



# Research on the Construction Strategy of Tea Cultural Space of “Three Rivers and Two Banks” in Hangzhou

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**Abstract.** This study takes the tea cultural space of "Three Rivers and Two Banks" in Hangzhou as the research object, and combines river tourism theory to explore the key points of the construction of cultural space under the background of river tourism. Based on the analysis of the current situation, the construction strategy of tea cultural space of "Three Rivers and Two Banks" in Hangzhou is proposed from three aspects: overall planning of tea cultural space, measures for constructing tea cultural space, and detailed design of tea cultural space. Furthermore, auxiliary strategies are also put forward, focusing on the integration of cultural tourism industry clusters, innovative design of digital space, and the continuous enhancement of communication and promotion. These strategies aim to offer new perspectives and ideas for the construction of tea cultural space in China.

**Keywords:** Cultural Space, Tea Cultural Space, construction strategy, Three Rivers and Two Banks, Hangzhou

## 1 Introduction

Tea culture is an important component of the traditional culture in the "Three Rivers and Two Banks" area of Hangzhou, and tea cultural space, as a crucial carrier, can promote a clearer understanding of regional culture among people. In recent years, against the background of river tourism and the construction of cultural space, due to the lack of corresponding strategy for constructing tea cultural space and the neglect of the overall development of regional tea cultural space, some non-negligible issues have emerged in tea cultural space, such as utilitarian development of tea cultural space, significant development gaps between regions, and generally low satisfaction among tourists. To achieve sustainable development of tea cultural space, it is imperative to prioritize research on strategy for constructing tea cultural space.

## 2 Related Concepts and Basic Theoretical Research

River tourism is a form of tourism that relies on rivers and their surrounding environment, and is carried out through water-based or riverside activities[1]. With the development of the tourism industry and the diversification of people's travel needs, river

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tourism has demonstrated trends such as an emphasis on ecology, culture, and product diversification. The content of river tourism encompasses natural landscapes, human landscapes, tourism activities, and leisure vacations.

Cultural space is a proper noun used by UNESCO in 1998 for the protection of intangible cultural heritage. It refers to specific venues where various folk cultural activities and rituals are held at fixed times according to traditional customary practices, embodying both temporal and spatial characteristics[2]. At the same time, cultural space also refers to the specific natural and humanistic environments that traditional culture cannot be separated from, from its inception to development. The construction of cultural space requires enhancing perceptual experience, enabling people to interact with cultural space through their senses, thereby gaining unique feelings and experiences. As there is an interactive relationship between the layout of cultural space and the development of industrial clusters, the inheritance of culture and the cultural tourism industrial cluster model will generate synergistic effects. Therefore, the construction of cultural space within a region also needs to promote the clustering of cultural tourism industries, which is conducive to the long-term development of cultural space.

Cultural space is not only an important component of river tourism, but also a significant functional space in the region. The construction of cultural space under the background of river tourism requires comprehensive consideration of multiple dimensions such as urban planning, ecological protection, perceptual experience, and industrial clusters.

### **3 Basic Analysis of Tea Cultural Space of "Three Rivers and Two Banks" in Hangzhou**

#### **3.1 Planning scope of "Three Rivers and Two Banks" in Hangzhou**

The "Three Rivers and Two Banks" area in Hangzhou encompasses nine districts, counties or county-level cities located within the Xinan River, Fuchun River, and Qiantang River basins in Hangzhou, serving as a waterfront axis for the development of the Hangzhou metropolitan area [3]. The districts, counties or county-level cities involved in this region are Chun'an County, Jiande City, Tonglu County, Fuyang District, Shangcheng District, Xihu District, Binjiang District, Xiaoshan District, and Qiantang District. The government hopes to build this area into a world-class waterfront tourism destination with international competitiveness.

#### **3.2 Resource and Endowment of Tea Cultural Space of "Three Rivers and Two Banks" in Hangzhou**

Taking into account the historical changes of rivers and the overall development of the city, the tea cultural space of "Three Rivers and Two Banks" in Hangzhou covers nine districts, counties or county-level cities designated by the government as well as four other districts in Hangzhou. There are 16 major famous tea types here, some of which have been included in the list of famous teas throughout the ages, some have been listed

as one of the top ten famous teas in Hangzhou, and some related tea making techniques have been included in the intangible cultural heritage list at the municipal level or above. The names of these 16 teas are West Lake Longjing Tea, Jiuqu Hongmei Tea, and Osmanthus Longjing Tea in West Lake District; Sanqing Tea and Xianghu Longjing Tea in Xiaoshan District; Anding Yunwu Tea in Fuyang District; Tianzun Gongya Tea and Xueshui Yunlv Tea in Tonglu County; Jiukeng Maojian Tea, Yanjia Dafang Tea, and Qiandao Yuye Tea in Chun'an County; Jiande Baocha and Qiandao Yinzhen Tea in Jiande City; Jingshan Tea in Yuhang District; Shunxi Dafang Tea and Tianmu Yunwu Tea in Lin'an District[4].

According to the "History of Tea Culture Development in Hangzhou", the tea culture in Hangzhou can be roughly divided into the following stages: the Origin Stage (Pre-Qin Period, Qin and Han Dynasties to the Southern Dynasties), the Rise Stage (Sui, Tang, and Five Dynasties Period), the Prosperity Stage (Song and Yuan Dynasties), the Transformation Stage (Ming and Qing Dynasties), the Rise and Fall Stage (Late Qing and Republic of China Period), and the Renewed Prosperity Stage (After the Founding of New China)[5]. In the past decade, the tea culture in Hangzhou has continued to flourish and prosper, attracting worldwide attention. In 2005, Hangzhou was awarded the title of "China's Tea Capital," which is a full affirmation of its status in tea culture. In 2022, the green tea making technique of West Lake Longjing and the Jingshan tea ceremony, both originating from Hangzhou, were inscribed on UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list, which testifies to the impact and significance of tea culture in Hangzhou in the world.

In addition to numerous famous teas and a splendid history of tea culture, the region is abundant in the tourism resources of tea culture, which include natural resources such as Shifeng Mountain, Jingshan Mountain and Hupao Spring, as well as humanistic resources such as the China National Tea Museum, Jingshan Temple in Hangzhou City, and Jingshan tea ceremony.

### **3.3 Construction Status of Tea Cultural Space of "Three Rivers and Two Banks" in Hangzhou**

Currently, the development of tea culture tourism in this region relies on renowned teas such as West Lake Longjing, forming a relatively complete industrial chain, and enhancing brand influence through festivals and exhibitions. Remarkable achievements have been made in tea culture exploration and product development, with relevant books published and "intangible cultural heritage tea space" experience services provided. Emphasis is placed on marketing, integrating online and offline activities in tea mountains and gardens with domestic and international exchanges. While the digital platform construction has begun to take shape, there is still a gap compared to international advanced levels. The tea cultural space here generally face three issues. Firstly, there is a lack of overall planning, with insufficient interconnection between regions and a failure to integrate well with river tourism. Secondly, some spaces have neglected ecological and tea cultural connotations due to excessive pursuit of economic benefits or limited thinking, unable to meet tourists' needs for an in-depth tea culture experience. In some cases, staff members exhibit low professional quality or poor service attitudes,

leading to unsatisfactory tourist experiences. Thirdly, the connection between various links in the industry is not close enough. Some high-quality tea brands lack influence, the industrial agglomeration effect is not obvious, and the influence of the spaces is relatively low.

## **4 Construction Strategy of Tea Cultural Space of “Three Rivers and Two Banks” in Hangzhou**

### **4.1 Macro Level: Overall Planning of Tea Cultural Space**

#### ***4.1.1 Spatial Pattern Of “With A River as the Axis, Multiple Points Connected in Series”***

While preserving and enhancing the natural ecology, we have conducted a thorough examination of tea cultural resources, selecting sixteen renowned tea types and creating distinct tea cultural space tailored to the characteristics of each tea's culture. This layout takes the “One River System” – comprising the Xin'an River, Fuchun River, and Qiantang River – as its axis, and through resource integration, connects these tea cultural space into a cohesive tourism route, achieving a vibrant interplay among multiple points. Simultaneously, we are gradually constructing a multi-level system for the creation of tea cultural space to ensure their sustained and healthy development.

#### ***4.1.2 Thematic Planning and Design of Tea Cultural Space***

Based on the characteristics of tea cultural space across regions, they are categorized into culturally-led, ecologically-driven, or creatively-oriented tea cultural space, each subject to thematic planning and design. Culturally-led tea cultural space encompass the Xihu District and Yuhang District, where the most prominent features are abundant humanistic resources coupled with significant natural resources. Ecologically-driven tea cultural space include Xiaoshan District, Fuyang District, Tonglu County, Jiande City, Chun'an County, and Lin'an District, where natural resources are particularly rich but humanistic resources are relatively scarce. Creatively-oriented tea cultural space involve Qiantang District, Shangcheng District, Binjiang District, Gongshu District, and Linping District, where tea mountains are scarce, and humanistic resources are generally limited, yet these regions excel in creative thinking, cutting-edge technology, and other aspects.

#### ***4.1.3 Design of Tea Cultural Space Tour Routes***

Designing tea culture space tourism routes involves connecting tea plantations, tea culture attractions, river landscapes, and other elements into a cohesive itinerary, allowing tourists to gain an in-depth understanding of tea culture while enjoying the scenery of rivers. Nowadays, Hangzhou has released its first batch of “Top Ten Scenic Spots of Tea Capital” and the first provincial-level “Intangible Cultural Heritage Tea Spaces,” which not only showcase the natural beauty of tea mountains but also deeply integrate the display, dissemination, experience of intangible cultural heritage projects with tea-

related business activities [6]. By combining these clues and leveraging the resources within the scope, we can improve the tea culture tourism routes and provide convenience for tourists.

## **4.2 Medium Level: Measures for Constructing Tea Cultural Space**

### ***4.2.1 Construction of the Tea Agriculture Cultural Space***

The tea agriculture cultural space aims to immerse tourists in the natural charm of tea plantations through the forms of tea mountains and tea gardens. The activities one can participate in include touring tea mountains and tea gardens, tea picking, tea tasting, appreciating tea art performances, experiencing tea cultural customs, engaging in tea literature and art creation, and learning about tea-related knowledge. The spatial design of such spaces revolves around these functions, emphasizing the interaction between visitors and the space, and is specifically designed under the guidance of multi-sensory experiences. For visual experiences, the content primarily focuses on the green tea fields, where tea rooms, observation decks, or open-air markets within the tea fields should harmonize with the tea plantation, preferably adopting shapes and colors related to tea plants. Auditory experiences are centered on the sounds of nature, and any artificially added music should be in line with the serene and leisurely atmosphere of the tea plantation. Tactile experiences are mainly about the walkways and decorative materials in the tea fields, where eco-friendly and comfortable materials should be used as much as possible. Olfactory and gustatory experiences revolve around tea, offering local tea tastings to help visitors experience the local tea culture more comprehensively.

### ***4.2.2 Construction of The Tea Production Cultural Space***

The tea production cultural space allows visitors to observe the production process of tea products, typically organized in the form of tea factories, tea workshops, and the like. The emphasis lies in experiencing the charm of the production techniques embedded in the making of tea products. Here, visitors can engage in tea-making, tea tasting, and learning about tea-related knowledge. For visual experiences, the interior layout of the production areas is paramount. These areas are generally dominated by light colors, with tea-production-related decorations incorporated to enhance the visual aesthetics of the space while ensuring cleanliness and tidiness. Auditory experiences encompass the sounds emanating from the production process, with educational tea-related audio clips optionally added to enhance the interest and engagement. Tactile experiences center on tea-making and tea packaging, emphasizing the comprehensive display of production tools to allow visitors to experience a variety of textures. While olfactory and gustatory experiences are relatively limited, tea-tasting activities can be incorporated to bridge the gap between tea-making and tea-drinking, thereby enriching visitors' overall experience.

### ***4.2.3 Construction of the Tea Tasting Cultural Space***

The tea tasting cultural space is divided into tea room, tea house and other forms, with an emphasis on experiencing the tranquility brought by the tea drinking space and

the spiritual charm contained therein, such as Zen or poetry. Activities within these spaces encompass acquiring tea-related knowledge, savoring tea, admiring tea art performances, immersing in tea cultural customs, and engaging in tea-inspired artistic creations. The spatial design of these areas revolves around these activities, with a strong emphasis on the interaction between visitors and the space, guided by a multi-sensory experience. For visual experiences, the spatial environment of the tea-tasting locale takes precedence. All shapes, colors, and lighting are carefully crafted to evoke the desired atmosphere. Auditory experiences can encompass both man-made and natural sounds, such as the melodies of a guqin (an ancient Chinese stringed instrument) or the soothing sounds of flowing water, enhancing visitors' sense of leisure and relaxation during tea appreciation. Tactile experiences revolve around the tea utensils, tables, and chairs. Suitable materials for the tea sets and furniture are selected from a range of options, including ceramics, glass, metal, and more, all in harmony with the overall ambiance of the space. In terms of olfactory experiences, the use of appropriate incense can enrich the environment. As for gustatory experiences, besides savoring tea, visitors can also indulge in tea-related snacks and dishes, further enhancing their overall sensory immersion.

#### ***4.2.4 Construction of the Tea Catering and Accommodation Cultural Space***

The tea catering and accommodation cultural space centered on tea encompass various formats such as tea-themed restaurants, hotels, and homestays, with a primary focus on immersing visitors in the culinary delights and residential ambiance of tea culture lifestyles. Activities offered within these spaces encompass gastronomic indulgences, accommodations, tea-related education, tea tasting, appreciation of tea art performances, immersion in tea cultural customs, and creative endeavors inspired by tea.

#### ***4.2.5 Construction of The Tea Originality Cultural Space***

The tea originality cultural space sells tea-related cultural and creative products, existing in forms such as tea cultural and creative shops and tea creative markets, with a focus on experiencing the charm of the integration of tea culture and art. Activities here encompass tea-inspired artistic creation, tea tasting, appreciation of tea art performances, and experiencing tea cultural customs. The visual experience primarily involves the layout of the exhibition space, which should utilize shapes and colors related to local tea culture to highlight local characteristics. The design of other sensory experiences is also indispensable and can create a living scenario by combining local classic tea-tasting activities. Chinese aesthetics of life encompasses the beauty of nature, humanity, earth, travel, residence, objects, food, literature, morality, and temperament[7]. By integrating these beautiful aspects as perceived by Chinese people with local tea culture, domestic and international tourists can experience authentic tea cultural products.

### **4.3 Tiny Level: Detailed Design of Tea Cultural Space**

#### ***4.3.1 Tea Table Design***

Tea tables are categorized into various types, including competition tea tables, commercial tea tables, tea ceremony tables, and daily life tea tables, and the selection of the appropriate type should be based on practical considerations[8]. To create a spatial atmosphere that resonates with the unique characteristics of tea, it is crucial to choose materials and colors that align with the theme of the tea cultural space, thereby enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the space, optimizing people's tea-tasting experience, and facilitating cultural transmission. In terms of material selection, natural materials with local characteristics, such as bamboo and wood, can be utilized. Additionally, modern materials like glass, metal, and new eco-friendly materials can also be employed. When it comes to color coordination, attention should be paid not only to the color composition but also to the unity of color and material.

#### ***4.3.2 Furniture Layout and Display Design***

As the former capital of the Southern Song Dynasty, Hangzhou should leverage the contemporary value of Song Dynasty tea culture, promote the integration of outstanding traditional culture with the spirit of the times, and innovate by discarding the old and bringing forth the new. Emphasis should be placed on the harmony and unity of furniture arrangement, with the materials, colors, and styles of the furniture all needing to coordinate with the spatial environment to create a harmonious, natural, and comfortable atmosphere. Furthermore, attention should be given to the sense of hierarchy and spatiality in furniture arrangement, utilizing reasonable layouts and combinations to make the space more comfortable and aesthetically pleasing.

### **4.4 Supporting Strategies**

Through industrial cluster integration, the tea industry should aim to refine its industrial chain, encourage innovation and brand building, promote industry-academia-research collaboration, and prioritize domestic and international cooperation to optimize the perceptual experience within the space. Concurrently, efforts should be made to foster the development of digital spaces, leveraging modern technologies such as VR and AR to create immersive tea cultural experiences, and developing online tea cultural content to attract younger generations. Additionally, enhancing the exchange and promotion of tea tourism brands, while adjusting the spatial layout in accordance with the seasonal characteristics of rivers, can elevate the dissemination power and experience of tea culture.

## **5 Conclusions**

With the development of modern society, the unique charm and cultural value of tea cultural space have gradually been valued. To systematically create a tea cultural space,

this study delves into the strategies for constructing such a space in the region by employing river tourism and cultural space theories, integrating multi-dimensional perspectives of sensory experience and industrial clusters. A comprehensive assessment of the local tea industry and the current state of cultural space is conducted, accompanied by an analysis of the issues encountered in the construction of tea cultural space. Consequently, the article outlines an overall layout for the tea cultural space creation in the region and proposes specific methods for construction at various levels, aiming to achieve a comprehensive enhancement of the tea cultural space.

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