

# RED TOURISM IN CHINA BUILDING IMAGE



China promotes its sites connected with their revolutionary past to increase the people's loyalty to the party but also to generate revenue for poor rural areas.

The old Chinese revolutionaries would be surprised that their deeds have become a good business article. The Chinese have decided to instill patriotism and Communist Party loyalty by promoting **red tourism**.

The idea is to bring tourists to places where the revolution took place and naturally make them spend their money on such trips. Among the popular sites is the birth place of the great Chinese communist leader Mao Zedong, Shaoshan a village in central Hunan province. Another popular red tourism site is Yan'an, a city where the famous Long March ended. Chinese consider this city as the birthplace of their revolution. In the city of Wuhu tourists may learn about the revolutionary hero Wang Jiaxiang. Naturally, **communist museum** does not speak much about the Cultural Revolution.

Red tourism aims to improve the Chinese Communist party image and to increase Chinese loyalty but it is not only propaganda that drives the officials to run the project. Many of the red tourism sites are in poor rural areas and the officials hope the increased number of tourists will improve the economic situation of local people. They see red tourism as a catalyst for economic development. Boosting the demand for the red sites also brings the need to improve the local transport infrastructure. Thousands of kilometers of roads have been thus built. Numerous old buildings and memorials are currently being renovated.

According to official Chinese media, red tourism program is a huge success that has managed to attract **hundreds of millions of visitors**. The director of the Wuhu museum claims that his facility has attracted 320,000 visitors since its renovation in 2006. Old revolutionaries who are still alive are however disgusted by the "disneyfication" of the glorious revolutionary past. As anti capitalists they now have become a part of a business plan.

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