich province of Shanxi. They toured several energy companies and low-carbon industrial parks to explore up close the transformation path for coal-heavy regions and expressed the hope for future collaboration with enterprises in China’s Shanxi Province.

As a country undergoing vigorous development, China boasts a dynamic market environment, abundant natural and cultural resources, and a diverse range of government support policies. These factors not only provide foreign talent with diverse career options and a vast space for development, but also offer foreign businesses in cooperation with China a platform for growth and takeoff. In so doing, China is making a positive contribution to the shared prosperity of the global economy.

Chapter IV

“China Travel” Promotes Inter-civilizational Exchanges and Learning

Travel is a bridge for civilization dissemination, cultural exchanges, and friendship building. It is also an important way to bring people closer. Along with China’s rapid and dynamic development in tourism, inbound tourism is playing an increasingly significant role in enhancing the inclusivity of and coexistence among different civilizations, enriching the garden of civilizations, and promoting world peace and stability.

4.1 Enhancing the Inclusivity and Coexistence of Civilizations

State-to-state relations thrive when people share bonds, and bonds flourish when hearts are connected. As a global cultural exchange phenomenon, international travel has greatly promoted the exchanges between and integration of different civilizations in the world. Travel provides opportunities for people of different countries, nations, and beliefs to have face-to-face contact. Foreign tourists can learn about the realities of the places covered in their travel through physical visits and firsthand experience. Through their contact and interaction with visitors, local residents form a first impression of the source countries. Tourism builds a bridge to connect people’s hearts and minds in a way that is conducive to enhancing the capacity for empathy among civilizations. It enables people to view the differences and divergences between countries from a more inclusive perspective and thus appreciate the vitality and splendor of different societies with the aesthetic lens of civilizational diversity.

The Manila Declaration on the Social Aspects of Tourism adopted in 1980 states that tourism should play its role in addressing major global social issues, including the promotion of peace, settlement of disputes, and the maintenance of the international economic order. Although countries have different cultural backgrounds, through the collision of and exchanges between these cultures, people can better understand each other’s lifestyle, customs, values, and behaviors, and thus reduce misunderstandings, break down barriers, increase mutual understanding, and form public opinions that serve as the foundation of international cooperation. Through real contact by way of travel, hosts and guests can enhance their cultural ties and form the cognition of other countries’ cultures

and populace. The ever-closer cultural exchanges, like trickles and streams, will converge into a mighty river of friendly interaction.

China Travel provides a platform for direct communication and interaction between the Chinese people and foreign visitors, which helps not only increase the understanding of and respect for Chinese and other cultures of the world, but also foster the integration and inclusiveness between them. Through firsthand experience and interaction, foreign tourists can gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of China's cultural background and social customs, which contributes to continuous cross-cultural exchange and understanding. In addition, by experiencing in person China's lifestyle and social environment, international visitors can get a more genuine picture of China's development and changes. At the same time, the well-developed social media also allow foreign tourists to share their China trips with the rest of the world, further promoting mutual understanding and appreciation among different cultures.

In recent years, China has continued deepening cultural and tourism cooperation with many countries: the growing bilateral cooperation mechanisms between China and Russia and between China and Italy, the mutual hosting of the Year of Culture and Tourism between China and France, Kazakhstan, Tanzania, Zambia, Malaysia, and other countries, China's exchanges in culture and tourism with the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and other countries which have just established or resumed diplomatic relations with China. ... These external cultural and tourism exchanges and cooperation have become a vivid footnote about China's promotion of a community with a shared future for mankind.

In May 2024, the 14th China-U.S. Tourism Leadership Summit took place in Xi'an under the theme of "Expanding China-U.S. Travel and Tourism and People-to-people Exchanges". This exchange event, "restarted" after a lapse of five years, gave a strong boost to the cooperation between the related industries in China and the United States. After the event, a number of U.S. travel agent delegations tested the water by following each other to Beijing, Xi'an, Chongqing, and Shanghai to view the scenic spots, taste the food, try cashless payment in an immersive experience of China Travel. Exchanges and interaction between the travel industries of the two countries will help turn the "San Francisco Vision" into reality.

4.2 Enriching the World Garden of Civilizations

Tourism is not only a carrier of culture, but also a way to absorb it. The ancient Chinese equated "traveling ten thousand miles" with "reading ten thousand books" as a way for self-cultivation. In traveling activities, tourists'

behaviors based on motives like seeking a new or different experience, seeking knowledge, beauty, and pleasure are essentially processes of perceiving, experiencing, enjoying, and spreading culture. The cultural and tourism industries are inseparable. Only by being committed to shaping tourism with culture, presenting culture through tourism, and promoting the integrated development of both can we better enable people to appreciate the beauty of culture and cultivate the beauty of the soul through the beauty of nature.

China boasts a time-honored culture and an extensive, profound civilization. Through inbound tourism to China, friends from all over the world can see and experience Chinese culture and gain a deeper understanding of the history of Chinese civilization and thus have a deeper understanding of the outstanding continuity, innovation, unity, inclusivity, and peacefulness of this great civilization.

Seeing with your own eyes Emperor Qin Shi Huang's magnificent Terracotta Warriors and Horses, each with a diverse shape and feature of its own, enables you to feel the power and might of the emperor's unification of the six states into a single country. Listening on the spot to the Naxi ancient music with soft tunes and elegant vibe enables you to feel the magic of the "living fossil of Chinese ancient music". The winding and peaceful paths in the Suzhou gardens and the gorgeous and elegant Kunqu opera expose the visitors to the Jiangnan style south of the Yangtze River and the beauty of the soft Wu dialect. The towering Potala Palace and solemn Dazhao Temple make people realize the unique charm of Xizang's culture.

In recent years, local governments in China have flexibly utilized local tourism resources and continued to develop China's fine traditional culture and advanced socialist culture to accelerate the deep integration and development of culture and tourism by elaborating many distinctive cultural and tourism products embodying cultural underpinnings and humanistic spirit. A number of representative projects like Beijing Daxing International Airport, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, and China's Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Radio Telescope (FAST) have helped make tourism an important window to China's achievements in development in the new era. One hundred and sixty-four national tourism and leisure street blocks and 142 national industrial tourist demonstration bases have expanded the outlets for disseminating the rich and advanced socialist culture and bring Chinese and foreign tourists alike the beauty of urban modernity, industry, and technology during their journey.

China Travel in the new era fully demonstrates to foreign tourists the historical origin, development processes, and general direction of progress of the fine traditional Chinese culture. It fully reflects the unique creativity, values, and distinctive features of Chinese culture and highlights the unique charm of

contemporary Chinese culture. It ushers Chinese culture and tourism further unto the global stage, enriching the world garden of civilizations.

4.3 Promoting World Peace and Stability

Travel is the most direct and natural way of people-to-people communication, a window of openness, a bond of friendship, and a channel for peace. “Tourism brings people together,” said United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in his message on World Tourism Day 2024, pointing to the need to reflect on the deep connections between tourism and peace.

The concept of “Travel for Peace” goes back a long way in history. In ancient Greece, the famous “Olympic Truce” was a “feat of peace” undertaken by the monarchs to ensure safe travel for athletes and audiences (from their distant homes to the games). Many Greek city-states were at war practically all the time except for the days during the Olympics. The warring parties agreed to a seven-day truce before and after the opening and closing of the Games, with each country obliged to provide protection for the participants. This created a linkage among diplomacy, travel, and peace.

Many of the world’s eminent figures have high expectations of the role of international tourism and consider travel an important means of promoting international cooperation, understanding, and peace. After World War Two, and particularly since the 1980s, with the flourishing of cross-border tourism, the concept of “travel for peace” has attracted more and more attention. Mahatma Gandhi once said: “I have watched the cultures of all lands blow around my house and other winds have blown the seeds of peace, for travel is the language of peace.” A review of China’s history of diplomacy shows that the journey for peace, different as they were in terms of purposes, was a special way for ancient China to engage in communication and exchanges with the external world. The high monk Jianzhen’s voyages to Japan, Xuanzang’s journey to India, Zheng He’s seven voyages across seas and oceans, though regarded today as journeys of a religious or political nature, have had their forms of travel and diplomatic effect passed down through the centuries.

The world is now going through profound changes unseen in 100 years at an accelerating pace. The changes of the world, the times, and the juncture in history are unfolding in an unprecedented way, with conflicts between different cultures occurring from time to time. Reputed as the “envoy of peace” and “bridge of friendship”, tourism can play the role of a “stabilizer” and “lubricant” to ease tensions. In the face of the wave of anti-globalization and populism, peace and development are still the direction that most countries and the international

community are actively striving for. They have also injected sustained impetus to strengthening the common efforts of mankind to deal with all kinds of serious challenges and difficulties. As a part of major country diplomacy, China's tourism diplomacy should always be based on the main theme of the times and amplify it by telling China's stories well through inbound tours and showcasing the image of a "Beautiful China".

At the practical level, China's inbound tourism has, in the context of serving the long-term interests of mankind, gradually developed such tourism-related items as "peace tour" and "green tour". Based on respect for cultural diversity and social values, China's inbound tours are organized by leveraging its own advantages in tourism and holding high the distinctive banner of building a community with a shared future for mankind while regarding tourism development as a common interest of human society. By proceeding from the goal of reducing prejudice between countries, promoting consensus among countries and realizing mutual benefit and win-win results for the international community, inbound tourism should play and highlight its role as a medium linking source countries and regions with destinations while serving national interests. Efforts should be made to further narrow the gap between the interests of countries, break away from over-dependence on tourist sources, and increase the complementarity of advantages for common progress, striving to forge tourism as a "public product" that drives human progress and the realization of the common values of humankind and open up new channels for the grand goal of building a community with a shared future.

Concluding Remarks

The Chinese have since time immemorial had a cultural tradition of travel. The ancient sages advocated “reading ten thousand books and traveling ten thousand miles”, leaving behind countless classic travel essays and travelogues that have resonated throughout history.

Over three hundred years ago, Xu Xiake, a renowned Ming dynasty scholar, traveled extensively up and down China. His travelogue *The Travel Diaries of Xu Xiake*, which was written over the course of more than 30 years, is not only a world masterpiece on geography that contains his systematic observations and records of nature, but also a monumental work that depicts the beautiful landscapes of China, with a far-reaching and profound effect. May 19, the first day recorded in *The Travel Diaries of Xu Xiake*, was later designated as China’s National Tourism Day.

More than 700 years ago, the Venetian traveler Marco Polo traversed thousands of miles to China and opened the door for the East and the West to meet with and understand each other, turning his extraordinary personal journey into a shared memory among countries across the Eurasian continent and creating a bridge for cultural exchanges between Eastern and Western civilizations. Over generations, other emissaries have continued to write chapters of friendly exchanges among civilizations along the Silk Road in an exemplary role for dialogues on an equal footing and common development among world civilizations.

With the acceleration of globalization, inbound tourism has become not only a component of economic activities, but also a vital vehicle for cultural exchanges and people-to-people diplomacy. It serves as an important indicator of a country’s soft cultural power and international appeal. Over the past four decades of reform and opening-up, inbound tourism has not only boosted China’s economic development, but also strengthened China’s exchanges and cooperation with countries around the world, enhancing friendly interaction between regions and contributing to the blending of world civilizations.

In future, China’s door will open even wider and the facilitation of “China Travel” will continue its upward trend. Even more friends will come to China from abroad to see China, enjoy China, and fall in love with China. The China Travel of the new era will share with the world more stories about the ancient and modern country and will foster grater global consensus and promote efforts by all countries to open a new chapter of cultural exchanges and integration as well as the linking of people by the heart. This will make the global garden of civilizations

bloom in vibrant colors with full vitality.

We sincerely welcome more international friends to China for travel, to appreciate its beautiful landscapes, feel its unique charm, and join hands to begin a new chapter of cultural exchanges between peoples!

Editorial Note and Acknowledgement

The Xinhua Institute project team for this report titled “China Travel – inviting the world to experience a real China” is headed by Ren Weidong, a member of the Party Leadership Group and Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Xinhua News Agency, with Liu Gang, Director of the Xinhua News Agency Research Institute, serving as the Deputy Leader. Cui Feng, Deputy Director of the Xinhua News Agency Research Institute, is the Executive Deputy Leader. Other team members include Fu Yan, Qin Yanyang, Feng Hou, Ren Qinqin, Xu Zhuang, Wu Mengda, Zhou Huimin, Yang Siqi, Ding Yiquan, Liu Enli, Xie Yuan, Lang Bingbing, Chen Aiping, Liu Kai, Feng Qidi, Li Jizhi, and Chong Dahai. The team members were selected from the headquarters, domestic branches, and overseas bureaus of Xinhua News Agency. All of them are core members of the Agency engaged in news reporting and research. Since the project was authorized and initiated in July 2024, the report has taken five months of study, research, writing, revision, and proofreading before completion.

In the course of writing and publication of the report, valuable guidance and assistance in many areas were provided by experts and scholars including Dai Bin, Director of the China Tourism Research Institute; Bi Xulong, Vice President of the Central Academy of Culture and Tourism Administration; Bao Jigang, Professor at the School of Tourism Management, Sun Yat-sen University; Lin Jinping, Professor at the School of Marxism, Sun Yat-sen University; Miao Bin, Deputy Director of the International Exchange Department, Central Academy of Culture and Tourism Administration; Ma Xin, Assistant Researcher at the Institute of International Issues, Beijing Academy of Social Sciences. Additionally, PhD students Min Fangzheng, Shen Rui, and Yang Haozhe from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences University contributed to literature and data collection. We hereby express our sincere gratitude to them.

References

1. “Xi Jinping’s Letter on the Opening of the 14th China-US High-Level Tourism Dialogue”, Xinhua, May 22, 2024.
2. “Xi Jinping Issues Important Instructions on Tourism Work, Emphasizing the Need to Improve the Modern Tourism System and Accelerate the Development of a Strong Tourism Nation”, Xinhua, May 17, 2024.
3. “Xi Jinping and Italian President Mattarella Respectively Send Congratulatory Letters on the Opening of ‘The Source of Italy – Ancient Roman Civilization Exhibition’”, Xinhua, July 10, 2022.
4. “Xi Jinping’s Speech at the Symposium of Experts on Education, Culture, Health, and Sports”, Xinhua, September 22, 2020.
5. “Xi Jinping’s Keynote Speech at the Opening of Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations”, Xinhua, May 15, 2019.
6. “Xi Jinping’s Speech at UNESCO Headquarters”, Xinhua, March 27, 2014.
7. “Xi Jinping’s Speech at Opening of the Year of Chinese Tourism in Russia”, People’s Daily, March 22, 2013.
8. Liu Zhongcai and Xie Zhengfa: “Enhancing China’s Tourism Diplomacy in the Context of Globalization”, *Popular Tribune*, Issue 8, 2024, pp. 36-39.
9. Zhang Zhenpeng: “Culture and Tourism Integration Strategies for China’s Modernization”, *Governance*, Issue 12, 2024, pp. 46-51.
10. Xu Tong, Zhang Yuli, and Shi Peihua: “Historical Evolution and Current Analysis of China’s Tourism Development Pattern”, *Development Research*, Issue 6, 2024, pp. 42-48.
11. Sun Panpan and Li Xiaoying: “Inbound Tourism and the Building of a World Tourism Powerhouse: Mechanisms and Optimization Strategies”, *Price: Theory & Practice*, Issue 5, 2024, pp. 32-38.
12. Song Rui: “On the Unique Path of China’s Tourism Development”, *Price: Theory & Practice*, Issue 7, 2024, pp. 50-58.
13. Liu Minku and Deng Xiaogui: “Study on the Path to Cultural Identity Enhancement through Border Tourism: From the Perspective of Telling China’s Story”, *Social Sciences in Guangxi*, Issue 2, 2024, pp. 21-27.
14. Dai Bin and Yang Yuping: “Theoretical Construction of and Practical Research on China’s Tourism in the Context of New Productive Forces: An Interview with Professor Dai Bin, Director of China Tourism Research Institute”, *Social Scientist*, Issue 3, 2024, pp. 3-9.
15. “Resolutely Follow China’s Unique Path in Tourism Development”, *Xinhua Daily Telegraph*, May 18, 2024, Issue 002.

16. Xie Chaowu, Zhang Kun, and Chen Yanying: “The Support System and Action Direction for the Recovery of China’s Inbound Tourism”, *Tourism Tribune*, Issue 4, 2024, pp. 4-6.

17. Chen Ye and Wang Luqi: “The Recovery and Marketing Innovation of China’s Inbound Tourism Market”, *Tourism Tribune*, Issue 4, 2024, pp. 9-10.

18. Huang Songshan and Zhu Hai: “The Recovery and Development of China’s Inbound Tourism and Product System Upgrade”, *Tourism Tribune*, Issue 4, 2024, pp. 10-12.

19. Yue Xiaoyan and Sun Yehong: “Heritage Tourism: Building an Important Bridge for Cross-Cultural Exchanges in Inbound Tourism”, *Tourism Tribune*, Issue 4, 2024, pp. 12-14.

20. Yun Jiang, Yi Huiling, and Liang Chunmei: “Disruption, Transformation, and Creation: Enterprise Responses in the Recovery and Development of Inbound Tourism”, *Tourism Tribune*, Issue 4, 2024, pp. 7-9.

21. Li Xinjian, Zeng Bowei, Zhang Hui, Song Ziqian, Yang Yong, Ma Bo, and Wang Ning: “New Productive Forces and High-Quality Development of Tourism”, *Tourism Tribune*, Issue 5, 2024, pp. 15-29.

22. Cai Libin and Zhang Ziyu: “ ‘Soon to Come’ or ‘a Long Way to Go’? – Study on the Perceptions of Destination Residents on the Recovery of China’s Inbound Tourism”, *Tourism Science*, Issue 2, 2024, pp. 35-57.

23. Guo Zitong: “Enhancing Civilizational Exchanges and Accelerating the Development of Inbound Tourism”, *China Tourism News*, January 3, 2024, Issue 001.

24. Tian Li, Liu Lan, and Chen Jun: “Concentration and Diffusion: Spatial Changes in China’s Inbound Tourism Industry Driven by Location Factors”, *Inquiry into Economic Issues*, Issue 1, 2024, pp. 76-91.

25. Sun Jiuxia, Li Fei, and Wang Xueji: “ ‘Tourism in China’: Forty Years of Tourism Development and Contemporary Social Changes”, *Social Sciences in China*, Issue 11, 2023, pp. 84-104.

26. Zheng Peng, Liu Zhuang, Wang Jiejie, Chen Jiayi, and Xi Jianchao: “ ‘Travel for Business’ or ‘Arrival for Culture’? – The Belt and Road Initiative and China’s Inbound Tourism Industry”, *China Population-Resources and Environment*, Issue 3, 2023, pp. 181-193.

27. Song Rui and Liu Qianqian: “Tourism Development in China’s Modernization Process: Significance, Challenges, and Paths”, *Tourism Forum*, Issue 1, 2023, pp. 1-11.

28. Yang Jinsong and Song Ziqian: “The Historical Evolution and Era Choices of China’s Inbound Tourism Policies”, *Tourism Tribune*, Issue 4, 2024, pp. 1-4.

29. Shen Han, Yang Yijiang, and Chen Qingyang: “Inbound Tourism in Digital Age Brings New Opportunities for Elevating National Image”, *Xinhua Institute Research*, 2024.