

# Preparation quickens in Qingdao

► Massive local participation in readiness for sailing competition

By ZHANG YING

The opportunity to host an Olympic competition might come once in a generation — at most — and the citizens of Qingdao know that as they prepare for this summer's gala.

"Everyone in the city wants to play a part in the Olympic event and make his own contribution," says Xia Geng, mayor of the city.

The atmosphere of a "People's Olympics" has reached virtually every corner of the city.

Buses picking up and dropping off passengers carry the message to "Welcome the Olympics, Improve Manners and Foster New Attitudes",

while the citizens share in a notion on another sign that says: "I participate, I contribute and I enjoy".

The city government has even released guidelines to help locals improve manners and better prepare for the Olympics.

Many large gatherings have been held to popularize Olympic knowledge and spirit, according to officials from Qingdao Committee for Promoting Cultural and Ideological Progress.

The activities started last January at the 500-day countdown to Beijing Olympic Games. Other events marked the one-year and 200-day countdowns to the Games. More than 2.4 million locals have joined Olympic-re-



Qingdao locals perform Spanish dances to show their enthusiasm for the coming Olympics.

Photos by Ju Chuanjiang

lated events.

Activities include an exhibition of Olympic torches, a photo contest for the 2007 international sailing regatta and building a wall with 2,008 smiling-face photos of local residents.

Some events targeted urban environmental improvement and expansion of green coverage. As a result, citizens said that they feel the Olympics are close to their daily lives further sparks their enthusiasm.

As the entire city will share the fruits brought by the Games, residents have been inspired to support the Olympic movement and to become a part of it in their own way, according to the government.

The city government also held an Olympic cultural festival that ran from April to July in 2007 and organized locals to visit the venue's sailing center — and more than 1 million came.

As well, extensive efforts

have been made to popularize sailing sports among young people, with Qingdao the only city in the nation offering sailing sports for teenagers.

One thousand sail boats sponsored by companies have been given to 40 schools and 100 youth sailing clubs in the city.

More than 400,000 registered volunteers have been trained to offer various kinds of services to prepare for the upcoming Olympics, says Sun

Lijie, deputy executive chairperson and secretary-general of the Qingdao Olympic Sailing Committee.

Among them, 1,770 volunteers performed well during the 2007 International Sailing Regatta, a test event of Olympic sailing competition this year.

Now the city's taxi drivers are receiving etiquette and language training to render first-class service to athletes and visitors from all over the world.



Hein Verbruggen (middle) from the International Olympic Committee and Zang Aimin (right), vice-president of Qingdao Olympic Sailing Committee, visit the Qingdao sailing center.

## City creates recipe to ensure food quality

By ZHAO RUIXUE

A comprehensive system to ensure food safety for the Olympics officially began operation in Qingdao on April 1, another part of the city's complex preparations for hosting the 2008 Olympic sailing competition.

"The food project for the Olympics in Qingdao guarantees food safety for the event and treats sailors and tourists to diverse, delicious food," says Jiang Jing, deputy secretary-general of Qingdao Sailing Committee.

The city government began preparation and adopted a series of measures in 2004 to ensure food quality.

Over the past four years, local authorities have established a mechanism to ensure a safe supply of food through close

inspection of hygiene and supervised agricultural sites. An expert panel established regulations and rules to govern how and where food is produced.

The sailing competition itself will be served by an exclusive food distribution center and six officially designated hotels, including the Shangri-La, Qingdao and Haiqing Hotels, Jiang said.

The city now has 173 standardized agricultural bases, 989 livestock and poultry farms and 74 eco-friendly aquaculture sites.

Local farmers are encouraged to adopt new farming techniques, develop organic agriculture and use advanced testing for pesticide residue, heavy metals and microbes.

The city government has invested 59 million yuan in food inspection equipment and designated eight inspec-

tion institutions to control food quality.

All foodstuffs will carry a special tag to mark their Olympics purpose and sealed before they are allowed into the sailing center. Records will be kept to ensure careful monitoring of the supply chain.

The canteen at the sailing center, as well as hotels and restaurants, has been equipped with testing instruments and equipment for food safety.

Over the past two years, the authorities have sampled 623,100 lots of vegetables and 51,000 lots of pork. Some 79,900 kg vegetables were destroyed for having excess levels of pesticides.

A number of campaigns checking illegal food producers have been launched since 2004. As a result, more than 2,700 illegal food operations have been banned.

## Haiqing Hotel ready for Olympic effort

By WEI ZHIHUI

Haiqing Hotel says it is creating a home-like environment to make guests feel at ease during the Olympic Games.

"Our customers from different countries will enjoy fine food, drink and tailor-made services here," said Wang Xinmin, manager of the hotel's Building A.

As a coastal holiday resort in Qingdao the hotel has its own advantages to attract guests. It established its reputation for quality service during the 2006 and 2007 international sailing regattas held in Qingdao, which laid the foundation for the 2008 Olympics Games.

Xu Chongming, chief of the hotel office, shows many letters from athletes from various countries expressing praise and appreciation for the hotel.

"We touch our customers with love, which is the service idea of our hotel," says Xu.

The hotel accommodated more than 250 foreign competitors during the 2007 Qingdao regatta.

The athletes were very surprised and happy when they saw the pictures taken during the race hanging on the wall.

Because of the upcoming Games, the hotel has named its dining rooms after other Olympic host cities.

Photos of various countries and regions hang on the wall along the hotel's corridor, while national and regional flags decorate each guest room. The athlete customers last year were allowed to take away pillows as souvenirs when they left.

Special food and drinks were another appeal to foreign athletes.

The hotel has introduced many new dishes, such as one called the "Dragon looks forward to the Olympic Games". The dishes look so delicate that some athletes last year wanted to keep them or even hesitated to eat.

In addition to Chinese cuisines with a strong local flavor, the hotel has also developed a varied lineup for overseas customers, including Westerners and Muslims.

"Thank you for all your hospitality. You did great!" said Jack Henzed from Western Australia in his letter.

The hotel has a tea garden in a typical ancient Chinese building style where guests have a relaxing time listening to the nearby brook and tasting tea scented with faint aroma.

The hotel made a special offering of 208 Pu'er tea bricks, each printed the design of 2008 Olympic sailing race.

"If any of the athletes staying at our hotel have a birthday dur-

ing the race event, we will make a special yacht-design birthday cake and hold a party for him or her," says Yu Jing, manager of the hotel's Building C.

"One athlete from Poland was moved into tears when we had a party for her" during last year's regatta, she said.

"Thank you for the nice gift and sincere wishes. They came as a surprise to me and I really enjoy them all," said Kosia from Poland in her letter.

Haiqing Hotel is a four-star holiday resort situated on the Yellow Sea. The city government has given it awards for successful holding receptions for the 2006 and 2007 sailing race athletes.

The premium environment of the hotel has attracted more than 50 sports and film celebrities including Swedish table tennis player Jan-Ove Waldner and Chinese film star Tang Guoqiang.

The hotel also caters to company conferences. Thus far this year it has accommodated the annual meeting of Coca-Cola, Adidas and Siemens.



Wang Xinmin (middle), a manager at the Haiqing Hotel, gives tips on tea service.

## Security for land and sea set at sailing site

By XUE XIAOYING

With the 2008 Olympic sailing competition on the horizon, security measures are in full swing in Qingdao to ensure a safe and peaceful event.

"Our security system is constantly improving," said Qiu Shaobo, deputy director of the Security Department of Qingdao Olympic Sailing Committee. "And we will make sure of a foolproof Olympic event."

In strict compliance with the general security regulations stipulated by the Beijing Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games (BOCOG), security equipment of all venues has already been put into trial operation.

The system proved satisfactory during international sailing regattas held in the past two years and won praise from foreign athletes and officials.

The Olympic sailing center (OSC) has been equipped with a security system to check all people and vehicles that enter the venue. To ensure comprehensive coverage, hundreds of security cameras have been installed inside the center as well as its surrounding areas.

Nearly 1,000 such cameras connected to a video monitoring network at Qingdao's police head office have been set up across the city to monitor key areas around the clock.

An underwater surveillance system has even been installed in the OSC's harbor, which is protected from the open ocean with buoys. Only competing boats are allowed to pass through the cordon.

Various departments, including the maritime police and fishing authorities have been strengthening cooperation to establish a rigorous security network on the water.

To meet standards from the International Sailing Federation (ISAF), the Qingdao government has purchased a new type of motorboat to guard competition areas.

Advanced equipment, including detectors, radar and global positioning systems, has been installed on ships to improve the maritime police's ability to handle an emergency. Sea police vessels will be stationed to watch the OSC.

To strengthen the security force, 70 police patrol cars and special-purpose military vehicles have been supplied to special and armed police. The city's security force has been trained and tested in more than 40 drills in actual combat.

To facilitate transportation during the Games, traffic control around the OSC will be enforced during the competition in August. Motorcycle traffic police will guide the way for athletes and journalists.

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Gael Moureau (left), executive chef at the Shangri-La Hotel, shows some of his culinary skills.

## Shangri-La offers costal oasis

By DU SHU

A swirl of high-level visitors including Thailand's Princess Sirindhorn and Chairman of International Olympic Committee (IOC) Coordination Commission Hein Verbruggen on April 4 put the five-star hotel Shangri-La in the limelight.

"Being one of six reception hotels for Olympic sailing competition, we feel committed and confident to accommodate guests from home and abroad," said Zhang Wei, the hotel's director of communications.

To meet the demand from an influx of well-heeled visitors, the Shangri-La Qingdao invested about \$62 million in a new "Valley Wing".

With the extension put into operation in March, the hotel increased its reception capabilities and can accommodate two international meetings at

the same time, Zhang said.

The hotel has provided services for more than 40 high-profile international meetings and competitions last year, including the 2007 International Sailing Regatta and a tourism ministry meeting between China, Japan and South Korea, Zhang said.

"Many important guests have stayed here before such as IOC President Jacques Rogge and the Iceland's President Olafur R. Grimsson," Zhang added.

With gourmet food and an elegant environment, Café Yum, a restaurant designed for Olympic Games, is an attraction of the hotel.

Water ripples, bubbles, ice cubes and blue lighting create a sea-like atmosphere.

The facility also boasts an array of Chinese traditional artwork like snuffboxes, porcelain and ancient locks lined up along glass partitions.

An open cooking section en-

ables guests to see clearly how dishes are prepared.

"The guests here can enjoy different cuisines—Western, Japanese, Korean and Chinese," said Gael Moureau, the French executive chef of the hotel.

The comfortable environments and delicate food attract crowds of diners, so much so that people stand in a line to get to the elegant buffet, according to Zhang, who adds that "80 percent of guests here are foreigners".

"I like the food here very much, especially Korean food," said an American guest unwilling to reveal his name.

The hotel also designed about 20 special dishes for the Olympics, including Jing Zi Yin Zhang — Chinese emblem and Xiang Yun Huo Ju — Olympic torch with lucky clouds.

"The dishes contain Olympic elements like five rings, torches and sailing boats. While en-

joying the food, guests can strongly feel the Olympics," said Chinese executive chef Jia Zhenggui.

"In addition to Olympic dishes, we've also developed eight health dishes to help our guests adjust to jet lag and revive energy," Jia added.

"Our food is not only delicious but also safe," said Zhang Kun, manager of food safety.

"We have our own designated supplier and strict rules for food quality control to ensure food safety," Zhang said.

The hotel was awarded the prestigious Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point System (HACCP) certification in August 2007, a guarantee for food safety during the 2008 Olympic sailing competition.

About 60 hotels in the city are expected to receive crowds of tourists and participants during the Olympic event, according to the Qingdao Tourism Bureau.