

# Culture and Tourism Integration Development Status, Problems and Policy Recommendations in Guangxi

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## Abstract

From an industrial integration perspective, this paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the integration between culture and tourism in Guangxi. It concludes that the integration has already taken shape in Guangxi, resulting in the creation of a national industrial integration brand and the emergence of new forms of industrial integration. However, during the deep integration process, several challenges need to be addressed in order to promote the development of culture and tourism. There is a lack of innovative capacity in cultural and tourism integration. This hinders the creation of unique and novel experiences for tourists, limiting the potential for growth and expansion in the industry. The high degree of homogenization poses a significant challenge. The lack of diversification and differentiation among cultural and tourism offerings leads to a monotonous experience for visitors, ultimately affecting their satisfaction and willingness to return. The scale and structure of cultural and tourism integration are currently unreasonable. The imbalance in resource allocation and development across different regions within Guangxi impedes the overall progress of the industry. A more equitable and balanced approach is needed to ensure sustainable growth and maximize the potential of each area. Addressing these three types of problems is crucial to the promotion of the culture and tourism integration industry. By fostering innovation, encouraging diversification, and optimizing resource allocation, Guangxi can further enhance its position as a leading destination for cultural and tourism experiences.

## Keywords

Guangxi; Culture and Tourism Integration; Policy Recommendations.

## 1. Introduction

The Recommendations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Formulation of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Vision for the Year 2035, which were adopted at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee, have explicitly emphasized the importance of promoting the integration and development of culture and tourism. The document highlights the need to establish world-class tourist scenic spots and resorts that showcase rich cultural heritage. Additionally, it calls for the creation of national tourism and leisure cities and neighborhoods that possess distinctive cultural characteristics.

Moreover, the development of red tourism and rural tourism is also emphasized. These recommendations not only provide a clear direction for the integrated development of the culture and tourism industry, but also offer theoretical guidelines. They also set forth precise requirements and higher goals for local innovation in culture and tourism. Following these guidelines and goals will contribute to the overall growth and enhancement of the culture and tourism sector at the local level.

In recent years, Guangxi has been steadfast in its commitment to shaping tourism through culture and showcasing culture through tourism. The region has prioritized the acceleration of

high-quality development in the culture and tourism industry, with the aim of establishing itself as a world-class tourism destination and a prominent hub for culture and tourism. Guangxi has also taken significant steps in implementing the “culture and tourism +” and “+ culture and tourism” strategies, which focus on fostering cross-border integration and synergistic development among the culture and tourism industry and other related sectors.

Through this cross-border integration and synergistic development, new products, models, and forms have emerged, generating fresh momentum for high-quality economic development. This approach has also contributed to the expansion of cultural and tourism consumption and improved its overall quality. By solidly promoting the integration of culture and tourism and emphasizing high-quality development, Guangxi is creating a new era of industrial integration and development in the region.

## **2. The current situation of cultural tourism integration development in Guangxi**

### **2.1. The integration of culture and tourism is taking shape**

All regions within the Guangxi region have consistently emphasized the integration of culture and tourism, with a focus on promoting the synergistic development of these two sectors with other related industries. As a result, numerous cultural and tourism events and attractions have been successfully launched. For instance, Fangchenggang City, Beihai City, Guilin City, and Hechi City have achieved remarkable progress in integrating sports and tourism, hosting events such as the “Tour of Guangxi” Road Cycling World Tour, the “One Belt, One Road” International Regatta, the Natural Golf Maritime Silk Road Exploration Tournament, the China-ASEAN International Marathon, Yangshuo International Marathon, and Bama International Marathon. These events have attracted a significant influx of tourists to Nanning City[1].

Furthermore, Nanning City has made efforts to promote cultural and tourism landmarks such as Qingxiu Mountain, Fangte ASEAN painting, and the Three Streets and Two Lanes. It has successfully positioned itself as a vibrant nighttime economy destination and a “red tourism landmark.” Notably, Nanning City has also successfully organized thematic activities such as the Guangxi Automobile Tourism Conference and the World Jasmine Congress, effectively boosting the consumer market for culture and tourism.

Liuzhou City, leveraging its industrial sector advantages, has successfully established industrial tourism attractions such as the Liuzhou Museum of Industry and the Baojun base of SAIC-GM-Wuling. These attractions have gained visibility and influence within the industry[2]. Wuzhou City has focused on the application of new energy technology and intelligent driving technology in tourism public transport, developing innovative tourism transport services. It has also deepened the integration of tea and tourism, creating tea-themed scenic spots and rural tourism routes. The “Tea Boat Ancient Road-Xijiang River Style Tour” has been selected by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism as a national rural tourism boutique route[3]. Yulin City, capitalizing on its traditional Chinese medicine resources, has developed a brand for Chinese medicine health tourism. It has established demonstration bases such as the Dairongshan Base and Colorful Field Base, which are dedicated to Chinese medicine health tourism. These bases, alongside ongoing construction projects, aim to create a unique Yulin-style health recuperation experience, enhancing the city’s reputation in this field.

Overall, Guangxi’s regions have made significant advancements in integrating culture and tourism, resulting in the development of various attractions and events that attract both domestic and international tourists.

## 2.2. Continuous creation of national industrial integration brands

Since "March 3 of the Zhuang Nationality" became a legal holiday in the autonomous region, the autonomous region's Department of Culture and Tourism has endeavored to carry out the "March 3 of the Zhuang Nationality - Bagui Carnival" series of cultural activities. These activities aim to celebrate the cultural heritage of the Zhuang people and provide a grand carnival for the people of the Zhuang hometown.

Several cities, including Nanning, Guilin, Beihai, Yulin, Guigang, and others, have been selected as national culture and tourism consumption pilot cities. Guangxi has ranked first among the provinces in terms of the number of selected cities. Additionally, Nanning City, three streets, two alleys, and the Yongjiang River South Bank Area have been selected as national night culture and tourism consumption agglomerations, ranking first among other provinces in terms of the number of selected units[4].

In 2021, there have been notable additions to Guangxi's tourism offerings. This includes 2 new national tourism and leisure blocks, 2 national leisure agriculture key counties, 10 China's beautiful leisure villages, 4 national forest recreation bases, 1 national industrial heritage, 2 national sports tourism demonstration bases, and 6 China's sports tourism boutique projects. Furthermore, in 2022, the ASEAN Culture and Tourism Area in Nanning and the Yueya Dong Village in Liuzhou City, among other places, have been selected as the second batch of national nighttime Culture and Tourism Consumption Clustering Areas. Additionally, 4 units have been selected as pilot construction units of national forest recreation bases.

## 2.3. Continuously enriching new forms of industrial integration

All over the region, there has been an active promotion of the "culture and tourism +" to "+ culture and tourism" industrial development mode change. This aims to facilitate the integration and development of cultural tourism with health, internet, agriculture, industry, sports, and other related industries. As a result, new forms of integration continue to emerge.

The integration of agriculture, culture, and tourism, known as "Agriculture + culture and tourism," has been a focus in the region. Rural tourism and leisure agriculture development are being promoted according to local conditions. In 2021, efforts were made to create 50 autonomous region-level leisure agriculture and rural tourism demonstration sites. Additionally, 16 autonomous region-level field complex pilot projects were cultivated. The region has also been holding leisure agriculture and rural tourism boutique line promotion activities for four consecutive years, introducing a series of boutique offerings to the market.

Since 2020, Guangxi has been vigorously promoting the development of industrial tourism, known as "Industry + cultural tourism." Notable achievements include the selection of Liuzhou Air Compressor Factory as one of the fifth batch of national industrial heritage sites. Additionally, attractions such as Oriental Dream Factory - LiuKong Cultural and Creative Park, Heshan National Mining Park, Hepu Mooncake Town, General Wuling Baojun Base, Pubei Shenmai Wine Manor, and others have been developed with industrial tourism themes. This has led to the creation of boutique routes like the Liuzhou Industrial Culture Tour.

In terms of "business + culture and tourism," Guangxi is accelerating the breeding of brands, expanding consumption, and strengthening industry integration. In 2021, 11 Guangxi leisure and tourism neighborhoods, 5 autonomous regional-level nighttime featured consumption agglomeration areas, 3 autonomous regional-level pedestrian streets, and 13 "Guangxi old brands" have been evaluated[5]. Various characteristic scenic spots and commercial districts integrating business, culture, and tourism have been built or accelerated, such as Nanning Three Streets and Two Alleys, Guilin East and West Alleys, Beihai Old Street, and Beihai Yinji International Coastal Tourism Resort Center[5]. Convention and exhibition tourism also continues to innovate, with events like the China-ASEAN (Liuzhou) Tourism Equipment Expo,

Guangxi Automobile Tourism Conference, and Guangxi Tourism B&B Conference contributing to the development of new industries.

Since being approved to create a national sports tourism demonstration area in 2018, Guangxi has been actively developing the integration of "sports + culture and tourism." By the end of 2021, 5 cities and 18 counties (cities and districts) have been included in the creation of pilot sports tourism demonstration areas[6]. The region has successfully organized high-quality sports events such as the Guangxi "Ethnic Sports Dazzle" series of competitions and the "Belt and Road" International Regatta, promoting the rapid development of sports tourism.

In terms of "education + culture and tourism," Guangxi has been actively promoting the innovative development of study travel. This includes the assessment of autonomous region-level primary and secondary school students' study and practice education bases (camps). The region also encourages the construction of study travel bases in municipalities, leveraging natural and cultural heritage resources, public venues, scientific research institutes, and more. In 2021, high-quality red study tours were launched, and Guangxi's top ten cultural and biological study tours and courses were selected. The region even launched the country's first customized study train in the summer of 2021, leading to the flourishing of study tours.

Guangxi has also been actively promoting the integration and development of other industries with culture and tourism. This includes "transport + culture and tourism," "water conservancy + culture and tourism," "meteorology + culture and tourism," "ecology + culture and tourism," "science and technology + culture and tourism," and more. Notable achievements include the comprehensive management of the Li River, upgrading of Li River cruise ships, and the popularity of cruise tourism products. Additionally, water conservancy scenic areas have been upgraded, cultural and tourism special trains have been launched, and intelligent tourism platforms have been developed. The construction of tourist scenic roads, such as the border scenic road and coastal scenic road, is also being accelerated.

### **3. Problems in the integration of culture and tourism in Guangxi**

#### **3.1. Insufficient promotion of cultural and tourism integration industry in Guangxi**

Currently, the integration of the culture and tourism industry in Guangxi is not deep enough, and the level of integration is relatively low, resulting in limited integration effects. This hinders the transformation and upgrading of Guangxi's cultural and tourism industries, as well as the synergistic and interactive pattern between the two industries.

One of the main challenges is the lack of sufficient policy support. Guangxi is relatively behind in promoting the development of the cultural and tourism industry and related policies, which hampers the progress of integration.

Additionally, the infrastructure construction is not yet perfect. The culture and tourism industry requires advanced infrastructure support. However, Guangxi still faces deficiencies in terms of transportation, communication, and hotel facilities. In particular, some tourist attractions and remote areas have poor transportation conditions, which inconveniences tourists and affects the development of the cultural and tourism industry.

Moreover, there is insufficient innovation in tourism products. Although Guangxi boasts rich and diverse tourism resources, including natural landscapes, historical and cultural sites, and ethnic culture, the innovation of tourism products is lacking. Many tourist attractions still rely on traditional sightseeing modes, lacking distinctiveness and differentiation. This limits the choices for tourists and fails to meet the diverse needs of different types of tourists, ultimately affecting the competitiveness of Guangxi's cultural tourism industry.

Furthermore, the development of cultural and creative industries is unbalanced. The cultural and creative industry plays a vital role in supporting the cultural and tourism industry. However, in Guangxi, the development of cultural and creative industries is mainly concentrated in urban areas, while rural and remote areas lag behind. The cultural and creative products in Guangxi also lack sufficient innovation and market competitiveness, making it challenging to attract the attention of tourists.

Addressing these challenges and promoting the integration of the culture and tourism industry in Guangxi will require comprehensive efforts, including enhanced policy support, improved infrastructure, increased innovation in tourism products, and balanced development of cultural and creative industries.

### **3.2. Unreasonable scale structure of cultural and tourism integration**

The scale of cultural and tourism integration in Guangxi is currently unreasonable, primarily due to two main factors. Firstly, there is an excessive focus on the development of the tourism industry, while the support for the cultural industry remains weak. Despite being a sparsely populated area with limited tourism resources, Guangxi has pursued rapid economic growth and employment opportunities by heavily emphasizing the tourism industry. This has led to the overdevelopment and excessive consumption of resources, resulting in environmental damage and overcrowding in some tourist destinations. Meanwhile, the development of other cultural industries has been neglected, resulting in a relatively low status and influence of cultural industries within the tourism sector. Many tourism projects lack depth and meaningful content. Secondly, the geographical distribution of the scale and structure of cultural and tourism integration in Guangxi is imbalanced. With its vast territory and diverse ethnic groups, different regions of Guangxi possess distinct cultural characteristics and tourism resources. However, the promotion and publicity efforts have been insufficient, resulting in limited national recognition of the 14 cities in Guangxi. As a result, the development of cultural and tourism resources in Guangxi has mainly focused on a few well-known regional areas, leading to geographical imbalances and the wastage of resources.

To address these issues, it is necessary to strike a balance between the development of the tourism industry and the cultural industry in Guangxi. This can be achieved by implementing sustainable tourism practices, preserving the ecological environment, and promoting the development of diverse cultural industries. Additionally, efforts should be made to enhance the promotion and recognition of cultural and tourism resources across all regions of Guangxi, ensuring a more balanced and efficient allocation of resources.

### **3.3. The cultural and tourism integration in Guangxi suffers from low innovation ability and a high degree of homogenization.**

Currently, the innovation in the integration mode of culture and tourism in Guangxi is primarily focused on well-known cultural attractions or cultural neighborhoods, while the utilization and development of lesser-known or less popular cultural resources are relatively weak. This is mainly due to the deeper cultural heritage and popularity of well-known attractions and neighborhoods, which attract more tourists and capital investment. As a result, the development of lesser-known attractions and cultural resources is often neglected, leading to the underutilization of their potential value. Moreover, some areas in Guangxi tend to imitate the successful experiences of others when innovating the integration mode of culture and tourism, resulting in a significant degree of homogeneity in cultural tourism products and cultural neighborhoods. This homogeneity hinders the development of regional cultural heritage and diversity and fails to meet the diverse needs of different groups of tourists.

## **4. Guangxi cultural tourism integration policy recommendations**

### **4.1. Strengthening the basic support for the deep integration and development of culture and tourism**

Firstly, cultural tourism integration should be guided by the concept of shared development, and policy support should be optimized to establish and improve a stable and long-lasting benefit linkage mechanism among all stakeholders. This will enhance the enthusiasm and initiative of all parties involved.

Secondly, policy coordination for the development of infrastructure necessary for the combined development of culture and tourism, such as electricity, water, gas supply, and transport systems, should be strengthened to prevent inefficient resource use and reduce construction costs. The design of tourism transport should be optimized to enhance its structural integrity and coherence, particularly focusing on the last leg of the journey to attractions and developing efficient internal transport systems. Additionally, infrastructure construction in key cultural tourism zones, demonstration sites for the integration of the culture and tourism economy, and cultural tourism markets should be promoted to increase the attractiveness of these areas for the development of the culture-tourism nexus.

Finally, the "foundational strength" of the ability to deeply integrate culture and tourism for industry development should be strengthened by actively supporting the development of infrastructure for cultural tourism attractions, such as parking spaces, viewing points, and visitor service centers. Efforts should be made to improve the service quality and customer flow tolerance of hotels, restaurants, shops, and other facilities near tourist attractions to enhance their brand image.

### **4.2. Optimizing the linkage of interests in the deep integration and development of culture and tourism**

Firstly, a comprehensive public service system combining culture and tourism should be established to promote the integration and optimization of cultural and tourism public services. This includes upgrading tourism services within existing public cultural venues and adding a cultural component to tourism public service facilities to enhance the cultural experience and service capacity.

Secondly, large-scale cultural and tourism companies should be actively fostered to establish, refine, strengthen, and expand linkages among them. Incentives should be provided to promote synergistic development through the joint construction of competitive clusters, creating a structure of shared benefits that generates strong complementary effects.

Finally, the unique regional characteristics of Guangxi cities, counties, and townships should be deeply explored and utilized to establish a comprehensive development system with "culture + industry + tourism + life" as the core. This will create a common or unique cultural brand and a sustainable economic ecosystem through diversified development strategies. It will also construct a regional network that includes economic development chains, urban communities, and life services.

### **4.3. Improving the sustainability of the deep integration of culture and tourism development**

Firstly, new collaborative approaches should be explored for industrial development, the integration of culture and tourism, and community building. Innovative and collaborative strategies should be sought to overcome issues related to land use and industry introduction in the development of cultural and tourism towns, promoting efficient and sustainable economic growth in these areas.

Secondly, an interactive sharing mode of culture and tourism across different industries should be established. This can be achieved through an information-sharing network platform that integrates various cultural and tourism resources, facilitating cross-regional, cross-unit, and cross-field collaboration and innovation. International scientific and technological exchanges should be expanded, and an open innovation ecosystem with global competitive advantages should be created.

Finally, the construction of integration platforms should be optimized, and education on cultural and tourism integration knowledge should be strengthened for the government, enterprises, and social organizations in the region. Promotion efforts should be enhanced to share resources and prevent the closed dissemination of tourism information, reducing tourism promotion costs.

## 5. Conclusion

Promoting the integrated development of culture and tourism is crucial for cultivating and growing new forms of industries and achieving high-quality economic development in Guangxi. During the "Thirteenth Five-Year Plan" period, Guangxi has made progress in the development of cultural and tourism integration but also faces challenges and constraints. To overcome these challenges, it is essential to optimize the basic support, linkage of interests, and sustainability of the deep integration of culture and tourism. By promoting deep development, leveraging the market's decisive role in resource allocation, and strengthening government efforts, Guangxi's culture and tourism industry can grow and thrive.

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