

Visa-free policy gives visitors a taste of Sichuan

By ZHUAN TI
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The China Sichuan Cuisine Cultural Museum has become a tourist hotspot following the start of Chengdu's 72-hour visa-free policy, according to a museum official.

The 4,000-square-meter museum is in Pixian county in southwestern Chengdu and has high-tech facilities for visitors to learn about the history and skills behind Sichuan food.

Sichuan cuisine goes back 3,000 years and is one of the eight major traditional cuisines in China.

Xu Liang, the curator of the museum said the number of foreign tourists visiting the museum, which promotes Chinese food and culture, has increased since the visa-free policy started in September 2013.

The policy allows transit passengers who have a third country visa and valid air ticket to stay visa-free in Chengdu for up to 72 hours.

In 2013, 1.76 million international travelers visited Chengdu, a 12.09 percent increase compared to the previous year.

The Sichuan cuisine museum was particularly popular with tourists from North America, the museum official said.

Matt Vegh, from Canada, spent a day in the museum and cooked Sichuan dishes.

"I learned that Sichuan cuisine is surprisingly delicious yet hard to cook," he said.

A French visitor surnamed Louis spent a day in the museum with his daughter Zoe and both of them were impressed by the high-tech exhibits.

Zoe particularly enjoyed a panda machine called Dr Panda, which used state-of-the-art technology to help it distinguish between different types of seasonings that visitors put under its nose.

She spent a whole afternoon testing out Dr Panda's skills with a variety of seasoning.

A highlight of the museum is learning how to make Douban,



Displays of different types of Sichuan cuisine at the museum.

a unique bean sauce commonly used in Sichuan food.

Pixian has been a production base for the sauce for more than 300 years and Douban produced in the county is honored as a Chinese intangible cultural heritage.

The museum is part of the Sichuan Cuisine scenic area, which also includes an enter-

tainment section and a 23,000 square meter food court.

The Pixian County Tourism Bureau invited 1,000 foreigners to visit the scenic area, including the museum on April 19.

"We are open to the world and we hope to boost the image of Sichuan cuisine globally," Xu said.

Xu said the museum was also planning to build another area near the museum for people to take cooking classes.

"Sichuan food is very special and has good reputation in both China and abroad, we hope more people can learn about it," he said.

Sichuan is colloquially known as the "heavenly country" due to its abundance of food and natural resources.

Most Sichuan dishes are spicy, although a typical meal includes nonspicy dishes to cool the palate.

Sichuan cuisine often contains food preserved through pickling, salting and drying and is generally spicy due to the heavy use of chili oil.



The entrance to the Temple of Marquis Wu.

PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Classic literature fans make pilgrimage to ancient shrine

By HUANG LIYING
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More and more fans of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, one of four acclaimed great classical novels of Chinese literature, are visiting the Temple of Marquis Wu in Chengdu, Sichuan province.

The novel tells the tale of dour lords and their retainers during the Three Kingdoms period (AD 220-280).

The temple is dedicated to Sichuan's ancient Shu past and the heroes that made the area legendary during the Three Kingdoms era and is the most influential of its kind.

He Hongying, deputy curator of the Temple of Marquis Wu Museum, said the area was a pilgrimage place for Three Kingdoms fans from China and abroad.

More and more international tourists visited after the Chengdu 72-hour visa-free policy started, she added.

The policy, which allows transit passengers with a third country visa and valid air ticket to stay visa-free in Chengdu for up to 72 hours, started in September 2013.

The number of tourists visiting the temple museum

between January and April increased 4.8 percent compared to the previous year and the number of international tourists is expected to grow even further, according to He.

The Temple of Marquis Wu covers 140,000 square meters and was built in AD 223 in memory of Liu Bei (AD 161-223), the warlord who founded the state of Shu Han (AD 221-263), and Zhuge Liang (AD 181-234), the chancellor of the state.

Both figures are legends in Chinese history and Zhuge is renowned as one of the most intelligent people in the country.

Tourists from East Asian countries including Japan and South Korea learnt the story of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* through children's books, movies, comics and video games, He said.

She said for many visiting the shrine is a childhood dream come true.

The temple includes antiques and ancient architecture including the tablet of Marquis Wu, also known as the Tablet of Excellence.

The stone tablet was made in the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907) and consists of inscriptions written in beau-



72-HOUR VISA-FREE

tiful calligraphy.

Statuses of warlords and generals also stand in the temple.

"The spirit of Three Kingdoms is an important part of traditional Chinese culture," He said.

"Foreign tourists can get a better understanding of Chinese history and values by visiting," she said.

The deputy curator said she was focused on improving services and infrastructure to meet the rising demand of international tourists.

A foreign visitor told China Daily that had learnt about Zhuge when he was young and said his visit to the temple museum brought the historical figure to life.

He said he was amazed to see that the 50 heroes of Zhuge's period had long hair, beards and goatees and were adorned with colorful robes.

The tourist said the visit gave him an opportunity to understand the appearance and lifestyle of ancient Chinese people.



ZHU XINGXIN/ CHINA DAILY

The China Sichuan Cuisine Cultural Museum beckons visitors from around the world.



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Yosemite (B7) - 优山美地
ID: 01382 522sqm, 4Br. 5Ba. ¥ 60,000
corner house, big garden, big balcony, open kitchen



Capital Paradise (I) - 名都园
ID: 14388 230sqm, 3Br. 2Ba. ¥ 21,000
semi-detached, beautiful garden, big balcony



Le Leman Lake Villa (A) - 莱蒙湖
ID: 08174 682sqm, 4Br. 4Ba. ¥ 53,000
detached, big garden, value for money



River Garden Villa (B) - 裕京花园
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detached, big garden, open kitchen, good sunlight



Beijing Riviera (II, E) - 香江花园
ID: 03718 350sqm, 4Br. 4Ba. ¥ 43,000
detached, big garden, open kitchen, good sunlight



Rose and Ginkgo (I) - 龙湖锦澜山
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corner house, big garden, open kitchen, floor heating



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SanlitunSOHO - 三里屯 SOHO
ID: 19645 166sqm, 2+1Br. 2Ba. ¥ 23,000
middle floor, good view, good sunlight



Landmark Palace - 亮马名居
ID: 04884 300sqm, 2Br. 2Ba. ¥ 43,000
high floor, south facing, lake view, big terrace



Mixion Residence - 九都汇
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middle floor, south facing, big balcony, floor heating



Central Park (II) - 新城国际
ID: 05073 171sqm, 3Br. 2Ba. ¥ 26,000
high floor, garden view, value for money



Hairun Int'l Apartment - 海润国际
ID: 28025 230sqm, 4Br. 3Ba. ¥ 26,000
high floor, good view, good sunlight



Seasons Park - 海晟名苑
ID: 03672 250sqm, 4Br. 3Ba. ¥ 36,000
middle floor, garden view, transversal windows



Centrium Residence - 瑞安君汇
ID: 38731 248sqm, 2+1Br. 2Ba. ¥ 42,000
high floor, good view, floor heating



CBD Private Castle - 圣世一品
ID: 03091 170sqm, 3Br. 2Ba. ¥ 21,000
penthouse, garden view, good sunlight



Beijing SOHO Residences - SOHO北京公馆
ID: 03212 290sqm, 2+1Br. 2Ba. ¥ 35,000
garden view, good sunlight, value for money



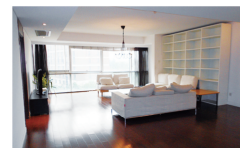
United Apartment - US联邦公寓
ID: 05151 166sqm, 2Br. 2Ba. ¥ 19,000
high floor, good view, good sunlight



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ID: 06853 265sqm, 2+1Br. 2Ba. ¥ 40,000
high floor, garden view, floor heating, value for money



Gentime Int'l Center - 通用国际中心
ID: 20820 485sqm, 4Br. 3Ba. ¥ 55,000
high floor, garden view, big balcony



Upper East Side - 阳光上东
ID: 05330 222sqm, 3Br. 2Ba. ¥ 26,000
middle floor, garden view, good sunlight



Park Avenue - 公园大道
ID: 06906 370sqm, 4Br. 3Ba. ¥ 62,000
middle floor, south facing, garden view, big balcony

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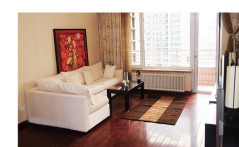
Palm Springs
ID: 10764 190sqm 3Br. 2Ba. ¥ 25,000
high floor, garden view, arc bay windows



Windsor Avenue
ID: 38759 310sqm 3Br. 3Ba. ¥ 35,000
high floor, south facing, good view, big balcony



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ID: 40603 250sqm 3Br. 3Ba. ¥ 38,000
first floor, super large garden, good sunlight



Parkview Tower
ID: 03614 196sqm 3Br. 2Ba. ¥ 20,000
middle floor, south facing, good view, big balcony



Rose and Ginkgo
ID: 02265 350sqm 4Br. 3Ba. ¥ 38,000
townhouse, beautiful garden, two kitchens, floor heating

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