

Striving Towards a Modern Coastal Metropolis

# Qatar World Cup: Excitement in the Air

By Gou Wen

The much-anticipated FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 kicked off on November 20 with a grand fireworks display, to the delight of worldwide fans after a four-year wait. 32 national teams have gathered in Qatar to compete for the World Cup Trophy in a 28-day period.

In this week's feature, we will take you through some of Qatar 2022's highlights.

## New Technology

2022 is Qatar's first time and Asia's second time hosting the World Cup. The 22<sup>nd</sup> tournament is also notable for being the first World Cup held during winter in the northern hemisphere, by a country that has never entered the finals.

Technological advances are a defining feature of Qatar 2022, notably with the first-time use of semi-automated offside technology (SAOT), which will enable match officials to make faster, more accurate offside decisions. SAOT was deployed in the high-profile opening battle between Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

The new technology consists of 12 dedicated tracking cameras, Al Rihla, the official match ball embedded with an inertial measurement unit (IMU) sensor, and an artificial intelligence system.

The 12 special cameras are mounted underneath the roof of the stadium to track the ball and multiple data points of each individual player, 50 times per second, calculating their exact position on the pitch.

## Chinese Elements at the World Cup

An array of products made in China, from stadiums and souvenirs to new energy vehicles debuted at Qatar 2022 as Chinese companies make their mark on the World Cup.

The 80,000-seat Lusail Stadium, the centerpiece venue of this year's tournament, was built by China Railway International



Qatar World Cup generates increased consumer spending on food and beverages in Ningbo.

[Photo by Tang Yan]

Group and Qatar HBK using cutting-edge green technology and sustainable materials. The stadium appeared on Qatar's new 10-riyal and 22-riyal commemorative banknotes.

One month ago, Qatar welcomed the arrival of two giant pandas, Si Hai and Jing Jing, in Doha, as China's gift to mark the World Cup. This is the first giant panda cooperation program between China and the Middle East region. On opening day, hordes of visitors flocked to the Panda House at Al Khor Park. Many children left clutching newly-purchased panda dolls.

China-made vehicles provide shuttle service to match officials, journalists, and spectators between stadiums. This is the first time that an international sporting event is using such a

large fleet of China's NEVs and the first time that green vehicles make up the majority of the World Cup shuttle fleet.

70% of Qatar World Cup merchandise come from Yiwu, Zhejiang, where officially-licensed jerseys, soccer balls, hats backpacks, whistles, mugs, cushions, and other products are made. These items are distributed to stores around Doha and snapped up by eager local and international fans. Some stores report having to place additional orders with their authorized Chinese suppliers due to high demand.

## Excitement Swells in Ningbo

Every World Cup generates

increased consumer spending on food and beverages. 2022 is no exception. This year, many matches will take from 9 PM to early morning Beijing time. Sports fans and bars in Ningbo are prepared to dial up the excitement.

The K- GUAN bar near Yinzhou Wanda Plaza is decked out with the national flags of the World Cup teams and football star posters. A large-screen TV is tuned into the sports channel, while private booths are equipped with individual TVs. Guests can guess the outcomes of each match to win beers.

Anyone who has stayed up late to cheer on their favorite teams knows the importance of a midnight snack. Many restaurants, particularly barbecue grills and hotpot establishments, are

offering special deals. In the week that started on November 6, the number of Ningbo restaurants offering World Cup-themed deals grew by 82% compared to the previous week; their sales increased by 68% week-on-week.

Combining the World Cup experience with an outdoor picnic or camping trip is also very popular. At Ningbo Cultural Plaza, a huge outdoor screen has been installed to broadcast the matches live, surrounded by canopy-covered seating. At Ninghai county's Xiaosen Campsite, the "World Cup package" provides the unique experience of watching the matches in a spacious tent with a sumptuous beer- and-BBQ meal, warmed by a campfire.

## SPOTLIGHT

## Cherry Tomatoes are in Season

By Dong Na

Recently, at Lvxin Farm in Zhenhai District, countless red cherry tomatoes are dangling from their vines. Farm workers are busily collecting the harvest.

The seedlings were planted in late August. Now, three months later, the first batch has ripened. Each day, the workers harvest around 100 kg.

Cherry tomatoes are not tolerant of high temperatures. Sprouts cannot grow roots well over Ningbo's hot summers. The plants are also prone to disease. To overcome these difficulties, Lvxin Farm uses soilless cultivation to facilitate root growth. Physical barriers and biological agents are deployed to prevent the spread of diseases. Air conditioning and water sprinkling systems help the cherry tomatoes survive summer.

Zhenhai's farms have mastered the techniques of cultivating premium cherry tomatoes. The techniques will be rolled out across more farms to benefit more growers.

Premium cherry tomatoes are sold in gift boxes of 2kg, priced at approximately ¥100. Although the planting costs are higher, the farm can operate continuously for many years. Moreover, cherry tomatoes ripen earlier in the year than regular tomatoes and can generate higher returns for the farmers.

In the Nanlanwan modern agricultural demonstration park of Xiepu Town, Zhenhai, an advanced cherry tomato farm is under construction.

The farm will have greenhouses and facilities for product exhibition, R&D, marketing, and training.

Currently, the first phase of the farm is being built, consisting of greenhouses, utilities, and supporting infrastructure. The greenhouses will be leased to large growers after completion.

The second phase will consist of cutting-edge "smart greenhouses", 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> of buildings, and other ancillary facilities.

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## 双语汇 Different Tongues

## 福泉山：一山观湖海，万翠拥福泉

By Xu Zhuowei

Fuquan Mountain is located to the southeast of Dongqian Lake. On the top of the mountain, visitors can take in the spectacular view of Dongqian Lake and even see the vague outline of the coast, thinly veiled in clouds and mist.

福泉山位于东钱湖的东南。置身山顶，既可俯瞰东钱湖粼粼波光，又可眺望东海云蒸霞蔚。

The undulating ridges, crisscrossing valleys, and babbling creeks make for a diverse and interesting landscape. Locals describe Fuquan Mountain as "veiled in mist on clear days and covered by clouds on rainy days". From time to time, mist

rises from the valleys, a phenomenon of the area's distinct yet dynamic weather system.

景区内山峦起伏，山谷纵横，溪水潺潺，地形变化丰富，形成不同的山地空间与自然风光。有乡谚说：“晴天遍地雾，雨天满山云。”

More than 240 hectares of rounded tea shrubs are planted on the rolling hillsides, forming gentle swells and dips of emerald green. With many hiking trails, tea farms, and resorts, Fuquan Mountain is a good destination for experiencing tea culture.

山顶3600余亩茶树环坡而栽，形成“茶岭碧波”景观，颇为壮观。福泉山以登山眺望、山野游览健身、茶园采摘、山上度假为游赏主题，是一个集名茶、名树、名泉为一体的休闲好去处。



Fuquan Mountain. /福泉山。

[Photo by Tang Yan] 唐严 摄

