

# ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING BEIJING CULTURAL TOURISM

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## **Abstract:**

*We analyzed the Beijing’s cultural tourism and presented the results as a SWOT analysis. We made some strategic suggestions for Beijing cultural tourism. Embracing a variety of cultural heritages and authentic traditions, Beijing has a big potential to deeply develop its cultural tourism market on the base of the increasing total tourist arrivals year by year. From the SWOT analysis of developing Beijing cultural tourism, we can perceive that Beijing has strengths in resources of cultural, traditions, talents and capital with great policy and market opportunities.*

**Key words:** strategy, Beijing, cultural tourism

**JEL classification:** M31, H89, L83

## **1. SWOT ANALYSIS OF BEIJING’S CULTURAL TOURISM**

### ➤ **Strengths**

a) *Strength of Cultural Resources.* Profound historical background, distinctive Beijing culture, and abundant educational resources are important potentials for Beijing cultural tourism.

First of all, as the political and cultural center of ancient China, Beijing has a history of more than 3,000 years since the establishment of the city and 850 years history of capital. It has many glorious imperial landscapes and rich cultural heritages, especially the imperial city landscape of the Ming and Qing dynasties. The authentic Beijing culture diversified ethnic cultures and the fashion elements of the world’s metropolises are blended together, gradually forming a distinctive Beijing culture, that is, the majestic and grand vicissitudes of the ancient imperial capital, the vogue of the modern metropolis, and the high speed and convenience.

Secondly, Beijing has a diversity of folk culture and rich historical monuments. The imperial city culture of the Summer Palace, the Forbidden City, and the Temple of Heaven provide a rich source and carrier for the development and growth of the cultural and creative industries in Beijing, including the unique Hutong-siheyuan culture and the cultural heritage of the Guild Hall and the ancient military culture represented by the Great Wall. Historical materials such as Peking Opera, Ming and Qing Dynasties, and military materials are valuable resources for the development of cultural tourism in Beijing.

Thirdly, Beijing has a strong educational resource and a diverse cultural atmosphere. Beijing has gathered many well-known universities at home and abroad such as Tsinghua University, Peking University, Renmin University of China, Communication University of China, Beijing University of Aerospace Engineering, etc. It is the most important educational cemetery and talent training base in China today, providing a powerful base for promoting and spreading Beijing cultural tourism.

b) *Strength of Talents.* The cultural tourism is a content industry with a perfect combination of historical and cultural resources, technology, and creativity. It is an industry with a high degree of correlation between knowledge, technology and wisdom. Its core elements and

intrinsic driving force are creative talent resources. This is precisely one of the advantages of Beijing's development of cultural tourism.

The advantages of creative talents in Beijing are mainly reflected in the following two aspects: The first is the local training of creative talent resources. As a capital and cultural center, Beijing has a large number of universities and research institutes. It has trained a large number of creative talents and provided solid intellectual support for the development of cultural tourism. Tsinghua University, Renmin University of China, Communication University of China, Beijing Institute of Fashion, Beijing Film Academy, Central Academy of Fine Arts and many other universities have set up cultural and creative related professional or talent training bases. The model realizes the effective combination of talent advantage, academic research advantage and capital. The advantage is the internal driving force of industrial development, adding "talent" and "intelligence" to and laying a solid foundation for the development of Beijing cultural tourism.

The second is to attract overseas students and overseas creative talents. In 2009, Beijing implemented the "Overseas Talent Gathering Project" to attract high-level overseas talents to start businesses in Beijing. At present, Beijing has attracted a total of 163 high-level talents from overseas, among which 67 are selected as the "Thousand-person Project" (Wang, 2012). The introduction of these high-level talents will attract or encourage more high-level talents to start business in Beijing, and the effect of gathering will become increasingly apparent. By 2010, the Zhongguancun Science and Technology Park has attracted over 10,000 returnees. It is expected that 800 more people will be added each year. These overseas cultural talents who have a background in studying abroad gather in Beijing, bringing with them not only creative products, but more importantly, overseas advanced creative ideas. Chinese and Western cultures, different civilizations and ideas collide here, and will inevitably produce colorful creative "sparks" that will give new contents to the culture nourish the healthy development of the cultural tourism in Beijing.

c) *Strength of Capital.* Beijing, a national financial decision, management, information and service center, has brought together almost the most important financial institutions in the world today with strong financing capabilities and significant capital advantages. As one of Beijing's largest industries and one of the most important pillar industries, the financial industry has significant advantages in capital accumulation, service innovation, and radiation and leading role in other industries. As the second pillar industry in Beijing, which is second only to the financial industry, cultural industries have received more support from the development of the financial industry. Beijing's cultural industry has received more financial support from the fast-paced development of the financial industry.

### ➤ Weaknesses

a) *Pollution.* Ecological environment problem has gradually become one of the most serious problems that local Beijing people concern about. The entire ecological environment of Beijing is listed at the bottom when compared with other tourist attractions around the world. And it is not better when compared with other cities within China. Tons of pollution problems such as air pollution, noise pollution and water pollution in the tourist spot are nowadays the primary problem stopping the healthy and consistent development of Beijing tourism industry. According to the World Health Organization, China has 16 of the 20 most polluted cities in the world, of which Beijing ranks first in terms of pollution. In addition, according to the survey, the annual average values of total suspended particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen-hydrogen compounds in the air in Beijing exceeded the national secondary standard. These environmental factors have become a factor limiting the number of inbound tourists in Beijing to a certain extent, which is not conducive to the further development of cultural tourism.

b) *Insufficient Forms of Cultural Tourism Product.* Cultural tourism products occupy the absolute dominance of Beijing's tourism products. While fully embodying the characteristics, it also causes a single drawback of product form. The urban pattern in which the ancient capitals and the modern metropolis are intertwined often makes the "new" and the "old" mutually exclusive.

Even if, Beijing's ancient capital style is still difficult to be fully preserved, it also makes it difficult for modern buildings and concepts to be highly recognized in Beijing. According to statistical data, tourism and tourism revenues received by historical and cultural tourist attractions accounted for about 75% and 85% of the total, respectively, while theme parks, landscape parks and tourism revenues received by tourists accounted for 25% and 15%, respectively. The income of Beijing tourism mainly comes from cultural tourism resources. Most of the cultural tourism products in Beijing are composed of static historical architectural heritage. As another important component of cultural tourism resources, that is, the lively festivals of music, art and folk culture are obviously lacking, and they are objectively caused. The natural drawbacks of insufficient product participation have led to a decline in the dynamics and charm of Beijing cultural tourism. These inherent defects could have been diluted by subjective efforts. Unfortunately, efforts in this area have not been sufficient and have not clearly worked.

c) *Celebrity resource levels are low.* Compared with some well-known cities in Europe, Beijing also lacks world-class cultural resources such as celebrities' former residences and sites, making Beijing cultural tourism resources slightly inferior. Of course, this is mainly due to the fact that since the modern times, China's economic culture has been in a weak status, and almost no celebrities have had world-wide influence.

### ➤ Opportunities

a) *Policy Opportunities.* In recent years, China has adopted a series of measures to promote the integration of the tourism industry. In addition to promulgating the "Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Combined Development of Culture and Tourism" and "Several Opinions of the State Council on Promoting Cultural Integration, Design Services, and the Integration and Development of Related Industries", there are other series of policies such as the "One Belt and One Road", a strategic layout and the integration of various economic zones. And the planning and establishment of large cities such as the layout of economic space are conducive to the integration of cultural and tourism resources and market expansion. The establishment of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism will not only realize the integration of culture and tourism in the administrative agencies, but will also further promote the ablation of the original industrial boundaries. The relatively independent and fragmented industries will surely form a convergence and promote the deep integration between them.

b) *Market Opportunities.* Cultural power is an important part of the Chinese dream, and the cultural industry has entered a period of vigorous development. In the past five years, the industrial added value has grown at an average annual rate of over 13%. "The National Outline for Cultural Development Reform during the 13th Five-Year Plan" clearly stated that by the end of the "Thirteenth Five-Year Plan", the cultural industry will become the pillar industry of the national economy. The tourism industry will shift from high-speed growth to high-quality development. According to the "National Tourism Work Report of 2018", by 2020, the total scale of the tourism market will reach 6.7 billion tourists, total tourism investment will be 2 trillion Yuan (around 0.3 trillion dollars), and total tourism revenue will reach 7 trillion Yuan (around 1.05 trillion dollars). From a strategic perspective, the cultural tourism is the highlight of national planning. It is expected that the "culture + tourism" industry will reach a scale of 15 trillion Yuan (around 2.25 trillion dollars) in the next 5-10 years. Judging from the current development trend, this figure is becoming a reality and the great era of the development of the cultural and tourism industry is rapidly rising.

c) *Regional opportunities.* Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei has always been a key area of investment. In particular, in April 2017, the Party Central Committee and the State Council announced the establishment of the Xiong'an New District in Hebei Province as a centralized load-bearing area for Beijing's non-capital functions. Meanwhile, the Winter Olympics, the Second Airport, and the Tongwu Corridor, Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region has become a hot spot in the market. From the perspective of the large regions, the eastern part of the country is still the focus of

investment in the past two years. The actual investment has accounted for about 50% of the country's total investment.

d) *Business Opportunities*. The implementation of the "Tourism+" and "Cultural+" strategy will further promote the cultural and tourism industry to break through the limitations of traditional industries and integrate closely with new-type industrialization, urbanization, informatization, and agricultural modernization, and continue to generate new forms of business and new products. Take OCT City as an example. Since the 18th National Congress of the People's Republic of China, OCT has forward-looking grasped opportunities for the integration of the cultural and tourism industries and proposed innovative development models of "Cultural + Tourism + Urbanization," and "Tourism + Internet + Finance," to constantly explore cultural and tourism towns, Beautiful villages and other new cultural and travel products and formats have achieved certain results.

In addition to new forms of business such as cultural and tourism towns and beautiful villages, tourism and health-care, theme parks, and cultural and tourism complex products returning to healthy life, returning to experience interaction, returning to cultural creativity, and other industries also usher in new opportunities for cultural tourism development in Beijing. According to the "Theme Park of Global Theme Parks and Museums" published by Theme Entertainment Association (TEA), the overall visitor volume of Chinese theme parks will surpass the United States by 2020 and become the largest single theme park market in the world.

#### ➤ **Threats**

Even though the Beijing cultural tourism market shows great opportunities in current situation, there are still some problems existing. These problems turn out to be huge blocks that prevent future development of the current market. Research firm Euromonitor says factors such as air pollution, crowded hotels and a stronger currency have diminished Beijing's attractiveness as a tourist hot spot.

a) *Complex Situation and Increased Risks*. The situation at home and abroad is complex and the risks are increasing. Outside, the world economy is still in recovery, plus the turbulence existing in some parts of the world, the external environment is unstable, the overall situation of the world's anti-terrorism is not optimistic. While at home, some Deep-seated contradictions and problems continue to appear, the economic downward pressure is still large. Domestic and international situation on the Beijing tourism market, especially inbound tourism market Demand has a significant impact.

b) *Intensified Competition*. Beijing cultural tourism has entered a new stage of international development, regional tourism competition intensified. Affected by the rising tourism cost and tourism competition from surrounding countries, Beijing's tourism industry is facing a threat. The high-speed railway era allows improvement of traffic accessibility, which will also lead to the intensity of competition for Beijing's domestic tourism market. Enhancing the competitiveness of international tourism and improve the level of domestic tourism services has become an urgent task Beijing cultural tourism faces.

c) *Lack of Authenticity*. Rapid commercialization and modernization have significantly affected the uniqueness and authenticity of Beijing and the quality of the local people. Indeed, some critics have seriously attacked the construction of high-rise buildings in Beijing, because they have destroyed the original style of the city. The humble and simple folk cultures (hutongs and quadrangles) are overshadowed by the grand heritage landscape.

d) *Tourism market is not quite organized*. In Beijing some tour guides ask for compensation and some of them even change the touring routines to bring the passengers to malls and force tourists to buy products and services offered by travel agencies, which obviously decrease the quality of passengers' experience. According the news from Global Times, Beijing Consumer Association receives the common complaints include too many shopping stops, promised services which are not provided and illegal travel agencies and guides (Deng, 2012).

## 2. STRATEGIC SUGGESTIONS FOR BEIJING CULTURAL TOURISM

To maintain a sound and sustainable development of Beijing's tourism industry, it is necessary to improve the rich cultural tourism products in Beijing and enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of Beijing's cultural tourism. This requires a forward-looking and sustainable cultural tourism development strategy. This idea includes both the upgrading of current cultural products and the innovating and developing of newly appeared products. In other words, on the one hand, it is necessary to improve the existing cultural tourism products; on the other hand, it needs to add some innovative products and projects for Beijing cultural tourism.

### ➤ Implement a Deep-Development Strategy to Increase Products' Experience Value

First of all, the strategy is to enhance the management of the attractions and the quality of service, and to increase the value of cultural resources for tourists. Secondly, it is needed to further develop new cultural tourism products.

The first-class cultural tourism resources should be accompanied by a first-class management model. For the rare world cultural heritages such as the Forbidden City, the Great Wall, the Summer Palace, the Temple of Heaven, and the Ming Tombs, on the one hand, Beijing authority must have a strong sense of protection, so that the heritage can be will preserved; On the other hand, it is needed to let the public enjoy the cultural products left by the ancestors. How to achieve the sustainable development of the heritage industry? Some researchers have profoundly pointed out the three tasks of the industry development and their mutual relations: Technical sustainability, related to maximizing the absolute value of the preserving time of the cultural relics, is the basis; operational sustainability, relevant to the maximization of the visitors' number, is the key point. The interpretative sustainability, related to the maximization of the visitors' innermost feelings, is the soul (Xu, 2003).

To reach a high level, careful consideration should be given to the arrangement of cultural heritage display contents, display methods, marketing strategies, commentary systems, environmental designs, and a systematic project to improve the quality of Beijing's cultural tourism products to increase the overall sensory impact on tourists. If there is no good way to externalize the value of cultural heritages, it is difficult to fully convey to tourists. Therefore, the corresponding managers of cultural tourism products are required to fully consider the product's entertainment, participation, dynamism, the identity of the scene atmosphere, and the design of external perception.

The expansion of new cultural tourism products can be linked to a number of secondary theme products to broaden the cluster of cultural products. Apart from the above-mentioned first-class resources, Beijing also has dozens of cultural tourism resources and products that are unique in the country, have a high ornamental value, and even have a large impact in overseas markets. For example, the Yuan Dadu Heritage Park and the Imperial City Root Heritage Park, Lugou Bridge, Ancient Observatory, China Museum of Natural History, China Ancient Animal Museum, Beijing Planetarium, China Science and Technology Museum, China Modern Literature Museum, Ancient Coin Museum, Emperor Temple of the Past Dynasties and the Museum of Ancient Art. These tourism resources, due to their large number, spread layout, and small scale of individual elements, are scattered as if the Pearl is scattered across the capital. If they can be arranged to cultural tourism tours in Beijing for tourists from home and abroad, it can be combined into another new type of cultural sightseeing products.

### ➤ Implement a Multi-product Strategy to Increase Dynamic Participation

In view of the shortage of dynamic products in the Beijing tourism market, and the shortcomings of insufficient activity and participation, Beijing should vigorously promote the development of active cultural tourism projects. The activities of cultural tourism products can not only make the ancient dignified Beijing City "moving up", but also make the functions of general sightseeing products play. The attraction of active cultural products to tourists is significant. There are 50 art festivals in France each year, attracting more than 50,000 tourists. Cities such as London

and Edinburgh in the United Kingdom are also known for their rich and dynamic participatory cultural activities such as music festivals and folk festivals, attracting a large number of tourists from all over the world every year. Beijing is fully qualified to add some attractive dynamic cultural tourism products.

- With an open mind and a great foresight, it is entirely possible that a large-scale cultural performance with a tourist market attraction can be created from the perspective of combining culture and culture.

- Rejuvenating the value of traditional cultural festivals from the perspective of national culture and promoting cultural tourism development. It should be promoted from the government, re-injecting rich folk customs into the four important festivals in Chinese traditional culture—the Spring Festival (Chinese New Year), the Dragon Boat Festival, the Mid-Autumn Festival, and the Qing Ming Festival (Tomb Sweeping Day), so that folk activities can return. In order to let people experience the traditional Chinese culture that has lasted for thousands of years.

- Establishing one or two theme parks with rich cultural connotations, high-tech, high-entertainment and participatory, which is an important way to supplement Beijing's dynamic cultural tourism products. It can not only provide leisure and vacation places for citizens in Beijing, but also provide a new innovative place for visitors home and abroad.

- Cooperating With Private Sectors to Stimulate the Vitality of Cultural Products

The main bodies of Beijing tourism resources are cultural relics, landscapes, garden resources, which are managed by different government departments who perform their functions in protecting and safeguarding national resources. But protection does not mean closing the door to guard. The social protection and operational protection of cultural relic resources have been proved to be the most viable protection methods. At this point, there are many international experiences that are worth learning from. Although the transfer of the overall management rights of tourism resources is a problem that is being debated in the academic community and the industry, at least part of the transfer of operating rights is feasible, and it can also be strengthened with tourism companies in marketing, circuit design arrangements, and new product development. PPP Mode in Beijing cultural tourism should gain more attention to improve the running of the cultural tourism market.

- Implement Industry linkage Strategy and Intensify Cultural Tourism Atmosphere

The improvement of the quality of cultural tourism products in Beijing and the improvement of tourist satisfaction rely on the scenic spots and attractions, as well as the management of tourism-related industries such as hotels, travel agencies, tourism and catering, tourism transportation and tourism commodities. The creation of theme hotels can integrate Beijing's cultural characteristics in terms of overall design, decoration, and theme, based on the realization of standardized services. Catering industry is a product where tourists want to experience different cultural characteristics in addition to attractions. Beijing's traditional famous restaurants and specialty foods should keep pace with the times.

- Branding Image Strategy

Strictly speaking, the creation of City image depends on the municipal government departments and depends on all aspects of the city's work. Therefore, the concept of "marketing city" has also been created. However, regarding the city as a tourist destination and reshaping the entire city image from the perspective of tourism has also proved to be a very necessary task. In recent years, many international cities have initiated tourism image shaping work. The Beijing Municipal Tourism Bureau has vigorously implemented the strategy of "Going Global and Bringing-in", frequently going to Japan, the United States, France, the United Kingdom and other major source countries for promotion work, and also inviting journalists from various countries to Beijing, resulting in Obvious effect.

However, the shaping of city image is a systematic project. It should also explore a variety of ways. At the same time, Beijing should also highlight the importance of solving the pollution, which may be another significant method to improve Beijing's tourism image. Beijing should take the resource-saving and environment-friendly development path, creating the development of eco-

tourism development of green tourism products such as green hotel; develop green tourism products and green food.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

Embracing a variety of cultural heritages and authentic traditions, Beijing has a big potential to deeply develop its cultural tourism market on the base of the increasing total tourist arrivals year by year. Although the inbound tourist's arrivals decreased in the year 2017 compared with the previous years, the total tourists' number is continuously growing. Beijing's domestic tourist market is developing bigger and bigger, despite the decrease of foreign visitors' number.

Through the analysis of the market mix, especially the products and promotion components, we can notice that Beijing's cultural tourism provide tourists with cultural attractions, events, big quantity of accommodation choices and quite well-built infrastructures with different means of promotion, such as social media, large-scale event (mostly for overseas promotion), online websites and mobile, collaborating with other institutions and organizations, etc. The USP of Beijing cultural tourism is suggested to be the cultural heritages and "Peking" elements, which represent the unique identity of Beijing and differentiate it from other destinations.

In the aspect of organization and management in Beijing cultural tourism, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Tourism Development, which is the public sector and the policy maker, shoulder the major responsibilities to better promote the leap-forward development of the tourism industry in Beijing and provide institutional guarantees and systems for the modern service industry. The PPP mode in Beijing Tourism was not very implemented due to some restrictions. However, the public sectors in Beijing are paying more attention and making efforts to create more PPP in Beijing cultural tourism.

From the SWOT analysis of developing Beijing cultural tourism, we can perceive that Beijing has strengths in resources of cultural, traditions, talents and capital with great policy and market opportunities. In the meanwhile, there are weakness and threats like pollutions, lack of authenticity and forms of cultural products, low-level celebrities, intensified competition from other destinations and not very well organized tourism market, which are the obstacles for better developing cultural tourism in Beijing.

Facing all the challenges, Beijing should integrate its cultural tourism resources on the basis of the diverse folk customs, revolutionary relics and long-lasting leisure and architectural traditions, and create a favorable tourism atmosphere by exploring more participatory projects such as cultural festivals and designing culture-themed tourism lines. In addition, all regions and scenic areas in Beijing should design more unique cultural tourism commodities according to its own cultural features and characteristics of visitors from home and abroad.

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