

# Tea and Tourism Integration for Rural Revitalization: A Case Study of Chaozhou

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## Abstract

The integration of tea and tourism is a new development model that combines and mutually promotes the tea industry and rural tourism, contributing to industrial transformation and rural revitalization. This study focuses on the development of tea and tourism integration in Chaozhou, China. By analyzing the current situation of the tea industry and tourism through literature and relevant data, and threats. Furthermore, a strategic matrix is constructed to clarify strategic choices, with a primary focus on a growth-oriented strategy, supplemented by turnaround and defensive strategies. This article proposes strategies and recommendations for the high-quality development of tea and tourism integration, including strengthening government support and financial investment, integrating resource advantages to shape brand image, optimizing promotional platforms and intensifying publicity efforts, attracting and nurturing talent to promote innovative development, and protecting the ecological environment to achieve sustainable development.

## Keywords

Tea and Tourism Integration, Rural Revitalization, Chaozhou, SWOT

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background

In 2023, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the No. 1 document titled “Opinions on Promoting Key Tasks for Comprehensive Rural Revitalization in 2023”. This is the 20<sup>th</sup> No. 1 document guiding agricultural and rural development since the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The document emphasizes the need to promote high-quality development of rural industries, broaden channels for increasing farmers’ income and prosperity, and solidly advance livable and business-friendly rural construction. As a significant force driv-

ing the high-quality development of rural industries, the tourism sector will play a pivotal role in the process of realizing the rural revitalization strategy.

China Chaozhou City, referred to as Chaozhou, is the original birthplace of Phoenix Dancong tea, boasting a long history of tea production and abundant tea resources, as well as profound tea culture. In recent years, Chaozhou has aligned itself with China's rural revitalization development strategy, promoting the modernization of its tea industry through leading enterprises, technological advancement, and cultural integration. Furthermore, Chaozhou is a city rich in historical and cultural heritage, with numerous attractions such as Guangji Bridge and Paifang Street. It also possesses cultural treasures like Kungfu-tea Artistry, Chao embroidery, and Chaozhou woodcarving, providing a solid foundation for the development of its tourism industry. In the 2022 Chaozhou City Government Work Report, it is emphasized that efforts will be made to construct a modern tea industry system, deepen the integration of the primary, secondary, and tertiary industries, and implement key projects such as the Phoenix Mountain Tea and Tourism Corridor, effectively combining the tea industry with cultural tourism.

This article conducts a comprehensive analysis of the current status of the tea industry and cultural tourism industry in Chaozhou through literature research and industry-related data. Utilizing the SWOT model, it examines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the integration of tea and tourism in Chaozhou. By constructing a strategic matrix, clarifies strategic choices and proposes recommendations to promote the high-quality development of tea and tourism integration in Chaozhou.

## 1.2. Significance

The integrated development of the tea industry and cultural tourism industry is an emerging form of achieving modernization in agriculture and rural areas. Currently, there is a mature body of literature on the development theories of the tea industry and rural tourism. However, research on the theory of tea and tourism integration is limited, with shallow depth, and lacks a scientific and feasible theoretical framework. There is a lack of research specifically on the integration of tea and tourism and existing research results do not effectively contribute to the development of tea and tourism integration in Chaozhou. This is the theoretical significance of this article.

Under the backdrop of the rural revitalization strategy, rural tourism provides an effective means to achieve the goals of “prosperous industries, livable ecology, civilized rural customs, effective governance, and improved livelihoods”. Chaozhou, a well-known tea-producing region in China, has a strong foundation in the tea industry and a rich history of tea culture, with its renowned brand of Phoenix Dancong tea. Additionally, Chaozhou is a historical and cultural city with unique cultural resources such as Chaoshan culture and ethnic minority culture. It possesses diverse tourist attractions, including the Da'an Ancient Tea Tree Garden, Phoenix Dancong Tea Museum, and Guangji Bridge, providing fa-

avorable conditions for further development of the tourism industry. The integrated development model of tea and tourism harnesses the advantages of combining rural tourism and the tea industry, integrating various tourism resources. This article has practical significance in promoting the high-quality development of tea and tourism integration in Chaozhou and realizing rural revitalization.

### 1.3. Research Structure

The article is organized as follows: Firstly, describe the background, theoretical significance, and practical significance of this article. Secondly, this article has conducted literature research on relevant content, indicating that it can fill the theoretical and practical gaps in similar research. In the third section, we use the SWOT analysis model to conduct a detailed study on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the tea and tourism integrated development of Chaozhou. Fourthly, we conducted a SWOT analysis matrix and selected the strategy for Chaozhou's tea and tourism integrated development. The fifth part is the conclusion of this article, and we also provide the governments with some development suggestions.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. The Culture and Industry of Tea

Phoenix Dancong tea is an important part of Chinese tea culture, and Chaozhou is its place of origin. Originating in the late Southern Song Dynasty, Phoenix Dancong tea has undergone generations of exploration and practice to improve its variety. The method of single bush picking, processing, and sales was implemented, isolating exceptional individual tea bushes and naming them "Dancong tea". After more than 170 years of development, Phoenix Dancong tea has cultivated ten major aromatic profiles, including Huangzhi fragrance, Zhilan fragrance, Milan fragrance, Yulan fragrance, Guihua fragrance, Xingren fragrance, Rougui fragrance, Yelaixiang fragrance, Youhua fragrance, Jianghua fragrance (Zhuang, 2022). In 2010, Phoenix Dancong tea was recognized as a "Chinese National Geographical Indication Product". The derived "Kungfu-tea Artistry" has had a profound influence, featuring techniques such as Guan Gong patrolling the city, Han Xin counting troops, offering and appreciating fragrant tea, tasting and discerning aromas, and pouring back the jade liquid, among others (Jiang & Zhang, 2021).

In 2021, the tea planting area in Chaozhou reached 150 square kilometers, with a yield of 26,700 tons of raw tea. There are 17 leading tea enterprises at or above the municipal level, including 7 key provincial enterprises. Over 5000 companies are engaged in the tea business, and the per capita income of tea farmers has exceeded 20,000 yuan, with a total value of initial tea processing reaching 6.4 billion yuan<sup>1,2</sup>. In recent years, the provincial-level modern agricultural industrial park for Phoenix Dancong tea (Qianting Agricultural Park) has been

<sup>1</sup>In 2021, the average exchange rate of RMB and the US dollar was 6.4515.

<sup>2</sup>Data sources: [http://www.chaozhoudaily.com/czrb/html/2022-05/16/content\\_1905179.htm](http://www.chaozhoudaily.com/czrb/html/2022-05/16/content_1905179.htm).

established, equipped with tea roasting workshops, semi-finished product workshops, and other functional areas, gradually improving the supply chain of the Dancong tea industry.

## 2.2. Tourism Development

The overall development of tourism in Chaozhou focuses on the Xiangqiao District, Chao'an District, and Raoping County, which boast a millennium-old ancient city, picturesque mountains, lakes, and seas, beautiful rural landscapes, and red revolutionary monuments. The city has formulated the "Chaozhou Ancient City Enhancement Action Plan", which is currently being implemented. This plan has created a cultural tourism industry chain that combines residential sight-seeing, intangible cultural heritage exhibitions, artistic creations, and residential inns. Chaozhou has established several rural tourism demonstration sites, boutique tourism routes, and characteristic tourism villages. The city has a total of 9 provincial-level and 30 municipal-level cultural and tourism characteristic villages. It has also developed one national-level, six provincial-level, and eight municipal-level boutique rural tourism routes. These efforts aim to enhance the quality and upgrade rural tourism, achieve sustainable development in the tourism industry, and promote the protection of the local ecological environment.

## 2.3. Integrated Development of Tea and Tourism

The development model of integrating tea and tourism is based on the foundation of the tea industry and the tourism sector. It fully leverages the strengths of both industries, fostering a novel mode of mutual integration and mutual advancement. As Tea and Tourism Integration is a freshly coined term in the era of emerging consumption patterns, its connotation remains intricate and diverse, and a standardized definition has yet to take shape. Initially, China scholars posited that this integration involves employing the tourism sector as the carrier, complemented by the tea industry and tea culture. This approach adeptly showcases the value and allure of tea, catering to the material and spiritual aspirations of tea enthusiasts (Li, 2018). As the amalgamation of tea and tourism continues to evolve, various regions across China have explored distinct developmental models, thus enriching the essence of this integration. Through a meticulous examination of individual cases in tea-tourism integration, this article asserts that such fusion will propel the transformation and elevation of the tea industry. It will engender novel products, novel industry value chains, and novel forms of sectors. This represents a potent avenue for the organic fusion of the tea industry and rural tourism.

The selection of the tea and tourism integration development model directly impacts the extent to which tea-tourism routes can fully leverage their intrinsic advantages and establish a distinctive edge of "uniqueness". This, in turn, fosters a robust competitive prowess. Presently, numerous instances of tea-tourism fusion in China are forged by dissecting the current developmental landscapes of the tea industry and tourism sector. They ascertain development strategies and

engender various modes of tea-tourism integration. For example, Mount Mengding harnesses its pristine ecological environment and national tea park to cultivate an integrated industry of health, wellness, and leisure. Niu Nianping establishes a tea company responsible for investment and operations, alongside establishing a nationally recognized tea tree breeding base. This shapes a fusion model intertwining “Tea Garden Splendor” with educational outreach. Hong Caoping, by harmonizing the local architectural aesthetics, seamlessly integrates tea garden sightseeing with cultural exhibitions (Gao & Li, 2020). Overseas endeavors exploring tea-tourism integration also epitomize local uniqueness. In Japan’s Shizuoka Prefecture, they establish specialized tea schools offering dedicated courses in tea craftsmanship, nurturing local talents for the tea industry. They construct experiential venues such as tea estates, tea ceremony halls, and tea education institutes suffused with a profound tea cultural ambiance, allowing visitors to immerse in tea culture. Simultaneously, a range of by-products utilizing tea as the primary ingredient, including tea beverages, tea-infused cuisine, and tea-infused salts, become preferred souvenirs for visitors. Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan, has thus established a “Training + Experience + Shopping” development model (Li, 2020).

The tea-tourism integration development model stands as a focal point within China’s recent rural revitalization efforts, particularly in the context of rural industrial revival. In recent years, multiple regions across China have introduced tea-tourism integration development plans. However, their execution has encountered considerable challenges. Based on current research, key issues within China’s tea-tourism integration development include weak awareness of the tea-tourism development, insufficient integration between tea and tourism, superficial understanding of tea culture, limited innovation, scarcity of professional talents, and ecological degradation. Correspondingly, scholars have proposed various strategies: bolster government financial support, enhance complementary infrastructure, deeply tap into tea cultural resources, innovate tea-tourism content, establish distinctive brands, intensify promotional efforts, attract specialized talents, and fortify skill training programs (Liu & Xu, 2023).

For existing literature research, this article found that there are relatively few studies on the tea and tourism integrated development in Chaozhou, and there are only 7 research results (papers) related to cultural tourism. Therefore, this article can enrich the relevant theoretical achievements of tea and tourism integrated development in Chaozhou City, and it has a certain promoting effect on local tea and tourism enterprises in terms of industrial development.

### **3. Analysis of Chaozhou Tea and Tourism Integrated Development Strategy**

#### **3.1. Strengths**

##### **3.1.1. Long History and Profound Heritage**

Chaozhou boasts a venerable history spanning over 700 years in tea consump-

tion and production. The predominant tea variety is the “Phoenix Dancong”, belonging to the Oolong Tea series. During the Ming Dynasty, Phoenix Dancong tea became an exclusive brand for rulers. In the Qing Dynasty, it gained international acclaim, finding popularity in regions such as Southeast Asia and Europe. Since 2010, Phoenix Dancong tea has been officially recognized as a “Geographical Indication Product of China”, an “Important Agricultural Cultural Heritage of China”, and a “China Outstanding Regional Tea Brand”. Phoenix Town, as the primary tea-producing area in Chaozhou, is renowned as the “Hometown of Chinese Oolong Tea”, the “Hometown of Renowned Chinese Teas”, and one of the “Top Ten Enchanting Tea Towns in the Nation”<sup>3</sup>. The “Chaozhou Kung-fu-tea Artistry”, derived from the tea industry, was successfully inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2022<sup>4</sup>. This vividly illustrates the profound and enduring history of Chaozhou’s tea culture.

### 3.1.2. High-Quality Tea Trees and Numerous Ancient Trees

The tea cultivars of Chaozhou predominantly consist of indigenous high-quality varieties, encompassing two national-level superior tea cultivars and eight provincial-level ones. Notably, among these, the Phoenix Dancong variety stands as China’s most exquisitely scented in terms of natural floral fragrances, offering an unparalleled richness of aroma profiles. Furthermore, Chaozhou preserves an extensive array of ancient tea tree resources. The Da’an Ancient Tea Tree Garden boasts a population of over 15,000 tea trees aged over a century, while more than 4600 trees surpass two centuries in age. This garden accounts for roughly 80% of the town’s ancient tree resources and represents the sole ancient tea tree group of significant conservation value within Guangdong Province, China.

### 3.1.3. High Economic Benefits

In 2020, Chaozhou’s Phoenix Town achieved an agricultural output value of 695 million yuan<sup>5</sup>, marking a 15.1% year-on-year growth. Notably, the tea industry’s output value reached 637 million yuan, constituting a significant 91.7% share of the total agricultural output. Moving into 2021, the tea cultivation area in Chaozhou spanned 150 square kilometers, yielding 26,700 metric tons of tea. The town boasts 17 leading tea enterprises at the municipal level and above, including 7 provincially designated key enterprises. The tea trade involves an excess of 5000 companies, elevating tea farmers’ average income to over 20,000 yuan, while the initial processed tea’s total value has soared to 6.4 billion yuan<sup>6</sup>. By the end of May 2022, Chaozhou Customs had supervised and verified 103 batches of exported tea, amounting to a value of approximately USD 13.51 million, reflecting impressive year-on-year increases of 134% and 136% respectively<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>3</sup>Data sources: <https://static.nfapp.southcn.com/content/201604/18/c70257.html>.

<sup>4</sup>Data sources: [https://www.mct.gov.cn/preview/whzx/qgwhxxlb/gd/202212/t20221205\\_937929.htm](https://www.mct.gov.cn/preview/whzx/qgwhxxlb/gd/202212/t20221205_937929.htm).

<sup>5</sup>The average exchange rate between RMB and US dollar in 2020 is 1:6.8974.

<sup>6</sup>Data sources: [http://www.chaozhoudaily.com/czrb/html/2022-05/16/content\\_1905179.htm](http://www.chaozhoudaily.com/czrb/html/2022-05/16/content_1905179.htm).

<sup>7</sup>Data sources: <https://www.puercn.com/news/122034/>.

### **3.1.4. Rich Cultural Resources and Diverse Types**

Chaozhou, a culturally ancient city with over 1600 years of history, stands adorned with key cultural landmarks such as Guangji Bridge, Paifang Street, Zhenhai Tower, and the ancient city walls, which serve as vital carriers of the Chaoshan culture. The city's charms are further exemplified through its "Eight Scenic Wonders of Chaozhou", encompassing picturesque scenes like Riverside Cotton Trees, Plaza Illuminations, Arcade Street Melodies, Delicate Ink Waters, Serene Island Mists, Mulberry Grove Springs, Phoenix Sky Pool, Zhe Forest Fishing Fires. The city's rich tapestry of intangible cultural heritage, including Chaozhou woodcarving, Kungfu-tea artistry, Chao embroidery, Chao opera, and Iron Branch puppetry, vividly portray the historical and cultural essence of Chaozhou. Moreover, as a revolutionary old base area, Chaozhou's Phoenix Mountain Revolution Memorial Park, Sanping Racuo Chaochengrao Revolutionary Committee Site, and Huang Qiufu's Former Residence hold invaluable educational significance. Concurrently, Chaozhou bears the heritage of an ethnic minority (the She nationality), distinctly characterized by its originating culture. This mosaic showcases Chaozhou's abundant tourism resources, representing a diverse array of types that intricately enrich the profound essence and uniqueness of tea-related tourism experiences.

## **3.2. Weaknesses**

### **3.2.1. Backward Supporting Facilities**

In the course of the tourism industry evolution, the adequacy of supporting infrastructure directly shapes the travelers' experiential sojourn. The development of complementary amenities encompasses domains such as gastronomy, lodging, transportation, communication, and healthcare. In the realm of gastronomy, owing to the nascent stage of tourism in Chaozhou's Fenghuang Town, the provision of dining establishments remains sparse, marked by pronounced culinary homogeneity and elevated pricing. About lodging, the town boasts a limited number of hotels and lodgings, characterized by subpar accommodations and service quality, coupled with elevated tariffs. In the domain of transportation, the journey from Chaoshan to Fenghuang Town spans over 52 kilometers, yet the public transit alternatives are confined to a mere four routes, culminating in solely the No. 1 bus line, with intervals exceeding 30 minutes per service. Among alternative modes of tourism, the town's remote geographical location causes a majority of ride-hail drivers to decline passengers. Consequently, the transportation conditions to reach Fenghuang Town warrant amelioration. In the sphere of communication, the hilly topography predominant in the tea-producing regions affects signal transmission due to undulating terrain, warranting an enhancement in communication infrastructure.

### **3.2.2. Low Comprehensive Quality of Employees**

Given that Chaozhou is only initiating the confluence of tea and tourism, the synergy between the two remains in its exploratory phase, thus attributing to li-

mitted visibility and relatively modest allure. Presently, the majority of personnel engaged in the tourist service sector within Fenghuang Town's tea gardens possess an educational background no more advanced than junior high school, characterized by a generally modest educational level and cultural proficiency. Additionally, the majority of these individuals are above the age of 40, thereby lacking the vigor and innovative thought prevalent in the younger generation. Concurrently, the workforce predominantly comprises residents, constrained by regional dialects, leading to communication hurdles between personnel and visitors. Instances of price manipulation through group efforts among industry practitioners further impede the tourists' consumption experience. In the nascent phase of tea and tourism integration, local middle-aged individuals form the core workforce, benefiting from advantages such as reduced labor and opportunity costs. However, considering the long-term perspective, the tea and tourism industry necessitates the inclusion of highly educated and youthful professionals to facilitate the establishment of a diversified spectrum of tea-infused tourism services (Wang & Li, 2019).

### **3.2.3. Insufficient Brand Building**

Currently, the integration of tea and tourism in Chaozhou is merely an emerging developmental trajectory, characterized by limited highlights within the confluence of tea and tourism. The tea industry and the tourism sector necessitate further convergence, as the populace primarily recognizes "Phoenix Dancong Tea" while remaining less acquainted with the concept of "Phoenix Tea and Tourism". Local practitioners in Fenghuang Town have conveyed that tea-related tourism predominantly involves local visitors from Chaozhou, with fewer tourists from other regions. Additionally, the realm of tea culture-related tourism themes remains sparse, with the exhibition of tea culture primarily centered around the Phoenix Dancong Tea Museum. The spectrum of associated activities predominantly encompasses tea-tasting festivals, manifesting a monotonous event landscape that offers weak appeal to external travelers. Concurrently, the vigor of brand promotion requires augmentation, with current promotional efforts mainly channeled through television broadcasts and local integrated media coverage, thereby restricting the scope of publicity.

## **3.3. Opportunities**

### **3.3.1. Policy Support**

The cultivation of rural tourism stands as a pivotal avenue for bolstering the prosperity of rural industries. In recent years, multiple instances in official government documents, notably the "Number One Document", have underscored the propulsion of rural tourism through synergies such as "tourism+" and "ecology+". These strategies aim to expedite the amalgamation of the primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors in rural areas while crafting distinctive local rural tourism routes (Xu, Zhang, & Yang, 2023). In 2022, Chaozhou Municipal Government's work report delineated the integration of the tea industry with the



cultural sector, ushering in focused initiatives like the Fenghuang Mountain Tea and Tourism Corridor. Furthermore, the promulgation of the “Regulations on Ecological Environment Protection in the Fenghuang Mountain Area of Chaozhou City” demonstrates the commitment to fostering sustainable development within the tea-producing regions, thereby establishing an amiable ecological backdrop for the integration of tea and tourism. The government has endorsed the “Construction of Fenghuang WenCi Tea and Tourism Corridor Action Plan”, delineating the developmental model and objectives for tea and tourism, advancing the implementation of this conjoined paradigm through project-driven endeavors.

### 3.3.2. Consumption Upgrade

The Chaozhou tea and tourism venture primarily caters to China tourists within Guangdong Province. Consequently, fluctuations in the per capita disposable income of Guangdong residents inevitably exert an influence on the developmental trajectory of Chaozhou’s tea and tourism industry. Through more in-depth analysis, it becomes feasible to ascertain the latent consumption demands of this amalgamated domain. As delineated by the statistical compendium of Guangdong Province, the per capita disposable income of its residents has exhibited a steady increase over the past decade, culminating at 47,100 yuan in 2022<sup>8,9</sup>. The elevation in household incomes has fostered augmented consumer spending, thereby concurrently propelling an escalation in resident consumption requisites. Concurrently, propelled by economic growth and an elevated standard of living, residents exhibit a heightened inclination towards non-materialistic expenditures such as tourism, placing additional emphasis on cultural substance and spiritual enrichment. The Chaozhou tea and tourism paradigm aligns seamlessly with the ongoing upgrading of consumer demands.

### 3.3.3. Various Forms of Publicity

Amidst the evolution of online technology and the widespread prevalence of smartphones, internet-based promotion has emerged as a pivotal conduit for shaping brand identity. The profound advancement of Chaozhou’s tea and tourism sector necessitates harnessing diverse promotional platforms and devising bespoke strategies targeting disparate consumer segments to achieve precision in dissemination. Through local television broadcasts, Chaozhou disseminates its message among middle-aged and senior citizens. Swift updates of tea and tourism-related information through an official app, coupled with the initiation of various interactive undertakings, serve to amplify the exposure of tea and tourism within the younger demographic, thereby resonating with their contemporary lifestyle. Through platforms like “Chaozhou Qiao Xun”, updates about the progress of Chaozhou’s tea and tourism initiatives can be disseminated, thus establishing a bridge between overseas Chinese and their ancestral homeland. This endeavor ignites a sense of patriotic sentiment among overseas Chinese, foster-

<sup>8</sup>The average exchange rate between RMB and US dollar in 2022 is 1:6.7261.

<sup>9</sup>Data sources: [http://www.gd.gov.cn/gdywdt/bmdt/content/post\\_4084772.html](http://www.gd.gov.cn/gdywdt/bmdt/content/post_4084772.html).

ing their participation in the developmental construct of Chaozhou's tea and tourism and subsequently elevating its prominence on the global stage. Consequently, a multifaceted promotional campaign conducted through mediums like the internet orchestrates the construction of the brand image of "Chaozhou Tea and Tourism", thereby potentiating the catalytic influence of the brand.

### **3.4. Threats**

#### **3.4.1. Intense Market Competition**

Presently, China boasts a myriad of tea and tourism routes, each characterized by distinct attributes. The Chaozhou tea and tourism sector faces market challenges arising from alternative tea and tourism itineraries. Examples encompass the Sichuan Mengding Mountain Tea and Tourism Region, the Metan County Tea, and Tourism Route, the YNKL Special Town of Yunnan, and the Duyun Maofeng Qianan Tea and Tourism Path, among others. These regions leverage their indigenous tea cultivars and tea culture to forge highly competitive tea and tourism brands, capitalizing on their first-mover advantage to establish a measure of renown, thereby endowing them with an irreplaceable uniqueness (Li, 2022). Within Guangdong Province, the city of Kaiping endeavors to cultivate the Dasha Tea Melody Town and the Dasha Lihuan Tea Valley, emerging as a principal contender to "Phoenix Dancong Tea". Concurrently, Kaiping City harnesses its abundant overseas Chinese resources to catalyze investment, focusing on the establishment of a provincial-level modern agricultural industry park, thus amplifying the influence of the Da Sha tea industry and unreservedly crafting the foremost organic tea haven within the Greater Bay Area of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau (Lin, Chen, & Li, 2022). Consequently, Chaozhou's tea and tourism sphere encounters rivals both within and beyond the bounds of Guangdong Province.

#### **3.4.2. Ecological Damage**

The splendor of the ecological environment constitutes a pivotal bedrock for the evolution of rural tourism, concurrently serving as the preeminent asset of rural tourism. Thus, a concerted emphasis must be placed on the ecological milieu. However, the prevailing lack of comprehension among local farmers regarding the developmental paradigm of tea and tourism engenders an inability to fathom the significance of the ecological milieu to the tourism sector, thereby fostering a myopic pursuit of individual interests at the expense of environmental conservation. On one hand, the issue of environmental degradation looms prominently. Driven by the quest for maximal profit, farmers indiscriminately employ chemical fertilizers and pesticides, thereby besmirching the soil and jeopardizing the prospective cultivation of tea. On the other hand, certain practitioners, possessed a superficial comprehension of tourism development, capriciously deforesting woodlands to erect lodging establishments, thereby undermining the ecological equilibrium and rural ambiance. Meanwhile, inadequately planned rural roads and utility infrastructure curtail the overall visual aesthetics. Consequently, the

unbalanced pursuit of short-term gains by farmers poses a substantive threat to the sustainable development of the tea and tourism industry.

## 4. Matrix Analysis and Strategic Selection

### 4.1. Strategic Matrix Analysis

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the integration of tea and tourism in Chaozhou, summarized in the preceding text, a strategic analysis table is presented below (Table 1), encompassing internal and external strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats:

### 4.2. Strategic Selection

Following a thorough analysis of the amalgamation of tea and tourism in Chaozhou

**Table 1.** SWOT analysis matrix of Chaozhou tea and tourism integration strategy.

		Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>External</b>	<b>Internal</b>	long history and profound heritage	Backward supporting facilities
		High-quality tea trees and numerous ancient trees	Low comprehensive quality of employees
		High economic benefits	Insufficient brand building
		Rich cultural resources and diverse types	
		Growth Strategy(SO)	Twisting Strategy(WO)
<b>Opportunities</b> Policy support Consumption upgrade Various forms of publicity		Leverage the rich tapestry of tea cultural resources, delve profoundly into historical archives, and sculpt an indigenous and distinctive amalgamated tea and tourism model. Unleash the potential of premium tea leaf products, craft an elevated echelon of tea and tourism brands distinguished by excellence, and amplify the cognizance of Chaozhou’s tea and tourism offerings. Rely upon the well-entrenched bedrock of the tea industry, infuse avant-garde technologies and expertise, and propel the tea sector towards loftier echelons of development, all while augmenting its competitive prowess. Exploit the multifaceted tapestry of tourism resources, propel the harmonious growth of tea and tourism with Chao-Shan culture, the culture of revolutionary heritage, and the culture of the She nationality, thereby expanding the cultural essence within the realm of tea and tourism.	Through multifarious channels such as governmental initiatives, industry alliances, and the diaspora, amplify investments and refine auxiliary facilities encompassing dining, lodging, transportation, and communication. Introduce a contingent of specialized professionals, and entice the youth to return to their roots for entrepreneurial ventures. Facilitate comprehensive training within the service industry, elevating the holistic acumen of practitioners. Bolster the construction of Chaozhou’s tea and tourism brand, and harness the power of the internet as a means of propagation to elevate prominence. Foster tea and tourism-related endeavors, enhancing visitor participation.
		Resistance strategy(ST)	Defensive strategy(WT)
<b>Threats</b> Intense market competition Ecological damage		Explore the unique advantages of Chaozhou tea and tourism, and reasonably position consumer groups. Protect the ecological environment, strengthen publicity and education, and enhance farmers’ awareness of environmental protection.	Maintain the brand image of Chaozhou tea and tourism; Improve laws and regularly carry out repairs and protection; Improve the crisis warning mechanism and enhance the ability to handle crises.

Source: Obtained from the previous paragraph of this article.

as expounded earlier, it becomes apparent that the internal strengths of Chaozhou's tea and tourism integration surpass its weaknesses, while external opportunities outweigh potential threats. Consequently, Chaozhou's tea and tourism development should amalgamate its inherent advantages with judicious utilization of external opportunities to attain a pinnacle of high-quality advancement. This discourse posits that the trajectory of Chaozhou's tea and tourism integration should predominantly adhere to the strategic paradigm of SO growth. This approach involves leveraging the profound tapestry of tea culture, the premium tapestry of tea varieties, the commendable economic yield of the tea industry, and the copious reservoir of tourism assets to establish an inimitable brand ascendancy and elevate brand prominence.

Moreover, Chaozhou's tea and tourism progression necessitates a confluence with the WO turnaround strategy and the ST confrontation strategy. This entails a bolstered safeguarding of the ecological milieu and the refinement of ancillary amenities to manifest a continuum of sustainable development. In summation, the reliance upon a solitary developmental strategy for regional advancement unveils a notable vista of perils, rendering it inadequate in navigating the ceaselessly dynamic market ambiance. Chaozhou's tea and tourism can solely flourish with a proactive and zealous embrace of the growth-oriented strategy, complemented by the pivot of the turnaround strategy and the tenor of the confrontation strategy. This synchrony maximizes the amplification of its native strengths, circumvents its intrinsic frailties, and ultimately consummates the crescendo of high-caliber and enduring evolution of Chaozhou's tea and tourism sector.

## 5. Conclusion and Suggestions

### 5.1. Conclusion

As the birthplace of Phoenix Dancong tea, Chaozhou City boasts a profound tea culture and a long history. The tea trees exhibit superior quality, with numerous ancient trees. The tea industry enjoys high economic benefits and advanced technology. The cultural resources are abundant and diverse. Meanwhile, the integration of Chaozhou tea and tourism presents favorable external opportunities, including government policy support, increased residents' income, upgraded consumer demands, and diversified promotional methods. However, the development of Chaozhou tea and tourism is hindered by disadvantages such as outdated infrastructure, low comprehensive quality of practitioners, and the need for improved brand building. External issues like intense market competition and environmental degradation also pose threats to the sustainable development of tea and tourism integration.

Based on the fact that the advantages of Chaozhou tea and tourism integration outweigh the disadvantages, and opportunities outweigh the threats, this article proposes a strategic selection plan guided by the theory of high-quality development. The main strategy is growth-oriented, supplemented by turnaround and defensive strategies. This article uses the SWOT analysis matrix to discuss in de-

tail the strategic issues related to the integrated development of tea and tourism in Chaozhou. For the government and company decision-makers in Chaozhou, this article can help them to make relevant development plans. Of course, the article also has a promotional effect on the integrated development of tea and tourism in other cities, but this effect may need to be combined with the specific local environment to be effective. Anyway, this article has had a certain impact and can be promoted on the integration and development of other cities or industries. Therefore, we propose some suggestions for the integrated development of tea and tourism in Chaozhou.

## **5.2. Suggestions**

### **5.2.1. Strengthen Government Support and Increase Financial Investment**

Government support and guidance are crucial means of regional development. It is important to determine scientifically reasonable development goals and increase financial investment while directing funds toward key areas (Zhang, Gao, Zhang et al., 2022). Therefore, it is necessary to enhance investment in the development of Chaozhou tea and tourism in the following aspects: Firstly, increase investment in infrastructure development to improve public services such as dining, accommodation, transportation, and communication, thereby enhancing the comfort and satisfaction of tourists. Secondly, allocate more funds for promotional activities by collaborating with media companies and utilizing various channels, both online and offline, to enhance the visibility of the Chaozhou tea and tourism brand. Thirdly, allocate funds for training practitioners in the tea and tourism industry, providing professional training programs to enhance their overall competence. Lastly, increase funding for organizing tea and tourism events, such as tea culture festivals, tea knowledge competitions, tea tasting, photography, and other activities, to increase tourist participation and enhance their experiential satisfaction.

### **5.2.2. Integrate Resource Advantages and Shape The Brand**

Tourism resources constitute the core content of tourism routes. Only through rational planning and innovative integration can diverse and abundant tourism resources enhance the playability and cultural significance of tourism routes, thereby forming unique brand advantages (Yang, 2022). Chaozhou boasts abundant tourism resources that need to be scientifically integrated and harmoniously developed with tea and tourism, thus shaping a Chaozhou tea and tourism brand with rich connotations. Firstly, fully explore the profound tea culture, leveraging the advantages and leading role of “Chinese traditional tea-making techniques and related customs” as a UNESCO intangible cultural heritage, “Phoenix Dancong tea production techniques” as a Guangdong provincial intangible cultural heritage, and the “Chao’an Phoenix Dancong tea cultural system” listed as a significant agricultural cultural heritage in China. By integrating resource advantages, promote the coordinated development of projects such as Phoenix Valley, Chessboard Valley, Fengxi Valley, and Thousand-Mu Ecological

Park, and highlight the publicity and educational role of the Phoenix Dancong Tea Museum. Secondly, delve into and make good use of the resources of the Red Revolutionary culture, protect the sites of the Red Revolution, and incorporate the Red Revolutionary culture into the tea and tourism development plan. Tell compelling stories of the Red Revolution and create a brand of Red culture (Huang & Chen, 2021). Thirdly, strengthen the protection and revitalization of minority (the She nationality) culture. Chaoshan is the ancestral homeland of the She nationality, and it is important to fully leverage the unique appeal of the She nationality culture, create distinctive the She nationality tourism projects, and establish a She ethnic cultural museum, making the She nationality culture a new highlight of Chaozhou tea and tourism.

### **5.2.3. Optimize Publicity Platforms and Increase Publicity Efforts**

A high-quality brand image requires both profound connotations and effective promotion (Li, 2021; Huang & Ding, 2022). The promotion of the Chaozhou tea and tourism brand should utilize traditional and online platforms to achieve an integrated online and offline publicity approach. Tailored promotional content should be created to target different consumers, enabling precise and enhanced promotion to increase the recognition of Chaozhou tea and tourism. For instance, firstly, emphasize traditional media promotion. Conduct on-site interviews and news reports on television to promote tea and tourism culture. Plan and produce film and television work with a focus on Phoenix Dancong tea culture. Create promotional videos for Chaozhou tea and tourism. Transform tea culture into cultural works. Secondly, innovate the methods of promotion. Utilize influencer-driven promotion through short videos, WeChat public accounts, Weibo, and other online platforms to promote the Chaozhou tea and tourism brand. Promote tea products through live-streaming events and online cultural festivals. Establish tea and tourism brand ambassadors, distinctive slogans, and logos. Thirdly, organize various forms of tea and tourism activities. Host events such as the Phoenix Dancong tea harvest festival, International Chaozhou Phoenix Dancong tea cultural tourism festival, tea competitions, etc. Conduct tea culture summit forums to facilitate exchanges and collaborations among China and international tea industry professionals, tea culture enthusiasts, overseas Chaozhou residents, and various groups related to the She nationality nationwide.

### **5.2.4. Introduce and Cultivate Talents to Promote Innovative Development**

The qualities of tea and tourism practitioners have an impact on the quality of the Chaozhou tea and tourism brand and the travel experience of tourists. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce professionals and enhance the training of tea and tourism practitioners to improve their comprehensive qualities. This article proposes the following suggestions: Firstly, accelerate the introduction of professionals related to tea and tourism. Recruit talents with experience in tea and tourism through open recruitment. Collaborate with universities, research institutions, etc., to bring in experts and professors for guidance. Secondly, streng-

then the training of existing practitioners. The existing training model has issues such as low participation, limited frequency, short duration, and lack of specificity. Increase the frequency of training to ensure that all practitioners have the opportunity to participate. Conduct courses on scientific cultivation techniques, advanced management methods, innovative business concepts, etc., encouraging tea and tourism practitioners to receive further education with government subsidies. Thirdly, encourage young people to start businesses in their hometowns. The development of tea and tourism requires innovative thinking and strong learning abilities, in which young people with higher education have a relative advantage. Collaborate with universities to carry out promotion and recruitment activities, encouraging graduates to return to their hometowns for entrepreneurship. Establish special funds, establish incentive mechanisms, and support young people in innovation and entrepreneurship.

### **5.2.5. Protecting the Environment and Achieving Sustainable Development**

The picturesque ecological environment is the greatest advantage of rural tourism, and in the process of integrating Chaozhou tea and tourism, special attention should be given to the protection and restoration of the ecological environment. This article, based on field research, provides the following suggestions: Firstly, strengthening governance at the source of tea production areas. Enhancing the testing of land quality and water source quality and promoting the control of land and water pollution. Addressing issues such as excessive land development, deforestation for tea planting, and guiding farmers in the proper use of fertilizers and pesticides. Secondly, establishing a professional team to protect the ecological environment, conducting regular inspections, promptly identifying environmental issues, and initiating restoration work promptly. Providing sufficient environmental facilities and cleaning personnel to promptly clean up garbage and waste materials. Thirdly, developing conventions and regulations for constraint. Through tea industry associations, tourism associations, and other organizations, we establish conventions and regulations to prohibit various activities that undermine the sustainable development of tea and tourism, and impose appropriate penalties on violators. Fourthly, strengthening publicity and guidance. Creating slogans and displaying boards for environmental protection promotion and assigning specialists to locations prone to environmental destruction to supervise visitor behavior and provide environmental education.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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