

中 国 儒 商 第 一 家

Home for China's Most Successful Scholar-traders

常家庄园

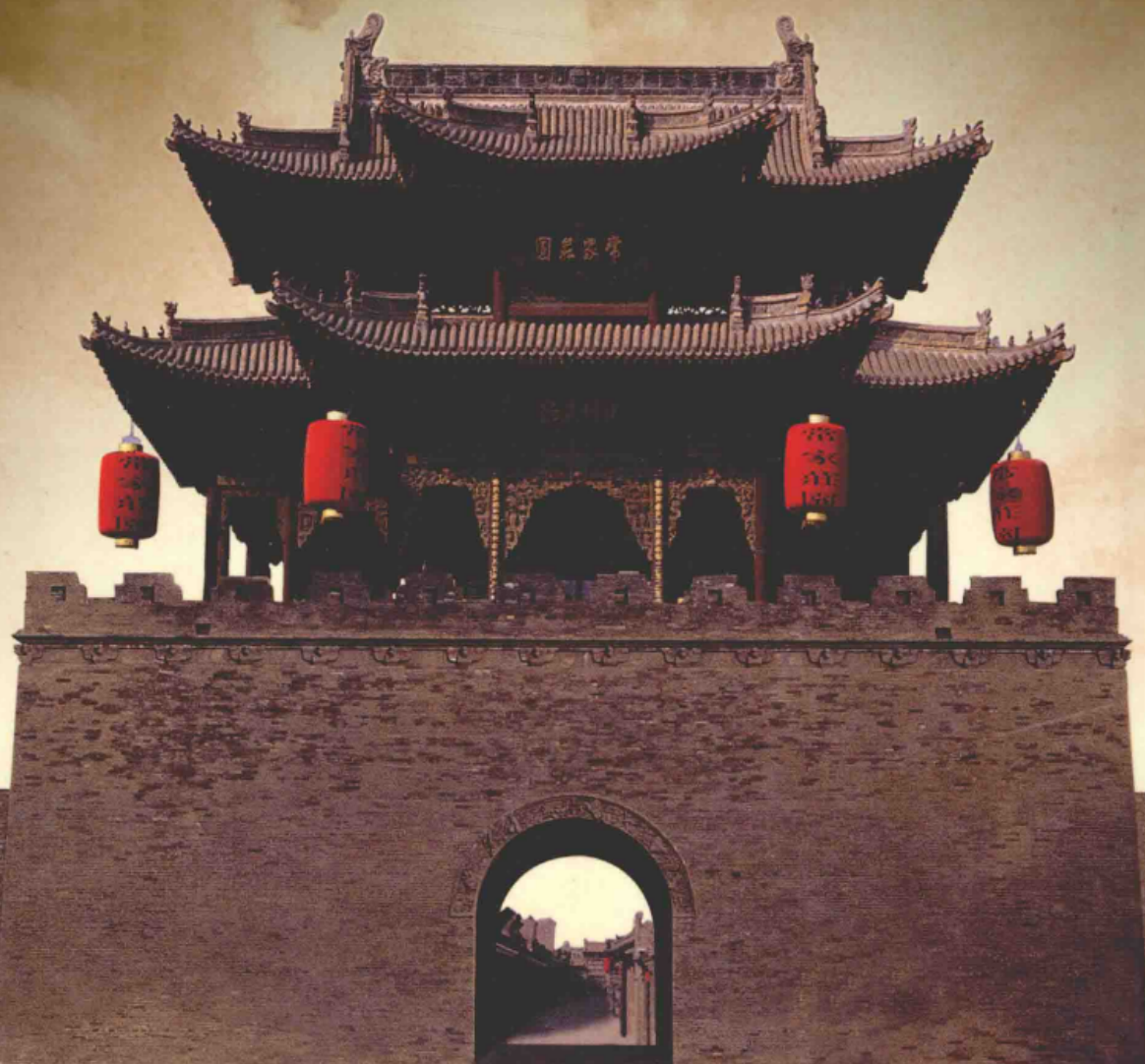
THE MANSION OF THE CHANG'S

策 划：耿彦波

编 著：白 雷 郑春宝

Supervised by Geng Yanbo

Edited by Bai Lei Zheng Chunbao



重庆出版社
CHONGQING PUBLISHING HOUSE

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

常家庄园:中国儒商第一家 / 白雷摄影、编著. - 重庆:
重庆出版社, 2002
ISBN 7-5366-5746-3

I. 常... II. 白... III. 民居 - 简介 - 榆次
IV. K928.71

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2002) 第 021168 号

常家庄园
中国儒商第一家
CHANGJIA ZHUANGYUAN
ZHONGGUO RUSHANG DIYIJIA

重庆出版社出版、发行 (重庆长江二路 205 号)
新华书店经销 深圳华新彩印制版有限公司印制

☆

开本 889 × 1194 1/16 印张 9.75
2002 年 5 月第 1 版 2002 年 5 月第一次印刷
印数 1-5000 册

☆

ISBN 7-5366-5746-3/J · 958
定价: 180 元

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庄园俯瞰
Chang Mansion.



中国儒商第一家

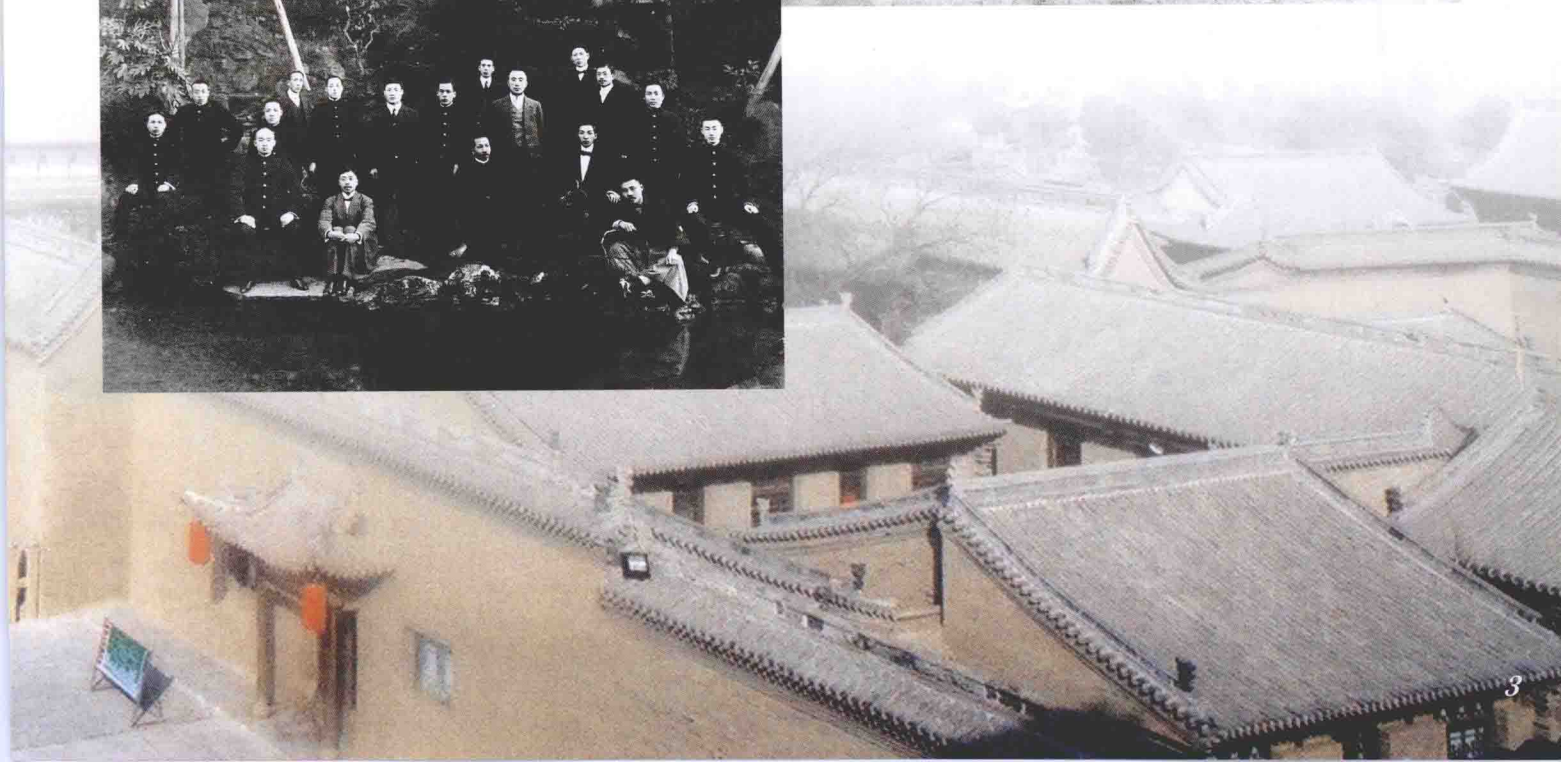
——常家庄园

明清之际，商海兴波，大潮滚动，首先冲击和改变了时人的价值观念，社风骤然为之一变，商人再也不必遮遮掩掩，而是坦然从商，引儒入商，并大胆与官府“勾兑”。晚明思想家李贽对此作了全面的认同与肯定，他说：“商贾亦何可鄙之有？挟数万之赀，经风涛之险，受辱于官吏，忍诟于市易，辛勤万状……”商家之所以巴结官府，那是为了寻求“保护伞”。官员从商，则纯属谋利。文人下海，无非是求财。当商场、官场、文场和市场，一旦构成为“场”的时候，那种微妙关系的组合和奇特效应便都成为同源嫡系了，而作为核心和动力的便是利益互动。此正所谓“天下熙熙皆为利来，天下攘攘皆为利往”。当时中国商家很快敏感地捕捉到这一历史机遇，并迅疾掀起滚滚洪波。这股商品大潮盘旋作势，震撼大江南北，波及海外，从而迎来了“前近代”文明的一缕曙光。

正是在晋中平原上，赫然闪现出富甲天下的“晋商王朝”和群落性的商界巨擘，并由此而开创了盐业、茶业和票号的三大亮丽风景，更由此而形成了富有历史底蕴的晋商文化。榆次常家便是其中的佼佼者。有意思的是，常家开始并不怎么走运。常氏先祖常仲林，一度以牧羊为生，直到八世常威这一代，才峰回路转。其子常万达更是一个善于捕捉商机的精明商人，他乘中俄贸易开发的有利时机，毅然决定将“大德玉”商号改为茶庄，并果断地离开了扎根已久的张家口，而踏上中俄边境恰克图那片荒凉而陌生的土地，直把生意做到莫斯科和西伯利亚等十几座城市，然后又在欧洲等地设立常氏茶庄的分店。这样，几经风雨，几度春秋，常家终于开辟了中国茶商的第一条丝绸之路。常氏茶庄便俨然成了跨越诸国、绵延一万三千余里的“跨国公司”。常家也就成了中国外贸第一世家的名门望族，并创造了200年辉煌的奇迹。

常氏家族的成功与辉煌，自然与他们的艰苦创业、善于理财和讲究信义有关，但更深层次的原因恐怕还是秉承了儒道文化的传统血脉。常氏不同于其他商家的主要之点，就在于他的儒商气质不是从外部拼贴上去的广告商标，而是其本质的自然流露。因此，不难发现，“儒”为济世经商之本，“道”为修身养性之根，这恰是常氏作为儒商世家的精神支柱和人生境界。因此，常氏家族子弟大多具有很高的文化功底和艺术成就。在众多充满文化气息的楹联匾额中，晚清进士、著作等身的儒学大家常麟书撰写的一副对联，特别引人瞩目，“浩溥旁通诗书上不许俭，雍容儒雅衣食边只要勤”。足以表明，常家深谙文化投资的重要，在这方面舍得花大本钱。在全族95户800口中，先后就开办了17座私塾。除石芸轩大书院外，各房都另



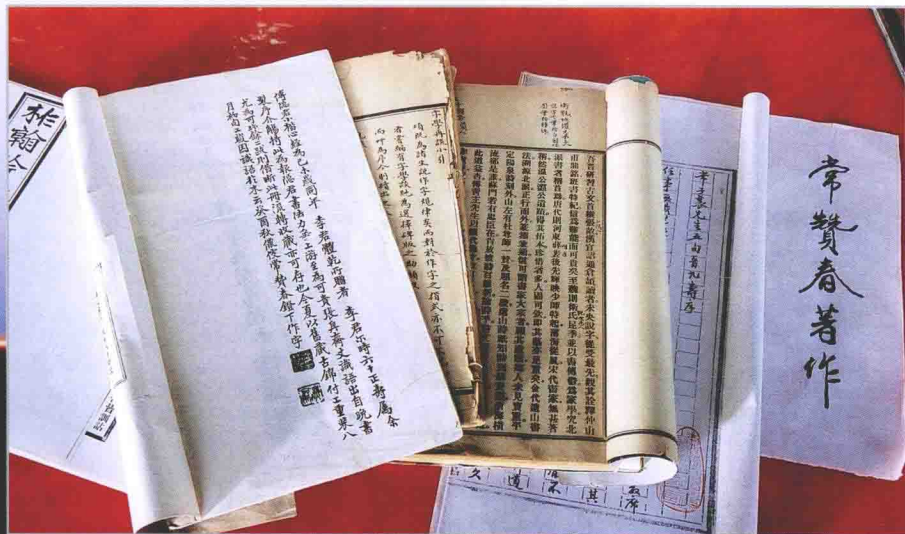


外设立了小书院。而且对历代弟子的要求极为严格，学儒不精者不准从事经商等社会活动，直到学业有成时才又一批批地将他们输送到商业战线上。这样在常氏集团中，就能始终保持由精英人物组成的人才队伍。他们既是商业巨子，又是文化名流。常炳的柳体、常佑的双钩、常恽的行楷，都各具特色。尤其是常赞春和常旭春兄弟俩的书画艺术，则更是出类拔萃，占尽风流。在“学而优则贾”的家训和儒商相长的熏陶下，常氏取得秀才、贡生、举人和监生等资格的就多达176人，其中入仕者132人。即使在常家商厦倾颓时，也是学者如林，人才辈出。直到最近在海内外常氏大小3000口后人中，于各高等院校任教的教授也有57人。从常氏家族留下的部分珍贵照片看，他们大多显得温文尔雅，颇有魏晋名士的风度。因此与其说他们是商人，不如说是文豪；而其庄园与其说是商贾豪宅，不如说是文人书院。因为常氏家族及其庄园，无不流溢着儒家之风雅、道家之虚静和佛家之空灵，所以人们对常氏庄园格外垂青，并给予高度评价：

“中国民居第一祠堂”如果说建筑是凝固的历史，那么历史的神韵便凝固在整体建筑的每一部分，常家祠堂则凝结着常家的历史底蕴和儒家礼仪的传统。高台歇山式的大门楼，巍然耸立的双斗旗杆，造型别致的石围栏，都一一展示出常氏家族的显赫与威严。三门四进，进深百余米、宽25米的祠堂大院和精致的戏楼，则更是华夏民居中结构最完整、规模最大的祠堂精品。

“中国民居第一书院”此书院为园林式结构，前院四亭三廊，分别以“德有邻”、“志于道”、“学而思”和“思无邪”命名，一望而知，全是孔子的格言。东廊的“听雨轩法帖”、西廊的常氏弟子遗墨法帖、正面的“石芸轩法帖”，后面的44个帝后墨迹，大都是书法艺术的顶级珍品。作为书院主体建筑的“听雨楼”，则是供族中弟子研读诗书的地方。遥想当年常家子弟在此听风听雨的环境中饱受儒文化的熏陶，就不难明白常氏为什么成为儒商世家了。走进书院，一股翰墨香风夹裹着书卷气便迎面扑来，不禁使人油然感到，这哪里是商贾之家，分明是华夏民居的最大的学府。

“中国北方民居第一园林”常家也像许多中国商人一样，总是英姿潇洒地走出去，最终又都神闲气定地落叶归根，在家乡寻求最能体现自己人格魅力和归宿的参照物。园林便是他们精心打造的作为生命



力的验证和人格升华的精神王国。《道德经》云“归根曰静”，此园以“静”为名，再联想到园中的砖雕八卦影壁和石刻上的老子格言，便清楚地表明园主对道家返朴归真与天人合一的人生境界的雅好和仰慕；主人对园中杏林的青睐，则出于对儒家重道、医家重德和民间好吉祥的信奉与崇拜；园中廊壁上嵌刻 56 方清代名家名联和“可园”中嵌刻的唐诗笔意帖，则再次证明主人对书法艺术的雅爱。总之，园中的楼台山水，花木雕作，无不蕴含着儒道文化和民族风情的丰富内涵。再联想到庄园他处出现的一苇渡江、达摩面壁和大肚罗汉图，不难想象，当年奔波万里商途的儒商巨子，回归家园之后寄情山水、淡泊明志、怡然自得和游心太玄的祥和心境，在拈花微笑中，也许还沐浴着阵阵清风禅韵。

“世所罕见的建筑装饰艺术”建筑是一门艺术，但并非所有建筑都是艺术。只有当它富有文化内涵时，才能步入艺术殿堂。比如令人叹为观止的常家庄园的彩绘，不仅具有清代“汉纹锦”风格，而且其内涵极为丰富。“书百忍”大楼横梁上绘的那幅宋太祖夜访赵普的彩绘（还有一副同样内容的门窗木雕），便明白无误地说明主人对儒文化的倾心。想必他从赵普半部论语治天下的故事中得到启迪，也将论语融化在他的人格结构中。至于其余彩绘影壁、窗棂、门楼、雕作等所展示的三国、春秋和民族风情，则更蕴含着仁义礼智信的内涵。主人似乎无声地劝告世人也警喻自己，经商如同做人一样，无信不立。人义、人格和信誉，是金钱买不来的。当儒道文化的血脉，通过这些文化载体化为常氏家族的生命情调时，他们自然便更加以此来拥抱文化了。

没有商业运作的文化是瞎子，没有文化支撑的商业则是残废。明乎此，就能体悟到儒商之难能可贵了。但也只有到了常家庄园，才能明白什么是难能可贵的儒商。山西人打造和开放常家庄园，游人络绎不绝地来此观光旅游，想必正是出于对儒商的呼唤吧。

常氏历代书画和著作洋洋大观
Paintings and books by the Chang's.



The Mansion of the Chang's: Home for China's Most Successful Scholar-traders.

In the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties, the developments in commerce brought great changes to people's values and social atmosphere. Instead of trading stealthily, the businessmen began to manage their businesses openly and "cooperate" with governmental officials boldly. The intellectuals moved into the business circle. Famous thinker Li Zhi (1527–1602) identified with and applauded the new changes, saying, "Why should the merchants have been so humble? They were wealthy and they had experienced great risks but they had to get humiliated by officeholders and berated in the markets. They were so bitter and arduous..." The businessmen made up to the officials for an "umbrella", officials threw themselves into businesses for profits and intellectuals engaged themselves in trade for wealth. There was a saying that people came for profit and people went for profit. The Chinese businessmen timely sensed and grasped the historical opportunity, and raised a tide of commodity economy which thundered throughout the country and echoed in the outside world. China saw the first glimmer of pre-modern civilization.

The Central Shanxi Plain became the centre of the "Shanxi Merchants' Dynasty", where a large number of tycoons, The Chang family in Yuci, occupied the first place in wealth in China. Salt, tea and banking were their three major businesses. The Chang family in Yuci, Shanxi Province, was not so lucky at first. Its ancestor, Chang Zhonglin was once a shepherd. Chang Wei, son of the eighth generation, began the change. And Chang Wanda of the next generation was a sharp-sighted businessman. He took the chance of Sino-Russian trade development and changed his "Dadeyu" firm into a tea trading company. He left Zhangjiakou where the family had stayed for so many years and began a new business in Chaktu near Lake Baikal in South Russia. His business reached as far as Moscow and a dozen of Siberian cities, and set up shops in other European countries. The Chang's tea company developed and its international trade covered some 5000 miles area and people called the route China's first Tea Road, or the Silk Road of Tea.

The success of the family, of course, was the result of their painstaking efforts, their extraordinary talent in financial administration, their quality of honesty and faithfulness. But the deeper reason may be the family's background of Confucius and Taoist learning. The intellectual bearing was a spontaneous overflow of their inner quality instead of an advertisement attached from outside. This was one of the major differences of the family

朱文公詩之一
子襄常贊春夢

於然風林雪徑
欲是陽苦司密
今窮先斯柴門

種花移石自殷勤
孝慈常也赤

酌酒賦詩相料理

只將詩句答春華

已潔心源超世表

compared with other merchants. Confucianism was the principle of managing the business and contributing to the society, and Taoism of cultivating the moral character and moulding the temperament. This was the spiritual ideality for them. Most of the Changs were accomplished and many had admirable artistic achievements. The Chang's knew well the importance of education. There were 17 private schools for the 800 people of 95 families in the mansion. Besides the Shi-yun-xuan College for the whole family, every branch had a college of its own. Only after they had been trained adequately were the youth allowed to begin their career. In this way, the Chang group kept a team of men of ability. They were businessmen and intellectuals in one. Calligraphy of Chang Bing, Chang Ji and Chang Yi had their own distinguishing features. Chang Zanchun and his brother Chang Xuchun were outstanding calligraphers and painters. In the family, 176 people passed the imperial examinations at county or provincial level, or studied at the Imperial College in the capital, and 132 of them were appointed as officials. Even after its business capsized, the family still boasted a large gathering of scholars and talents. The latest statistics show that, of the 3000 offspring of the Chang family in and outside China, 57 of them are professors. The Chang Mansion as well as people lived there is a combination of Confucian elegance, Taoist tranquility and Buddhist grace.

China's most significant family ancestral temple: The Ancestral Temple is the concretionary form of historical connotation and Confucian etiquette of the family. The entrance tower, the flagpoles and the stone fence reveal the brilliance and stateliness the family once enjoyed. Its 25-metre-wide-and-160-metre-long scale and exquisite opera stage confirm that it is the largest of all ancestral temples in local residences.

China's biggest family college: The Shi-yun-xuan (House of Rue) College is a garden-styled school. In its front court are four pavilions which are all named after Confucius sayings. On the corridor walls is calligraphy of the ancestors of the family, historical famous calligraphers and 44 emperors and empresses. The main structure, Ting-yu-lou, used to be the classroom building.

The most attractive family garden in North China: No matter how far they had gone to do business, the Changs, like most other Chinese businessmen, would finally return to their hometown. The garden became a spiritual realm for them to identify their vitality and distillation of personality. A Chinese proverb says, "Leaves fallen return to the root." Laozi's *Book of Changes* has a saying that "Having returned to the root means tranquility." The garden is named Jing-yuan, meaning the Garden of Tranquility. There are other inscriptions carved on the stones of Laozi's *Book of Changes* and there is a screen wall with the Eight Diagrams. All these display the



常氏部分书画艺术
Calligraphy and paintings by the Chang's.

owners' love for Taoist belief of returning to simplicity and essence, and unity of nature and man. On the other hand, the owners' favouritism to apricot trees implies the owners' respect for Confucian concept of devotion to present social life. The 56 couplets by famous calligraphers of the Qing Dynasty and the calligraphy inscribed in the Ke-yuan Garden show the owners' enthusiasm for the Chinese traditional art.

The golden treasure of architectural decorations: Many of the coloured drawings are typical of the "Han-wen-jing" style which was popular in the Qing Dynasty. (Han-wen-jing is a style imitating the patterns on the bricks of the Han Dynasty.) Some others have deeper implications. There is a drawing which tells the story of the first emperor of the Song Dynasty visiting Zhao Pu, a hermit scholar who later became the prime minister, at night and there is a woodcarving on the same story. It is possible that the owner of the Mansion was moved by the old saying that Zhao Pu rules the country with only a half of *The Analects of Confucius* and he also wanted the classic resolved into his personality. Stories and traditional custom shown on other drawings and the carvings of wood, stone and brick are a display of the owners' esteem for humanity, righteousness, rites, wisdom, and fidelity, five qualities Confucianism has advocated. The mansion owners seem admonishing other people, in silence, as well as reminding themselves, that those qualities were equally important in doing business and conducting oneself in society. The blood of Confucianism and Taoism was thus, by the help of the cultural media, resolving into the body of the Chang family.

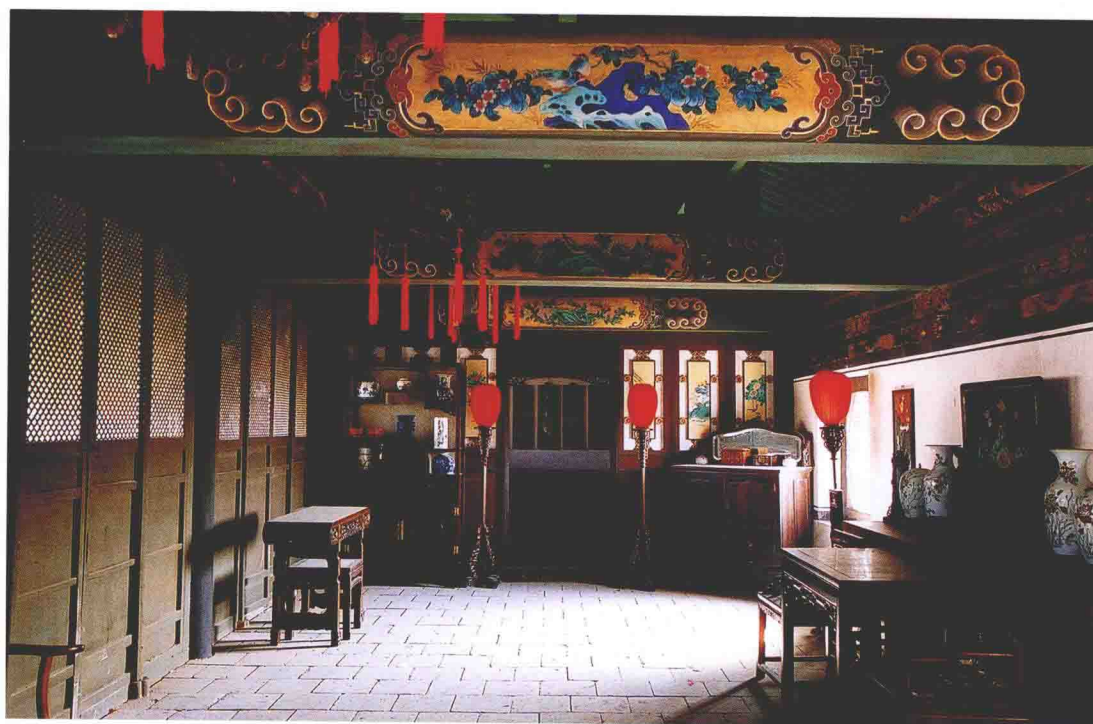
A cultural activity without the help of commercial operation is blind, a commercial activity without the support of cultural background is handicapped. With this understanding, we can understand why the scholar-traders are estimable. And only in the Chang Mansion can we understand what is really a scholar-trader. The local people have opened the mansion and visitors have been swarming in—most probably they are all calling for new scholar-traders to emerge.



- 6 客厅书卷气浓
A drawing room.
- 7 居室翰墨飘香(1)
One of the many rooms: howing
scholar qualityof the Chang's.
- 8 居室翰墨飘香(2)
One of the many rooms: howing
scholar quality of the Chang's



7(1)



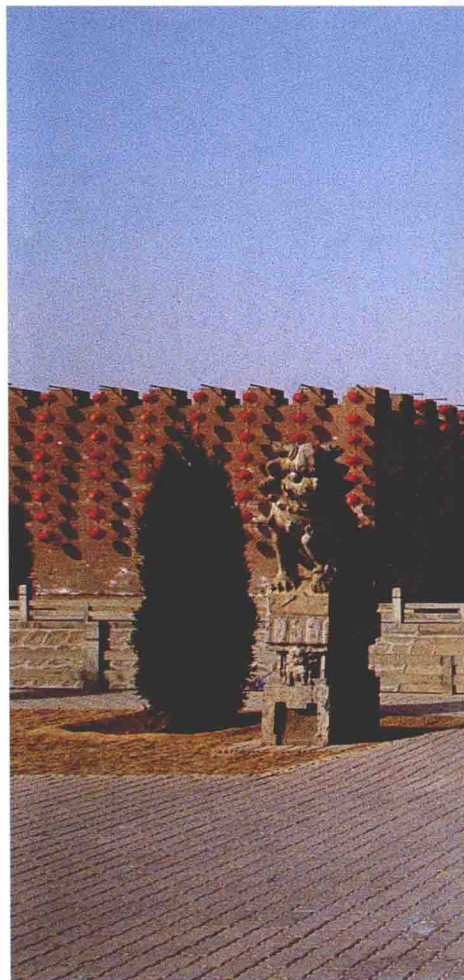
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中国第一条茶商丝绸之路

常家制茗于武夷山，扎庄于恰克图，开辟了中国茶商的第一条丝绸之路，遂成为中国对外贸易第一世家的名门望族，同时营造了作为中国第一儒商的精神家园。这里的“一山一阁，两轩五院，四园九堂，六水八帖”，都充溢着这位中国茶商的儒气香风，体现出他高雅的文化品位和凝重的历史底蕴。

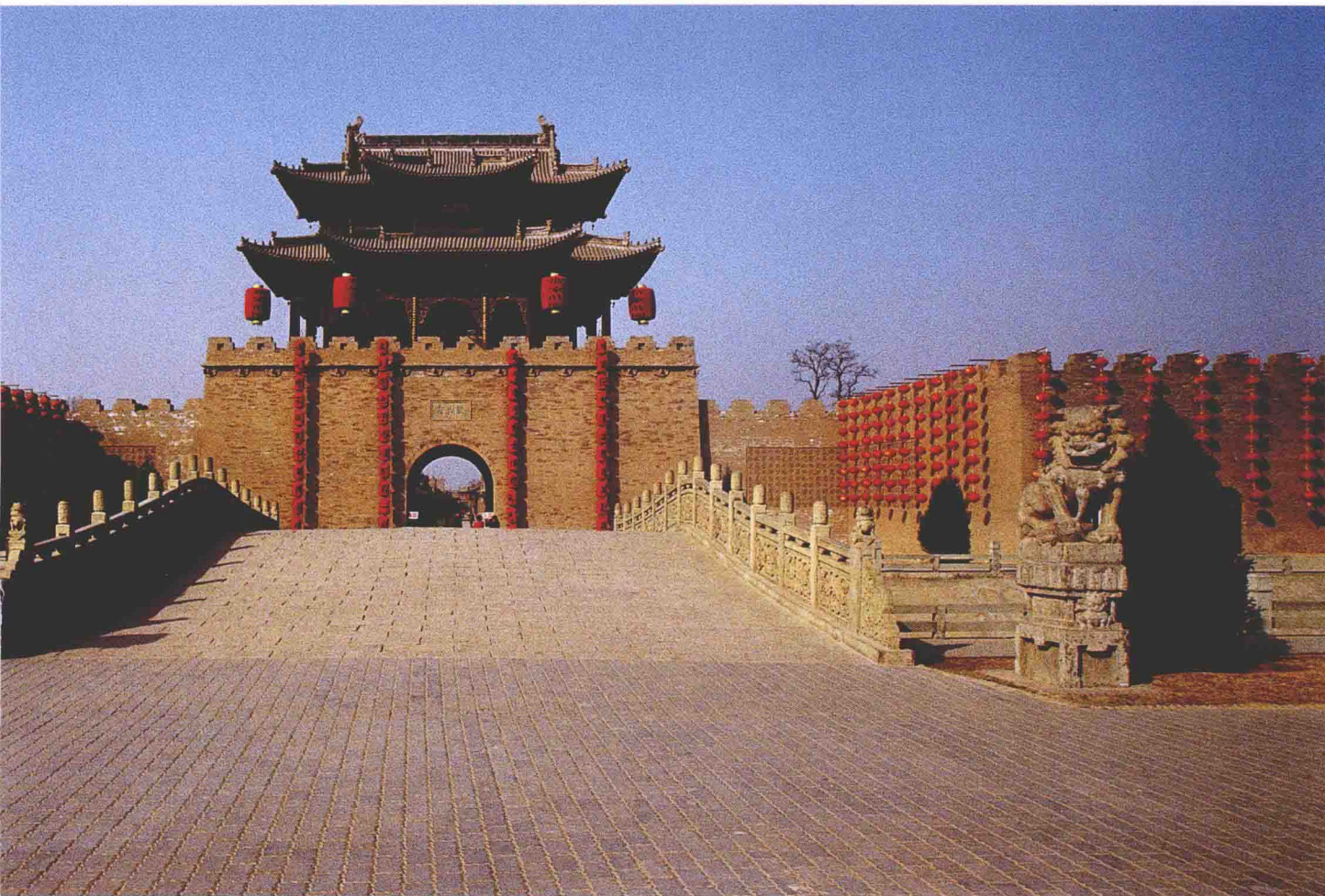
China's First Tea Road

The Chang's processed tea in the Wuyi Mountain in Southeast China's Fujian Province and set up their shops as far as in Chaktu near Lake Baikal in South Russia. They opened up the first Tea Road, or another Silk Road, to trade tea in other Asian and European countries, and thus became known as China's most successful family in foreign trade. The booming business helped them build up the Chang Mansion, which was to become their magnificent residence, and a stage to display their spiritual height.



中国第一条茶商丝绸之路行程示意图
China's First Tea Road Route Sketch map

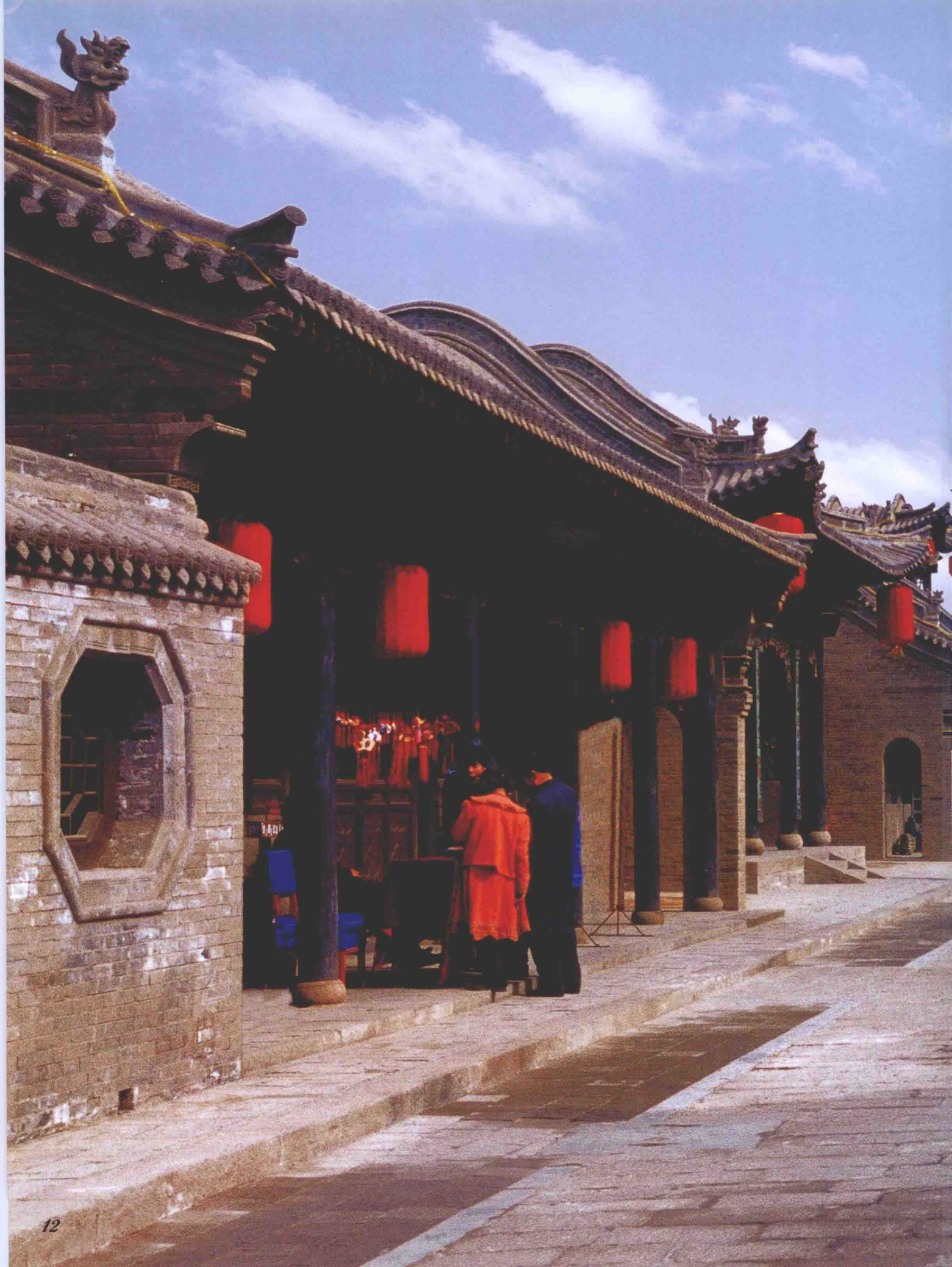




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9 通向万里茶商丝绸之路的庄园堡门
The mansion gate: Starting place of the Tea Road.







10 万里茶香一条街
A street in the mansion.