

A Hit among Visitors: Maritime Silk Road Culture and Tourism Expo Energizes Ningbo

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From October 25 to 27, Ningbo witnessed the launch of the Maritime Silk Road Culture and Tourism Expo at the Ningbo International Convention & Exhibition Center. The three-in-one exposition, for the first time, integrated the 9th Zhejiang Book Fair, the 2024 Ningbo Maritime Silk Road Culture and Tourism Expo, and the 2024 Ningbo International Tourism Expo. The grand event boasted six themed exhibition areas, spanning over 30,000 square meters, with more than 70 indoor events and over 1,100 outdoor activities. It offered stamp-collecting, art tours, hands-on cultural heritage activities, folk performances, and many other unique experiences, attracting large audiences from around the world.

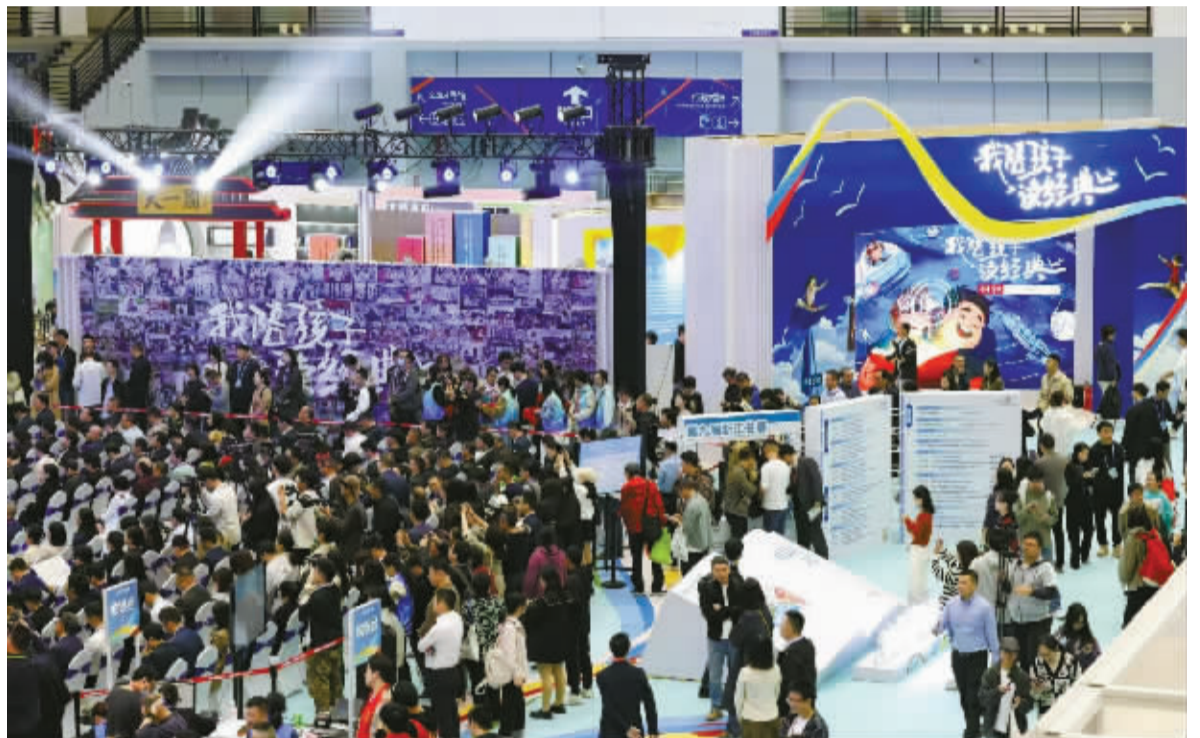
Zhejiang Book Fair

This year's book fair showcased over 30,000 titles. Paired with the popular program of "Reading Classics", the event was designed to engage thousands of families. Therefore, the fair highlighted poetry, literary classics, and bestselling editions, with some titles discounted up to 90%, making it a haven for book enthusiasts seeking rare finds.

Throughout the fair, more than 50 esteemed authors, including Fan Deng, Zhang Xiaofeng, and Ma Boyong, engaged with readers on site. Iconic bookstores such as Shanghai Hong Kong Joint Publishing Co., Ltd., Hangzhou Southern Song Dynasty Study, and Zhoushan Island Bookstore also made special appearances. To mark the centenary of Louis Cha's birth (1924-2018), a dedicated section was set for the work of this beloved author. And the books of the recently crowned Nobel laureate Han Kang (1970-) were also featured.



A French booth at the expo. (Photo: Pan Miao)



The Zhejiang Book Fair of the Maritime Silk Road Culture and Tourism Expo. (Photo: Xu Neng, Xu Cheng)

2024 Ningbo Maritime Silk Road Culture and Tourism Expo

The expo serves as a premier platform for fostering mutually beneficial cooperation in cultural tourism, facilitating a cross-temporal dialogue of civilizations within the "Brilliant Silk Road" zone. This zone brought together countries along the Belt and Road, highlighting the rich cultural heritage of Ningbo and Xi'an. The expo also featured dedicated sections for other domestic cities along the route, including Chongqing, Guangzhou, Hangzhou, Suzhou, Changsha, and Xiamen. Furthermore, international sections showcased exhibits from France and other Central and Eastern European countries, promoting cultural exchange and understanding.

Over 300 exhibitors joined the event, including Pal-

ace Museum Cultural Innovation Institute and Xiling Seal Engravers' Society. Besides, it offered a feast of popular cultural IPs like Dunhuang, the Giant Panda Heritage, and Sanxingdui. Advanced tech features such as interactive screens, digital fireworks, live NPCs, naked-eye 3D displays, and virtual mythical creatures, were deployed to provide immersive interactions for visitors. An array of crowd-pulling events included Ningbo-themed cultural workshops, study sessions on *Legend of the Sea*, esports competitions of *Honor of Kings*, and coffee master competitions, plus "Silk Road Stamping" activities, social-media-friendly photo walls, and themed salons.

2024 Ningbo International Tourism Expo

The Ningbo International Tourism Expo - themed "In Ningbo, Enjoy" - featured three sections focused on cultural tourism exchange, consumption, and public benefits. Alongside Ningbo, the spectrum of city tourism promotion ranged from Chengdu, Nanjing, and Jinan, to regional partners like Kuqa, Liangshan, and Tianjin in China.

The expo offered enticing deals on both domestic and international trips designed to boost travel-related consumption. Ever dreamed of exploring both Singapore and Malaysia? Or maybe a tour through Japan's historic cities, a trip to the UAE, or a cruise on the luxurious *Costa*

Toscana and *Norwegian Dawn*? From cruises to international and domestic travel packages, attendees could find great deals to fuel their wanderlust. Discounts were also available for *Adora Magic City*, China's first large-scale domestically-made cruise ship, which began commercial operations on January 1 this year.

Beyond a mere cultural showcase, this event heralds a new era for Ningbo, underscoring its significant strides in integrating culture and tourism, as well as its ambitious trajectory toward becoming a premier international exhibition hub.