

How Can Shanghai's "Hottest Island" Keep Drawing the Crowds?



At the 2026 annual sessions of the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress and the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the government work report said Shanghai would further integrate culture and tourism in 2026, with a particular focus on developing world-class tourism brands, including waterfront destinations along the Huangpu River and Suzhou Creek.

Located along this waterfront corridor, can Fuxing Island create a major cultural and tourism brand with global influence? And how can this hugely popular destination sustain its appeal and turn today's buzz into lasting impact?

Fuxing Island Has Seen Wave After Wave of Popularity, Emerging as a New Landmark for Urban Life

Guan Yuanfa, a deputy to the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress and Chairman of Yangpu Riverside Investment and Development Group Co., Ltd., has pointed to the strong momentum generated by a series of community-driven events on Fuxing Island, which helped turn the island, covering just one square kilometre, into one of the hottest destinations on social media in a remarkably short time.

One event that particularly impressed Guan was the massive immersive comics and animation convention held by Xiaohongshu on Fuxing Island last August. It was generating buzz even before it opened. Nearly 300,000 users took part in a quiz for a chance to claim free tickets. During two rounds of public ticket sales, daytime passes sold out in as little as three seconds, while full-day passes were snapped up in a record two seconds. "That shows just how powerful these communities can be. For Gen Z, those born between 1995 and 2009, and

Generation Alpha, born between 2010 and 2024, the chance to connect with people who share their interests is at the heart of what makes an event appealing."

This year, Fuxing Island will continue to host major community-focused events, including music festivals and gaming carnivals, while improving transport links, commercial facilities and other infrastructure to strengthen both the island's identity and its functions. Guan hopes that during the 15th Five-Year Plan period, Fuxing Island can build on its vibrant communities and become a major hub supporting Shanghai's ambition to establish itself as Asia's leading performing arts capital.

Fuxing Island's ongoing renewal and packed calendar of events have kept the buzz growing, turning the island into a new landmark for urban life.

Today, a walk beneath the leafy canopy of Gongqing Road reveals how nature and industrial heritage coexist in harmony. At Chuantai Park, history meets art, while renovated factory buildings seamlessly blend the old with the new. Every corner of the island tells a story of urban transformation, while each event showcases the possibilities created by bringing together culture, commerce, tourism, sports and exhibitions.

For Fuxing Island, a series of major events, including the table tennis carnival, will help further raise its profile and build a strong brand, supporting its ambition to become a Shanghai urban icon with global influence.

In fact, Fuxing Island's rise to prominence has been driven by the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, sports and exhibitions. According to the Yangpu District Culture and Tourism Bureau, cultural resources continued to flow to the island in the first half of 2026, with a series of major events drawing

widespread attention, attracting high-profile guests and bringing different sectors together. "If you want to hold an event on Fuxing Island, you have to compete for the most popular dates," an official said.

Fuxing Island has had no shortage of standout moments this year. During the May Day holiday, the large lawn at the northern end of the island opened to the public for the first time with the "Fuxing Party | Fuxing Island Music Festival." Popular performers including Tengger, Zheng Jun and Wang Zhengliang, together with the rare expanse of riverside lawn in central Shanghai, drew more than 10,000 visitors to the island. Running alongside the festival were an immersive exhibition based on the hugely popular Chinese animated series A Record of a Mortal's Journey to Immortality and an offline creative market featuring content creators. Together, the events brought live entertainment, digital animation and youth culture into one space, striking a chord with younger audiences. University students, young entrepreneurs and short-video enthusiasts made up more than 70 percent of attendees, while large numbers of young creators shared their visits online, quickly putting this once little-known destination on the city's cultural map.

Fuxing Island has also become an increasingly popular setting for star-studded events. The 2026 China Film and Television Night, an official event of the Shanghai International Film Festival, was held on the island, with actors including Dilraba Dilmurat, Liu Ye and Yan Ni bringing star power to Chuantai Park. The red carpet for the 33rd ERC Chinese Top Ten Awards was also staged here, with dozens of musicians, including Wang Sulong, Zhang Xincheng and Huang Zihongfan, greeting fans both on-site and online. "This venue is so cool. The combination of its industrial character and live entertainment makes it

really distinctive," one fan said.

Deep Integration of Culture, Commerce, Tourism, Sports and Exhibitions Brings Multiple Industries Together on a Vibrant Island

A vibrant island naturally creates opportunities for different industries to thrive together. The 2026 Shanghai Online Audiovisual Creators Conference was successfully held at Fuxing Yunting, highlighting how high-quality online audiovisual content can help tell China's stories and showcase the city's image, while attracting companies and content creators to Shanghai, Yangpu and Fuxing Island. Short videos featuring highlights from guest speakers and original content by creators generated 12 million views across online platforms. Reports on WeChat received more than 200,000 views, while related topics on Weibo surpassed 14 million views and made Shanghai's local trending list. Internationally, numerous English-language media outlets published reports on the event, helping bring Fuxing Island to a global audience.

More events spanning culture, commerce, tourism, sports and exhibitions are scheduled for Fuxing Island in the second half of 2026 as part of efforts to further raise the island's profile, reporters learned. Xiaohongshu's highly anticipated "REDLAND" Open-World Adventure Island will return during the National Day holiday. Last year, the event transformed the island's distinctive industrial heritage and riverside landscape into the world's first large-scale immersive fan-themed "ita island," drawing more than 100,000 visitors. This year, role-playing, interactive missions and IP-themed photo spots will once again create a large-scale offline gaming and animation experience built around immersion, play and freedom of exploration.

The opening performance of the 25th China Shanghai International Arts Festival's "Art Space" program is planned for mid-October, with leading international groups expected to stage a world-class aerial arts spectacle. A diverse lineup of theatre companies and bands from China and abroad is also expected to take part,

using Fuxing Island's distinctive landscape as a natural stage to create a signature outdoor performing arts event combining industrial aesthetics with an international artistic vision.

The 18th Shanghai International Photographic Art Exhibition will open in late October under the theme "Light of All Things: Imaging the Future." The exhibition will explore the many possibilities for the future of photographic and visual art as technology opens up new forms of artistic expression, in line with Fuxing Island's vision as an island of digital intelligence, design and art, and people-centered urban development.

Other events will follow, including the Shanghai University Student Tourism Carnival, the Jiangchaole · Fuxing Yixia concert series and the Shanghai Citizens' Karaoke Competition. Catering to a wide range of audiences, from young people to local residents and visitors, these events will continue to bring fresh energy to Fuxing Island.

By drawing visitors through events and building distinctive cultural brands, Fuxing Island can not only attract more people and bring greater vitality to the island, but also give nearby residents easy access to high-quality cultural experiences and enhance their quality of life.

From the breakout success of major table tennis events to the deep integration of culture, commerce, tourism, sports and exhibitions, Fuxing Island is drawing on its distinctive industrial heritage and using cultural and sporting events to energize urban life and strengthen its profile.

Looking ahead, Yangpu will bring more high-quality cultural and arts projects to Fuxing Island and continue to raise awareness of the island's distinctive identity. It will also seek support from municipal authorities to develop Fuxing Island into a vibrant destination for art, youth culture and technological innovation, enriching residents' access to diverse, high-quality cultural experiences. The goal is to turn this small island in the Huangpu River into a new calling card for Shanghai and a new model for urban development. ■He Yajun (Adapted from Shanghai Morning Post) Images on this page are file photos.

