



# Zitong County Cultural and Tourism Integration Development

Cha Yuqiao

Southwest Minzu University, Cheng Du, China  
Email: 2845268821@163.com

**Abstract:** With the merger of the former National Tourism Administration and the Ministry of Culture in 2018, and the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, the integration of culture and tourism has received much attention. Against this background, Zitong, as an ancient county with nearly 2300 years of history, is facing more development opportunities and challenges. This article aims to analyze Zitong County's integration of culture and tourism and put forward suggestions, on the basis of protecting historical and cultural heritage, give full play to the advantages of Wenchang culture, "Two Bombs and One Star" red culture and profound historical and cultural resources, utilize brand advantages, highlight the core of cultural tourism integration, empower with culture and tourism, and inject strong impetus into the rural revitalization of Zitong County.

**Keywords:** Zitong County; Rural Revitalization; Integration of Culture and Tourism; Cultural Resources

## 1. Introduction

In 2018, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the "Rural Revitalization Strategy Plan (2018-2022)" [1], and local governments at all levels have successively issued relevant plans. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Zitong County has taken "Culture and Tourism to Revitalize the County" as its primary project, integrating it into the provincial and municipal cultural tourism boutique routes, and linking with surrounding cultural tourism routes for development, constructing a large-scale regional tourism pattern. A number of policy documents have been issued, such as "Opinions on Deeply Implementing the Project of Culture and Tourism to Revitalize the County and Accelerating the Construction of a County with a Strong Culture and Tourism" and "Mianyang City Zitong County All-Area Tourism Plan (2021-2035)", etc., making the landscape, culture, and red tourism connected in a ring and chain, forming a spatial panoramic cultural tourism integration development system. At the same time, Zitong County also has rich historical and cultural resources such as historical sites and historical legends, but there are few products and projects reflecting cultural connotation in this area, the publicity of the cultural tourism industry is insufficient, it is difficult to form a brand effect, and the integration between various industries is not deep enough, making it impossible to build a new industrial pattern for the development of culture and tourism. Through field research, systematically explain the historical and cultural resources and the current situation of cultural tourism integration in Zitong County, deeply explore the development advantages and existing problems, and then propose the new development path for Zitong County in the field of cultural tourism integration, to continuously empower rural revitalization.

## 2. Literature Review

With the steady advancement of China's rural revitalization strategy, the integration of culture and tourism, as a key driving force to stimulate the endogenous power of rural areas and reshape the economic and cultural landscape of rural areas, has become a cutting-edge hotspot in academic research and industrial practice. Domestically, governments at all levels, universities, research institutions, and other organizations have conducted extensive research and discussion on this concept. More discussions focus on effectively integrating tourism and cultural resources to achieve mutual promotion, which can realize a virtuous cycle of rural revitalization and cultural inheritance. At the same time, it is necessary to ensure that villagers benefit from tourism development and the sustainable development of the rural tourism industry (Geng Songtao and Zhang Shenyang, 2021) [2]. Fully utilize local cultural resources and integrate them into tourism products. The government and the market work together to promote the high-quality development of cultural and tourism integration (Liu Zhiyan, 2019) [3].

Foreign research on the integration of culture and tourism to promote rural revitalization has also achieved some important results, such as the development of rural tourism in Europe and rural cultural tourism in the United States. Foreign scholars have conducted comprehensive research on the development of rural revitalization and the integration of culture and tourism, with a focus on cultural impact, sustainable development, innovation and entrepreneurship, and destination management. These studies provide international experience and inspiration for the development of rural tourism, and provide references for countries to formulate development strategies and management practices for rural areas. At the same time, exchanges and cooperation between domestic and foreign scholars have also provided opportunities for the development of rural revitalization and the integration of culture and tourism, promoting the continuous deepening of theory and the continuous innovation of practice. Smith et al. (2017) studied the cultural impact



and community participation of rural tourism, emphasized the importance of protecting and inheriting rural culture, and proposed strategies to promote community participation and the development of social capital[4]. Hall et al. (2015) studied the relationship between rural tourism and sustainable development, explored how to achieve economic, social and environmental sustainability in the process of rural development, and put forward corresponding policies and management measures[5]. Getz et al. (2016) studied the innovation and entrepreneurship of rural tourism, focused on the cultivation of entrepreneurial opportunities and innovation capabilities in rural areas, and put forward methods and practical experience to promote the innovative development of rural tourism[6].

As an important way to promote the construction and development of rural revitalization, the integration of culture and tourism still has some problems that need further research and exploration, such as an imperfect theoretical system, insufficient policy support, and low community participation. Future development requires strengthening theoretical research, policy support, and international exchanges to provide more theoretical and practical support for the integration of culture and tourism to help rural revitalization, and will start from the following directions: in-depth research on the mechanism and path of the integration of culture and tourism, strengthening theoretical research and policy support, and strengthening exchanges and cooperation with foreign research.

### **3. Advantages of the integration of culture and tourism in Zitong County**

Zitong County is located in the northwestern part of the hilly area in the Sichuan Basin. Zitong County was established in the 30th year of King Nan of Zhou (the 22nd year of King Zhao Xiang of Qin, 285 BC), and it has been more than 2,000 years. This area has bred a rich and diverse culture, including Qin and Han culture, Three Kingdoms culture, Han and Tang culture, Wenchang culture, red culture, and traditional Chinese medicine culture[7]. Qiqushan Temple, Liyeque on Changqingshan, and Wolongshan Thousand Buddha Grottoes in Zitong County are all national key cultural relics protection units.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the culture and tourism system of Zitong County has actively taken action in many aspects, and the integration of culture and tourism has achieved fruitful results. In 2023, Zitong County was successfully selected into the list of demonstration area creation units for the integrated development of cultural industry and tourism industry in Sichuan Province, marking that the county has taken a solid step in the integration of culture and tourism.

In terms of policy guidance and planning layout: Zitong County regards "County Revitalization through Culture and Tourism" as the primary project, integrates it into the provincial and municipal cultural and tourism boutique routes, and links up with surrounding cultural and tourism routes to develop and build a large-area tourism pattern. A number of policy documents have been issued, such as the "Opinions on In-depth Implementation of the Culture and Tourism Revitalizing County Project to Accelerate the Construction of a Strong Cultural County and a Strong Tourism County" and the "Mianyang City Zitong County All-Region Tourism Planning (2021-2035)", so that landscape, culture, and red tourism form a ring and a chain, forming a spatial panoramic system for the integrated development of culture and tourism. In terms of cultural relic protection and intangible cultural heritage inheritance: the county's Cultural Relics Bureau was the first to be established, the "Management Measures for the Protection of Cultural Relics in Zitong County" was formulated, the Qiqushan Cultural Heritage Protection Center was established, two thematic museums were built, the number of cultural relic protection units in the county increased, and the work of intangible cultural heritage inheritance achieved remarkable results. As of 2021, there are 4 national key cultural relic protection units, 5 provincial units, etc., 1 national intangible cultural heritage item, 5 provincial items, etc., the number of intangible cultural heritage inheritors has increased to 51, and an intangible cultural heritage protection center and an intangible cultural heritage learning institute have also been established, promoting the protection of cultural relics and the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

In terms of project construction and facility improvement: a large amount of funds were invested to promote the 5A creation of Qiqu Mountain and the improvement project of Two Bombs City, and multiple projects were completed or accelerated. For example, multiple construction projects of the Qiqu Mountain Scenic Area were completed, the new campus of the "Two Bombs and One Star" Cadre College was built, and the red tourism research camp has been completed and put into use. Relying on the good ecological environment of the Shudao ancient cypress forest, cooperation with medical institutions has established rehabilitation centers and medical and health projects, creating high-end quality health products, attracting tourists and the elderly to vacation and old-age care, transforming the resource advantages of natural ecology, landscape, traditional Chinese medicine health culture and medicine and food homology into industrial advantages, and creating a health care industry chain with the characteristics of medicine and food homology and medical and health care[8].

In terms of cultural activities and service improvement: By implementing the "Culture +" strategy, it has promoted the integrated development of culture, tourism and related industries, and launched folk customs performance projects such as Wenchang Dongjing ancient music, Wenchang sacrifice, Wenchang patrol, Mamingyang opera, and Daxin lantern. In terms of literary and artistic performances, a series of heroic monument scenario dramas were created, including the stage plays "Invisible Monument" and "Three Manuscripts", the large-scale drama "National Soul", etc., to promote the spirit of "Two Bombs and One Star". Promote the "Tourism + Product" model, adopt methods such as buying tickets and giving souvenirs, guessing riddles, and group purchase discounts, and launch cultural and creative products such as Zitong wood carving, champion pen holders, "Two Bombs" models, and Wenchang New Year paintings[9]. The scenic area infrastructure is improved, the smart tourism platform is introduced, and a variety of online humanized services are realized.

Industrial Development and Market Benefits: Tourism reception and total revenue have increased significantly, the number of A scenic spots has increased, and the value added of the cultural and tourism industry as a percentage of GDP has risen. The scale of the industry has expanded, with an increase in the number of cultural enterprises above a certain size and their operating revenue, as well as an increase in the number of star-rated agritainment facilities and hotels. The results of cultural and tourism exchange activities are fruitful, with the successful holding of several cross-strait exchange activities, which have promoted cultural inheritance and economic and trade cooperation, such as the signing of investment cooperation agreements at the 5th Cross-Strait Wenchang Culture Exchange Activity in 2021, with a fund amount of 8.175 billion yuan. Efforts are being made to strengthen the research and development of tourism products, and to introduce and cultivate a number of new and distinctive cultural tourism enterprises, such as cultural creativity, tourism product processing, and tourism e-commerce.

#### **4. Problems in the Integrated Development of Culture and Tourism**

The tourism development of Zitong County has achieved considerable results today, but there are also some shortcomings, such as unstable tourist sources, few tourists from other places, and a single mode of operation. The reasons for this are mainly the following issues:

##### **(1) Insufficient integration of cultural resources**

Zitong County has rich cultural resources, but there are shortcomings in the integration and development of these resources. The fragmentation and diversity of cultural resources make the integration work more complex. In addition, the lack of systematic scientific guidance and in-depth development is also one of the problems. The association between different cultural elements is not sufficiently explored, resulting in a lack of depth and systematicness in cultural and tourism products. No characteristics have been formed. The development mode of scenic spots is extensive, lacking in-depth research oriented to the market, and the evaluation and grasp of resources are not accurate. There are few experience-based and consumption-based product formats. Some scenic spots only integrate historical sites, lacking related humanities such as photography, painting, poetry, dance, and stories. The integration is superficial and shallow, resulting in a limited time for tourists to stay. The content is relatively single and homogenized, making it difficult to retain tourists or attract tourists to repeatedly "check in". After tourists have come, eaten, played, and stayed, they have no special impression, resulting in the inability of tourists to obtain a richer cultural experience.

##### **(2) Heavy service pressure during peak tourist seasons**

Zitong County does face significant service pressure during the peak tourist season, primarily due to weak infrastructure and a shortage of professional service personnel. These problems lead to traffic congestion, accommodation shortages, and a decline in the quality of tourism services, which frequently occur and seriously damage the tourist experience. To alleviate these problems, Zitong County needs to strengthen infrastructure construction, improve the carrying capacity of transportation and accommodation, and increase training and recruitment of tourism service personnel to improve service quality and ensure that tourists can enjoy a more comfortable and satisfying tourism experience.

##### **(3) Lack of unified planning**

Zitong County's tourist attractions lack an overall plan for supporting functional facilities, hierarchical types, and promotional planning. The radiation-driven capability of other related industries in the tourism industry is weak, making it difficult to form a large-scale brand and generate an overall effect. The geographical locations of Zitong County's attractions are far apart; there is no direct transportation between the attractions, and taxis are the main mode of transport; the tourist routes have not been uniformly planned, and are relatively random, making it inconvenient for tourists to take transportation. In addition to the two well-known attractions, Qiqu Mountain and Two Bombs City, which are far apart, the remaining small attractions are scattered and have low visibility, and local people are not familiar with them.

Taking Wolong Qianfo Rock Scenic Area as an example, it is difficult to get a taxi near the scenic spot, and the distance between it and other scenic spots is far, and the transportation facilities between the scenic spots are not perfect, which has a certain impact on the development of Zitong County's culture and tourism. During the field interview, an interviewee said: "For tourists, the transportation situation in Zitong is not very convenient. Tourists can only choose to take private cars or long-distance buses to reach Zitong. However, once they arrive, tourists can easily use public transportation or car rental services to go to various tourist attractions. The distribution of Zitong's attractions is relatively scattered, but the transportation network is relatively complete, and tourists can reduce the time spent on the road."

##### **(4) Insufficient promotion**

In terms of promotion, Zitong County's traditional promotion model has not been perfectly integrated with modern marketing methods, resulting in insufficient marketing skills, a lack of market appeal, a lack of unique features and traffic, making it difficult to attract a large number of tourists for sightseeing. At the same time, Zitong County lacks compound talents who understand both culture and creative design, as well as marketing, during the development of cultural tourism integration. This leads to a lack of innovation in the development of tourism products, making it difficult to form unique Zitong County-featured brands and cultural and creative IPs, and the promotion effect of cultural tourism products is not ideal.

#### **5. Development Suggestions**

##### **(1) Promote the Deep Integration of Cultural Tourism Industry**

Zitong County has rich resources and should further deeply explore the cultural connotation of Zitong, actively promote the deep integration of the cultural tourism industry, by exploring the rich cultural connotations of the "Two Bombs and One Star" spirit, Shu Road culture, and Wenchang culture, to build historical and cultural tourism landscapes, package cultural

tourism projects, launch high-quality cultural tourism routes, and create well-known brands with Zitong characteristics, so as to expand and strengthen the cultural tourism economic industry. At the same time, relying on resources such as red revolutionary sites and historical and cultural sites, carry out tourism activities such as historical tours, reading classics, scenario-based education, and patriotism education, guide tourists to experience culture and learn skills, strengthen the development of study tourism products, enrich the product system, and build a famous study tourism city.

In addition, Zitong County can also promote the integrated development of the sports tourism industry by organizing sports culture tourism festivals and brand off-road events, shaping the brand of cultural sports tourism, and creating a multi-functional integrated sports and leisure characteristic demonstration area. As well as focusing on the development of new formats of agricultural tourism integration such as pastoral vacations, design leisure agriculture and rural tourism boutique routes. At the same time, tap resources such as traditional Chinese medicine culture and health care, construct a "big tourism + big consumption + big health" ecosystem, promote the deep integration of traditional Chinese medicine and tourism, build a health tourism destination, and support the construction of high-level traditional Chinese medicine health tourism demonstration areas and health industry characteristic towns in Hongren Town and Wenxing Town to promote the comprehensive development of the local economy. Promote the deep integration of the cultural tourism industry, improve the tourist experience, and promote the comprehensive development of the local economy.

#### (2) Create High-Quality Tourist Routes

Explore the spirit of "Two Bombs and One Satellite", Shu Road culture, Wenchang culture, traditional Chinese medicine culture, Sichuan cuisine culture, and folk culture. Build a batch of historical and cultural tourism landscapes, package a batch of cultural tourism projects, launch a batch of high-quality cultural tourism routes, and create a batch of well-known cultural tourism brands with Zitong characteristics to expand and strengthen the cultural tourism economy. Actively integrate into Mianyang City's "Three-Line Memory" cultural tourism boutique routes and Sichuan Province's "Three-Line Exploration • Charm of the Era" tourism line, Sichuan Province's Northeast Sichuan tourism loop, Sichuan-Shaanxi Jinniu Shu Road tourism line, and Chengdu-Chongqing city cluster tourism loop. Create Zitong's all-region tourism "Historical and Cultural Corridor", "Natural Ecological Scenic Corridor", "Pastoral Landscape Painting Corridor" and other all-region tourism boutique routes, and accelerate the formation of a county-centered, southeast, north and west four-way expansion of the county tourism loop.

#### (3) Improve the all-region tourism transportation network

Improve the supporting services such as tourism consultation and information inquiry at highway service areas and gas stations. Improve the all-region tourism connection lines, accelerate the construction of special tourism transportation lines and greenway lines, and form special tourism transportation lines from the county to Qiqu Mountain, Wolong Mountain, "Two Bombs City" and Zitong Wenchang Art Town. Accelerate the construction of a three-level tourism distribution service network system with the county as the core, Qiqu Mountain and "Two Bombs City" key scenic spots as nodes, and the all-region rural tourism belt, to achieve all-region coverage of multiple functions such as traffic organization, information services, tourism organization, and tourism reception.

#### (4) Strengthen the supporting facilities for all-region tourism

Focus on the upgrade of star-rated hotels and innovatively build a special tourism accommodation system supported by star-rated hotels, economy hotels, theme hotels, rural homestays, and camp hotels. Build supporting leisure catering food streets, gathering local specialties and traditional delicacies and other characteristic flavored catering. Develop special agritainment, develop catering varieties that meet the history and resource characteristics of villages, highlight the Zitong's unique flavor, and form a food industry chain and catering system with Zitong characteristics. Accelerate the development of the night economy of tourism in key commercial districts in the county, enrich the night tourism life of tourists, and improve the extended service level of transportation, catering and other aspects during key festivals and holidays. Improve the tourism shopping management system, strengthen market supervision, and improve service quality.

#### (5) Design cultural and creative IP

The author uses questionnaires to understand the target group's knowledge, preferences, and willingness to purchase cultural and creative products and their IP design, collects opinions and suggestions on cultural and creative IP, and provides reference basis for optimizing the design and market promotion of Zitong County's cultural and creative products. The survey collected a total of 217 valid questionnaires, with more than half of the participants expressing a preference for purchasing (collecting) cultural and creative products, the main purposes being collection, gifting, and home decoration. This indicates that cultural and creative products have a certain market potential and consumer base. Participants' preferences for cultural and creative products are mainly focused on commemorative value, artistic value, cultural connotation, and aesthetics.

Therefore, it is possible to consider directly applying the historical elements of Zitong County, such as the paintings of Wenchang culture, the tones of traditional buildings, and special materials, to the appearance of products, such as keychains and cups printed with images of historical figures from Zitong. At the same time, customers can also be introduced into the historical scenes of Zitong, such as inviting actors to wear costumes that match the historical and cultural background of Zitong to perform local historical allusions to attract tourists. By designing a puzzle game with Qiqu Mountain Temple as the background, the sense of immersion of cultural and creative products can be enhanced. Tourists can also be allowed to personally participate in the design of cultural and creative products, such as couplets, fans, red envelopes, cups, pillows, refrigerator stickers, color cards, badges, and other cultural and creative products, to inject new vitality into the traditional culture of Zitong.

## 6. Conclusion

Cultural and tourism integration is the continuous fusion process of tourism as the embodiment of culture, and culture leading the in-depth extension of tourism. Research on rural revitalization and cultural tourism integration in Zitong County is currently in a stage of continuous development, focusing not only on the protection and inheritance of cultural resources, but also on how to combine rich historical and cultural resources with rural revitalization, which has become an important research topic. The research on the integration of culture and tourism in counties like Zitong, which have a profound cultural heritage and great development potential but are not yet widely recognized, is relatively scarce. In view of this, it is of great theoretical and practical value to deeply explore the development trajectory of culture and tourism integration in Zitong County, based on the heritage of place names such as Qiqu Mountain and Two-Bombs City, accelerate the cultivation of tourism formats such as heritage tours and study tours, and hold various cultural tourism activities such as visits to red education bases and explanations of revolutionary historical stories, which not only helps to unlock the unique model of local cultural tourism development and fill the existing academic gaps; it can also accurately grasp the key elements for the integration of culture and tourism to take root in niche areas, refine universal experiences, and provide valuable references for vast rural areas to explore the path of cultural tourism revitalization. In addition, Zitong County can also enhance the attractiveness and influence of cultural tourism by innovating cultural tourism models, such as developing tourism products with local characteristics, strengthening cultural tourism interaction, and expanding media publicity. At the same time, we should strengthen the training and introduction of professional talents to support the sustainable development of cultural tourism integration, inject new momentum into rural revitalization, and achieve a virtuous interaction between culture and economy.

**Acknowledgments:** This research was supported by the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program for college students of Southwest Minzu University for Nationalities (Project number :S202410656102).

## References

- [1]The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the "Rural Revitalization Strategy Plan (2018-2022)" [N]. People's Daily, 2018-09-27 (001)
- [2]Geng Songtao, Zhang Shenyang. Research on the Collaborative Development of Rural Tourism and Cultural Industry under the Background of Rural Revitalization [J]. Journal of Nanjing Agricultural University (Social Science Edition), 2021, 21(02):44-52.
- [3]Liu Zhiyan. Development of Cultural Tourism Integration: Theory, Practice and Future Directions [J]. People's Forum·Academic Frontiers, 2019(16):92-97.Hu Wei, Wu Xue. Research on the integrated development of culture and tourism in Zhitong County [J]. Tourism Panorama, 2024, (16): 132-134.
- [4]Smith, M. K., & Richards, G. (2017). The Routledge handbook of rural tourism. Routledge.
- [5]Hall, C. M., & Müller, D. K. (2015). Tourism and regional development: New pathways. Routledge.
- [6]Getz, D., Carlsen, J., & Morrison, A. (2016). The Routledge handbook of transport economics. Routledge.
- [7]Hu Wei, Wu Xue. Research on the integrated development of culture and tourism in Zhitong County [J]. Tourism Panorama, 2024, (16): 132-134.
- [8]Zhao Bin. Let the "Pearl of Shu Road" shine brightly [N]. Mianyang Daily, 2018-10-17.
- [9]Zhao Bin. Zhitong fully promotes the integrated development of culture and tourism [N]. Mianyang Daily, 2019-05-08.
- [10]Bai Jinjin, Xu Zhonghua, Gao Lei. Research on the integrated development of cultural tourism industry in Nanyang City under the perspective of rural revitalization [J]. Urban Architecture, 2024, 21(14): 121-125. DOI:10.19892/j.cnki.csjz.2024.14.29.
- [11]Du Chenyu, Zhou Haiyuan, Lü Lin. Research on strategies for promoting the creative transformation and innovative development of red cultural resources in Nanyang City under the background of rural revitalization [J]. Southern Agricultural Machinery, 2024, 55(15): 111-114.
- [12]Long Jingran, Du Shanshan, Zhang Jingqiu. Development mechanisms and models of rural revitalization under the guidance of cultural tourism integration [J]. Economic Geography, 2021, 41(07): 222-230. DOI:10.15957/j.cnki.jjdl.2021.07.024.
- [13]Hu Shasha, Liu Xiaodong. Zhitong builds a livable place for high-quality, happy and beautiful life [N]. Mianyang Daily, 2024-08-28(006). DOI:10.28575/n.cnki.nmyrb.2024.001324.
- [14]Hu Shasha, Qiu Yuyi, Liu Xiaodong. Zhitong's multi-format integration helps the cultural tourism industry to be brilliant and out of the circle [N]. Mianyang Daily, 2024-07-17(006). DOI:10.28575/n.cnki.nmyrb.2024.001109.
- [15]Zhong Yan. Several thoughts on empowering rural revitalization with culture [J]. Rural · Agriculture · Farmers, 2024, (22): 62-64.