Hangzhou
UNESCO City of Craft and Folk Art

As a national historical and cultural city, Hangzhou is one of the most important culture centers in contemporary China. The advantage of unique culture, abundant talent, superior environment, developed markets and industry provides a sound basis for Hangzhou promoting crafts, folk art and cultural & creative industry.

Fast Facts

- As one of the most important centers of Crafts and Folk Art, Hangzhou nourish Stone Carving of Xiling Seal Engraver’s, Firing Techniques of Royal Porcelain Kiln of the South Song Dynasty, Silk Weaving Techniques, West Lake Longjing Green Tea Making Techniques and the workmanship of knives, scissors umbrella fan, all of which is famous all over the world and is of historical importance in the history of art development.

- National cultural & creative center. In Yangtze River Delta Regional Planning (2010), the Chinese government clarified the strategic position of Hangzhou as the “National cultural & creative center”, and Hangzhou aim at promoting the development of cultural & creative industries and leisure and tourism industries.

Practices on Crafts and Folk Art
- Issuing Specialized Policies

In 2004, Hangzhou issued Regulations on Protecting Traditional Arts & Crafts in Hangzhou and Measures for Appraisal of Arts and Crafts masters in Hangzhou. By 2009, 33 items including West Lake Silk Umbrella, Hangzhou Woodblock Printing and rice paper ancient book printing had been successively confirmed as key protected traditional art and crafts varieties and skills in Hangzhou and key protection and policy support had been provided for these above said varieties and skills.

In terms of financial support, Hangzhou established a dedicated fund for key protection and development of traditional arts and crafts in 1998. This fund has been increased year by year and had reached RMB 10 million Yuan per year by 2009. It supports the development of arts and crafts in five aspects, including funding projects related to key protected varieties and skills of traditional arts and crafts, personnel training, rewards to winning works and exhibitions.

- Undertaking Large Events

Hangzhou is “China’s most influential festival city” and “China’s best brand exhibition cooperative city”. Currently, it holds at least 10 sessions of large-scale brand culture activities every year, in which more than 100,000 people get involved. In the last few years, there are 2008 World Handicraft Conference, the 10th CIOFF Asian-Oceanian Folk Art Festival, Chinese Arts and Crafts Masterpieces and Best Arts and Crafts Works Expo, and China’s Folk Artist Festival.

- Strengthening External Exchanges

In recent years, by integrating resources from associations, institutions and industries and utilizing their respective advantages and through various channels, Hangzhou has actively conducted different forms and levels of external exchanges in all-round way. Take Xiling Seal Engraver’s Society for example, as the first seal society in the history of China, Xiling Seal Engraver’s Society integrated with calligraphy, painting, seal and collection, it gradually developed into the academic society with the longest history, highest achievement and most extensive influence in the history of seal engraving at home and abroad, and gained the prominent status as the
“Sacred Land of Seal” and the reputation of the “No.1 Society in the World”. Under its influence, overseas members also established national seal cutting creation and research groups in Japan and South Korea, further promoting the development of seal cutting creation and research in surrounding Chinese characters cultural circles.

- Economic impact

According to statistics, since 2007, the value added of cultural & creative industries in Hangzhou is 5.7% higher than that of the city’s GDP in average. In 2011, the value added of cultural & creative industries in Hangzhou was RMB 84.33 billion Yuan, and contributed 12.03% to the GDP. By the end of 2011, the cultural & creative industries in Hangzhou employ more than 488.4 thousand, and the area of cultural & creative Industrial Park up to 2364.5 thousand square meters, and got the operating revenue 16.7 billion Yuan.

- Significant results of the combination of culture and tourism.

In 2011, there were 3,063,100 tourists coming from abroad and 71,809,600 domestic tourists come to visit Hangzhou. There are three branded drama in Hangzhou, the drama of Song Dynast, giving more than 1.2000 movie shows to 28.5 million people annually, income of RMB 505 million Yuan, the other two drama of The Night of West Lake and The impression of West Lake gave 4850 and 363 shows in 2011, receiving income RMB 160 million Yuan and 5.8 million Yuan.