

# The Foundation and Path for Haikou to Build Itself into the “Capital of Chinese Tourism Performance”

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**Abstract:** Focusing on Haikou’s strategic development to become the “Capital of Chinese Tourism Performances,” this paper delves into its foundational conditions and implementation paths. By analyzing Haikou’s rich cultural resources, favorable geographical environment, thriving tourism industry, and continuously improving policy support, it explores how to further integrate resources, innovate development, enhance the quality and influence of tourism performances, and achieve the goal of becoming the “Capital of Chinese Tourism Performances.” This provides theoretical support and practical guidance for the high-quality development of Haikou’s cultural and tourism industry.

**Keywords:** Haikou; Tourism performance capital; Basic conditions; Development path

**Online publication:** July 14, 2025

## 1. Introduction

As people’s living standards improve, travel is no longer limited to traditional sightseeing tours. As a form of in-depth experiential tourism, travel performances are increasingly favored by tourists. They integrate cultural arts with the tourism industry, not only enriching the essence of travel but also injecting new momentum into the dissemination of urban culture and economic development. Leveraging its unique natural and cultural advantages, Haikou has set the strategic goal of becoming “China’s Capital of Travel Performances,” aiming to promote deep integration and high-quality development of the cultural and tourism sectors, enhancing the city’s cultural soft power and international influence.

## 2. Haikou city’s foundation to build “China’s tourism performance capital”

### 2.1. Rich and diverse cultural resources

Haikou City boasts a long history and unique cultural heritage, providing an inexhaustible source of inspiration for tourism performances. As a national historic and cultural city, Haikou has a history of over 2,000 years since its founding, with the ruins of Qiongzhou Ancient City bearing witness to the vicissitudes of time<sup>[1,2]</sup>. Stories of

historical figures like Hai Rui and Qiu Jun have been passed down through generations on this land, their spirit and deeds serving as precious material for cultural creation <sup>[3]</sup>. For example, one could use the upright life of Hai Rui as a model to create historical stage plays, vividly portraying ancient anti-corruption culture through lively performances, allowing visitors to appreciate the depth of history while enjoying the shows <sup>[4]</sup>.

Haikou's folk culture is rich and diverse, with traditional festivals such as the Xian Lady Cultural Festival and the Flower Exchange Festival, which carry the beliefs and emotions of the local people <sup>[5]</sup>. Elements like sacrificial rituals, folk dances, and music from these folk activities can be integrated into tourism performances <sup>[6]</sup>. Taking the Xian Lady Cultural Festival as an example, the dance movements and musical melodies from its sacrificial rituals can be artistically processed to create dance performances. These performances showcase Xian Lady's heroic deeds and patriotic spirit to visitors while also introducing them to Hainan's unique folk beliefs <sup>[7]</sup>.

Haikou is located on the coast of the South China Sea, where maritime culture is a significant cultural feature. The customs of fishermen and the history of the Maritime Silk Road are all highly attractive cultural elements <sup>[8]</sup>. A live performance themed around the ocean can be created, using lighting, sound effects, and actors to depict the hardships of fishermen going out to sea for fishing and the prosperity of the Maritime Silk Road. This allows visitors to appreciate the charm of maritime culture <sup>[9]</sup>.

## **2.2. Superior geographical environment and climate conditions**

Haikou's natural environment provides a unique stage for tourism performance. The tropical coastal scenery of Haikou boasts a continuous coastline, pristine beaches, and crystal-clear waters. The beauty of Haikou's tropical seaside is breathtaking <sup>[10]</sup>. Hosting outdoor tourism performances in such an environment can offer audiences a unique audio-visual experience <sup>[11]</sup>. For example, beach music festivals held on holiday beaches feature stages set up on the sand, allowing spectators to enjoy musical performances while feeling the sea breeze and the pounding waves, creating a relaxed and joyful atmosphere <sup>[12]</sup>.

The pleasant climate, with a warm and humid sea breeze, makes Haikou a spring-like place all year round, suitable for hosting various tourism performances. Compared to many cities in China where winters are cold and not conducive to outdoor performances, Haikou's climate has significant advantages <sup>[13]</sup>. This makes domestic and international performance groups more willing to choose Haikou for their shows, attracting more tourists to come and watch. Whether in the scorching summer or the mild winter, visitors can comfortably enjoy tourism performances in Haikou <sup>[14]</sup>.

## **2.3. Thriving tourism industry**

In recent years, Haikou City's tourism industry has developed rapidly, providing a broad market space for the growth of the tourism performance industry. With the advancement of Hainan International Tourism Island construction, Haikou, as the provincial capital, has seen a steady increase in the number of tourists received annually. In 2023, Hainan Province welcomed 90.062 million domestic and international tourists, generating a total tourism revenue of 181.309 billion yuan, representing year-on-year increases of 49.9% and 71.9%, respectively, compared to 2019, which saw growths of 8.3% and 71.4%, respectively. The large number of tourists provides ample demand for tourism performances. For example, the Jay Chou Carnival World Tour Haikou leg attracted 154,600 fans, who not only attended the concert but also participated in other tourism activities, boosting local tourism consumption <sup>[15-17]</sup>.

Tourism infrastructure is well-developed, with Haikou continuously increasing its investment in tourism

facilities. Transportation, accommodation, and dining options are becoming increasingly complete. The completion of large venues such as the Wuyuan River Stadium and the Haikou Bay Performing Arts Center has provided excellent hardware conditions for hosting various tourism performances. Meanwhile, the emergence of numerous high-end hotels and distinctive bed-and-breakfasts offers comfortable accommodation choices for tourists. Additionally, Haikou's transportation network is becoming more advanced, with the continuous expansion of routes at Meilan International Airport, connecting it closely with major cities both domestically and internationally, making travel more convenient for visitors.

## **2.4. Policy support and industrial development**

The government's policy support has provided strong guarantees for the development of Haikou's tourism industry. Policy incentives, along with the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port, have brought numerous policy benefits to Haikou's tourism industry. For example, visa-free entry for personnel from 59 countries and a 15-day visa-free entry for foreign tour groups on cruise ships have lowered the barriers for overseas performance teams and audiences to enter, enhancing Haikou's appeal as a platform for cultural exchange. At the same time, Haikou has introduced a series of policies to support the development of the cultural performance industry, such as financial subsidies and tax incentives, encouraging enterprises and individuals to invest in tourism performance projects.

Industrial agglomeration: Haikou actively promotes the agglomeration development of the tourism performance industry, forming a certain scale and industrial chain. The Fung Xiaogang Film Commune at Mission Hills regularly stages an immersive outdoor large-scale live performance called "Prelude to Nanyang," which boosts urban vitality through regular, on-site immersive experiences. Meanwhile, around the tourism performance industry, related sectors such as performance planning, stage design, and ticket sales have also developed, forming a complete industrial chain. For example, in the vicinity of the Haikou Bay Performance Center, several performance planning companies and stage design studios have gathered, providing comprehensive services for hosting performance events.

## **3. Current situation of tourism performance development in Haikou**

### **3.1. Rich and diverse performance types**

Currently, the types of tourism performances in Haikou City cover various fields such as concerts, live shows, plays, musicals, children's theater, and live-action performances. In recent years, Haikou has attracted many famous singers like Jay Chou, Zhang Shaohan, and Xue Zhiqian to hold their concerts. These concerts not only draw large numbers of fans but also enhance the city's reputation and influence. For example, Jay Chou's concert at Wuyuanhe Stadium attracted tens of thousands of fans, creating a vibrant atmosphere that became a major event in the city's cultural life.

Cultural and artistic performances are frequently held at venues such as the Haikou Bay Performing Arts Center, including comedy plays by Happy Mahua, classic operas, and ballets. These performances enrich the cultural lives of residents and tourists, enhancing the city's cultural appeal. For example, Happy Mahua's plays, known for their humorous style and profound themes, have won the hearts of audiences, attracting many citizens and visitors to buy tickets to watch.

Live performances, represented by the prelude version of "Nanyang Stories" at the Fung Shu Kwan Film

Commune in Mission Hills, immerse audiences in historical and cultural charm through authentic settings and vivid performances. Set against the backdrop of Nanyang during the Republic of China era, these performances showcase the social landscape and character stories of that time, transporting viewers back to that era as if they were traveling through time.

### **3.2. The construction of performance venues has been continuously improved**

Haikou City has increased its efforts in constructing performance venues, with a number of modern venues being built and put into use. The Wuyuan River Stadium, which can accommodate 50,000 people, is an important venue for hosting large concerts and sports events. Its advanced facilities and excellent conditions have attracted many renowned artists from home and abroad to perform there. For example, singers like Jacky Cheung and Karen Mok have held concerts at the Wuyuan River Stadium, delivering spectacular audio-visual experiences to audiences. The Haikou Bay Performing Arts Center, positioned as “international, avant-garde, and youthful,” boasts nearly 1,400 seats and can meet various performance needs such as dance, drama, opera, musicals, and children’s shows. Since its completion, the center has hosted over 700 performances, becoming one of the most active cultural performance venues in the province. For instance, the classic opera “The Barber of Seville” performed at the center received high praise from the audience for its superb performance and beautiful music.

Oriental globe grand theater: With more than 1,800 seats and world-class stage facilities and sound equipment, it can host large-scale cultural performances, international conferences, and other activities. The completion of the theater has further enhanced Haikou’s performance carrying capacity and provided a guarantee for hosting high-quality tourism performances.

### **3.3. The scale of tourism performance market is gradually expanding**

As the tourism performance products continue to diversify and the market is further cultivated, the scale of Haikou’s tourism performance market is gradually expanding. Box office revenue has been growing; in recent years, the box office income from Haikou’s tourism performances has shown a yearly increasing trend. In 2023, the box office revenue from Haikou’s tourism performances reached 1.78 billion yuan. For example, the Kanye West World Tour Haikou leg saw tickets sell out quickly upon release, generating 730 million yuan in consumption, creating a significant box office income.

Increase in audience, an increasing number of tourists and residents are beginning to pay attention to and participate in tourism performances, leading to a growing audience. In 2023, the number of visitors to Haikou’s tourism performances reached 80,000, with out-of-town tourists accounting for 95%. For example, during the 2023 (24th) Hainan International Tourism Island Joy Festival, various performances at the Haikou Bay Performance Center attracted a large number of citizens and tourists, adding a rich cultural atmosphere to the festival.

### **3.4. Existing problems and challenges**

Despite the development of tourism performances in Haikou City, some issues and challenges remain during the process. The lack of originality is evident; many tourism performance works lack innovation and depth, with severe homogenization, and there is a shortage of original works that reflect Haikou’s unique characteristics and cultural essence. Some performances merely mimic successful cases from other regions without fully tapping into Haikou’s cultural resources, making it difficult to leave a lasting impression on the audience. There is also a shortage of professional talent; the development of the tourism performance industry requires a large number of



professionals, including playwrights, directors, actors, and scenic designers. Currently, the tourism performance sector in Haikou City faces a relative scarcity of specialized talent, and the talent cultivation system is not well-established, which hinders the industry's growth. For example, some performances suffer from suboptimal stage effects due to a lack of professional scenic design expertise, affecting the overall quality of the show.

The industrial chain lacks coordination, and the collaboration between various links of the tourism performance industry chain is not tight enough, resulting in a disconnection between upstream and downstream industries. For example, there is a lack of effective communication between performance planning and tourism marketing, leading to a mismatch between the promotion of performances and the needs of the tourism market, which affects the market effect of performances.

## **4. The path of Haikou to build itself into the “Capital of Chinese Tourism Performance”**

### **4.1. Strengthening the excavation and innovative integration of cultural resources**

Delve into the cultural essence, organize professional teams to conduct in-depth research and exploration of Haikou's historical culture, folk culture, and maritime culture. Extract representative cultural elements and integrate them into tourism performance works. For example, create a musical reflecting the modern commercial development of Haikou based on its Qilou culture, showcasing the unique charm of Qilou culture through various artistic forms such as music, dance, and drama.

Innovate performance formats and content, utilizing modern technological means such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and holographic projection to innovate the presentation of tourism performances, enhancing audience participation and experience. For example, in live performances, AR technology can be used to allow audience members to interact with the performance scenes through their mobile screens, increasing the entertainment value and appeal of the show. At the same time, continuously update the performance content based on market demand and audience feedback, promptly adjusting the program arrangements to maintain the freshness and appeal of the performances.

Promoting the deep integration of culture and tourism by combining tourism performances with Haikou's tourist attractions and routes, creating a fusion product of “performance + tourism.” For example, host performances themed around volcanic culture at Volcano Park. Visitors can watch these performances while touring the park, gaining a deeper understanding of volcanic culture. At the same time, offer travel packages related to tourism performances, such as a one-stop service of “performance + accommodation + dining,” to meet the diverse needs of tourists.

### **4.2. Increasing policy support and industrial support**

Improving the policy system to further refine the policy framework for the development of Haikou's tourism performance industry, increasing support for venue construction, original production creation, and talent cultivation. For example, establish a special fund for the development of tourism performances to provide financial subsidies for outstanding projects; introduce tax incentives to reduce the burden on tourism performance enterprises.

Strengthen industry guidance by formulating development plans for the tourism performance industry, clarifying development goals and key directions, and guiding social capital investment into this sector. Encourage companies to increase their investment in tourism performance projects and support cross-regional and cross-

industry collaborations, fostering several competitive tourism performance enterprises. For example, guide large tourism companies to collaborate with performance companies to jointly develop tourism performance products, achieving resource sharing and complementary strengths.

### **4.3. Improving the quality of tourism performance and brand influence**

To create high-quality performance projects and increase support for premium tourism performances, we encourage enterprises to produce artistic works with Haikou characteristics and high standards. By organizing tourism performance competitions and art exchange activities, we aim to enhance the quality and level of performance works. For example, regularly holding the Haikou Tourism Performance Competition to select outstanding performance works and teams, providing rewards and support, to promote the creation and development of premium performance projects.

Strengthen brand building and promotion to establish a positive image for Haikou's tourism performances. Utilize various channels for publicity and promotion. Leverage social media, online platforms, and tourism fairs to widely promote Haikou's tourism performance products, enhancing brand awareness and reputation. For example, create high-quality promotional videos and post them on major social media platforms to showcase the highlights of Haikou's tourism performances; participate in domestic and international tourism exhibitions, and set up dedicated booths to promote the Haikou tourism performance brand.

Carrying out international cooperation and exchange, leveraging the policy advantages of the Hainan Free Trade Port to strengthen collaboration with internationally renowned performing arts institutions and artists. Introduce world-class performing arts projects and talents to enhance the internationalization level of Haikou's tourism performances. At the same time, promoting Haikou's tourism performance to the international market, showcasing the charm of Chinese culture. For example, invite internationally renowned musical theater groups to perform in Haikou, learning from advanced international performance concepts and techniques; organize outstanding Haikou performance teams to participate in international performances, expanding the international market.

### **4.4. Cultivate and introduce professional talents**

Strengthen the construction of talent cultivation systems, encouraging local universities and vocational colleges to offer majors related to tourism performance. Enhance cooperation with tourism performance enterprises, establish internship and training bases, and cultivate professional talents that meet market demands. For example, Hainan University can offer majors such as tourism performance directing and stage art design, collaborating with companies like Haikou Bay Performance Center to provide students with internship opportunities and improve their practical skills. Introduce high-end talent, formulate preferential policies, and attract outstanding tourism performance talents from home and abroad to develop in Haikou. Through talent introduction programs, provide high-end talents with housing, children's education, medical care, and other guarantees to address their concerns. For instance, renowned screenwriters and directors can receive housing subsidies, talent apartments, and other preferential policies to attract them to work in Haikou.

Strengthening talent training and exchange, regularly organize tourism performance professionals to participate in training and exchange activities, learn advanced concepts and technologies, and improve their professional skills. For example, invite renowned performance experts from home and abroad to hold lectures and training sessions in Haikou, organize local practitioners to attend industry seminars and academic exchange

activities, and broaden their horizons and thinking.

#### **4.5. Improving the tourism performance industry chain**

Strengthen collaboration across the upstream and downstream of the industrial chain to promote synergy among all segments of the tourism performance industry, forming a complete industrial chain. Companies involved in performance planning, production, marketing, and ticketing should enhance communication and cooperation to achieve resource sharing and complementary strengths. For example, performance planning companies can collaborate with tourism marketing firms to jointly develop promotional strategies for performances, thereby increasing their market recognition and influence.

Expand the extension areas of the industrial chain, focusing on the tourism performance industry and developing related extended fields such as performance derivative product development and cultural tourism town construction. Develop Haikou-characteristic performance derivatives, like performance peripheral products and cultural souvenirs, to increase the added value of the industry. At the same time, integrate tourism performance projects with the construction of cultural tourism towns, creating comprehensive tourism destinations that combine performances, travel, leisure, and shopping. For example, build a cultural tourism town themed around the Republic of China culture around the Fung Xiaogang Film Commune in Mission Hills, complemented by hotels, restaurants, and commercial streets to provide all-around tourism services for visitors. Enhance the integration with other industries, promoting the fusion of tourism performances with catering, accommodation, and shopping, forming a synergistic effect. For instance, offer dining packages and accommodation discounts related to tourism performances to attract tourists to engage in additional consumption while watching shows. Additionally, construct shopping centers and specialty commercial streets around performance venues to meet tourists' shopping needs.

### **5. Conclusion**

Haikou City has unique and advantageous conditions for building itself into the “Capital of Chinese Tourism Performance.” Rich cultural resources, superior geographical environment, thriving tourism industry, and policy support provide ample room for the development of the tourism performance industry. Although there are still some issues and challenges at present, by enhancing the exploration and innovative integration of cultural resources, increasing policy support and industrial assistance, improving the quality and brand influence of tourism performances, cultivating and attracting professional talent, and perfecting the tourism performance industry chain, Haikou City is expected to achieve its goal of becoming the “Capital of Chinese Tourism Performance,” promoting high-quality development in the cultural and tourism sectors, and enhancing the city's cultural soft power and international competitiveness. In the future, as various measures are gradually implemented and the industry continues to develop, Haikou's tourism performance industry will surely usher in an even more glorious future, becoming a significant destination for tourism performance not only in China but also worldwide.

### **Funding**

Exploratory study on Haikou's accelerate development of “International Performing Arts Capital” under the background of Hainan Free Trade Port, Stage results of Haikou Philosophy and Social Planning Project in 2025 (2025-ZCKT-96)

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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