

## **Leshan Giant Buddha: Cultural Tourism Promotion Guidelines of Leshan, Sichuan Province, China.**

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### **Abstract**

The objectives of this study were to: 1) study the history of Leshan Buddha and 2) study the cultural tourism promotion guidelines of Leshan Buddha in Sichuan Province, China. Leshan, this research employs qualitative research methods, including literature review and field data collection through surveys, interviews, observations, group discussions, and workshops. Analysis is conducted based on information provided by 60 participants, and the results are presented in a descriptive analytical manner in line with the research objectives. The research findings are as follows: 1) Leshan Giant Buddha is a cultural, historical and archaeological heritage of China. Such as recently, present time, 7,226 Buddha statues and carvings have been surveyed. Most of the cultural relics in the Leshan area represent Chinese Buddhism, which dates to the Tang Dynasty. The Leshan Giant Buddha is a combination of mountains, rivers, temples and pagodas, creating a magical scene of harmony between man and nature that has long bonded in China. 2) The guidelines for promoting cultural tourism of Leshan monks in Leshan Province, Sichuan, China. This cultural heritage area should have training in history, culture and traditions that can be searched from tourism resources. Guidelines for developing the creation of tourism resources to be in harmony with nature, culture, traditions, and further developing the elements of tourism. Those involved should develop modern innovative technology by presenting tourist attraction information electronically and linking tourism through various online applications that can access information in Leshan. In conclusion, this research can be used as a guideline for developing tourist attractions.

**Keywords:** Leshan Giant Buddha ; Cultural Tourism ; Promotion

### **Introduction**

Monk Fahian went on a pilgrimage to investigate Buddhism. His story is very interesting in many respects. He was the first person to brave the dangers and reach India. He stayed in India to study the Dhamma for 6 years, between 948 and 954 A.D., which at that time in India coincided with the reign of King Chandragupta II or King Vikramaditya of the Gupta Dynasty. He was a monk who recorded the events that led to the spread of religion to China. (Surintharaphachai, 2023)

The Leshan Buddha statues began to be built during the Tang Dynasty, about 700 years ago. A monk named Haidong arrived in Sichuan and found that the mountain was located on three river crossings, so there were frequent boat accidents, causing frequent deaths. Monk Haitong therefore intended to build a large Buddha statue in the spot to protect travelers. Devout Buddhists put in effort to build this Buddha statue to perfection. Buddhists from different areas come to worship for peace. Leshan Buddha is the largest Buddha statue in the world, located in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China. It was registered as a World Heritage Site along with Mount Emmie in 1996. The Leshan Buddha is a large-eyed Buddha. Both are 10 feet long; each foot is 10 times the size of a person and are considered the largest Buddha statues in the world and one of the 7 Wonders of (China Andrews, 2023). These three rivers

have been guarded by the gods for over 1,000 years, and the Great Buddha on Mount Leshan was carved into a sheer cliff face by dedicated Buddhist disciples who took more than 90 years to create. and carving The Big Buddha area is a tourist attraction that attracts more than 2 million people a year. Tourists come from all over the world.

There are many sacred things to talk about the Buddhism of this city. Another majored religious attraction in Leshan is a statue excavated from rocks hundreds of years ago. Leshan Giant Buddha scenic area extending along the cliff are dangerous ancient steps carved on stones, called "Nine Bend Wooden Road". Most tourists come here to take a group photo with Leshan Giant Buddha Scenic Area The type of visiting Leshan Giant Buddha scenic area is thirist group. They are tourists who want to visit the great historical sites and buildings of China. The other group is Buddhists who come for religious worship. They were all fascinated by the Leshaniant Buddha Scenic Area created so miraculously. Today's society is increasingly aware of the importance of cultural or religious tourism. Rattanasuwongchai (2011). Cultural tourism is a form of tourism in which tourists are inspired or motivated to travel to a destination to observe, learn, gain experience, and realize value, which covers creative work. Traditions, customs, ancient sites, as well as various activities of the target area, tourists and people in the community must respect, learn and understand the culture of the area owner to create friendship and peace. Pongtratik (2021) State that cultural tourism can occur in areas possessing the following elements: (1) Areas with heritage sites that create cultural or archaeological tourism. (2) Areas with historical origins will serve as sources of historical and cultural tourism. (3) The type of area that reflects the traces of a living community is the most important element. It can serve as a tourist attraction showcasing community culture and way of life. (4) Areas with arts and crafts. It will be a cultural tourist attraction in the form of art. Leshan big buddha scenic area visiting types Leshan big buddha scenic area tourists who want to visit the historical sites and great buildings of China. Buddhists of their religion are fascinated by scenic spots. Today's society is increasingly aware of the importance of cultural tourism.

Cultural tourism is a form of tourism in which tourists are inspired or motivated to travel to a destination to observe, learn, gain experience, and realize value, which covers creative work. Traditions, customs, ancient sites, as well as various activities of the target area, tourists and people in the community must respect, learn and understand the culture of the area owner to create friendship and peace. For the reasons mentioned above, the researcher is interested in doing research on the Leshan Big Buddha: Guidelines for promoting cultural tourism, Leshan Big Buddha, Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China. For the reasons mentioned above, the researcher is interested in doing research on the Leshan Big Buddha: Guidelines for promoting cultural tourism, Leshan Big Buddha, Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China.

## **Objectives of the Research**

- 1.To study the history of Le Shan Buddha, Leshan, Sichuan Province, China.
- 2.To study the cultural tourism promotion guidelines of Leshan Buddha in Leshan, Sichuan Province, China.

## **Research Methodology**

Research methods on " Leshan Giant Buddha: Cultural Tourism Promotion Guidelines of Leshan,Sichuan Province, China." were divided as follows:

**Step 1:** Step 1: Investigated the related documents and contents of Leshan Giant Buddha, Cultural Tourism Promotion Guidelines of Leshan,Sichuan Province, China. Concepts and of cultural ecology theory. Cultural tourism theory participation theory and research on ancient sites and ancient objects to serve as guidelines for studying and analyzing approaches to tourism.

**Step 2:** Explored the research area and selected the main study areas, consisting Leshan, Sichuan Province, China, and related areas. The methods of operation were: 1) providing a platform to clarify the project; 2) providing a workshop; 3) collecting field data; and 4) arranging the data system and selecting works for a role model in transfer Cultural Tourism Promotion Guidelines.

**Step 3:** Involved studying important information from key informants, consisting of the sample group used in this research was 60 people follows: 1) A group of key informants from government and community 20 people. to inquire about the history of tourism in Chenedu, consisting of 2) Casual informants' group of 10 people and 3) General Informant group of 30 people, according to the research issues, were identified through 1) observation, 2) interviews, 3) focus group discussion, 4) small group meetings, and 5) additional follow-up studies to ensure completeness.

**Step 4:** Creating the research tools and methods for this study used a participatory process to analyze and present the results through qualitative research that requires in-depth explanations. The research tools consisted of a survey, an interview an observation form, a group discussion guideline, and a workshop for gathering comprehensive information.

**Step 5:** Gathered information that was divided into documents, and on the field, gathered poems, poems told by local scholars in the research area, as well as making an appointment for a date, time, and location to go on-site to conduct a triangular data examination based on the issues outlined in the research objectives.

**Step 6:** Analyze the data according to the research issues set forth in the objectives. In terms of Cultural Tourism Promotion Guidelines, practice experiments improved the teaching and learning processes to achieve higher skills, respectively. Synthesis of content from the data obtained from the interview: the data are categorized, linked, and defined as a conceptual framework for analysis and presenting according to a conceptual framework. Information obtained from group discussions must be summarized into the main ideas presented to the group to check its accuracy again according to the research issues.

**Step 7:** Conclusion the research findings and analyzed documents based on the issues assigned. The content was synthesized, and descriptive reports were written.

## Research Results

The results of collecting knowledge and synthesizing Cultural Tourism Promotion Guidelines of Leshan, Sichuan Province, China. The research results appear as follows.

### **Objective 1 history of Le Shan Buddha, LeShan, Sichuan Province, China**

China is home to numerous World Cultural Heritage sites, many of which are well-known to international audiences. The country's engagement with global heritage initiatives began in the late period following China's accession as a World Heritage State Party in 1985, marking the start of its intensified efforts to develop and preserve its cultural heritage. Currently, many scholars emphasize the sustainable development of cultural tourism.

The Leshan Giant Buddha Scenic Area features several significant landmarks, most notably a stone statue of Maitreya Buddha from the Tang Dynasty. Other highlights include a group of reconstructed stone statues in the Eastern Buddha Capital and the Marquis Wu Temple, also dating to the Tang Dynasty. The centerpiece of the area is the Leshan Giant Buddha, a colossal stone statue measuring 71 meters (233 feet) in height. This impressive statue was carved into a Cretaceous red sandstone cliff between 713 and 803 CE, during the Tang Dynasty. Located at the confluence of the Min and Dadu Rivers in southern Sichuan province, near the city of Leshan, the statue faces Mount Emei, with a river flowing below its feet. This monumental work of art is the tallest stone Buddha statue in the world.

Construction of the statue began in 723 A.D. under the leadership of a Chinese monk named Haidong. He believed that Phra Sri Ariya Maitreya would calm the turbulent waters that posed a danger to ships traveling along the river, ensuring their safe passage. Haidong funded the project using his personal financial resources. However, after the monk's death, construction was delayed due to insufficient funds, and progress was limited to completing the statue from the shoulders upward.

Haidong's disciples later resumed the work with financial support from a local official named Zhangchou Jianxiong. They managed to extend the construction up to the statue's knees. Unfortunately, Zhangchou Jianxiong was recalled to serve at the royal court in Chang'an, leaving the project without leadership and causing construction to halt once more.

Approximately 70 years later, Jiedushi Wei Gao became the project's sponsor. With his support, Haidong's disciples were finally able to complete the statue in 803 A.D.



**Figure 1** Le Shaan Buddha on the banks of the river (Source: From researcher)

The Leshan Giant Buddha at the beginning of the Northern Song Dynasty was damaged and the sculpture was covered with moss. The wooden pavilion also fell into disrepair during Song Renzong's reign. The Great Buddha once again underwent major repairs. The wooden pavilion has since been rebuilt. Records of the destruction and reconstruction of the Buddha statue have disappeared. The original temple, Lingyun Temple, was destroyed in many wars. When it was built, a complex drainage system was incorporated into the Leshan Giant Buddha. It remains in working order, including drainpipes carved at various points on the body to allow water to drain away after rain, preserving the sculpture.

The People's Republic of China has established itself as a systematic country. The Leshan Giant Buddha was designated a cultural heritage site and protected by the Sichuan Provincial People's Committee in 1956. In 1996, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee included the Big Buddha. Leshan was included in the World Cultural and Natural Heritage List in 1998. The Management Committee for the Leshan Big Buddha Scenic Area was officially established. The management committee's control area covered 17.88 square kilometers or 6.90 square miles in 2008. The Leshan Big Buddha - Mount Emei Scenic Area Management Committee was officially established with the main responsibility of Develop tourism resources for Mount Emei and Leshan Big Buddha on March 24, 2002, the World Bank officially began the first phase of the Leshan Big Buddha repair project. The project consisted of restoring the entire Buddha statue from chest to head and strengthening the stone

walls. On June 23, 2002, Phase 2 of the Leshan Giant Buddha Maintenance Project began. During this phase, stone repairs were made around the feet of the Buddha statue and repair the corroded parts of the rocks below the water level.

### **Objective 2 Cultural tourism promotion guidelines of Le Shan Buddha in LeShan, Sichuan Province, China.**

The World Cultural Heritage Site of Sichuan Province is one of China's six important sites. Visited by many tourists from 2001 to 2003, the attraction is ranked as the second most popular tourist attraction among the province's heritage sites. 1.4 to 1.5 million visitors per year in 2004, great progress has been made which has greatly increased the number of visitors to 2.1 million. From 2005 to 2007 there were approximately 2.3 million visitors. Reaching 2.8 million visitors per year, tourists make the local economy prosperous through employment and a variety of income streams. Religious tourism can affect the quality of the Buddha statues, which is why the local government has established boundaries and guidelines to preserve the integrity of the statues. Leshan Giant Buddha is most popular during Chinese New Year when tourists from around the world come to pray for good luck.

Leshan's tourism industry is at the forefront of the world. Landscape architecture is still maintained and has not been created in accordance with the unique characteristics of the region. Buddhist tourism professionals are fully aware of the importance of safety issues. Local administrators have issued warnings and safety announcements to tourists, urging them to abide by tourism regulations such as smoking in scenic spots. Entering the closed viewing area without permission as a result, some aspects can be avoided for good.

The development of the Le Shan Buddha cultural tourism community in LeShan, Sichuan Province, China is to create awareness and consciousness in a participatory manner, for people in local communities to see the value of local cultural heritage and resources because they are important costs for development. Continuing with cultural tourism, which is the integration of interdisciplinary knowledge and modern knowledge compatible with local knowledge and wisdom the development of cultural tourism communities must be developed by internal factors to have potential that is appropriate to the context of the local community.

Community development of cultural tourism is considered an approach or alternative for community and local development. Tourism resources are a tool for managing cultural heritage to create awareness and participation of all sectors. In conserving, restoring, expanding and disseminating cultural heritage, development guidelines are based on social processes and shared cultural learning with 7 important principles as follows:

1. Respect rights and cultural diversity. It is a rather broad concept. Overall, it refers to the right of everyone to have an equal and fair opportunity to express or participate in the culture of their choice. So that the Leshan Giant Buddha culture can survive. Can be continued and developed. It is also a concept that guarantees that everyone has the right to receive satisfaction from the management of cultural resources and cultural heritage.

2. Management of local cultural heritage and resources. Cultural heritage management can be done in many ways, such as spatial cultural heritage management. Leshan Giant Buddha cultural heritage management, local people management, etc.

3. Creation and sustainable use. Putting culture to good use. Cultural learning resources and processes must be created and developed. Make it easy for all groups of people to access and use, by promoting it as a cultural tourism destination.

4. Participation of relevant sectors. Public participation and government agencies to preserve cultural heritage sites. In order to be a cultural tourist attraction that can continue.

5. Creates a learning process and awareness. Operation step by step or using various methods that helps people to Learn about the Leshan Giant Buddha cultural heritage. Learning

outcomes include knowledge and understanding of various matters, ability to act. Using various process skills, including feelings as a result of learning process Can be further developed

6. Consider the impact on the economy, society, culture and environment. Tourism development has a positive effect on the development of the economic and social system. But it also contributes to causing pollution. Forests are destroyed And there is a large amount of waste that affects society, the environment, and the culture of the community.

7. Raise the quality of life of people in the local community. Tourism is a tool for improving the quality of life. well-being as well as maintaining cultural identity and the environment of the local community It makes the quality of life of the local people better, both economically and socially.



**Figure 2** Souvenirs for selling to tourists (Source: From researcher)

Sustainable development and management consist of the following issues: planning, setting measures. and an agreement to prevent and reduce negative impacts that will adversely affect culture, society, economy, environment, and communication in online channels. It also includes the management of community organizations for tourism management that is consistent with the economic context. The area, economy, society and culture of the local Le Shan community.

## Discussion

1. History of Le Shan Buddha, LeShan, Sichuan Province, China. Found that Buddhism entered China, as shown in the evidence around 608 BC. During the reign of Emperor Han Ming, he sent 18 diplomatic missions to investigate Buddhism in India. This ambassador traveled back to China, along with two monks, namely, the Buddha and the Dharma Rattana, as well as the scriptures of Buddhism. The Emperor Han Ming ordered the construction of the temple to be the address of the two monks, which is called Wat Paebi with both Thera. Buddhism has been distributed from the center, India, widely entered China due to the condition of the landscape that can be contacted. Economic factors by trade routes are the Silk Road. Social factors are traveling to spread Buddhism. Land and water transportation in the Silk Road trading In line with the theory of cultural spread, Wannasiri (2007). The direction of cultural diffusion depending on the following factors: 1) The geography must not have geographic obstacles. 2) Economic factors that people must Traveled to each other to exchange

resources between people in different regions. 3) Social factors, which are intentionally exchange methods. New behavior and knowledge Going to study to other places is therefore a direct spread of culture. 4) Good transportation is a factor that is conducive to cultural spread, such as good roads for passenger and travel in a short distance. All of them are good cultural accelerations as well.

The Han Dynasty, although Buddhism is a devotion, is still limited to a narrow circle, among the civil servants and the aristocracy of the royal court. Because most Chinese people still respect the Confucianism and Taoism until the robber, the talented wise, showing the principles of Buddhism to the people of the city to see the deep truth of Buddhism superior to the original doctrine. People respect and rely on the pure behavior of the monks as an incentive for the Chinese to believe that the people of the city turn to Buddhism more than other religions. The combined rights of Buddhists, Daoist, and the thoughts of Fengshhen Yanyi. It shows that the concept of the doctrine depends on the concept of Confucius about "the mandate of heaven" and "FengShen Bang", which is a mixture. Buddhism DAOISM and Confucius Credit Fengshhen Yanyi also driven by two main characters - Daji, the concubine and the fox spirit of King Zhou and Shen Gongbao. These important components are important indicators, honesty in FenShen Yanyi. Ni thinks similar, so the three cars are melted together in accordance with the study of Phrakhrū Suwatthanapattharaporn (2023). In the research, it was clearly found that 1) The findings found that religious ethics are the set of a framework for human behaviors, for peaceful collaboration, and reach good goals in the next after life (the future world). The goal is to improve the quality of life by starting with the development of prior ethics and making people virtuous but not creating problems for themselves and society. They, therefore, must rely on the principles of Brahma Vihara Dhamma (to abide in loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity), Saṅgahavatthu (Generosity, kind words, beneficial help, consistency) and Saraniya Dhamma (a set of six states of conciliation). 2) Ethical Principles for Peaceful Coexistence in Confucianism is to conduct oneself with good relations between individuals to create cooperation that will work to achieve quality results and efficiency, which will bring benefits and happiness to oneself and others according to the principle of duty and mercy. 3) The ethical peaceful coexistence of both religions is the need for society to coexist without conflict and not creating burdens or problems for society by practicing the virtues and the ethics. For the different issues, in Buddhism emphasizes perfect self-development then, extending the results to society by using Buddhist principles as a supplement, such as Brahma Vihara Dhamma and Saṅgahavatthu, etc. For Confucianism, the goal was to create social and political development, and propose ways to develop people to complete their duties.

2. Cultural tourism promotion guidelines of Le Shan Buddha in LeShan, SichuanProvince, China was found that the temple should be a learning source in Buddhism, education, doctrine, religion, meditation, prayer that tourists can participate. Local history and culture should be divided into tourist areas and stores to be organized. There should be a variety of media in public relations. By creating video, history, tourist attractions, tourism guide should have a guide. The tourist destination should have a role in management and management for tourists in accordance with the education of Akkapanayo (2023).The study revealed that 1) Buddhist tourism aspect of temples in Nan Municipality, Nan Province, it is in the form of 4 issues: (1) The role of temples and Buddhist tourism in Nan Municipality. The temple has public relations and convenience for tourists. (2) Temple management for Buddhist tourism in Nan Municipality. The temple operates Buddhist tourism in accordance with the mission of the Sangha in all 6 areas. (3) Factors in the management of Buddhist tourist attractions in Nan Municipality. (4) Process of managing Buddhist tourism of temples in Nan Municipality, Nan Province.

The way of life of the community, the community, is a strong armor creator and stands

with the identity, maintaining and cherished, natural resources, traditions and cultures that are inherited from the ancestors. The people see more common benefits than their own, they will bring pride in their homeland, in which these ideas have received from Buddhist teachings that focuses on peacefully together with the Campaign. Which is a practice in the way of life of members in society that uses the principles of the Buddha's mind to be in line with the research results of

Dheerasanyamo Sanya (2023) the results showed that 1) Tibetan refugee communities migrated to settle in the area. After the Chinese People's Liberation Army took over until there was a big riot. A government in exile was established. A replica of the temple was built and named after the original temple in Tibet. and the 14th Dalai Lama resided here People know this place as Little.

Currently, most tourism focuses on developing tourist attractions to be of high quality and sustainability. Promoting historical tourist sites to show the pride of the country creates income for local communities and to promote awareness of preserving cultural tourism to be valuable and able to maintain sustainable cultural identity that meets needs. Tourists and local owners under the capacity of natural resources and traditions, which promotes the economy of the community in line with the study of Sukkorn (2019) the development of cultural tourism that is linked to the development of the country both socially and economically from an economic point of view. Cultural tourism is considered a product with a unique selling point in generating income for the country. Economic development is also a mechanism for maintaining the cultural inheritance of the locality and the country to remain valuable, as well as being able to create additional value under the balance of development that goes hand in hand in the future.

## New Knowledge

The new knowledge in this research can bring operational culture to create value and tourism economic value. Location refers to the location of the Leshan Giant Buddha, which is a cultural tourist destination and tourist consumption. Places of important cultural significance tourism background analysis of Leshan Giant Buddha are roughly divided It is issued as a guideline for developing the creation of tourism resources in accordance with nature, culture, traditions and further developing the elements of tourism that are involved. Modern innovative technology should be developed by presenting information on tourist attractions electronically. and connect tourism through various online applications that can access information in Leshan more conveniently

## Conclusion

The study of the “Leshan Giant Buddha” located in Sichuan Province, China, aimed to explore its historical significance and formulate guidelines for promoting cultural tourism. The results showed that the significance of the Leshan Giant Buddha as a cultural property with enormous historical, artistic and environmental value. Key strategies for promoting cultural tourism involve integrating local resources, improving infrastructure and cultivating a strong site image to attract both domestic and international tourists. The study emphasized the role of the Buddha as a driving force for community economic growth and a symbol of cultural heritage conservation.

## Suggestions

### **1. From the results of this research, the following recommendations are made:**

1.1 The results showed that Leshan Giant Buddha has rich historical and cultural resources. There are 2 first-class national cultural relics and 4 second-class national cultural

relics in its territory alone. Leshan Giant Buddha has left a large amount of cultural heritage in Chinese history, and it is also very rich in cultural relics. Therefore, both the public and private sectors should use this cultural heritage to promote tourism in order for the community to have a better quality of life.

## **2. Suggestions for future research**

For the next research issue, research should be done on the following topics:

2.1 Should study the connection of tourist attractions in the area close to tourist attractions to create a network of tourism areas with community participation.

2.2 There should be a comparative study between tourist attractions with the same characteristics as attraction to exchange information, similarities, differences Problems and impacts occurring in tourist attractions are clearer.

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