

Qingdao offers historic architecture, fascinating tales



The Trestle is an iconic tourist attraction in Qingdao. — All photos by Yang Yang



If we consider architecture as a kind of concrete music, then the old buildings in Qingdao are like a symphony, bearing the history of Qingdao and also reflecting an artistic tint.

Yang Yang

Qingdao, a coastal city on the Yellow Sea in east China's Shandong Province that is at roughly the same latitude as Tokyo and San Francisco, derived its name from a small offshore island.

With a thick profusion of yearlong greenery and surrounded by reefs and rocks, the island has long been popular with locals who nicknamed it Xiaqingdao, or "little green isle."

People later started to refer to the entire city as Qingdao.

An ideal place to begin a journey through Qingdao, which offers delightful views in all seasons, is the Trestle, a military port set up during the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

The port, just a strip of water away from Xiaqingdao, stretches to a length of 440 meters and is 8-11.5 meters wide. It is made up of a stone bank in the north, a central lounge bridge and an island

breakwater in the south with a pavilion above.

The Trestle used to be the last auxiliary port of navy torpedo fleet barracks the Beiyang Fleet of the Qing Dynasty built from 1881 to 1897, and the only one that remained unfinished at that time.

Construction of the Trestle was forced to halt as the defense army of the Qing Dynasty stationed in Qingdao was dispatched to the northeastern Liaodong Peninsula battlefield during the Sino-Japanese War in 1894.

After the war, the Qing Dynasty government, having to pay a large amount of war reparations, lacked enough funds to sustain the construction, which had been dogged by other factors such as tidal effects, climate and unfavorable seasons.

The government's intention to reconstruct the port was further thwarted on the morning of November 14, 1897, when the German navy landed at Qingdao through the Trestle



A petroleum lamp

as part of the Triple Intervention against the cession of the Liaodong Peninsula to Japan.

The German navy dismantled some barracks architecture and further strengthened the port so it could dock its ships.

The Chinese characters for the Trestle, 栈桥, first appeared after the invasion of the city by Japan to replace Germany on

November 7, 1914.

The Trestle, after multiple repair projects in the contemporary era, is a landmark tourist site for the city now.

Vendors sell seashells and conches at the seaside or along the deck of the Trestle for adults who still nurture childhood shell-collecting memories. Watching a beachfront sunrise above the Trestle inspires wonder at the beauty of nature.

The Qingdao Railway Station is close to the Trestle and a convenient traffic transit with plenty of lodging choices nearby from where to commence your trip to the architectural heritage buildings of Qingdao. The station is a German Renaissance-style complex combined with some Chinese elements. Visitors can transfer to Metro Line 1 and 3 through the subway station there.

Qingdao was a fishing village named Kiaochow before the occupation by Germany. On November 14, 1897, the Qing Dynasty government signed