

# Where wonders are waiting



Everything was autumn; the blue-yellow sky with what looks like white brushstrokes, the beautiful brittle leaves - red, orange, yellow- falling in a rhythm, the crisp breeze, and the very chilly air you breathed. Xuzhou city boasted its remarkable splendour as she was adorned with the finest features of everyone's favourite season.

Located in the northwest of Jiangsu Province and at the core of Central China, Xuzhou, otherwise known as Pengcheng in ancient times, is the largest city of Northern Jiangsu, as well as the most prehistoric city of the province.

The joining point of Jiangsu, Henan and Shandong provinces, the city can brag of its important geographic position that makes it the place all the states of ancient China once scrambled for. The history, dating back thousands of years, has blessed the city with a fervent culture, especially when it was the second political centre of the Han Dynasty (260-220 B.C.).

Xuzhou city measures up to 11, 258 square kilometres and has a population of

10.07 million, and is one of the three cities that Jiangsu province plans to invest heavily in. It is also a key focus in the Belt and Road Initiative- a plan raised by China's top leadership to promote economic and cultural interconnectivity within Eurasia.

The city is home to ancient heroes like Liu Bang and Xiang Yu, as well as 11 emperors who established the dynasties. The Han Culture Tourist Zone pays proper tribute to the past, by storing real and also replicas of historic relics and artefacts dating back to those times.

The famous theme park includes three museums and numerous tourist sites. The setting is a concoction of Xuzhou's awe-inspiring natural sceneries and the powerful history and culture of the Han dynasty. The venue can be considered a treasure trove of ancient relics such as tombs, sculptures, terracotta figures and more, that can immediately transport you into the past.

The Xuzhou Museum, founded in 1959 on the northern part of the Yunlong Mountain, occupies 33,000 square meters,

of which 3000 square meters are dedicated to display halls. It was established at the site of the temporary palace of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) during his tour of China's southern provinces.

This remarkable city has an abundance of natural landscapes, and is surrounded by or connected to 72 hills, 9 rivers and seven lakes - all of which add immensely to the extraordinary aesthetic values of the place. The plentiful surrounding water bodies permit the existence of 30 open villas with gardens, and over 300 meadows.

The Dragon Lake Park, which previously used to be a mine, is now a mountain covered in greenery, decorated with wooden steps and a waterfall, well and alive. Entering the park, you will be enchanted with the bright hues of the leaves, the tranquil sounds of the water, and just nature in all her glory. You will leave the park breathless, if you ever manage to talk yourself into leaving.

To go visit places nearby, a high-speed

railway line that links Lanzhou, Gansu province is under construction, while its airport has over 20 airlines to cities on the mainland as well as to Taiwan, Thailand, Hong Kong and the Republic of Korea. It's convenient transportation infrastructure and systematic roads connect the city to both Beijing and Shanghai.

Xuzhou is also a contemporary city. Hotels and hostels with different paradigms will undoubtedly satisfy, if not impress, your accommodation requirements and the proficient recreational sites will be above and beyond your expectations.

The unique, yet somehow familiar city is a place with a profusion of delectable eateries, and people for whom smiles and love is the international language, spoken with hearts full of warmth. There is no reason for Xuzhou city to be left off your travel itinerary, because that is precisely where wonders await your presence.

By Naziba Basher

Photo: Naziba Basher



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