



驿站度假村
池畔一隅
Bridge across
the reservoir at
naked Retreats

IMAGE © NAKED STABLES PRIVATE RESERVE

非一般愿景

ROADS LESS TRAVELLED

一群新锐企业家正在改变中国酒店业的面貌，首开国内可持续发展旅游业的先锋，重塑旅游观念及唤醒环保意识，并为本土社区注入新生命力

A new breed of business owner is helping change China's hospitality sector by pioneering a sustainable approach to domestic tourism that's reshaping attitudes, boosting environmental awareness and empowering local communities

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Translation by Jess Lit

坐落在慕田峪长城脚下的可持续旅游项目「小园」(The Schoolhouse)，创办人为美国人萨洋(Jim Spear)。他很喜欢与人分享他和这块土地结缘的经过。「17年前我到长城旅游时，有位农夫向我兜售一件T恤，」他说道。「我跟他讲，我宁愿买一栋房子，他说可以帮我。他果然办到了。」

其后10年，这栋房子成了萨洋的周末度假屋，直到他辞去企业界的工作，才正式搬到位于北京东北70公里处的这个乡村居住。后来村长要求他协助社区发展，原因是虽然有很多游客到慕田峪游览长城，但旅游业并未让此人口日渐老化的乡村直接获益，他因此兴起推行这项计划的念头。

2006年萨洋和妻子及另外两位合伙人租下村内一所废弃的校舍，开了一个艺术工作室及餐厅。如今，这项获奖的小园计划已拥有三个餐厅、瓦厂小生态酒店及11栋度假屋。所有房舍都是向当地村民租用，再由萨洋改建。

向当地村民租下他们废弃的房屋，可确保村民直接获得经济利益。2007年建于杭州以北60公里处莫干山的驿站度假村同样以此模式经营，并取得傲人成绩。

驿站度假村是由高天成(Grant Horsfield)与叶凯欣夫妇、Evan Lai及常务董事卢家宝共同经营，开业初期只有三栋房子。现在已扩充至八栋，全年入住率接近100%。

拥有28个房间的阳朔胜地度假山庄及位于广西桂林附近的阳朔听月楼酒店由另一位美国企业家柏昆(Chris Barclay)创办、设计及建造。柏昆因参加户外运动而来到南京北部约475公里的阳朔，并深深爱上这里的美丽景色，但他发现此地的住宿选择十分有限。于是，他运用他在跨国公司从事培训与发展的丰富专业经验，向当地政府提交了一份建议书，那就是度假村不仅为企业客户及游客服务，不使用时亦可作为官方及商家的会议场地。 >>

JIM SPEAR, THE AMERICAN FOUNDER OF THE SCHOOLHOUSE AT MUTIANYU GREAT WALL, a sustainable tourism project that benefits villages along a section of this global landmark, enjoys telling the story of how he came to be a valued member of the local community. "I was visiting the Great Wall 17 years ago and a peasant tried to sell me a T-shirt," he says. "I told him I'd rather buy a house. The man said he would help me find one, and he did."

Spear used the house for weekend getaways for 10 years before quitting the corporate world and moving to the village, which is about 70km north-east of Beijing. The idea for his business was born when the local mayor asked him to get involved in the community, explaining that while many tourists came to the Great Wall at Mutianyu, they did not spend money in a way that helped the aging village population.

Five years ago, together with his wife and two partners, Spear leased the community's abandoned schoolhouse and opened an art house and restaurant. Today the award-winning Schoolhouse business includes three restaurants, the Brickyard eco-retreat and 11 holiday homes. The houses were all rented from local people and remodelled by Spear.

Leasing disused properties from area residents ensures that the money generated goes directly into villagers' pockets. >>



(左起顺时针) 坐落于慕田峪的瓦厂小家生态酒店，瓦厂小家附近的面店及瓦厂小家庭院
 Clockwise from top: Brickyard Eco Retreat at Mutianyu Great Wall; noodle shop near Brickyard; main courtyard at Brickyard

驿站度假村开业初期有三栋房子，现在已经扩充至八栋

LAUNCHED WITH JUST THREE PROPERTIES, NAKED HOME VILLAGE IS NOW HOME TO EIGHT HOUSES



「这份建议书获得了很大的支持及鼓励，」柏昆说。「当地政府还协助我取得土地及各种许可证件。」

萨洋表示其可持续发展的经营理念，源自于他要为本土社区服务的承诺：「我们对这个社区最重要的贡献就是制造就业机会，例如与本土供应商合作。」

肩负对本土居民与大自然的责任，是驿站度假村及阳朔胜地度假山庄的创办理念。两个度假村的员工几乎全部来自附近的村镇。柏昆在阳朔聘请了一位全职的驻店培训师，专责客户服务及英语培训。业绩达标时，他会带员工出外旅游，让他们体验不同地区的文化风情及待客之道，目的是希望他们能够学以致用。

「我们的员工留守率很高，这与我们提供培训与发展机会、具竞争力薪酬、利润分享计划等福利有直接关系。」柏昆说。他的员工合共持有酒店业务的一成股份。此外，他也为当地创业者提供免息贷款，并为当地儿童设立奖学金。

教育员工及村民有关可持续发展模式，例如使用本土及季节性的产物，得益者不仅是本土社区。游客也可借此亲自了解农村社区在都市化的洪 >>

IMAGE © NAKED STABLES PRIVATE RESERVE

This business model is shared by the highly successful naked Retreats company, which set up the naked Retreats Home Village in 2007 in Moganshan, a town in Zhejiang Province about 60km north of Hangzhou.

The partners behind naked Retreat – Grant Horsfield, his wife Delphine Yip, Evan Lai and managing director Gabriela Lo – launched naked Home Village with just three properties. It's now home to eight houses and boasts nearly 100% occupancy year-round.

Fellow entrepreneur Chris Barclay, the American owner and founder of the 28-room Yangshuo Mountain Retreat and the Village Inn near Guilin in Guangxi Province, designed and built his own property. He had fallen in love with the beautiful Yangshuo area, which is about 475km north of Nanning, while on a sports holiday but found accommodation options to be limited. Drawing on his years as a

training and development professional for multinational companies, he put together a proposal for the local government: the retreat would be somewhere he could host corporate clients and tourists, and, when not in use, it would be made available to the local government and businesses for their meetings.

“The proposal was received with excitement and encouragement,” he says. “The government helped me secure the land and get the necessary approvals.”

The Schoolhouse's Spear says that while his business model is based on sustainability, the project has its origins in a commitment to the local community.

“The most important contribution we have made to the local community is to provide jobs. For example, by using local suppliers,” he says.

Responsibility to people as well as to nature is a founding principle of >>

(右起顺时针) 驿站度假村会所，面向树林的树顶别墅，驿站度假村景观，会所泳池

Clockwise from right: clubhouse at naked Retreats; treetop villa overlooking the forest; view of the forest at naked Retreats; clubhouse swimming pool



流下所面对的巨大挑战。

然而生态旅游在中国仍处于起步阶段。近年迅速增长的中产阶级大多喜欢到国外旅游，而选择国内旅游的富裕人士都倾向于五星级的奢华假期。遗憾的是，环保在这些地方往往不受重视。许多中国人似乎对简朴农村风情兴趣缺缺，而自然风光正是阳朔胜地度假山庄的主要卖点。

「受教育越高的中国专业人士及向往阳朔恬淡风光的外籍家庭都很喜欢我们的度假设施。」柏昆说道。

瓦厂小家的目标顾客是生活优渥、旅游经验丰富的人士。但还是有部分客人对可持续发展旅游概念感到陌生。萨洋必须向他们解释「一次性用品如独立包装的卫浴用品并不环保，因此酒店不会提供。」

企业客户经常在生态酒店进行团队精神训练及召开董事会议，为酒店带来可观收入。以驿站度假村为例，宜家 and 可口可乐等跨国企业便占了其宾客总数的三至四成。不过，近年中国游客入住驿站度假村和小园的人数也有大幅增长。

「中国人对潮流非常敏感。」卢家宝说。萨洋也有同感，他指中国「有许多了不起的人，他们愿 >>



TOURISTS CAN LEARN ABOUT THE CHALLENGES FACING RURAL COMMUNITIES



both naked Retreats and the Yangshuo Mountain Retreat. Almost the entire staff of each was drawn from surrounding villages. Barclay employs a permanent onsite trainer at Yangshuo as a customer-service and English-language coach. He takes his staff on trips when the business hits its targets, which allows them to experience the culture and hospitality in other locations. The aim is to have them apply their learning in their own roles.

“Our high staff retention is directly related to our training and development, competitive pay rates and benefits such as our profit-sharing scheme,” says Barclay, whose staff collectively owns 10% of the business. He also offers no-interest loans to local start-ups and scholarships to children from the area.

Educating staff and local residents about sustainable practices, such as using

locally sourced, seasonal products, is just one side of the coin. Tourists can also gain first-hand insight into the challenges faced by rural communities in a time of mass urbanisation.

There is, however, no escaping the fact that eco-tourism in China remains in its infancy. Members of today's mushrooming middle class generally prefer to holiday outside the country. Those who choose to vacation in China, and who have the means pay high prices for accommodation, expect five-star levels of luxury. Unfortunately, environmental friendliness tends not to be a high priority for such businesses. Moreover, many Chinese seem to have little interest in the kind of rustic lifestyle experience that's available at the Yangshuo Mountain Retreat, where natural wonders are the primary drawcard.

“More professional, educated >>

THE NUMBER OF CHINESE VISITORS HAS INCREASED SHARPLY



意接受改变和成长」。

虽然这三家酒店都采取可持续发展模式，但是所提供的旅游乐趣却各有不同。瓦厂小家的定位是「简约奢华」，阳朔胜地度假山庄以乡土淳朴特色取胜，驿站度假村则呼吁客人「放松身心，休养生息」。

三位企业家对未来都有宏图大计。驿站度假村第二期发展项目naked Stables Private Reserve刚开业，拥有功能性环保别墅。萨洋和他的团队正研究新计划，准备朝太阳能方向发展。柏昆则筹划开办一所特殊教育学校，并就更有利于可持续发展的环境管理策略进行推广工作。

开创生态旅游先锋的成功故事，摒弃利润至上的旧观念，证明可持续发展旅游业的可行性。凭着这些企业家的专业才干及对社会责任的执着追求，必将协助实现中国未来生态旅游业的美丽愿景。■

Chinese tend to enjoy the retreat more, as well as international expat families who want to enjoy the peace and scenery around Yangshuo," Barclay says.

The Schoolhouse-run Brickyard's target customers are relatively well-off, globe-trotting travellers. Yet some are new to the sustainable tourism concept and Spear says he explains that "disposable amenities like individually wrapped toiletries are not ecologically sound, and therefore not provided".

A sizeable chunk of the earnings at each of these eco-retreats comes from corporate clients involved in team-building weekends and board meetings. At naked Retreats, multinationals like Ikea and Coca-Cola account for about 30-40% of the guests. However, the number of Chinese visitors to naked Retreats and the Schoolhouse has increased dramatically in recent years.

"The thing with China is that people pick up on trends really quickly," says Lo, the naked Retreats MD. This is echoed by Spear, who says that China is "full of extraordinary people who are willing to change and grow".

Though all three businesses are based on the same sustainability model, they're pitched at different levels of luxury. The Brickyard positions itself as a purveyor of "the luxury of simplicity", the Yangshuo Mountain Retreat delivers a rustic, no-frills escape while naked Retreats urges guests to "Retreat. Regain. Restore".

All the entrepreneurs have big plans for the future. Naked Retreats has just opened the naked Stables Private Reserve, a luxury resort of purpose-built eco-villas. Spear and his team are examining potential new projects and moving towards switching to solar power. Barclay plans to set up a special-needs school and is lobbying for a more sustainable environmental-management strategy.

The success of these sustainable tourism pioneers proves the viability of business models that run counter to the conventional profit-maximisation approach.

By drawing on their professional skills and pursuing social goals, the entrepreneurs behind these initiatives are helping ensure a bright future for eco-tourism in China. ■



阳朔胜地度假山庄
(左上图) 石灰岩山峰
Yangshuo Mountain Retreat:
Above, left: limestone peak

新たなホスピタリティを求めて

万里の長城で有名な慕田峪は以前は観光客による経済効果がわずかだった。そんな慕田峪で成功したアメリカ人がスクールハウスのオーナー、ジム・スピア氏である。地元での賃貸契約により家賃が村の収益となった。浙江省のネイキッド・リトリート・ホーム・ビレッジと 桂林にある陽朔ホテル・ビレッジインも同様だ。これらホテルの共通点はビジネスの持続可能性と地元住民の雇用や業者の利用による地元への貢献、そして自然保護を重視していることだ。しかし中国ではエコツーリズムに対する意識が未だ乏しく、環境保護を優先する観光地は少ない。また自然の美しさが魅力である田園でのライフスタイルに関心のある中国人はごくわずかだ。しかし中国人は流行に敏感なため、変化に対して積極的な人々も多い。ここで紹介したホテルの持続可能な観光事業は、従来の利潤最大化方法に反するビジネスのあり方を証明しており、優れたスキルと社会的ゴールの導入は中国におけるエコツーリズムの拡大に繋がる。■