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GRAND COURTYARD THE QIAOS





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Brief Introduction

The Grand Courtyard of the Qiaos, another name "Zaizhongtang", is the former residence of Qiao Zhiyong who was a famous businessman and capitalist in the country during Qing Dynasty. It is located at Qiaojiabu Village which is 12 kilometers northeast from the township of Qi County and 54 kilometers away from the capital city Taiyuan of Shanxi Province. It is one major scenic spot of a three—day—tour together with the Courtyard of the Qus, ancient business street, Changyuchuan, Armed Escort Service Bureau for the businessmen from Shanxi, the museum of abacus, Yulou Furniture Museum, Chinese Zhouyi Palace, Yanshou Palace, Jiugou Scenery Zone and the Memorial Hall of Luo Guanzhong.

Located at the central area of the province of Shanxi, at the south end of Taiyuan basin and the east bank of Fen River, Qi County covers an area of 854 square kilometers with a long history. The terrain of it slopes from southeast to northwest gently and it is located in a beautiful surroundings and good scenery.

Qi County is a famous city of history and culture of China. There are so many famous people coming from this place in the history. "To recommend who are talent persons from outside of the family even those are personal enemies, and to recommend who are talent persons but from the family to engage in a suitable post" is a quotation of Qi Huangyang and it is regarded as a good example until now as a principle in treating the governmental affairs without considering personal friends or enemies. Wang Yun in Easten Dynasty, Wen Qiao in Jin Dynasty, Wen Daya, Wang Gui ,Wang Wei, Wen Tingjun in Tang Dynasty, Wang Fu in Song Dynasty, Luo Guanzhong in the end of Yuan Dynasty and the early Ming Dynasty, Dai Tingshi and Qu Benqiao in Qing Dynasty, they are all famous people from Qi

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County and they had played an important role and made great efforts for the progress and development of the society and culture in the history of China. Qi County is also famous for its background in literature. There are about 115,000 books including 50,000 ancient books and 30,000 rare edition books in the library of Qi County. The scale of total amount and the importance of the editions rank top among the libraries at the county level in the country. There are more than 4600 pieces of historical relics among which are more than 1000 pieces of ancient paintings and calligraphies in the Bureau of the Administration for the historical relics in Qi County. Including in these rare pieces are also the true originals of Guan Daosheng in Southern Song Dynasty, Tang Yin, Qiu Ying, Lan Ying, Dong Qichang in Ming Dynasty, Fu Shan, He Shaoji and Qing Zai in Qing Dynasty. Qi County is also the major birthplace of Jin Opera and Qitai Folk Songs.

Located at the communication center, there were two ancient postal roads passing through Qi County. The convenient communication has provided the special and favorable conditions for Qi County to develop the business activity. As early as in Song Dynasty, the businessmen from Qi County began to be famous in the commercial society of China. During the period of Ming and Qing Dynasties, especially the period after the emperors of Kang Xi and Qian Long in Qing Dynasty, the businessmen from Qi County developed so fast and became the important force of the commercial society of Shanxi Province. The branch offices of companies from Qi County had been set up in the most of the large and middle cities, ports and stations throughout the whole country and even at the cities of foreign countries as Siberia, Moscow of Russia, Pyongyang of the Democratic of People's Republic of Korea, Seoul of South Korea, Tokyo, Kobe and Osaka of Japan and other cities in southeast Asia, and occupied the monopolized conditions in Mongolia, Northeast Area and Baotou Cityin the country.

Among the commercial companies in Qi County, the largest at

the early period are the Zhangs, the Zhais and the Suns. At the later period, about ten companies including the Qiaos, the Qus and the Hes among which the most typical is the Qiaos from Qiaojiabu Village. The Grand Courtyard of the Qiaos was the former residence of Zaizhongtang from the Qiaos. Zaizhongtang is the name of the hall of Qiao Zhiyong who was the third generation of the famous capitalist the Qiaos.

The Grand Courtyard of the Qiaos is a close type and castle type courtyard. It was built in Qian Long Period in Qing Dynasty, and it had been refurbished many times during the period of Tongzhi and Guangxu Year in Qing Dynasty and 1910s. Though it has a long history of about 200 years, it still remains the harmony in the style of the architecture. Covering an area of 8724.8 square meters, the grand courtyard is consisted of 6 large courtyards, 19 small courtyards and 313 rooms. The three sides of the courtyard face the streets so the courtyard is disconnected with the residential houses around it. It is surrounded by a close type brick wall with about 10 meters high. There are crenels, guarding tower and viewing towers on the top making it magnificent. The whole courtyard was strictly designed to show a double-happiness in Chinese character and it looks so lofty from outside and splendid from inside. There are different highs of roofs and standardize cultural style. There is a special structure of wood called dougong and eaves highly raising into air, stone carving and brick carving, ivory floor(牙板) and wooden tower, beautiful paintings, each with its specialty of art, demonstrating the high level of ancient Chinese people in architecture. It is honored as "a pearl in the architectural history in residential houses in Qing Dynasty in North China" by the professional personnel and there is a saying as "If one who wants to see imperial palace should visit the Forbidden City in Beijing, but if one who wants to see residential houses should visit the Grand Courtyard of the Qiaos,"

In 1986, the Courtyard of the Qiaos was open as A Museum of Folk Traditions by the government of Qi County. The major contents

include the folk traditions of the local people living in the Jinzhong Area and it demonstrates systematically the very typical folk traditions of the people living in the period of the late Qing Dynasty and 1910s, all the ceremonies of local people of Jinzhong about marriage, funeral, birth, sickness and death can be found in this museum. The total amount of the whole exhibitions amounts to 30,000 and there are about one thousand pieces of historical relics kept in the museum among which there are 500 pieces of ancient painting and calligraphies of different periods-Tang, Five Dynasties, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties with different styles and most of them are the unique treasures such as "The wonder of the East-Nine Dragons Lantern", "National treasure—The mirror of Rhinoceros looking at the moon", "The Miracle—Ten Thousand People Ball" and other daily furniture used by the families of the businessmen in Jinzhong Area during Ming and Qing Dynasties. The visitors can feel the glory of the past that the commercial businessmen created through the visit to the courtyard.

The Grand Courtyard of the Qiaos is a National Standard Preserved Unit for Historical Relic and one of the ten best scenic spots in Shanxi Province, It has received the visitors totaling to 6 million both from the country and abroad and there are about 50 films and TV plays shot in this courtyard among which the most famous one is "the Red Lanterns Hanging High" was shot here and the editor of the film was Zhang Yimou and the famous star Gong Li was the major character in it.



三晋名城 — "金" 祁县

在美丽富饶的山西晋中盆地,有一方昔日被誉为金银之乡的土地,这就是祁县。

祁县古称昭馀。据记载,远古时代,晋中盆地一带是一片蒿草繁茂的沼泽地,曰:"昭馀祁泽薮",后来历年干涸至祁地,祁县因此而得名。

祁县具有得天独厚的地理条件和便利的交通优势,自古就是"川陕通衢"之要塞。南同蒲铁路干线与108、208国道以及省道大运路、祁临高速公路、东夏线、祁文线交错成网,形成了山西省最大的交通枢纽。祁县距省会太原50公里,全县幅员854平方公里,辖6镇2乡,总人口25万。境内气候温和,年平均气温9.9℃,属暖温带大陆性气候。

祁县是国家历史文化名城,有着悠久的历史和灿烂的文化,早在6000年前的新石器时代就有人类居住,春秋时为晋大夫祁黄羊



古城夜景

A Night Scene of the Ancient City







元宵节社火 ——跑旱船

Paohanchuan-One Major Performance of the Lantern Festival

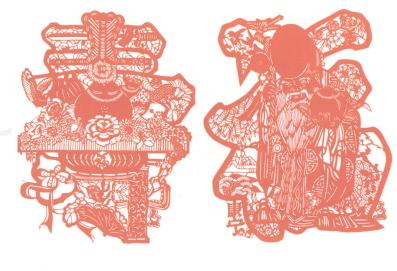
食邑,正式置县为西汉初年,距今已有2200多年的历史。

漫长的岁月中,祁县这方土地上哺育了众多的杰出人物。战国大夫祁奚"外举不避仇,内举不避亲"的举贤之道,至今被人称颂:东汉司徒王允与貂蝉巧设连环计,诛杀董卓,成为《三国演义》的重要篇章;东晋骠骑大将军温峤,骁勇善战,朝野共重;唐代黎国公温大雅辅佐李渊太原起兵,功绩卓著,官至礼部尚书;与李商隐齐名的唐代诗人温庭筠和"诗中有画,画中有诗"的诗书画全才王雅;文学界的开山鼻祖,《三国演义》、《水浒传》的作者罗贯中;戴廷栻建丹枫阁与顾炎武"一时名倾天下",都给祁县悠久的历史增添了不少的光彩。

据不完全统计,列入《辞海》、《辞源》、《中华大字典》和《中国历代名人辞典》的祁县名人一百有余,列入《山西通志》等书者225人。

祁县有着丰富的文物古迹。现有文物保护单位184处,馆藏文物5000余件。祁奚墓、王允墓和作为"川陕通衢"的古驿道镇河楼,以及唐代以来多达千件以上,包括唐寅、仇英、董其昌、傅山、

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民间剪纸

Traditional Paper Cutting

何绍基等在内的名家书画, 至今还均可见到。

祁县文化灿烂,科第不绝。金世宗大定年间创办了昭馀书院。祁县曾有过关系着反清复明的名士会集场所——丹枫阁。祁县图书馆现藏书12万余册,其中古籍图书5.1万册,善本图书3万册。所藏宋版书《昌黎先生集考异》为海内孤本,被誉为"国宝"。

县城保存完好的晋商老街,和遍布城乡数以千计的庭院建筑,古风古韵,古色古香,不仅被众多影视厂选定为最佳景点,而且给建筑学院的教学与研究也提供了难得的实物资料。

祁县是"晋商"的大本营,祁县商帮是晋商的杰出代表。祁县在明清年间的商业兴盛期间就有一半以上的人家从事商业活动,除国内各地外,还涉足俄、日、朝和东南亚等地。因而,祁县城被称为闻名全国的商业金融名城,故有"汇通天下"之美誉。票号是晋商的杰作。光绪年间,全国60余家票号,祁县就占了21家,具有举足轻重的地位,故有"执全国金融牛耳"之誉。

祁县地方经济发展迅速,农业生产水源充足,土地肥沃,是国家商品粮基地县之一;有丰富的农副产品资源,盛产水果,是全国优质苹果基地县,也是全国优质酥梨基地县,现已形成南梨北果的市场格局,年总产量6000万公斤,其中红星系列苹果为国宴供品。

农业产业化以粮、菜、果、牧四大主导产业不断推进。祁县地方工业蓬勃发展,形成了以玻璃、酿酒、碳素、酰胺为主的主导产业。玻璃行业已成为全国最大的人工玻璃吹制基地,玻璃酒具、五金工具出口到北欧和北美,化工产品有质量免检产品活性炭,走俏市场的碳素、糠醛、絮凝剂;食品酿造有国优名酒"六曲香"、"山西二锅头"、小磨香油"一滴香";机械产品有各类锻压机床、轴承、水泵、锅炉等。目前已探明有储量丰富的优质天然气等地下矿产资源。

古老的人文历史和灿烂的文化以及绮丽的风光,使祁县成为人们想往的旅游胜地,古城24景,乔家大院36景,渠家大院30景,构成一条山西中部独特的旅游热线。有蜚声海内外的国家重点文物保护单位、山西省十佳旅游景点——乔家大院民俗博物馆:有晋商豪宅——渠家大院、晋商文化博物馆和晋商老街及千处民宅;有北方惟一的珠算博物馆:有长裕川茶庄博物馆、晋商镖局、雨楼明清家具博物馆;有乔家花园"中华周易宫";有湖光山色的九沟风景区;还有新近开发的罗贯中纪念馆、戴隆邦故居、延寿寺信仰博物馆,形成了祁县三日游格局。

金祁县,以其辉煌的过去,永垂史册;金祁县,以其灿烂的今天,吸引着海内外客商!



晋商老街 An Ancient Business Street in Shanxi