

Shantou

A Developing Coastal City

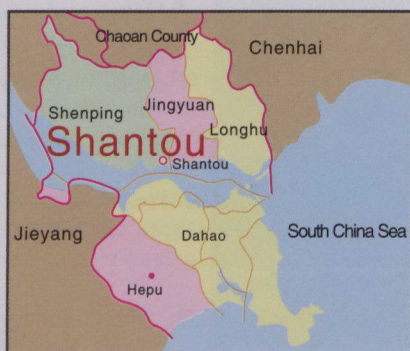


A View of the Booming City

Shantou, a harbour city and a famous hometown of overseas Chinese on China's southeastern coast, is one of the first Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in China. It governs five administrative districts—Longhu, Jinyuan, Shengping, Dahao and Hepu—and Nan'ao Island and, on behalf of Guangdong Province, also administers Chaoyang City and Chenghai City.

Shantou lies in the eastern part of Guangdong Province, 195 nautical miles away from Hong Kong and 214 nautical miles from Kaohsiung City of Taiwan. Shantou enjoys a sub-tropic oceanic climate, with the Tropic of Cancer crossing through it. Overseas Chinese born in Shantou and Chaozhou and their descendants are scattered in more than 40 countries and regions worldwide. The population density is approximately 2001 persons per square kilometre and the average cultivated area per person is about 119 square metres. Chaozhou dialect is the prevalent dialect among the populace and has thus become a specific language system to the area, similar only to the dialect spoken in the Minnan area in the south of Fujian Province.

The local customary charms include the "Four Chao": Chaozhou Opera, Chaozhou Music, Chaozhou Cuisine and Chaozhou-Shantou Kongfu Tea. Chaozhou Cuisine has already spread inland and has become part of the Chinese cuisine family.



Economic Development

Since the reform and opening-up policy, Shantou has attained substantial economic development. Shantou industries fall into five categories, namely, chemical, ultrasonic electronics, pharmaceutical, textile and machinery. Photosensitive materials, ultrasonic and electronic instruments, ceramics, drawn work, textiles, garments, medicines, and handicrafts are all traditional industrial exports. Shantou agriculture has been modernized, with four bases for rearing of fruit and vegetables, aquatic products, processing, and husbandry.

In 1997, Shantou's GDP was RMB 37.352 billion, and the total output value of industry and agriculture rose to RMB 58.65 billion. The import and export value totaled USD 6.873 billion, among which exports accounted for USD 3.477 billion, and actual utilized foreign investment accounted for USD 1.011 billion.

With its favourable SEZ policies, its improving investment environment, and its multitudinous and industrial labour force, Shantou has been attracting an increasing number of investors. By the end of 1996, 12,396 foreign invested contractual projects had been approved, with contractual foreign investment of USD 7.967 billion and actual utilized foreign funds of USD 4.39 billion. 4,657 of these projects are in the form of foreign direct investment (FDI) projects, and USD 3.682 billion out of the USD 7.595 billion FDI has been utilized. In 1992, Shantou was listed among the Top 50 Cities of Comprehensive Strength in China and among the Top 40 Cities with Excellent Investment Environment.

Transportation and Telecommunications

Shantou Harbour has 79 over-five-hundred-ton berths, including 8 over-ten-thousand-ton deep-water berths. The annual handling capacity of the harbour is 211.2 million tons, and the total volume of containers handled in one year is 365,000 TEUs. Shantou Harbour has freight business with more than 248 harbours of 53 countries and regions in the world. A multiple harbour complex comprising of Shantou deep-water harbour as the hub and a group of large, medium-and small-sized harbours with complete supplementary facilities has been developed.

The Guangzhou-Meizhou-Shantou Railway joins the Beijing-Kowloon Railway to make Shantou a key export terminal of the main trunk railways in China. Passenger trains run daily to Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hengyang, Wuchang and Shaoguan, and freight trains connect to all parts of the country. As well, State Highways No. 324 and No. 206 pass through the city. The Gulf Bridge and Shenzhen-Shantou Expressway connect the three Special Economic Zones of Shantou, Xiamen and Shenzhen, therefore forming an important part of the major highway network in the