



Artist's conceptualization of an aerial view of the proposed layout for the 2014 Qingdao International Horticultural Expo.



A rendering of the Theme Pavilion, one of the two landmark buildings of the 2014 Qingdao International Horticultural Exposition. Its design inspired by the China rose, the pavilion resembles petals.

Qingdao gets chance to shine on world stage

Exhibition is the biggest event the coastal city has held since hosting the 2008 Olympic Regatta

Editor's Notes: Qingdao, a coastal city in East China's Shandong province, put itself in the international spotlight when it hosted the Olympic Sailing Regatta and Paralympic Games in 2008, and it will once again gain worldwide fame as the host of the Qingdao International Horticultural Expo in 2014, when the city will demonstrate its stunningly beautiful scenery and supremely livable environment to the world once more.

By XIE CHUANJIAO AND ZHUAN TI

Six years after hosting the Olympic and Paralympic sailing events, the city of Qingdao in Shandong province is poised to capture the world's attention once more in 2014 as the host of the International Horticultural Expo.

With the theme "From the earth, for the Earth", the expo will open in April 2014 and last until October. The organizers expect around 12 million visitors to attend the event.



Qingdao is now faced with an unparalleled chance to elevate its development level and raise its profile by hosting such an international event."

LI QUN
PARTY CHIEF OF QINGDAO

The most-splendid horticultural artworks and latest gardening technologies will be presented to visitors from all over the world along with the city's characteristics that are synonymous with its brand — oceans, beaches, beer, the Olympics and an ecological environment.

As a professional non-trade

expo, the International Horticultural Expo shows varieties of rare plants and the latest gardening technologies. It is regarded as the "Olympics" in the field of horticultural science.

"Qingdao is now faced with an unparalleled chance to elevate its development level and raise its profile by hosting such an international event," said Li Qun, Party chief of the city, in a recent interview.

"But at the same time, it also brings new challenges and new tests to the city's comprehensive capabilities," he said.

The city government has planned a "world-class expo with Chinese style and local features". It has introduced international standards and technologies in venue planning and construction, events management, services and attracting investment.

"Along with the global standards, we will also add local

elements to demonstrate local characteristics," said Li. "We will also take the chance to improve the city's environment and functions and upgrade its quality to build an internationalized modern city."

"The expo should be unique in its culture," said Wang Jianxiang, deputy mayor of Qingdao. "We have paid much attention to how to display and integrate culture into the plan."

Wu Zhiqiang, the chief planner of the 2010 Shanghai World Expo, has been invited to plan the Qingdao horticultural expo. His overall plan was approved by an expert panel in March this year.

The main venue of the expo is located in the Baiguo Mountain Forest Park, a forest park that is a 30-minute drive from downtown Qingdao. It is also not far from the Laoshan Mountain, which is one of the best-known tourism destina-

tions in the city. In the venue there are mountains, hills, rocks, a reservoir and forests of all kinds.

Qingdao is one of the very few mountainous areas that have been selected to host the horticultural expo, but this venue reflects the ideas of famous Chinese horticulturist Ji Cheng in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), who believed that mountains and forests are the best places to build gardens.

The plan combines traditional Chinese concepts of harmony between heaven and earth with latest architecture technologies. The seven parks in the site are themed on the sun, the moon, metal, wood, water, fire and earth, the seven elements in ancient Chinese philosophy.

The construction of a number of pavilions in the venue has been completed, along with two-thirds of the roads, cable and pipeline networks

in the venue. Wang said the expo will "take the lead in the world in at least 10 aspects".

"For example, the garden-roofed buildings will appear at the expo for the first time, and the WiFi coverage area will be the widest," he said. "And we will have the largest mountain-top fountain in the world."

One of the parks in the venue has been set aside for cities in Shandong province to showcase their rich cultures.

"We are expecting all participating cities to bring their best designs, combining both local features and latest city development, to make ancient Shandong culture and modern innovation better understood by the outside world," said Wang.

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City preps for 2014 horticultural expo

By XIE CHUANJIAO
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Inspired by a tale of heavenly maidens, the blueprint of the 2014 Qingdao International Horticultural Exposition features elements both ancient and modern, fusing combined concepts from the East and the West.

The expo spreads across 241 hectares, including 164 hectares of theme areas, 15.6 hectares of water areas, a 77-hectare experience area for visitors and a 55-hectare Expo Village to provide logistical support.

There are seven parks with themes — Chinese, Floriculture, Herb, Dream-kids, Science, Green and International, and five experience parks, including the tea-scent, agriculture, floristry, floral world and mountain parks.

"As the fairy tale goes, the maidens were scatter-

ing flowers and exploring the most beautiful places on earth, when they were deeply impressed by the beauty of Jiaozhou Bay and the splendors of Baiguo Mountain. They decided to stop and as they descended, seven bands of distinctive colors began to fall," said Li Fengli, secretary-general of the QIHE executive committee, referring to the design for the park's layout.

The Chinese park, built according to the principle of harmony among man, heaven and earth, consists of 51 exhibition sections for domestic provinces, including Taiwan and the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions as well as 17 cities of the host province Shandong, enabling visitors to enjoy the charm of a unified China, Li said.

The international park will showcase the horticulture of foreign countries.

"This park consists of 36

exhibition sections, mainly for relative international organizations, countries, foreign sister provinces and cities as well as professional institutions who were frequent supporters for the expos in the past," Li said.

The green park consists of 37 exhibition sections. Hirun Investment Group has transplanted two ancient mulberries and 1,600 mulberry saplings to the park and will show the visitors the process of breeding silk worms and making silk.

Visitors will also see hops and barley in this park grown by Tsingtao Brewery Co Ltd, a world-renowned brewery, which will reveal its brewing secrets at the expo.

"The green park is definitely worth a trip because a lot of fun, knowledge and unique features can be found there," said Li.

The designs of the theme

hall, botanical hall and horticultural center are starting to take shape but are still very much in the early stages.

The theme hall has four pavilions, which resemble petals. The first and second pavilions feature the local culture of Qingdao and Shandong. Pavilion three is designed for showing floriculture, while pavilion four provides service.

The botanical hall, a lush garden full of house plants, provides popular science, culture and entertainment. With a planned area of 22,000 square meters, it is made up of exhibition sections for sea plants and bamboo as well as one for rattan and temperate plants.

The horticultural center conveys the concept of harmony between man and nature while showing horticulture by introducing plants through stories told in first-person narratives.



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LI FENGLI
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE QIHE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

So far, the main roads have been paved and pipelines have almost been put in place. The main construction projects are expected to be completed by the end of this year. The necessary trees have been acquired and are scheduled to go into place by winter. All the work will be accomplished by October 2013.



A rendering of the Botany Pavilion, which will provide science, culture, entertainment and leisure activities in theme sections, such as marine plants, bamboo, rattan, and temperate plants.

Attendees from afar sought for trade fair

By XIE CHUANJIAO
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Qingdao is making efforts to attract more exhibitors from home and abroad to the 2014 International Horticultural Expo.

The exhibition will feature a Chinese park, international park and green park, with a total of 122 sections, said Wang Jianxiang, deputy mayor of Qingdao and head of the expo's organizing committee.

Organizers say 124 exhibitors from China and abroad are expected to come, including some from overseas sister provinces and cities, provinces at home as well as cities, companies and institutes within Shandong province.

The executive committee is working to attract foreign exhibitors through cultural and commercial exchanges with foreign countries. By June, 27 exhibitors had made it clear that they will exhibit in the international park, eight of which have already delivered their design proposals.

To date, 13 provinces and 13 cities within Shandong have confirmed their exhibition sections in the Chinese park. The same is true of the Taiwan and Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions.

Twelve companies, such as Tsingtao Beer, Vanke Group and Hirun Investment Group, are also sure to make an appearance in the Green Park, with nine having

already submitted their schemes.

The expo promotion office said that the executive committee expects to attract more than 100 exhibitors by September this year, including more than 30 from abroad.

Since construction broke ground, the executive committee has been promoting the expo through various channels, mainly on TV, Internet, newspapers and magazines. The expo's official website and micro blog have also been used to attract foreign exhibitors as well as popularize the event at home and get more citizens in Qingdao involved.

"Video clips, titled *Qingdao, A Livable City and International Horticultural Expo Qingdao 2014*, have been played in New York's Times Square," said Wang.

"The videos highlight the creative ideas of seven heavenly maidens scattering flowers and seven colored belts," he added.

A three-month-long painting competition for children was launched by the executive committee on June 5 with the goal of mobilizing parents and children to actively participate in the expo, Wang said.

The designs of its emblem and mascot have already been finalized. Agreements have been signed with companies, like China Post, Shandong Air, Haier Group and Bank of Qingdao to co-sponsor the expo. Work is under way to protect intellectual property rights, according to the executive committee.



Qingdao, one of China's most beautiful coastal cities, is a major seaport and economic center in China.