

A Podcast Guided Tour of Qianwei Ecology Village, Chongming County

Leave the traditional guided walks behind and strike out at your own pace with an audio guide. This bilingual podcast is presented by Shanghai Daily and supervised by the Shanghai Science and Technology Committee.

Welcome to Qianwei Ecology Village. You can leave the standard guided group tours behind and strike out at your own pace with this bilingual podcast. It is presented by Shanghai Daily and supervised by the Shanghai Science and Technology Committee.

Thirty years ago, Qianwei was a remote and ordinary village by the sea on beautiful Chongming Island, China's third largest island. Its people were mostly farmers and fishermen. Today, villagers mostly farm, but there are some fishermen as well.

You can make arrangements to spend a day with a farmer in the "happy farmer's life" program.

Gone are those days when the waves and tide ruled people's lives. Now,

an ecology village has been built here, a village that tries to create harmony between man and nature. Qianwei Ecology Village is developing its agriculture, industry and tourism in a well-planned and coordinated way.

Natural, organic farming and use of alternative fuels are a way of life. The village is totally powered by clean energy.

The village is designated as one of China's "National Modern Agricultural Tourism Developing Sites." And it is listed as one of the "Global Ecology 500 Villages" by the State Tourism Bureau.

With its scenic setting and calmer pace of life, this spot is a world away from the urban bustle. The area is home to about 700 villagers. People in Chongming County usually describe Qianwei Village as "a pearl on the island."

Here we go, let's visit Qianwei Village together and enjoy the extraordinary ecological life.

As you enter the gate of Qianwei village, before you is the **Yinzhou Yuling Bridge**, which is decorated with white jade. Cross the bridge and

you will see a bronze statue of a cow. It symbolizes the hardworking and creative spirit of Qianwei villagers.

Here, you can rent a bicycle, tricycle, battery-powered cart – and even a horse carriage. Or, you can walk.

No automobiles, motorbikes, trucks – or any internal-combustion engine vehicles are allowed to pollute the air.

Now that you have chosen your “clean” vehicle, let’ s keep going.

The **Yinzhou Ancient Town** on your left features some buildings that have been restored to their original Qing Dynasty (1644-1911)-style. Thatched huts are prominent.

In the village, you can see displays of the waterwheels, spinning and weaving machines and other farm equipment and artifacts. Some people traveled by sedan chair in the old days – you can see the sedan chairs as well.

In addition, special snacks in Chongming are available in the village, such as Chongming cake and *zongzi*. Zongzi are rice dumplings made of

glutinous rice, stuffed with various fillings and wrapped in bamboo leaves. Chongming cake, steamed or boiled, is a sweet desert.

Now keep going to a crossroads, and you will find the **Shanghai Wild Animal Domestication Farm** on your left. With a beautiful setting and fresh air, the farm is home to grackles, nonpoisonous snakes, pigs, dogs, birds, monkeys, eagles, chickens and deer, among others. It is here that you will especially sense the harmony between humans and animals.

Let go back to the crossroad and walk straight ahead.

This is the National Ecological-Tourism Science Dissemination Center.

First, let' s have a look at the **World Wooden Fossil Museum** of petrified wood and the **China Rare Stone Museum**.

You can see more than 200 stones, including spectacular crystals and gemstones, from about 20 provinces in China and Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia and Myanmar.

Now move on to the **Chinese Root Carving Museum**. It houses more than 160 works by the modern root carving master Fan Jingui. Let' s

check out how the masters transform ordinary tree roots into delicate art works, such as holders for pens, as well as human figures and landscapes.

To the left of the Ecological-Tourism Science Dissemination Center is the 80-hectare **Ecological Agricultural Model Base**. It demonstrates the rational ecological arrangement of crops and plants and the recycling of resources. The main crops are fruits and vegetables, as well as organic rice.

Now, keep going, and you will see demonstrations on the development and use of clean and renewable energies -- solar energy, wind energy, marsh gas energy, straw gas energy and geothermal energy.

These nontraditional energy displays are not just for show. The village itself utilizes all these forms of energy and homes use solar panels to generate electricity.

The village is totally powered by clean energy. The power generated from different alternative fuels is fed into an electricity grid for all of Chongming County, the island itself. And everyone outside the village benefits.

Marsh gas or methane is produced from animal and other wastes and waste straw can be turned into gas. Generating energy this way removes and recycles the polluting animal wastes.

Qianwei Village also uses geothermal energy. It is building a 20,000-square-meter education center that provides information about alternative fuels -- especially geothermal power, which taps the earth's own heat with a pumping system. Geothermal power will be used for an air conditioning system in the center. It will help people keep cool in summer and warm in winter.

In a nutshell, Qianwei village has combined various clean and renewable fuels to sustain itself. It has produced positive results in terms of society, the environment and economy.

Further ahead is the **Waste Water Treatment Plant** to the north. Rivers in the area are polluted with human waste and discharge from small factories. So the villagers in Qianwei have undertaken water purification projects and waste water treatment with support from universities.

There is a large illustration of the procedure of waste water treatment in front of the Artificial Wetland Waste Water Plant. Let's go and check it

out.

Continuing on our way and making a turn, here we are, at the Ecological Entertainment Square where numerous cultural and sports facilities are available. You can relax in the square.

Further ahead is the **Qianwei Ecological Recycling Center** where you can see how waste is reduced and how materials are recycled.

Here we are in the **Ecological Science Garden**, which houses the Earthworm Breeding Base, Flower Garden and Butterfly Garden. You must wonder why the base breeds so many earthworms. Actually, the earthworm plays an important role in the waste-recycling sector in ecological agriculture. The fertilizer used in earthworm breeding is poultry waste.

In addition, earthworms could not only be applied in agriculture, but also remedy the polluted soil and environment. By burrowing in the earth, the worms create air passages and help the soil to “breathe.” Earthworms could also be used in biological pharmacy manufacturing. It is no exaggeration to say that every inch of the little earthworm is a treasure.

The Butterfly Garden features a grand glass room that imitates a virtual ecological environment of nature. Here you can see colorful butterflies in the air. Turn right and enter the door, you will have a glimpse of various samples and bookmarks made from butterflies' wings. Do you notice the paintings hanging on the wall? They are made of butterflies' wings. If you are interested in making butterfly art on your own, you can try here.

After visiting the **Butterfly Garden**, you can rest in the **Sunshine Restaurant** right opposite. The dishes and food here have a special flavor as the chef adds a lot of healthful and aromatic plants. Afterward, you can see how these aromatic plants are grown.

Here in the **Flower Garden**, dozens of imported aromatic and medicinal plants including rosemary, lavender, roman chamomile, thyme and geranium are growing. They present a variety of flavor and aroma, and they have medicinal uses.

Just as you can make your own butterfly art, here in the Flower Garden you can make your own aromatic plant souvenir. You can select whatever plant you like, and make it into soap, like lavender soap, or an aromatic bag. These are memorable keepsakes to be enjoyed and put to good use.

In the garden, there is a **Flower Picking Area** where you can pick roses, carnations and African daisies. You can also pick some fruits such as pomelos and cherries in the Fruit Garden. Are you ready? Let' s go and enjoy.

Further ahead, we enter the "*nong jia le*" section. For those who are fed up with the concrete jungle, the laid-back eco-friendly village life has great charm. If you want to try living as a fishermen or a farmer for a day or so – or more – you can stay overnight and work with a rural family. This is the village' s "happy farmer' s life" program -- also known as "*nong jia le*." The village also offers standard accommodations.

Almost every village family provides accommodations. Those who offer family "hotel" service hang a big sign outside their house. It costs 100 to 150 yuan a day – equivalent to 13 to 20 US dollars. And it usually includes a homemade meal, using fresh organic ingredients. The signs are in Chinese.

All right, our trip in Qianwei Village is over. We hope you enjoyed your visit and have a better idea of the need for ecological agriculture, the possibilities of clean energy and sustainable development. – and the

happy farmers' life.

Address: 1 Shengli Avenue, about 15 minutes' drive north of the National Forest Park

Ticket price: 40 yuan (US\$5.27); 10 yuan for vehicle renting

Hours: Every single day

Transport: You can take Tourism Line No. 5, Bus No. 51 or Beibao Line to Baoyang port. Take a ferry to the Nanmen port and get on Nandong Line. You can also take a ferry to Baozhen port and get on Baosheng Line to Qianwei Village.

For details, call 5964-9261, 5964-9211 or check out www.qianweicun.com

Key Words:

1. Ecology village (n). A human settlement in which human activities are harmlessly integrated into the natural world in a way that is supportive of healthy human development and can be successfully continued into the indefinite future.生态村

2. Sedan chair (n). An enclosed chair that is borne on poles by two bearers. It is one of the main vehicles used for transporting people in

ancient China.轿子

3. Petrified wood (n). A type of fossil wood where all the organic materials have been replaced with minerals, including silica, silicates, carbonates, sulfates, sulfides, oxides, and phosphates.木化石

4. Solar panel (n). A device that collects and converts solar energy into electricity or heat.太阳能板

5. Methane (n). A colorless, odorless gas with a wide distribution in nature.沼气

6. Geothermal energy (n). Energy extracted from the internal heat of the Earth, which is clean and sustainable.地热能

7. Wetland (n). A marshy area where there is much moisture in the soil. Wetlands are sometimes covered in water.湿地