

A Strategy for Linking Tourist Routes in Wuxiang County, a Linear Tourist Destination

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Abstract: This paper aims to explore how to effectively and artfully link the cultural, natural, and historical attractions of Wuxiang County within the context of linear tourism destinations. This paper first analyzes the distribution characteristics of Wuxiang County's Taihang humanistic and historical tourism resources and the current state of tourism development. It then proposes a tourism planning framework of "one center, two main threads, and three functional zones." With the Taihang regional historical memorial hall as the core, the framework revolves around two main themes—cultural tourism and immersive experiential tourism—to form three major functional zones: the Taihang regional historical and cultural exhibition center, the Taihang ancient site humanistic experience zone, and the Banshan modern industrial relic experience zone. Through the integration of culture and tourism, combined with activities such as VR immersive experiences, artistic painting, cultural murder mystery games, and cultural hiking, this framework breaks away from the traditional "superficial sightseeing" model of cultural tourism, enriches the structure of tourism products, and establishes a comprehensive tourism development framework. Through these strategies, Wuxiang County's cultural tourism routes—while preserving and promoting Taihang regional traditional humanistic heritage—will also fully leverage local natural and historical resources to provide visitors with diverse travel experiences, thereby driving the high-quality development of the county's tourism industry.

Keywords: Wuxiang County; Tourism; Linear Tourism Destinations; Strategies for Linking Tourism Routes

1. Introduction

Linear tourist destinations represent a new form

of tourism that stands out in the diversified development of today's tourism industry; their uniqueness and richness are attracting the attention of an increasing number of visitors. A linear tourist destination refers to a route or path that connects multiple related attractions or cultural sites to form one or more continuous and appealing tourist itineraries. This not only provides convenience for visitors but also drives the coordinated development of the regional tourism industry. Wuxiang County is rich in tourism resources. Not only is it a nationally renowned historic revolutionary base area with abundant tourism resources, but it also boasts a wealth of diverse natural attractions. This paper aims to explore strategies for linking tourism routes in Wuxiang County as a linear tourism destination. It checks and studies the county's tourism resources. Then it gives a workable plan for connecting these routes. This plan can make Wuxiang County more attractive to tourists. It can also help protect and grow local culture. And it can push the regional tourism industry to develop together.

2. Overview of Wuxiang County's Tourism Resources

2.1 Tourist Attractions in Wuxiang County

Wuxiang County is a county rich in tourism resources, primarily because it has achieved a harmonious coexistence and balanced development of its cultural, natural, and historical assets. First, Wuxiang County is located in southeastern Shanxi, at the western foot of the Taihang Mountains. Its terrain is higher in the east and west and lower in the center, resembling a "ruiyi" (a traditional Chinese symbol of good fortune). It is a famous historic revolutionary base area, hailed as the "Hometown of the Eighth Route Army" and the "Cradle of the People's Liberation Army" [1]. At the same time, Wuxiang County boasts stunning natural scenery, providing a wealth of natural landscapes and tourism resources.

Second, Wuxiang County enjoys convenient transportation with a relatively well-developed transportation network. These transportation routes not only facilitate connections between Wuxiang County and surrounding areas but also provide convenient access for tourists. Finally, Wuxiang County's most distinctive feature is its red cultural resources, which it leverages to vigorously promote the integrated development of tourism. At the same time, Wuxiang County has strengthened the protection and development of its scenic spots, enhancing the tourist experience. The county's tourism resources are primarily concentrated in Wuxiang County seat and the eastern part of the county, and the overall development trend shows vigorous growth.

2.2 Current Status of Tourism Development in Wuxiang County

In recent years, Wuxiang County has focused on revolutionary culture as its driving force, pursuing in-depth integrated development across three areas: the construction of revolutionary sites, the exploration of revolutionary culture, and the organization of revolutionary tourism activities. In order to mobilize the willingness of foreign tourists to travel and improve their satisfaction, Wuxiang County has continuously increased its investment in tourism infrastructure in recent years, strengthened infrastructure construction, improved the level of public services, optimized the tourism environment, and strived to create a more comfortable and convenient tourism environment. The local rich red resources constitute the material foundation for supporting the development of local characteristic industries. In the process of development, these red resources have been deeply integrated with agriculture, handicraft industry and tourism, which not only drives the coordinated development of multiple industries, but also opens up new formats such as rural tourism and e-commerce, rural tourism and red research, rural tourism and modern agriculture [2]. At the same time, Wuxiang County has also handed over a good report card at the level of cultural and tourism integration, adhering to the guidance of 'shaping tourism with culture and promoting culture with tourism', so that the two can empower each other at a deeper level. In terms of concrete practice, the local government has not only built the backbone transportation facilities such as 'Taihang No.1' tourism

highway, but also paid attention to tapping the cultural added value of cultural and creative products, and promoted the organic linkage between red culture and natural ecological tourism, rural leisure and vacation. However, while the tourism economy as a whole is on the rise and the income is growing steadily, some problems have gradually surfaced. First, the market heat of tourist destinations is still low, and there is a lack of a clear enough iconic image. Second, the existing tourism product structure is relatively single, the core scenic spots mostly stay at the traditional sightseeing level, and the supply of interactive and immersive experience projects is obviously insufficient. Third, infrastructure is relatively underdeveloped—particularly transportation within scenic areas and between them—which is far from meeting the needs of rapid tourism development [3]. Fourth, the destination's profile is low, and promotional efforts need to be strengthened. Fifth, protection of tourism resources is inadequate, and awareness of sustainable development is weak. While many of these issues may not yet be fully apparent due to the early stage of development, as development intensifies, this problem must be given sufficient attention. Actions must be guided by the principles of conservation-oriented development and sustainable development—which are also fundamental requirements for ecotourism [3].

3. Strategies for Linking Tourist Routes in Xiangxi County, a Linear Tourist Destination

3.1 Planning and Innovation of Tourist Routes in Wuxiang County

Currently, Wuxiang County has established a comprehensive tourism development framework known as "One Axis, One Core, Three Zones, Three Mountains, and Four Temples." This framework encompasses the county's entire spatial layout and aims to realize a comprehensive tourism plan that integrates "points, lines, and areas" through "six major initiatives": panoramic development, all-around promotion, comprehensive services, full-scale industry development, region-wide management, and society-wide participation [4]. In terms of cultural tourism, the county is establishing a main cultural tourism route centered on the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall, the former site of the Eighth Route Army Headquarters at Zhuanbi, and the former site at

Wangjiayu. At the same time, it is enhancing the appeal and influence of Wuxiang's tourism through projects such as the protection and utilization of cultural resources, the optimization and upgrading of the supply system, cultural tourism research and study programs, and the creation of an optimal environment for tourism development. Building upon Wuxiang County's current all-for-one tourism plan, this paper integrates and analyzes the county's tourism resources, thereby proposing a broad framework for the tourism destination consisting of "one center, two main routes, and three functional zones". However, the overarching framework for Wuxiang County's tourism destination proposed in this paper centers on the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall. Based on the concept of a linear tourism destination, it makes rational use of the roads within Wuxiang County to form two main routes: the Cultural Landscape Route, centered on the Tai-Chang Expressway, and the Scenic Experience Route, centered on National Highway G519 and Provincial Highway S322. It also establishes three major functional zones—the Eighth Route Army Cultural Exhibition Center, the Eighth Route Army Historic Site Experience Area, and the Banshan Eighth Route Army Headquarters Armaments Factory Experience Zone. Furthermore, numerous experiential and interactive themed activities have been added at various tourist attractions—such as VR experience zones at the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall and the Eighth Route Army Cultural Park, and murder mystery games at the Eighth Route Army Cultural Park and the Eighth Route Army Zhanbi Historic Site—thereby enriching the visitors' travel experience.

This paper's planning and new ideas for Wuxiang County's tourism routes come from a linear tourism destination model. This model has created a big plan for the destination. The plan has "one center, two main routes, and three functional zones." The next parts will give more details about what this plan includes and what it does. "One Center" means the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall. The routes go out from this hall. First, the hall sits in the middle of Wuxiang County. So it has good transport and is easy to get to from other places. Second, it is the only big revolutionary hall in China that shows the full history of the Eighth Route Army in the War of Resistance Against Japan. Because it has deep historical meaning, it is a key place for

learning revolutionary history and remembering revolutionary heroes. The "Two Main Routes" are the Cultural Landscape Route, centered on the Tai-Chang Expressway, and the Scenic Experience Route, centered on National Highway G519 and Provincial Highway S322. The Cultural Landscape Route features a wealth of attractions, including revolutionary heritage sites, natural landscapes, and historic cultural architecture, allowing visitors to appreciate the beauty of nature and historical charm while immersing themselves in revolutionary culture. In addition to the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall, the Scenario Experience Route includes the former site of the Eighth Route Army Headquarters and the Banshan Scenic Area. Zhuanbi Village and Liyu Village are two villages along this route that are distinctive for their revolutionary heritage. This article proposes the design of an immersive murder mystery game and a painting activity titled "The Era of Awakening: Painting a Blueprint Together" to enrich the forms of immersive cultural and tourism experiences. A simulated Long March hiking tour has been set up in the Banshan Scenic Area, allowing visitors to retrace the Long March route and experience the spirit of the Red Army. The "Three Major Functional Zones" consist of the Eighth Route Army Cultural Exhibition Center, the Eighth Route Army Historic Site Experience Area, and the Banshan Eighth Route Army Headquarters Armory Experience Area. Building upon the existing digital experience hall, memorial hall, and revolutionary study tours, these zones have added interactive programs such as artistic painting activities and VR experience areas to further diversify cultural experiences. Among them, the Eighth Route Army Historic Site Experience Zone encompasses the Wangjiayu and Zhuanbi historic sites. It uses the revolutionary sites in Zhuanbi Village and Li Yu Village. It has an immersive murder mystery game. This game tells revolutionary history. And it passes on the revolutionary spirit through new and interactive ways. The Banshan Eighth Route Army Headquarters Armory Experience Zone is set in the Banshan Scenic Area. This area is at the highest point of Wuxiang County. It has beautiful natural views and many revolutionary sites. It was also the main battlefield of the Battle of Huangyadong. So, the area has made a hiking activity called "Reflecting on Hardship and Appreciating Prosperity." During the hike,

visitors can follow revolutionary memories, honor revolutionary heroes, and feel the Taihang Spirit. What has been outlined above is the overall framework of the tourist destination, centered around “one core, two main routes, and three functional zones.” Breaking it down, its core anchor is the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall; the two main tour routes and three functional zones are connected by the Tai-Chang Expressway, G519, and S322. In terms of the order of scenic spots, it is determined according to the order of historical events, not randomly arranged. In addition, theme activities have been arranged at some nodes, and a small design of punching rewards has been made by the way, so that visitors can not only “watch” but also “play”. The advantage of this approach is that it can not only explain the revolutionary vein more completely, but also increase the sense of participation of tourists. The final point is to create a linear tourist destination with a clear theme and clear hierarchy.

3.2 The Diverse Themes of Tourism Activities in Wuxiang County

The above has elaborated on the overall development framework of the tourist destination of “One Center, Two Main Routes, and Three Functional Zones” in Wuxiang County, and combined with some scenic spots in the framework, the theme activities of tourism in Wuxiang County have been planned and designed, specifically including the VR experience area, “Awakening Age, Drawing Blueprints Together” painting activities, immersion The four themes of the script killing and “remembering bittersweet” hiking activities. The following will elaborate on these four thematic activities.

The VR experience area is located in the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall, and visitors can decide their own experience time before and after the visit. As soon as the equipment is worn, virtual reality technology directly drags people into the historical scene, and there is no dead angle in 360 degrees. In front of you is the trench, and there is the sound of gunfire in your ears. The characters can be warriors, correspondents, or local villagers. The feeling of the word “hardship” is completely different from different perspectives. Upon exiting, visitors participate in complementary activities, such as knowledge quizzes and

listening to classic songs. By leveraging science and technology to enhance cultural education, this approach deepens the visitors’ experience, amplifies the cultural impact, and boosts its reach [5]. The painting activity of “The Age of Awakening, Drawing a Blueprint Together” was placed in the Eighth Route Army Cultural Park. After visiting the red exhibition area, tourists draw the feelings in their hearts with a brush, which can be the ideal future or the picture that impressed them the most just now. By using art to reflect on the path taken by our forebears, the “revolutionary spirit” becomes more than just a phrase—it’s something they’ve brought to life through their own artwork. The immersive murder mystery game is set in Zhanbi Village, the former site of the Eighth Route Army’s General Headquarters. The scenarios are based on real events and figures from the area, with multiple themes available for visitors to choose from according to their preferences. Through role-playing, scene reenactments, and clue-based deduction, the entire experience blurs the sense of time, making it feel as though one has “traveled back” to that era. The tension of deduction combined with the heart-wrenching fate of the characters naturally evokes an emotional resonance—the revolutionary spirit is not something taught, but something experienced firsthand. Through these experiences, participants develop an emotional connection and elevate the revolutionary spirit, infusing cultural tourism with innovative vitality [6]. The “Remembering Hardship, Cherishing Prosperity” hiking event is held in the Banshan Scenic Area. It uses local places like the main battlefield of the Battle of Huangyadong and the old sites of the Eighth Route Army Headquarters’ armory and hospital. The event copies the Red Army’s march route. People taking part wear military uniforms. They hike through old revolutionary sites. Along the way, they eat “hardship-remembrance” meals like frozen potatoes and stir-fried flour. They can also join Red Song singing contests. Through these hands-on experiences, they understand better the hard times and the spirit of the revolution. In addition, this article uses key cultural and tourism places like the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall and the Banshan Scenic Area. It brings in a special “check-in and stamp collection” activity. After visitors finish the check-in tasks at these sites, they can get Long March Victory-themed stamps. This makes the

whole tour more interactive and gives visitors a stronger sense of participation.

In addition, a “stamp-collecting” route has been established along the main tourist attractions. The sites included are the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall, the Eighth Route Army Cultural Park, the Thousand Buddha Pagoda, Taihang Longdong, the Changle Battle Memorial, the Wangjiayu Historic Site, Huixian Temple, and the Banshan Scenic Area—essentially linking all the scattered points along the way. At each location, visitors can collect a stamp and make a note; once they’ve collected them all, they can exchange them for a set of Long March-themed commemorative stamps. These stamps are earned through their own “journey”—while the act of checking in isn’t difficult in itself, placing it along this route adds an extra layer of interaction between visitors and each attraction. Overall, these designs are not merely intended to diversify the format of the activities; there are two underlying meanings behind them: one is a retrospective look at history, and the other is an experiment in contemporary methods of “red education.” How does one balance form and content? The approach taken by Wuxiang involves using new methods to present old stories. Judging by the actual results, Wuxiang County has successfully transformed its cultural tourism resources into a powerful driving force for local economic and social development [7].

4. Implementation Results of the Integrated Tourism Routes in Wuxiang County

By optimizing the spatial tandem of tourist routes and enriching the types of thematic activities, Wuxiang County has achieved remarkable results in the following aspects. First, resource integration and route optimization. Relying on the three roads of G519 National Highway, Erguang Expressway and S322 Provincial Highway, Wuxiang County not only connects the cultural points of the Eighth Route Army Taihang Memorial Hall, the old site of Wangjiayu and the old site of the brick wall, but also connects the natural landscape and historical sites together to form an ecological tourism line. As a result, the tourism resources within Wuxiang County are no longer scattered but are now organized within a cohesive framework, achieving the integration and optimization of the county’s tourism resources [8]. For tourists, it is convenient for their tour

and experience; for the scenic spots along the route, which were originally less well-known, it also has tourism exposure, thus attracting more tourists to visit and learn about tourism. Second, at the industrial level. As soon as the route is open, the flow of people increases, and more people come, and the supporting facilities such as meals, accommodation and transportation will naturally follow. This not only stimulated local economic growth but also raised residents’ income levels [9]. Third, culture and education. After the lines are strung up, the tourists do not walk a scattered point, but a line with a narrative order. Walking along this line, the perception of that period of history is continuous and progressive. This way of experience is easier for people to go in than just looking at one point, and the effect of patriotic education is also more natural. Fourth, the level of infrastructure and service. In order to improve the tourism experience of tourists, Wuxiang County has carried out a series of renovations to the infrastructure. The road has become easier to walk, the accommodation conditions have become stronger, and there are more dining options. The attitude and professionalism of service staff have also improved accordingly, providing visitors with more convenient and comfortable services [10]. Of course, to turn the current positive momentum into a lasting advantage, Wuxiang County also needs to continue to make efforts in product innovation, facility upgrading, brand promotion and experience optimization. Only in this way can we stand firm in the increasingly fierce regional tourism competition and truly transform the attractiveness of red resources into market recognition and tourist reputation.

5. Conclusion

The tandem connection of tourist routes in Wuxiang County is essentially the spatial reorganization and value activation of regional stock resources under the framework of linear tourist destinations. It is not only a physical connection of the revolutionary relics, but also the narrative reconstruction of the red memory and the contemporary continuation of collective recognition. As a rich area of tourism resources in southeastern Jin, Wuxiang County is staggered with various elements such as red ruins, natural ecology and rural settlements, but the dilemma of “with pearls without necklaces” has always existed. Through scientific and

reasonable route organization, on the one hand, the scattered cultural carrier can be integrated into the unified semantic network to achieve the cluster effect of "1+1>2"; on the other hand, the landscape can also be embedded in the historical scene with the help of the optimized utilization of traffic corridors, so as to improve the rhythm and immersion of the tour sequence. In this way, tourists are no longer tired of running between isolated points, but naturally walk into that history along a storyline with ups and downs. But to really string this line well, at least two key points must be pinched at the operational level. The first is the depth anchoring of cultural connotation. Each scenic spot should not only be geographically adjacent, but also have a narrative connection. For example, what is the logical relationship between the old site of a headquarters and the old site of the rear hospital? How do they complement each other in wartime? These inherent tensions and interactions are the soul of the "readability" of the line. The second is the systematic support of tourist experience. The supporting infrastructure, the layout of service facilities, and the diversified development of experience products should be updated synchronously. For example, setting up thematic explanation boards and interactive devices between nodes, or interspersed with some short immersive scenario experiences, so that tourists can both "see" and "play", so as to truly turn "passers-by" into "overnight guests". At present, Wuxiang's line series is still in the stage of exploration and trial and error, facing many practical constraints. For example, the protection status of some sites is uneven, the traffic connection between nodes is not smooth enough, and the coordination mechanism of the operating body has yet to be run into. These shortcomings need to be gradually repaired in subsequent practice. In the long run, if Wuxiang wants to make this red line a brand, it must continue to make efforts in several aspects: First, strengthen the protective use of resources and put an end to the erosion of the historical field by excessive commercialization; the second is to deepen the research and excavation of local revolutionary history, so that each site can tell a unique story, instead of the one-size-size-all three-one "meeting, fighting, sacrifice"; the third is to innovate the expression and marketing channels of products, and with the help of digital media, study tours, thematic cultural creation and other new business forms, the red IP of

Wuxiang is differentiated and attractive. In a word, the tandem connection of Wuxiang routes in the context of linear tourist destinations is a systematic project that is both strategic and operational, and it is impossible to win with one or two raids. It requires the top-level design at the government level, the flexible operation of the market subject, the active participation of the community, and the knowledge support of academic research to form a synergy from many parties. Only in this way can the resource advantages of Wuxiang be effectively transformed into product advantages and competitive victory, so that this route can not only become a geographical channel, but also a lively corridor that carries memory, transmits the spirit and drives development.

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