

DESTINATION PROMOTION

Internet woos prospective tourists

About 100 'veterans' are made tourism celebrities in a tourism video alliance of China CYTS Tours Holding Co and yixia.com, a popular video live-streaming platform operator

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Lin Tingting gets to travel free and also gets paid in exchange for sharing her travel experience and tips with her fans. Now, her Weibo microblog account (Abby45) has more than 150,000 followers and her increasing popularity in tourism circles has earned her a contract with Miaopai, a Vine-like short video sharing app, where she has more than 210,000 fans.

Born in the 1980s in Fujian province's Xiamen, Lin started out in the logistics industry, but her love of travel spurred her to share her photos on POCO.cn, one of the most popular photo sharing sites in China.

"I wanted to communicate through the platform and learn photography," she says.

To her surprise, she soon had more than 1,000 fans and received lots of response, which encouraged her to keep taking photos during her trips.

Later, she entered a travelogue competition, where her words and photos won her an opportunity to travel to Thailand for free.

Her posts about her experiences such as a night visit to a zoo then endeared her to many followers.

"Sharing pictures and stories about beautiful scenery, culture, food, especially some small corner which most people may not see is among the charms of a trip," says Lin.

Lin considers her job as helping people to learn about a place in a



From left: Lin Tingting takes a selfie during an invited trip to Seoul, South Korea; she experiences local life in Erdos, Inner Mongolia autonomous region. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

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Lin Tingting, travel blogger

more vivid and well rounded way, and not always being fun and games.

"I always have to plan ahead before any arranged trips, like carrying a single-lens reflex camera, various lenses and an unmanned aerial vehicle to places such as tall mountains, and choose the best possible sites to take pictures or make videos."

"When I'm back, I write the travelogues and edit the photos and videos."

She improved her video skills when she was chosen to do live broadcasts of the London Olympics in 2012.

"I then learned how to interact with people on the street and interview them," she says.

Lin became a full-time travel blogger in May this year.

And she is among 100 "veterans" who will be nurtured to become

tourism celebrities in a tourism video alliance jointly run by China CYTS Tours Holding Co and yixia.com, a popular video live-streaming platform operator in Beijing, which owns Miaopai.

Yixia will invest 100 million yuan (\$14.8 million) to promote the alliance, which is designed to boost tourism.

Live streaming has been all the rage this year, with hundreds of short video sharing and live broadcasting platforms springing up.

The number of users who tuned into online broadcasting shows reached 325 million by June, 2016, accounting for 45.8 percent of Chinese netizens, according to an internet development report by China Internet Network Information Center.

Meanwhile, CYTS and Yixia see the

potential and hope to integrate tourism with the live streaming craze to make tourism marketing more interesting, says an official with CYTS.

Compared with the traditional marketing of a destination, video offers more real virtual experiences, say experts.

This is a view supported by Dai Bin, the head of China Tourism Academy, who says: "It's great to enrich a visitor's experience by enabling him to see the destination before the trip, especially information on scenic spots."

The alliance will feature information on tourism bureaus, airlines and hotel.

Well-known online celebrities in the tourism sector will star in the videos to answer user's questions and share their travel experiences about specific destinations.

CYTS Tours has reached strategic agreements on live broadcasts with Heilongjiang, Guizhou and Qinghai provinces, and the Inner Mongolia, Tibet and Xinjiang Uygur autonomous regions.

The travel agency, which used videos to boost tourism for Heilongjiang province and the Inner Mongolia autonomous region this year received good feedback from online users.

For Lin, she's already using Miaopai to share her travel experiences, and some of her work has received more than 500,000 clicks.

Speaking about her future plans, Lin says there's still a lot to do.

"I'd like to travel to as many destinations that I haven't been to," she says.

"And I also want to try something three-dimensional and learn to take aerial, underwater or even VR photos."

LEISHAN SPECIAL

China sponsors "Leisure Leishan with 1,000 Miao Villages" tourism promotion conference in the US

From Dec 1 to Dec 4, a delegation from Leishan county visited the United States to carry out "Leisure Leishan with 1000 Miao Villages" project.

The delegation visited the Ross Meade County municipal government, the New York Tourism Exhibition Bureau, the New York US-China Tourism Association and the Tianma Travel Agency.

In addition, the delegation held a special-topic tea culture performance of "Holy Land of Miao District and Leisure Leishan" in New York, introducing numerous tourism projects such as "One Village, One Mountain and One Primogenitor" tourism resources, "Ethnic Fine County," "China Classic Village Landscape" and various brands of tea.

In a New York Times article titled "52 Places to Go in 2016" included 2 destinations in China - Hangzhou and Guizhou and in Guizhou, the best attractions for mountain and folklore tourism are in Leishan county.

Leishan County has the reputation for being "The Hometown of Chinese Tea Culture" and "The Holy Land of Miao District". Thirteen featured products from Leishan County are on the national list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. And 57 traditional villages are located in "China Historical and Cultural Town" West Town, "Chinese Landscape Village" Langde Shangzhai and "China Classic Landscape Village" Wudong Village.

At the Boao Summit of World Tourism Elites in April 2009, the county was awarded the honorary title of "Chinese Ace Tourism Destination".

Annually, Leishan County hosts over 3,000,000 tourists. Thanks to the fast-growing tourism industry, a global tourism system integrating natural ecology, ethnic non-heritage customs and tea culture experience has been developed.



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