

## Historic Preservation



For decades, the Chinese government has attempted the protection of famous historical and cultural cities (see Tourism section in the Economy chapter for a listing of these cities under national key protection). The protection of these cities includes both the preservation of the ancient buildings and historical sectors, and the preservation of the layout, features and traditional cultures of the ancient cities. In November 2003, the Ministry of Construction and the State Cultural Relics Bureau under the Ministry of Culture together released a new list that for the first time puts under protection historically and culturally famous towns and villages. The list includes 10 towns including Jingsheng Town in Lingshi County, Shanxi Province, Zhouzhuang Town of Kunshan City in Jiangsu Province, Wu Town of Tongxiang City in Zhejiang Province and 12 villages including Cuandixia Village of Mentougou District of Beijing, Xiwan Village of Qikou Town in Lin County of Jiangxi Province.

In the 1990s China made significant investment toward protecting cultural relics. Special subsidies by the Central Government for the protection of cultural relics reached some 700 million yuan for about 1,000 projects. The Palace Museum in Beijing, Potala Palace in Lhasa and the Longmen Grottoes in Henan Province, for example, underwent major renovations. Concerned governmental departments invested in a special fund to protect cultural relics in the project areas of the national basic

construction of the Yellow River Xiaolangdi Project and the Yangtze River Three Gorges Water Conservancy Project. The Law on Cultural Relics Protection of the PRC was revised in October 2002 for the first time to institute regulations on transfer and exchange of cultural relics. In 2004, the government of Tibet Autonomous Region plans to appropriate RMB 70 million yuan on preservation of the Potala Palace, the Norbuglinkha Park and the Sakya Temple. Major renovations planned for the Shaolin Monastery in Henan Province were expected to be completed by October 2004.



In recent years, cultural relics have come under increasing legal protection. China has already participated in all the four international treaties of cultural relics preservation. The Law on Cultural Relics Protection of the PRC revised in October 2002 institutes regulations on the transfer and exchange of cultural relics for the first time. In 2003 the government publicized the Regulations on Enforcing the Law on Cultural Relics Protection, Provisional Rules on Administering the Auction of Cultural Relics, and the first special law on the protection of the Great Wall — Beijing Administrative Methods of Protection of the Great Wall.

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