

Revitalizing Intangible Cultural Heritage Through Night Tourism: A Case Study of Chengdu Jinjiang Night Tour



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Abstract: Under the background of the country's continuous promotion of the cultural and tourism integration strategy, the combination of intangible cultural heritage and night tourism becomes an important path to promote the upgrading of urban tourism and cultural inheritance. As a new first-tier city, Chengdu has a strong demand for night tourism. However, the existing products generally have problems such as product homogeneity and insufficient tourist stickiness. This paper takes the "Night Cruise of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu as the research object. It adopts on-site investigation and text analysis methods to systematically examine the practical achievements and existing predicaments of this project in the integration of culture and tourism. The research finds that although the "Night Cruise of Jinjiang River" project achieves initial success, it still faces challenges such as product homogeneity, shallow cultural performances, and the lack of formation of an intangible cultural heritage product system. Based on this, this paper proposes a strategic path for enhancing the cultural depth and market competitiveness of the "Night Cruise of Jinjiang" project's night tourism products by leveraging intangible cultural heritage. This provides a reference for the development of night cultural tourism products in similar cities.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage Revitalization; Night Tourism; Integration of Culture and Tourism; Urban Night Economy; Jinjiang Night Tour

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1 Introduction

The state vigorously advocates the in-depth integration of culture and tourism, and more and more cultural tourism products are constantly being developed. Night tourism is a manifestation of the night economy and an extension of daytime tourism [1]. At present, night tourism has become an important engine for driving urban economic growth and an important way for the development of the cultural and tourism industry. Intangible cultural heritage (hereinafter referred to as "ICH") is a form of traditional cultural expression existing in an intangible form, presenting the basic characteristics of regional characteristics. Up to now, scholars at home and abroad have achieved fruitful results in the integration of intangible

cultural heritage and tourism, but there are still certain limitations. In the development of tourism products, foreign scholars have focused on the positive effects of the integration of intangible cultural heritage and tourism on economic development, the innovation and display methods of products, as well as research on sustainable development. Alexandra Bitušiková emphasized the significance of integrating intangible cultural heritage with regional contexts for the development of intangible cultural heritage tourism products [2]. Li-hua Cheng and Eral Jimenez proposed that the combination of intangible cultural heritage and tourism requires policy support and optimization of management mechanisms, especially

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by enhancing the tourist experience through improving tourism routes and technical means, so as to achieve sustainable development [3]. These studies provide a direction for our subsequent product development research. Domestic scholars, on the other hand, focus on the protection and inheritance during the integration of intangible cultural heritage and tourism. The latest research progress is the collaborative mechanism for the dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage in the integration of culture and tourism proposed by Jiang Juanli and Jiang Maosen [4]. Based on this, subsequent projects should carry out innovative development on the bottom line of the dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. At present, scholars at home and abroad have not yet formed a systematic study on the integration of intangible cultural heritage and night tourism. Although a large number of night-time intangible cultural heritage tourism products have been launched in many places across the country, there is a widespread phenomenon of homogenization. Therefore, studying how to integrate intangible cultural heritage elements and develop tourism products with regional cultural characteristics is the core path and necessary measure to promote the development of urban night tourism.

The deep integration of culture and tourism cannot do without policy support. On June 17, 2025, the 7th Plenary Session of the 12th Committee of the Communist Party of China Sichuan Provincial Committee passed the "Decision of the Communist Party of China Sichuan Provincial Committee on Promoting the Deep Integration and Development of Culture and Tourism and Strengthening the Cultural and Tourism Industry", establishing the integrated development methodology of "culture as the soul, tourism as the body, and technology as the empowerment", and proposing to promote the construction of 100 "Nightless Tianfu" night economy clusters at different levels [5]. In July 2025, the "Decision of the CPC Chengdu Municipal Committee on Promoting the In-depth Integration and Development of Culture, Business, Tourism and Sports, and Accelerating the Construction of a World-Famous Cultural and Tourism City and an International Consumption Center City" was reviewed and approved [6]. As a national historical and cultural city, Chengdu boasts a rich array of intangible cultural heritage resources with unique Ba-Shu characteristics, including Shu embroidery, Shu brocade, Sichuan Opera, Chengdu lacquer art, and sugar painting. The "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu is a waterfront night tour project based on the ecological environment of Jinjiang River and the culture of Bashu. It is a key project in the development of night tourism in Chengdu.

Focusing on the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project

in Chengdu, explore innovative development strategies for intangible cultural heritage and "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" night tourism products. The aim is to empower culture, explore regional cultural characteristics, and enrich the cultural connotation of night tour products. By concentrating on enhancing the appeal and market competitiveness of the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project.

2 The Current Situation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism Product Development

Wen Tong and Cao Xinxiang classified night tourism products into performance type, interactive type, landscape type and comprehensive type according to the different types of activities [7, 8]. Based on the on-site investigation of the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" in Chengdu, this article classifies the night tourism products of the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu that integrate intangible cultural heritage elements into: performance type, landscape type, and participation type.

2.1 Performance-oriented Tourism Products

The "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu combines intangible cultural heritage with social Spaces, creating a performance-oriented tourism product with regional characteristics. The project takes the Living Water Park · Zidi Teahouse and Dongmen Wharf as its main carriers, presenting a number of national intangible cultural heritage contents, including long-spout teapot tea art, money board, Sichuan storytelling, Sichuan Opera, etc. At the market, inheritors of intangible cultural heritage made bamboo weaving, sugar painting and other products on the spot, transforming the production process into dynamic performances, thereby increasing the stay time of tourists and the transaction rate. Performance-oriented tourism products are favored by tourists because they can offer them aesthetic experiences. The performance-oriented tourism products integrating intangible cultural heritage into the project not only offer tourists an aesthetic experience but also play a role in cultural dissemination.

2.2 Interactive Tourism Products

The "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu,

relying on the space of the wharf, has collaborated with the surrounding areas to create a diverse consumption scene integrating dining, shopping, cultural experiences and leisure entertainment. Around the pier, a market has gathered intangible cultural heritage inheritors, handicraft experts, high-quality cultural and creative merchants and fashionable trendy products, providing tourists with a rich variety of consumption options. The project also combines the "December Market" and traditional festivals to launch intangible cultural heritage hands-on experience activities such as lacquer fans and tie-dyeing. This type of interactive tourism product enhances tourists' participation, thereby improving their experience and deepening their impression of local culture, further strengthening the vitality and vigor of intangible cultural heritage.

2.3 Landscape Tourism Products

The "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu has created a landmark attraction that combines landscape value and cultural connotation on the Hongxing Bridge section of the Jinjiang River - a panda installation standing on a steel cable. This work was jointly created by Liu Yang, the chief designer of the Beijing Olympic MEDALS, and Yang Longmei, the inheritor of the national intangible cultural heritage "Daoming Bamboo Weaving". It has become the only landscape tourism product in the project that takes intangible cultural heritage skills as the core and is deeply integrated with the panda IP. This landscape product takes a unique visual image as its core attraction. While meeting the differentiated aesthetic needs of tourists, it vividly showcases the charm of Tianfu culture and enhances tourists' sense of identification with the local culture.

3 Problems Existing in Tourism Products

3.1 The Products Are Homogeneous, Lacking Creativity and Differentiation

Based on Butler's theory of the tourism product life cycle, the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu is evaluated [9]. The project has now entered the product maturity stage. At this stage, the core challenge faced by the project is the insufficient innovation and homogenization

of intangible cultural heritage tourism products. Specifically, the current intangible cultural heritage handicraft experiences (such as lacquer fans, tie-dyeing, etc.) are highly similar in form and content design to the common cultural tourism products in the market, lacking uniqueness. This homogenization has led to a gradual loss of its distinctive appeal in cultural expression and experience design. In the future, the project needs to break through the existing model by deepening content development and strengthening creative design, in order to maintain the long-term competitiveness and cultural appeal of the project.

3.2 Cultural Performances Are Superficial, Making It Difficult to Deepen Cultural Cognition

Through on-site research, it was found that there is a significant lack of cultural interpretation in the performance segment and market display of the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu. During the performance of intangible cultural heritage and the display of inheritors, there is a general lack of systematic explanations of the cultural background and the connotation of the skills, which leads to tourists' understanding of intangible cultural heritage remaining at the surface level and makes it difficult for them to establish a deep cultural memory and emotional connection [10]. Meanwhile, to enhance the efficiency of dissemination, the project has symbolized and simplified intangible cultural heritage. For instance, historical figures such as Li Bai and Xue Tao have been introduced as NPC narrative media. Although this approach enhances the fun of the experience and the efficiency of dissemination, it also keeps the outside world's understanding of the culture superficial and lacks depth [11]. This kind of experience model mainly based on shallow interaction not only restricts tourists' participation and cultural identity, but also affects the in-depth dissemination and value continuation of intangible cultural heritage in the contemporary context.

3.3 Intangible Cultural Heritage Exists in a Sporadic Manner and Has Not Formed a Serialized System

By sorting out the tourism products that incorporate intangible cultural heritage elements in the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu, it is found that in terms

of the integration of intangible cultural heritage elements in the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu, the current main manifestation is the scattered implantation of intangible cultural heritage in various tourism scenarios in additional forms such as performances and handicrafts. The project has not yet established a complete product system centered on intangible cultural heritage. This fragmented presentation method leads to weak connections among the contents of intangible cultural heritage, making it difficult for tourists to deeply engage with the cultural connotations and practical processes of intangible cultural heritage through coherent experiences. The result is that it fails to help tourists form an overall understanding of intangible cultural heritage, nor can it meet their growing demand for in-depth cultural experiences. At the same time, it restricts the sustainable development and value deepening of intangible cultural heritage tourism products.

4 Strategies for Jinjiang Night Tourism Products Based on Intangible Cultural Heritage

4.1 Deeply Explore Cultural Elements to Promote the Development of Night Tourism

The solution to the phenomenon of product homogenization lies in deeply exploring and systematically applying local cultural resources. In the context of the integration of culture and tourism, the key lies in deeply exploring and rationally applying cultural elements. In particular, it is necessary to have core content or IP that highlights the cultural connotation of the region as strong support [12]. Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province, boasts a rich and unique intangible cultural heritage, including folk literature such as the legend of Adouluo Dai. Traditional music includes the Shu school of guqin, etc. Traditional skills include Shu embroidery weaving techniques, Chengdu lacquer art, and the making of silver filigree, etc. Traditional dances include the High Platform Lion Dance and the Huanglongxi Dragon Lantern Dance, etc. Traditional dramas, such as Sichuan Opera, Chengdu puppet shows and shadow puppetry, etc. Folk art forms include Sichuan yangqin, etc. Traditional fine arts include new palm weav-

ing and Chengdu sugar painting, etc. Traditional craftsmanship, Shu brocade weaving technique, Chengdu lacquer art, Chengdu silver thread making technique and the traditional brewing technique of Shuijingfang liquor. Each of these intangible cultural heritage projects showcases the diversity and uniqueness of Chengdu's culture. Designing the above-mentioned intangible cultural heritage elements into night tourism products with Chengdu's characteristics can endow the products with irreplaceability, enhance their distinctiveness and competitiveness. More importantly, this approach of integrating intangible cultural heritage with the night tour product system can promote the dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage [13]. For instance, the Palace Museum has successfully transformed traditional culture into experience products that attract tourists and drive secondary consumption by developing interactive projects such as cloisonne filigree, demonstrating the remarkable effect of culture empowering tourism. Therefore, deeply exploring the intangible cultural heritage elements of Chengdu and organically integrating them into the night tour product system can not only enhance the quality and competitiveness of Chengdu's night tour products, but also open up new paths for the inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage, achieving a win-win situation of cultural inheritance and economic benefits.

4.2 Innovate Cultural Expression and Deepen Tourists' Cultural Understanding

In response to the problems of shallow intangible cultural heritage performances and weak cultural perception among tourists, the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu should be enhanced from two aspects: narrative deepening and technological empowerment. At the narrative level, the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu should lower the threshold for tourists' cultural cognition through story-telling expression, thereby enhancing tourists' emotional resonance with intangible cultural heritage [14]. For instance, during the performance of Sichuan Opera, the plot can be deduced around the origin of Sichuan Opera facial makeup and the stories behind classic plays. At the same time, design materials such as narration explanations, offline display boards, and promotional brochures to assist tourists in deeply understanding intangible cultural heritage. In terms of experience forms, efforts

should be made to actively promote the digital transformation of culture and tourism. In the context of the deep integration of culture and tourism, promoting the digital transformation of cultural and tourism products and the construction of smart tourism has become a key path for traditional culture to achieve innovative development and creative transformation [15]. For the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu, if it is to expand the breadth of night tourism product development, technological empowerment is indispensable. From the perspective of performance forms, modern technology has brought about a brand-new opportunity for transformation. Taking cutting-edge digital technologies such as VR, AR, XR, MR, the metaverse, naked-eye 3D, holographic projection, digital light and shadow, and intelligent perception as entry points, it deeply integrates the unique cultural elements of the city to create immersive experience Spaces. This innovative form of performance not only fully meets the diverse entertainment needs of tourists, but also significantly enhances their satisfaction, allowing them to deeply experience the charm of intangible cultural heritage while enjoying the performance.

4.3 Integrate Intangible Cultural Heritage Resources and Build a Tourism Product System

In view of the current problem that the presentation of intangible cultural heritage in the project is rather scattered and lacks a systematic approach, the project should promote the transformation of intangible cultural heritage from "embellishing and adding" to "core integration" through systematic integration and in-depth exploration. First, it is necessary to systematically sort out intangible cultural heritage resources, distill their historical origins, artistic features and spiritual cores, and extract cultural symbols and aesthetic elements with local identifiers. On this basis, promote the innovative transformation and IP-based development of intangible cultural heritage elements, form cultural IPs with high recognition and dissemination power, and strengthen their brand value. To optimize the way cultural resources are integrated, it is also necessary to build a scientific integration framework. Then, by adopting the approach of thematic guidance and systematic integration, the elements of intangible cultural heritage are organically combined with the development of tourism products to create a cultural and tourism integration product system

with local cultural characteristics. A series of experiential cultural and tourism products can be designed around specific intangible cultural heritage categories or cultural themes to build an integrated product system with local characteristics. Finally, through reasonable planning and centralized layout of intangible cultural heritage performance, display and experience Spaces, a continuous and concentrated cultural display belt is formed. At the same time, integrate intangible cultural heritage into all aspects of tourism, including food, accommodation, transportation, sightseeing, shopping and entertainment, to break the disconnection between intangible cultural heritage and tourism scenarios. For instance, integrating intangible cultural heritage (ICH) cuisine with skills experiences, incorporating ICH aesthetics into accommodation and transportation scenarios, and designing ICH series cultural and creative products for different customer groups, etc. This enables tourists to experience intangible cultural heritage in an immersive way throughout their entire trip, meeting their demand for in-depth experiences and achieving their perception, participation and recognition of intangible cultural heritage.

5 Conclusion and Prospect

The development of night tourism can promote the economic growth of a city. Under the background of the integration of culture and tourism, deeply exploring intangible cultural heritage and innovatively applying it to night tourism not only helps to revitalize culture but also injects new vitality into urban tourism. The tourism economy is trending towards high-quality development, and tourists' travel demands are in a constantly changing state. Only tourism products that meet these demands can more effectively attract tourists and stimulate consumption behavior. Taking the "Night Tour of Jinjiang River" project in Chengdu as the research object, a systematic review of the project was carried out from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage. After clarifying the current development status and existing problems of the project, targeted tourism product development strategies were proposed. The research results show that the current "Night Tour of Jinjiang" project is in a stage of continuous deepening of cultural and tourism integration. It has not yet fully released the cultural value and market potential of intangible cultural heritage resources. In the future, efforts can be made from these three aspects: first, to integrate intangible cultural heritage resources; second, to deeply explore cultural elements; third, to innovate

cultural expression methods Ultimately, by building an immersive tourism product system with the theme of intangible cultural heritage, the goal of coordinated development of the revitalization and utilization of intangible cultural heritage and the night economy can be achieved. This study mainly employs the case study method to conduct an in-depth analysis of the night cruise along the Jinjiang River in Chengdu. Future research can introduce quantitative research methods to enhance the accuracy of the study. At the same time, it is necessary to combine the achievements of the in-depth integration of culture and tourism in more cities and continuously improve the product system of urban intangible cultural heritage night tourism.

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