

Research on the development of local cruise tourism products from the perspective of cultural creativity

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Abstract: The modern cruise industry originated in North America at the end of the sixties. In recent years, the international cruise industry has maintained an average annual high growth rate of 8% to 9%, far exceeding the overall growth rate of the international tourism industry. Therefore, the major cruise companies began to expand in the Chinese market, and the domestic cruise tourism is facing a good opportunity for development. This paper adopts the method of questionnaire survey, through the investigation of current domestic consumer cognition of cruise tourism, found that China cruise tourism has low domestic consumer awareness and the type of Chinese cruise tourism products single problem, according to this paper puts forward the product development countermeasures, explore the perspective of cruise tourism product development ideas.

1. Introduction

As China's economy continues to develop, the living standards of domestic consumers are rising, and their desire for a more fulfilling spiritual life is increasing, leading to a greater emphasis on new forms of outbound travel. The cruise ship represents a novel tourism mode in China, offering a unique travel experience that integrates food, lodging, transportation, sightseeing, shopping, and entertainment, all within one tourist destination and method of transportation. Cruise tourism originated in Europe and the United States and is prevalent in Western countries. The tourism industry boasts high penetration rates of 1.17% to 2.51% among tourists in these regions. However, in China, cruise tourism has only reached a mere 0.02% penetration rate among tourists. Tourists in inland cities are unfamiliar with this mode of travel, creating an untapped market potential for the cruise industry to explore and develop.^[1]This has increased Chinese tourists' expectations for cruise tourism, aiming to satisfy their curiosity and achieve satisfaction through this unique form of tourism. To increase satisfaction among domestic consumers, innovation in hardware facilities and cruise tourism products is necessary to allow tourists to experience the charm of cruise travel during their journey.

Currently, the demand for sightseeing cruise tourism products is decreasing. In contrast, there is an increasing demand amongst domestic consumers in the cultural field for cruise tourism products that offer cultural creative experiences. This trend is a result of the new economic era, where there is a shift away from mass tourism products towards culturally and creatively tailored tourism products that cater to the personalized demands of domestic consumers. In designing cultural and creative products for cruise tourism, it is essential to focus on enhancing the inner ideology and cultural

connotation of the products themselves, improving existing mass tourism products, creating innovative and unique cruise tourism products, and reforming both the route and on-board cruise tourism products. Doing so will contribute to the expansion of China's cruise tourism market and the achievement of sustainable development in China's cruise industry.

2. Current Situation of Local Cruise Tourism Product Development

Cruise tourism products are intangible goods, designed and provided by cruise ships to fulfill passenger demands for sightseeing, relaxation, and vacation in compliance with recognized passenger needs and future expectations. The two components of this are tangible on-board tourism products, which include cruise ship adornment, service infrastructure, and amusement programs, and intangible cruise line tourism products, such as cruise lines and their services.

(1) Cruise line tourism products:

Cruise line tourism products are tailored to the needs of cruise consumers following comprehensive analyses of journey and onboard costs, as well as cruise ship operations. The cruise company surveys and analyzes consumer demand and destination characteristics. An example includes the 2018 Quantum of the Seas line products, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: 2018 Quantum of the Seas Route Listing

2018 Quantum of the Seas Route Listing (partial)			
Date	Days	Holiday theme	Execute the route
February 26, 2018	6 days and 5 nights	The Lantern Festival at sea	Fukuoka - Sakaiminato
March 3, 2018	6 days and 5 nights		Okinawa - Nagasaki
July 7, 2018	8 days and 7 nights	Summer vacation	Kyoto - Kobe - Tokyo
July 30, 2018	6 days and 5 nights	summer vacation	KUMAMOTO - Nagasaki
October 1, 2018	7 days and 6 nights	National Day holiday	Kagoshima - Kobe

(Table data compiled by author)

Table 2: Statistics of Tourism Products on board Quantum of the Seas.

Statistics of Tourism Products on the Ocean Quantum Ship (Partial)		
Category	Product Name	Product Features
Restaurant	Sailing cafeteria	Royal Caribbean signature specialty restaurant, enjoying delicious food and changing dishes at different times to meet different culinary needs.
	Coastal Kitchen	The golden box designed for VIPs blends the elegance of the Mediterranean with the warmth of California farms. It offers both Pacific coast cuisine such as cranberry sauce bass, as well as Mediterranean cuisine such as Solana ham, sheep cheese, grilled grapes, and Napa Valley and Tuscany wines, all exuding a rich and fresh flavor.
	Royal Avenue Cafe	A coffee shop located in a convenient location on Royal Avenue, offering freshly brewed and mellow coffee as well as various cookies, sandwiches, and desserts
Leisure and entertainment products	North Star	The design of the North Star, inspired by the London Eye in the UK, is a miracle in engineering. Its 360 degree rotating boom arm and gem shaped glass cabin transport visitors to a new height of 88.6 meters above sea level. During the day, you can overlook the endless blue sea like a seagull, and at night, you can admire the dazzling neon lights on the quantum number.
	Maritime collision vehicle	A vibrant venue and comfortable handling for all ages, allowing you to spark joy in repeated collisions. With the rotation of the steering wheel and the retraction and release of the pedals, you can regain childlike fun and indulgence in it.
	Starry Sky Cinema	The outdoor cinema located by the 14th deck swimming pool is an incredibly comfortable experience, whether it's watching a fierce ball game during the day or leaning against the pool at night to watch a romantic love movie with the sea breeze and starlight.
Technology products	North Star	The design of the North Star, inspired by the London Eye in the UK, is a miracle in engineering. Its 360 degree rotating boom arm and gem shaped glass cabin transport visitors to a new height of 88.6 meters above sea level. During the day, you can overlook the endless blue sea like a seagull, and at night, you can admire the dazzling neon lights on the quantum number.
	Robot Bar	The robot bar full of technological elements and endless fun, just give instructions to Bio and Nic to prepare your own exciting special drinks.

(Table data compiled by author)




(2) Cruise ship tourism products:

Cruise ship companies create onboard tourism products according to consumer demand for tourist destinations and cruise ships, as well as tourists' consumption habits and other pertinent factors for the target market. These products cater to leisure tourists and can include amenities such as swimming pools, duty-free shops, major theme restaurants, and more. For instance, Table 2 displays the available tourism products onboard the Quantum of the Seas.

3. Analysis of the development status of local cruise tourism cultural and creative products

3.1 Analysis of themed products onboard cruise ships

Table 3: Cultural and Creative Products of the "Nanhai Dream" Theme Activity

Product Name	Physical image	Product Connotation
Carp lamp		The Jinli Lantern Dance of Qionghai Coastal Fishing Township is a stunning maritime cultural and historical site with hundreds of years of history dating back to the Ming Dynasty. It has been listed as intangible cultural heritage. By implementing the sea sacrifice ritual and cultural practices of farming, grazing, and fishing traditionally observed in the coastal fishing village of Qionghai, we have gained an understanding of the exquisite and favorable symbolism associated with the carp lamp. Consequently, we have fabricated a carp lamp cultural and creative craftwork modeled on the carp and incorporating cultural elements such as auspicious clouds and Chinese knots.
Nanhai Porcelain		By introducing the exquisite deep-sea archaeological relics found in the South China Sea, we can connect with the restoration of the "porcelain in the South China Sea" blind box deep-sea archaeological relics. This provides a unique opportunity to experience the unmatched charm of the treasures of the South China Sea and the field of underwater archaeology, allowing us to connect with countless craftsmen spanning from ancient to modern times.
Understanding Shells in the South China Sea		Through interactive experiences such as display, explanation, and handcrafting, we will lead everyone to get to know the "shells" of Nanhai Treasure, understand their living habits, appreciate their shapes and colors, listen to the sound of the sea they bring, and create our own shell porcelain plate paintings.

(Table data compiled by author)

With the gradual growth of China's cruise industry, the quality of the cultural and creative products offered by local Chinese cruise ships is also improving. The South Sea Dream, operated by Sansha South Sea Dream Cruise Co., is a Chinese cruise ship that reflects this advancement. The trip begins in Sanya and takes travelers on a four-day, three-night journey to Fudao Island, Yukong Island, and Yinyu Island, offering exceptional service. The South China Sea Museum and the "South Sea Dream" cruise ship have partnered for a strategic "sea cruise" collaboration. The cruise ship plans to construct a mobile museum on board to showcase exhibits and cultural creations related to "sea cruising", influenced by the South China Sea's traditional non-legacy culture. A mobile museum showcasing

cross-border cooperation, exhibitions, and cultural and creative products of "Sea Cruise" is scheduled to be constructed aboard the cruise ship. In February 2023, the cruise ship "South Sea Dream" launched the "Experiencing South Sea Culture, Tasting Xisha New Year's Customs" theme activity. The event showcased cultural and creative products specific to the South China Sea, including carp lamps, South Sea porcelains, Understanding Shells in the South China Sea, and more. Please refer to Table 3 for a detailed list of items displayed.

The on-board theme activities of "Nanhai Dream" utilize traditional skills and historical allusions from Chinese non-heritage traditional culture. This not only adds Chinese traditional cultural characteristics to cruise tourism products, but also promotes the history and culture of the South China Sea and non-heritage skills. These enhancements enrich the ideological and spiritual connotations of Chinese cruise ship's creative products, and increase the external level structural design of cultural and creative products with significance to reference for Chinese cruise ship's creative products. It enhances the ideological and spiritual meaning of Chinese cruise ship cultural and creative products at the internal level, while improving the structural design and techniques of cultural and creative product design at the external level. This has significant reference value for the development of Chinese cruise ship cultural and creative products.^[2]

3.2 Analysis of cruise line product design

Cruise routes in the China region have become increasingly crucial in the Asian cruise market. With their exceptional cultural and historical significance, attraction features, and tourism resources, Chinese cruise routes boast tremendous potential. Accordingly, designers of Chinese cruise lines should prioritize the spiritual and cultural connotations and significance of the line products.^[3] In the context of integrating tourism into national strategies, cruise ports are promoting the dissemination of Chinese culture in the "Belt and Road", establishing a new trend in the cruise industry, and hastening the construction of the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road". The 13th Five-Year Plan for Tourism Development expressly states: Promote collaboration in cruise tourism along the 'Maritime Silk Road', co-develop international tourism routes, and enhance the recognition of the 'Belt and Road' tourism brand. Boost the awareness and influence of the 'Belt and Road' tourism brand.

Xiamen Port is located on the southeast coast of China and the west coast of the Taiwan Strait, providing natural advantages for hosting cruise routes. It serves as an ideal home port connecting directly to Kyushu and South Korea in the north, Taiwan and Okinawa in the east, and Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam and the Philippines in the south. Since the establishment of Xiamen Cruise Home Port, Xiamen Port has become a vital component of the "Maritime Silk Road" cruise routes. It has routinely conducted "Maritime Silk Road" themed routes with ports in Southeast Asia. On March 8, 2018, Xiamen Cruise Terminal successfully operated the first 15-day "Maritime Silk Road" cruise, connecting six Southeast Asian countries, including the Philippines. The cruise attracted nearly 1,800 high-quality tourists from East China and received a positive market response. On March 22, 2018, the Port of Xiamen utilized cruise ships to execute the "China Xiamen Cultural Tourism Exchange" in Southeast Asian ports, including Manila, Kota Kinabalu, and Bandar Seri Begawan. The event focused on the theme of "Sea Silk Road - Southern Fujian Love" and showcased Xiamen's cultural performances, cooperation forums, and tourism promotion in varied forms. Through cultural events, partnership forums, tourism advertising, and other forms of promotion, Xiamen showcases its city image and Minnan culture to build a human connection. The cruise line's theme embraces the "cruise + culture" approach, an inventive fusion of cruise design and cultural experiences.

Through utilizing China's distinctive traditional culture to generate fresh concepts for the enhancement of China's cruise line design, the innovative fusion of "cruise + culture" can be further

elevated. This can be achieved by creating various thematic routes, including: Religious, cultural, family, social, and other routes are being developed to attract domestic and foreign tourists. The integration of new routes and culture is also in line with the development trend of China's cruise tourism products. This enriches the product structure of China's cruise tourism, extends the industry supply chain, and promotes the sustainable development of China's cruise routes and tourism products. Additionally, these efforts aim to attract more visitors to ride and explore the routes.

4. Local cruise tourism cultural and creative product development design

4.1 Emphasize the story expression of traditional Chinese culture

China, as one of the world's major countries with a strong cultural heritage, experiences a surge in foreign tourism culture. Domestic consumers in this environment seek novelty and prioritize experiences. The local cruise ship development stage requires a reflection of the unique characteristics of the cruise culture in hardware construction, as well as the integration of supporting software facilities to enhance a unique sentiment.

It develops cultural and creative cruise tourism products with distinctive Chinese characteristics at the external, intermediate and internal levels. This involves focusing on the material color and structure at the external level, providing interactive services on the cruise ship at the intermediate level, and expressing Chinese cultural allusions and the ideology and spiritual essence of Chinese cruise ship characteristics at the internal level. The aim is to enhance tourists' cultural self-confidence and closeness to Chinese cruise ship culture, thereby improving their satisfaction with the experience of local Chinese cruise ships.

By employing the "cruise + culture" design approach to enhance and innovate Chinese local cruise products^[4], Chinese traditional culture, which boasts a rich legacy and has been handed down from one generation to the next, is utilized to narrate stories of Chinese cultural specialties like wine culture, tea culture, incense culture, and music culture to evoke emotional resonance among domestic consumers.

4.2 Design of short- and medium-term domestic routes

Domestic travelers also demonstrate a preference for certain ports of call when selecting a cruise. Approximately 80% of respondents reported choosing a cruise for its unique atmosphere in the ports of call. Additionally, Chinese tourists prioritize visiting the destination's scenic attractions as an essential component of their travel itinerary.

China's local cruise ships demonstrate a formidable ability to plan routes. When designing river cruise routes, it is advisable to adopt the "cruise + region" format, which provides tourists with a comprehensive experience of the scenery and cultural traits along the Yangtze River region, crossing multiple provinces and regions. As for coastline cruises, utilizing a north-south extension when designing routes can offer a better understanding of the cultural and landscape disparities between the north and south of China.

4.3 Cruise-themed leisure and entertainment product design

The cruise ship is integral to the cruise tourism product, serving as a non-traditional market expression. When deciding on cruise tourism consumption, consumers must take into account factors related to the cruise ship, including its size, decorative style, equipment, and facilities, as well as the features of its route. Therefore, it is essential to fully consider the living habits, consumption habits, cultural variances, and other factors of local tourists when designing tourism products.^[5]

Incorporating Chinese cultural elements into the general style of the cruise ship enhances leisure and entertainment experiences. (Figure 1)

Based on feedback from Chinese tourists aboard international cruise ships, it appears that they experience discomfort with Western cuisine and buffets offered on board. Additionally, communication with English-speaking wait staff presents difficulties. Although cruise ships offer excellent entertainment facilities, activities such as golf and ice skating differ from those found on Chinese cruise ships. Therefore, when designing a cruise ship, it is important to incorporate entertainment programs with "Chinese characteristics," such as tea rooms, rooms for playing chess and cards, and saunas. These are elements that Chinese tourists appreciate, and the ship should also incorporate Chinese culture. (Figure 2)

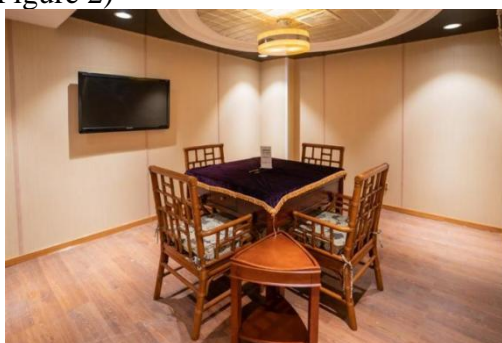


Figure 1: Display of Chinese Specialty Chess Rooms and Bars on Three Gorges Luxury Cruise Ships (Pictures collected from the Internet)

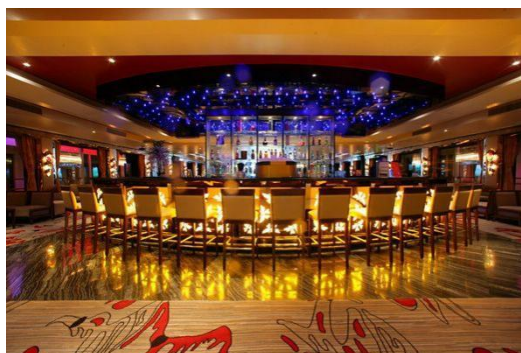


Figure 2: Display of Chinese Specialty Chess Rooms and Bars on Three Gorges Luxury Cruise Ships (Pictures collected from the Internet)

5. Conclusion

When choosing to develop local cruise products in China, it is essential to select those that align with the Chinese people's living habits and customs and consider the cruise line's logic and cycle for the target market. This will better promote China's cruise culture. Both river and sea cruises should be taken into account in this regard. They take advantage of China's rich history and cultural connotations to create unique cultural and creative products for the cruise industry. By strategically integrating Chinese culture with cruise products, we can enhance the industry's vitality and increase resonance among consumers.

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