

LIFE



Clockwise from top left: Images from *Win at the Museum* feature some of the most well-known museums with unique collections of revolutionary relics in China, respectively in Nanchang, Jiangxi province, Zunyi, Guizhou province, Xibaipo, Hebei province, Yan'an, Shaanxi province, Beijing and Jinggangshan in Jiangxi. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

REMINDEERS OF HISTORY

TV show highlights some unusual but relevant items from the revolutionary past in successful bid to attract young viewers by enriching their knowledge of the struggle for freedom, **Xu Fan** reports.



Situated in downtown Beijing, the Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution is like a treasure trove that has drawn numerous visitors to glimpse the country's military history.

Among the landmark complex's sizable collection, consisting of more than 180,000 objects, a German-made Mauser M1896 pistol is displayed in a conspicuous position.

Despite looking a bit old and obsolete with the outer coating fading, the firearm was once part of a pivotal moment of modern history. It was carried by Zhu De — one of China's greatest military leaders — during the Nanchang Uprising, the first major conflict led by the Communist Party to counter anti-communist purges by the Kuomintang, starting in the capital city of Jiangxi province on Aug 1, 1927.

Alongside a bunch of valuable historical relics, the pistol and the legendary stories behind it are featured in *2021 Win at the Museum*, a TV show recently aired on CCTV-14, the country's flagship broadcaster for children and teenagers.

First launched in 2018, the annual show aims to expand and enrich youngsters' knowledge about China's history and culture through a series of tours to some of the country's most well-known museums.

Unlike the past three episodes, which explore ancient civilization, the fourth season spanning nine episodes travels to 11 museums, most of which are located in the Party's previous revolutionary bases such as Jinggangshan and Yan'an respectively in Jiangxi, Shaanxi provinces, or cities where once significant meetings were held, like Zunyi in Guizhou province and Shanghai.

To mark the 100th anniversary of



China Central Television hosts Ju Ping (fourth from left), Huo Xiaolei (right) and Huang Wei (left) with young volunteer guides in the show.



The stage of the show, decorated with a revolutionary flair.

the founding of the CPC, the latest season — which is now available on China Central Television's website — blends veteran guides' introductions, stories told by youngsters and close-up shots inside museums to look back on the turbulent era from the Party's founding in 1921 to the

birth of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

Aside from Zhu De's pistol, a number of revolutionary relics are showcased in the show, including an important seal used by general He Long, and the first radio owned by the Red Army in 1930.

heroic story of Zhang Side (1915-44), a veteran soldier who sacrificed his life to rescue a companion during a dwelling cave collapse.

Si says he was deeply moved as the scene denotes that the history has been remembered by the next generation, also the future hope of China.

In order to appeal to more young audiences with an easygoing style, Si says the crew paid more attention to specially selected relics with interesting stories.

For instance, in the last episode on the National Museum of China, a veteran guide introduces a less-noticed detail of the national flag raised in Tian'anmen Square during the country's 1949 founding ceremony. One angle of the biggest five-pointed yellow star had to stitch two pieces of cloth together as tailors failed to purchase an entire piece even after visiting all the stores in Beijing.

"If you could discover this detail, it will not be difficult for you to picture how hard and tough conditions were for the Chinese people before the founding of the People's Republic of China," says Si.

Wang Chao, a cultural relic expert who works at China Cultural Heritage Newspaper, says relics and heritage help historians to conduct research as well as stir up national pride of ordinary visitors.

"As early as in 1932, the Party made regulations about the protection and collection of such artifacts and relics, indicating China has attached great importance to the reservation of revolutionary relics for a long time," says Wang.

All these relics reveal the epic chapters in the history that the CPC and Chinese people fought for today's peace and prosperity, always reminding us to respect the legacies and inherit their spirit to build a better future, concludes Wang.

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Scientists confirm discovery of largest site of dinosaur tracks

By **YANG YANG**
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Paleontologists from home and abroad confirmed in a recently published essay that they have found the largest dinosaur tracksite ever discovered in China in Zhaojue, Sichuan province. The site covers an area of over 9,000 square meters, including at least 933 tracks.

The essay, co-written by Xing Lida, associate professor of China University of Geosciences, doctoral candidate Wang Miaoyan from CUG, Peng Guangzhao and Ye Yong, researchers from the Zigong Dinosaur Museum, Martin G. Lockley, professor at the University of Colorado Denver, and Hendrik Klein, dinosaur scholar from Germany, has been published on the international geological periodical *Geoscience Frontiers*.

Located in the middle of a copper mine in Zhaojue, these are arguably the most important tracksites in southwestern China, containing diverse sauropod, theropod, ornitho-

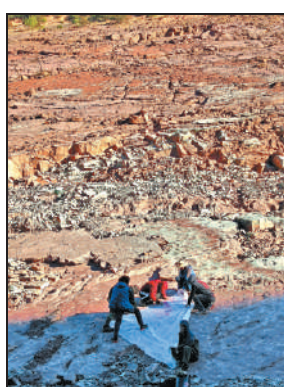
pod and pterosaur track assemblages, researchers say in the essay.

The Zhaojue tracksites extend 1 kilometer from north to south, and span 0.5 km from east to west, consisting of four important track-bearing surfaces, numbered as I, II, IIN (north) and III, of which Zhaojue-I was first reported in 1994 and the others were sequentially discovered from 2012 to 2019.

The four tracksites contain a total of 1,928 tracks, covering an area of over 10,000 sq m, including the previously reported pterosaurs and the ropod swim tracks.

Zhaojue-II experienced two exposures. In 2013, paleontologists found there the first dinosaur's swimming track discovered in China. The copper mining later increased the exposure of the tracksite so that it has been recognized as the largest dinosaur tracksite so far discovered in China.

From 2017 to 2019, paleontologists mapped the tracksite using drone technology, finding at least 933 recognizable dinosaur tracks,



Scientists use a plastic sheet to outline a dinosaur tracksite in Zhaojue, Sichuan province.

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and the longest sauropod and ornithopoda tracks ever recorded in China, which measure 80 meters and 52 meters respectively. Some of the tracks exhibit the obvious

change of the track makers' movement directions, providing behavior information.

The Zhaojue-II tracksite contains rich dinosaur tracks, including 61 trackways and seven isolated tracks, representing 68 track makers, of which 54 percent were ornithopoda.

Because the tracksites contain tracks of many different kinds of dinosaurs, it is important to the study of the living environment of dinosaurs in the Cretaceous Period, Peng says.

"There are also tracks that show dinosaur's special behavior, such as swimming or veering, which are helpful for the study of the behavior or the lifestyle of dinosaurs," he says.

Both Zhaojue-II and III tracksites contain paralleled ornithopoda trackways, suggesting the track makers' social or gregarious behavior.

Xing says there has been no Cretaceous dinosaur bone fossil discovered in Southern Sichuan Basin, so that the Zhaojue tracksites have provided great investigative sam-

ples for the study of dinosaur fauna in that region in the Cretaceous Period.

Over the last 30 years, however, due to quarrying, erosion or collapse during copper mining, the tracksites have been continuously exposed and damaged.

The local government shut down the copper mine for good in 2018, according to a report by West China Metropolis Daily.

However, concrete plans to protect the Zhaojue tracksites are still lacking, says Ebi Jiefang, former director of Relic Management Institute of Zhaojue county.

"The tracks that are clear when first exposed have been weathered," he says, adding that the dinosaur tracksites are located at more than 2,000 meters above the sea level, which has worsened the weathering.

"Since these tracks are so important for geological studies, related departments should cooperate to come up with protective plans as soon as possible," he says.

Nothing replaces my cup of Hangzhou green tea

Among the rituals I observe every morning when I arrive bleary-eyed to work, nothing perks up my senses more than the moment I open the little cobalt blue canister in my desk drawer and take that first whiff of West Lake Longjing, or "dragon well" tea leaves.

The aroma of those lightly roasted leaves recalls memories

of fresh tea on the bushes while meandering through high mountain fields in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province. Even just wandering through those fields in my mind, prompted by the sight and scent of *longjing* tea leaves, delights me on the most dreary of days.

My allegiance to the stuff runs so deep that I always prepare a stash of it whenever I travel, eschewing the free Lipton bags in hotel rooms or morning brews at a breakfast buffet for a steaming cup of this treasured tea.

Blame it on my husband Jun, who spoiled my taste buds by introducing me to what has long been his favorite morning ritual. He's a native of the Hangzhou region, where consuming green tea has long endured as a tradition and culture throughout the year. In Hangzhou, even on the chilliest of days in January and February, you'll still find people bundled up in down jackets and hats nursing a cup of *longjing*.

I've tried explaining this to my colleagues in Beijing from more northern climates in China, who insist I shouldn't consume this green tea in winter, claiming it's "too cold" for my stomach from a Chinese traditional medicine perspective. They sometimes try to tempt me with teas they deem more suitable for cooler temperatures, such as the eight-treasures brews bobbing with jujube dates and goji berries, or black varieties like Pu'er.

While I appreciate they mean well, I invariably refuse with a polite and amiable smile, knowing that only a sip of *longjing* will truly pick me up in the mornings, a sentiment shared by my husband and many others.

The arrival of March inevitably turns my thoughts to this tea, as this month sees the first harvest of the spring *longjing*. The leaves, plucked off the bushes before the coming of Qingming Festival in April, are considered the most tender of the year, and command the highest prices. I've sampled it a handful of times, luxuriating in its delicately sweet fragrance and flavor.

Nearly two years ago, I traveled back to Hangzhou for a video shoot that included a visit to the restaurant Charen Cun, nestled within the city's *longjing* tea fields. I walked through the terraces of jade-green bushes along with the owner of the restaurant, who had inherited the fields and tradition of tending and appreciating *longjing* tea from his own father. Hovering over one of the bushes, he pulled a small bunch of leaves off with a gentle tug and placed them in my hands. They were a light and exuberant green, a shade recalling the uplifting joy of warmer spring days and the return of more sunshine. I tucked into my pocket those leaves, which were the most precious souvenir of my trip, a real physical reminder that I had stepped among the fields of my most favorite tea.

Save your black tees for someone else. You can hide me all you want over drinking West Lake Longjing in the chill of a March morning, but I'll never give it up. Nothing but *longjing* tea for me, please.

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Second Thoughts