



Bicycling isn't just for the pros. Yanqing has thousands of amateur cyclists and a number of cycling clubs in both urban and rural areas.

PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

County wants to brand itself nationwide

By XU XIAO

Yanqing County, just outside Beijing, is on the edge of the Great Wall and considered by cycling fans to be a great place to pursue their sport.

It has many of the elements of good tourism: there is of course the Great Wall, but also valleys, cliffs, mountains, and water to provide a picturesque setting.

The surroundings and convenient connection with downtown Beijing, as well as cycling facilities and services, have given Yanqing a new label: "cycling lovers' paradise".

There are helpful signs along cycling routes and maps available, with more than 2,000 bicycles for rent at some 30 different spots, making cycling more convenient for everyone.

And the county has combined cycling with other tourist attractions: pastoral areas, folk culture villages, pick it yourself farms, and parks, providing more leisure options.

Cycling has become more of a fashionable sport in China in recent years, especially after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, which promoted healthy living and more people went looking for a "low carbon" lifestyle.

Cycling in Yanqing was already becoming better known after the cycling preparation for the Beijing Olympic Games in 2007 was held there and became even more popular after the Olympic cycling competition itself.

The cycling circuit at the foot of the Great Wall is thought by some to be the world's most beautiful circuit.

In 2010, Yanqing opened several cycling areas at the Qianjiadian 100-meter water corridor, Xianglong Road, Gulong Road, Guihe River ecology corridor, Longqing Valley, Shi Valley, Sihai Pearl Spring, and Dazhuangke, covering 256 kilometers in all.

The Qianjiadian route is 30 km long, and passes a national geo-park and scenic spots like Dishuihu and Wulong Valley. Visitors can buy local green foods like free-range eggs and Huangcun tea.

The Guihe River corridor is about 70 km long and has the Yeya River park, Guihe River Park and Binhe Forest Park.

The Longqing Valley route runs for 50 km and has such spots as Longqing Valley, Longwanhe wetlands, and Longqing Valley forest park.

This year, there will be more cycling activities held here. The first, "The Great Wall Cup" Beijing International Cycling Competition will be held June 18 and 19. Hosts are the Beijing Sports Bureau, Beijing Sports Federation, and Yanqing county government. It is expected to draw 5,000 cyclists from at home and abroad.

In October, Beijing will hold a professional cycling competition, turning Yanqing's Gulong Road and Xianglong Road into major circuits.

Cycling activities are now giving Yanqing a brand image, so it is aiming at becoming China's "first cycling county".

From national to local sport

By ZHANG ZHAO

The first Badaling Great Wall Cup - Beijing International Cycling Tour Festival will begin on June 18, in Yanqing county, to the northwest of the city. More than 5,000 competitors and cycling lovers from around the world are expected for the event.

Hosts of the event are the Beijing Sports Bureau, Beijing Sports Federation, and Yanqing county government. The theme is "leisure fitness, green commuting".

It will have both touring and racing events.

The 20-kilometer touring event starts and ends at Guichuan Plaza and passes the Wanmu Riverside Forest Park. At least 3,000 riders are expected for this part.

The races include mountain bike and road bike races. The men's road bike event covers 60 km, while the women's event is 45 km long. Both the men's and women's mountain bike races cover 45 km. Around 500 competitors are expected for these.

They pass through some of Yanqing's major attractions, such as the Songshan National Nature Reserve, Yudu Mountain, and Longqing Ravine.

Yanqing is on China's list of top 10 tourist counties and has natural beauty, various tourist attractions, and convenient transportation. Some enthusiasts consider its environment and location to be ideally suited for cycling.

The county was the site of the Good Luck Beijing Cycling tests in 2007, and the Beijing Olympic cycling race the following year, and some cyclists and media personnel said the Badaling bike track was among the world's most beautiful.

Since then, many cyclists have made the trek to Yanqing, and many professional teams do their training there, shining a light on the cycling industry.

The sport has even become popular with locals and the county has thousands of amateur cyclists and a number of cycling clubs in both urban and rural areas.

Last year, the local government designed eight cycling paths with 11 special routes, running 256 km in all. These are designed so that they run through countryside tourist attractions and alongside orchards and hotels.

The county also has a bicycle rental system with more than 30 stations and 2,000 bikes,

many of them mountain bikes.

The authorities plan to improve the cycling facilities under the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015), and are talking of 35 service centers and 11 tourist service centers. There will also be rest areas every three to five km.

RULES

Time

June 18, 2011

Venue

Wanmu Riverside Forest Park

Scale of activity

3,000-5,000 participants planned

Route

The bike touring covers a 20-km course, starting and ending at the same point (Guichuan Square), and passing through the Wanmu Riverside Forest Park. The starting point is on the south bank of Huanhu Lake, then going to Guanting Bridge, Yannong Road, South Rd in the Kang'an District, and back to Guichuan Plaza. The path is a 6-meter-wide smooth asphalt surface. The surrounding environment includes Xiadu Park, Youjing Gardens, Taidi Gardens, and Guishui Park.



WANG JIUHAI / FOR CHINA DAILY

The beautiful landscape of Longqing Gorge in Yanqing county.



GUO DONGLIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

The county has many scenic routes in watery areas.



GUO DONGLIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

A field of marigolds.

Cycling: a way to make a contribution and help the environment



LANG FENGJIE / FOR CHINA DAILY

One of the challenging cycling spots.

By HAO NAN

Government officials in Yanqing county have been getting on the bandwagon and trying to boost their county's image as a cycling center.

They started in 2010 with eight cycling routes that link scenic sites with hotels, villages, and pick-it-yourself orchards to combine sports and leisure. Each route is clearly demarcated with signboards and comes with a map.

They have also set up more than 30 rental spots across the county, which provide 2,000 bicycles of various kinds, to meet different demands.

"Yanqing has many geographic advantages for cycling," the officials have said.

"The slopes and curves are great for bicycle riding."

The county was also chosen as the venue of the cycling competition at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Ideal environment

Yanqing is now a State-level ecological demonstration zone, and 72 percent of the area is covered with trees and grass. It also has exceeding 10,000 hectares of wetlands, or more than 5 percent of the total area.

It now calls itself a large natural oxygen bar and the "Disneyland" of cycling.

The county is also proud of its scenery, officials have said, "We've built nine parks and developed 30 tourist sites. And riders can enjoy sightseeing and sporty exercise, all at the same time."

Road network

Yanqing in the recent past has increased spending on infrastructure to crisscross the area with a road network.

"We've built 300 kilometers of roads suitable for bicycle riding. The flat route along the riverside is enjoyed by the elderly and juniors, while the roads in the mountainous

northern part require better cycling skills," officials said.

"The northern route also passes through many fruit parks. Enjoying blossom flowers and picking fruits make the cycling tour even more interesting."

There are also interconnected village paths and roads under construction, which,

when they are completed, will make riding from village to village and scenic spot very convenient.

Diverse activities

Playing host to the Olympic cycling event bought Yanqing more opportunities to host other events, and some large professional cycling teams

have chosen it for their training.

Recently, the local government has been hosting annual cycling tours and has attracted hundreds of participants.

The county has its own cycling association, founded in 2007, with more than 300 members who ride all over the county.

Join the 1st Badaling Cup
Beijing International Cycling Tour Carnival
八达岭长城杯首届北京国际自行车骑行大会

6月18日在延庆举行

On June 18, 2011
Wanmu Riverside Forest Park
3,000-5,000 participants expected

For more details, please visit www.bjcylingtour.net
or call 86 10-6910 1011

