

# Picturesque Pengzhou is perfect place for profit or pleasure

Opening-up shows the city's development and increasing sophistication, **Li Yu and Li Yang** report.

**P**engzhou is a beautiful city with more than 4,000 years of history in Southwest China's Sichuan province.

With its picturesque landscapes, solid industrial base and welcoming environment for investors, Pengzhou is a magnet for tourists and business-people from around the world.

Pengzhou covers an area of 1,421 square kilometers and has a population of 808,500. It is 19 kilometers from the provincial capital of Chengdu, and sits in the center of Sichuan's Chengdu-Deyang-Mianyang economic belt.

Pengzhou has been the home of many famous people in Chinese history and has a number of scenic spots and historic sites. It was the capital of the ancient Shu Kingdom more than 3,000 years ago, where different civilizations and cultures from East and West met.

In its long history, Pengzhou has witnessed the long-term harmonious coexistence of five religions: Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, Catholicism and Islam.

Pengzhou's cool summer climate makes it an ideal summer resort.

The city is known as the "hometown of peonies", because the earliest written record detailing the planting of the flower was found in the city in Tang Dynasty (618-907). It remains a specialty of the city to this day and has become a city symbol. The blossom is favored by local residents.

Lu You, a famous poet in the Song Dynasty (960-1279), wrote a poem praising Pengzhou's peony as the best in Southwest China.

Pengzhou has four main tourist attractions: Longmenshan National Geological Park, Baishuihe National Reserve, Baishuihe National Forestry Park and Longmenshan National Scenic Spot Zone.

The Baishuihe reserve is an important part of the Giant Panda National Park and is a place where visitors can see this rare animal living in the wild.

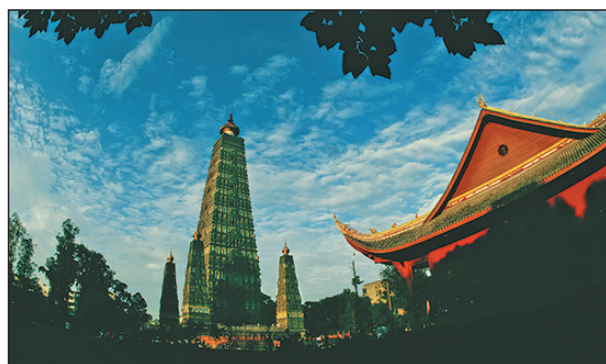
Pengzhou is an ideal place for investment, thanks to its convenient transportation links, efficient government, rich natural and labor resources and industrial foundation.

Last year, Pengzhou's GDP hit 33.36 billion yuan (\$5.13 billion), up 11.7 percent year-on-year, when China's national GDP growth was 6.9 percent.

The average annual personal



**LEFT: SPECTACULAR VIEWS** of the Gexianshan Mountain in Pengzhou, where Longmenshan National Geological Park is located. **RIGHT: A PANDA AT THE BAISHUIHE RESERVE**, a key part of the Giant Panda National Park. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



**LEFT: LONGXING TEMPLE**, was built in the East Jin Dynasty, (405-418). With more than 1600 years of history, the temple has an array of pagodas. The major pagoda is as high as 81 meters and is Asia's tallest diamond-throne pagoda of the Buddha's relics. **RIGHT: THE TRANQUIL LOTUS LAKE** is a renowned scenic spot and tourist resort.



**LEFT: CHENGDU FASHION WEEK** was held in Pengzhou last year. The city is one of the 21 cities under the administration of Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province. **RIGHT: PENGZHOU** is known for its peonies, The blossom is favored by local residents.



income of urban residents in Pengzhou was 26,214 yuan, up 8.9 percent year-on-year, and 16,319 yuan in rural areas, a 10.1 percent increase from 2014.

Pengzhou has a comparatively complete industrial structure, in which its modern agricultural industry is the foundation.

This September, the city will stage a forum on suburban development, involving village officials from around the country.

Pengzhou's climate is ideally suited to agriculture. It has 47 key agricultural enterprises in vegetables, oil and rice, kiwifruit and ligusticum wallichii, which is a type of Chinese herbal product. Pengzhou is a national center of vegetable harvesting and has the largest agricultural product trade center in Southwest China.

The center issues Southwest China's vegetable price index, which has become an indicator of vegetable

price fluctuations in the market.

Last year, more than 5.1 million metric tons of agricultural commodities were traded in Pengzhou, with business transactions totaling 32.6 billion yuan.

The city government predicts that Pengzhou's annual agricultural added value will hit 6.5 billion yuan by 2020. It is thought this will make Pengzhou a national model in modern agriculture and a national agricultural commodity trade platform, as well as an important window for Chengdu's opening up and international cooperation in modern agriculture.

The city's advanced manufacturing industries are mainly in the fields of petrochemicals, aeronautical dynamics and aviation, biological medicine and home textiles and garments.

Its service sectors include logistics, commerce and trade and tourism. E-commerce is playing an increas-

ingly important role in Pengzhou's agriculture and manufacturing industries, as well as in business and trade generally.

Local government is committed to providing investors, new business entrepreneurs and innovators with well-targeted, thoughtful and efficient services. It also focuses closely on attracting investors and prestigious global companies to the city.

Pengzhou is located at the crossroads of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, two strategic policies developed by the Chinese government to promote cooperation and trade.

It is accessible via air, road and rail. It takes 14 days to transport cargo from Pengzhou to Poland by rail, with the route crossing Central Asia.

## Sister city ties

The city government actively seeks ties with sister cities to facilitate greater cooperation. It has

established ties with nine sister cities, including Ipswich in Australia, Mürzzuschlag in Austria, Vercelli in Italy and Swidnica in Poland.

The town of Bailu in Pengzhou has established friendly relations with Moret-sur-Loing in France. Bailu hosts a French classic music festival every year and famous musicians, both domestic and foreign, are invited to perform in Pengzhou.

Pengzhou and Ipswich enjoy close cooperation with regards to environmental protection, education and trade, which deepen mutual understanding and friendship between people from both places.

Last October, Pengzhou and Ipswich jointly participated in an international investment conference and import commodity exhibition in Sichuan. Many enterprises from Ipswich participated in the exhibition.

On March 14, the Australian Consulate-General in Chengdu organized an Australia-Southwest China sister-city photography competition, with the theme of "village life". Appropriately, the competition's logo comprised a koala and a giant panda.

Photographers from 17 cities and regions of the two countries entered the competition and the event was covered by media organizations from both Australia and China.

Several photographers from Pengzhou also entered the competition. They focused on the scenery, culture and folk people of Pengzhou, and their photos deepened the cultural understanding between the Australian and Pengzhou people.

Invited by the governments of Christchurch in New Zealand, Luganville of Vanuatu and Ipswich, Pengzhou's mayor, Dong Li, will lead a delegation to visit the three cities in May to promote cooperation.

Pengzhou entrepreneurs from five enterprises in home textiles and modern agriculture visited Luganville in November 2013.

They found great potential for cooperation between Pengzhou and Luganville with regard to agriculture, tourism, fishery, trade and the home textiles industry.

The Pengzhou government hopes the mayor's visit will be the catalyst that realizes this potential.