Xidi Village
UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site
UNWTO Best Tourism Village

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Brief Introduction of Xidi Village

01 Xidi Village locates at Anhui Province, built in the Song Dynasty, with a history of more than 1,000 years. It covers an area of 12.47 km². The core area of the scenic area is 0.13 km², and has a jurisdiction over 9 village groups with a resident population of 1,245.

02 Xidi Village is an outstanding and representative of almost-perfectly preserved ancient villages in China, with 3 ancestral halls built in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, one archway, and 224 ancient houses.

03 Xidi was inscribed into the World Cultural Heritage List in 2000. It is the only village-type cultural heritage site, where the ancient buildings enjoy relatively complete preservation.

04 It is a National 5A-level Scenic Spot, a Chinese Historical and Cultural Village, and one of the Major Sites to Be Protected for their Historical and Cultural Value at the National Level. It began to develop tourism in the 1980s and received about 720,000 tourists in 2012 and about 905,300 tourists in 2019.

05 It is awarded as “Best Tourism Village” by UNWTO in 2021.
Xidi Village began to develop tourism in the 1980s. In 1994, the village-run Xidi Tourism Development Company was established. It gave priority to the employment of villagers and built up a community-oriented management model, i.e., Part of the company’s tourism income such as tickets are distributed to villagers, part of the income are used for tourism development and heritage reservation.

Since 2015, in order to better develop Xidi tourism, the state-owned enterprise Yi County Huihuang Tourism Group, has overtaken the responsibility of tourism development, operation and management of Xidi with villagers at the core and the government guidance. The group develops tourism while taking advantage of preservation and rational use of cultural heritage. Dividends are distributed to villagers in a certain proportion every year.

The villagers renovate their own houses to participate in local tourism, such as operating homestays, restaurants, tourist souvenir shops and so on. Migrants are also attracted here to set up shops and start businesses.
Tourism Income

In Xidi Village, ticket revenue and gross revenue of tourism have shown an overall increasing trend. Tourism revenue has increased from **39.7 million RMB in 2012** to **46.91 million RMB in 2019**. The disposable income of villagers has increased from **13,273 RMB in 2012** to almost **40,000 RMB in 2020**. Villagers make a living in different ways, **mainly in tourism**. Some of the villagers farm or work outside.

Featured Industry

Xidi Village continues to develop **featured agricultural industries** such as Chinese herbal medicine planting and high-quality tea, and cultivate industrial bases such as green plums and graphite tea. Xidi also plants rape, and develops agricultural tourism while ensuring the economic income of farmers. **Intangible cultural heritage** such as handicrafts, folk activities, and local food are developed for tourist experiences and creation of tourism products, such as experiencing traditional wedding customs and local bamboo carvings, brick carvings, Laba tofu.
Labor and Employment

- Local Employment rate
- Employment rate of tourism industry
- Male/Female Employment
- Residents return to village to work
Labor and Employment

- In the past, there was outflow of migrant labor in Xidi. However, after the development of tourism, villagers who went out to work come back to the village, and attract migrants to participate in tourism entrepreneurship, which accelerate the population inflow.

- Tourism stimulates employment. Xidi Village has a labor force of 739 people. There are 576 people engaged in tourism-related services in the village, accounting for 78% of the total labor force in the village.

- In 2019, there were over 210 shops in the village. 154 shops were operated by villagers living in Xidi, accounting for 73.3%. Migrant entrepreneurs account for a relatively small percentage, thus forming a tourism business model with villagers as the main body.

- Pre-job training has been carried out, which is conducive to villager’s capacity building for employment. Some local jobs such as road managers, cleaners, and ecological forest rangers, are given priority to residents, especially those who are difficult to directly benefit from tourism, to attract more villagers back to work in the village and reduce the outflow of local labor.

- Encourage women to participate in tourism and targeted training are conducted. Xidi also has the Anhui Girls Rural Tourism (homestay) Service Skill Training Classes to provide training for local female service providers and young people under 30. The activity increases women's participation in the tourism industry and enables women to benefit from economic income from tourism so as to promote gender equality.
“Anhui Girls Rural Tourism (homestay) Service Skill Training Class” on Floral, Photograph, etc.
Local resident employed for cleaning

Featured boutique hotel owned by local resident

Local food shop owned by local resident
Labor and Employment

- Data is provided by: scenic area administrative committee, villagers’ committee, Yixian County Hui Huang Tourism Group, Administration for industry and commerce, Police Stations, and other relevant departments.

- Data collected: villagers' gender, age, education level, labour intensity, salary level, employment intention, and the number of tourists.

- How do they do: visiting residents, surveys and questionnaires.

- Impacts: find out whether the jobs provided and brought by tourism development will only benefit the tourism industry or will benefit the macro economy. Then develop policies, issue the development plan, and impose the macro regulation based on the findings.

- **Challenges:** ageing population, general education level is not high, service quality and the limited carrying capacity, lack experience of the management, etc.

- **Solutions:** vocational skills training, new media (Tic-tok) promotion training sessions, and tourism training courses for practitioners of the homestays, policies.
Welcome to Xidi!