



MALU TOWN CELEBRATES ANOTHER BUMPER GRAPE HARVEST

The Kyoho grape at Malu Grape Park, weighing 11-13 grams each, is renowned for its juicy pulp with a hint of strawberry aroma. — Li Pin



Following Kyoho, the Sunshine Rose variety is now ripe and ready for the market. — Li Pin

Si Shushu, Peng Jing and Yang Yang

Another bumper grape harvest is being celebrated in Malu Town, Jiading District. The 24th Shanghai Malu Grape Culture Festival began at Jiayuanhai Art Museum on July 5. People are welcome to pick grapes, watch outdoor movies, take part in a folk guitar contest, or go on summer outings. The events will continue through October 7.

Malu grapes were approved as a geographical indication agricultural product of the People's Republic of China in 2015. All grapes grown in Malu, regardless of variety, earn the name "Malu Grapes." Most of the town's grapes are grown at the Malu Grapes Research Institute, Malu Grapes Development Co or Malu Grape Park.

Forty early-ripening and mid-season varieties including No. 1 Malu grapes, Evergreen Rose and Seedless Olympia, were on display during the opening ceremony. All three are known for their juicy pulp.

Among them the Seedless Olympia made its debut this year.

About 270 hectares of vines are expected to produce 4,400 tons of Malu grapes worth about 100 million yuan (US\$13.8 million) this year.

The Malu Grapes Association consulted several companies and cooperatives to establish the "2024 Malu Grapes Selected Fruits Standards." Fourteen strict evaluation standards were put in place on Summer Black, Sunshine Rose and Kyoho grapes grown in Malu.

"All the selected grapes must have a green certificate and we have detailed requirements regarding color, bunch density and flavor. For example, each bunch of selected Summer Black should have 65-70 grapes, with every grape weighing 8 to 10 grams," said Zhou Ying, head of the agricultural and rural service center of Malu Town.

A block chain traceability tool was officially launched during the ceremony, making the production process transparent and traceable. Through scanning the consumption code, buyers of Malu

grapes will have access to their digital certificate, green certificate, awards and verification conditions.

The town of Malu is also trying a crossover collaboration this year. It teamed with the beverage brand Bishan Village to launch the white grape and red grape sparkling water drinks. The beverages are made with either Kyoho or Sunshine Rose grapes. Ten Chinese homophones related to grapes are being used in the advertisements.

Visitors who dine at the *xiaolongbao* (small-steamed buns) eatery Lao Chang Sheng will have a chance to taste the grape-flavored sparkling water when ordering noodles with scallions.

Also during the opening ceremony, Malu Grape Art Village launched its agriculture, culture and tourism center.

"In the next step, the town will become a model rural revitalization zone that excels in art rehabilitation, homestay, wildlife and farming tourism," said Jin Meihua, head of the town's culture and sports service center.

Grapes, peaches and pears

Grape vineyards outside Malu Town also offer a chance to pick your own grapes. At Wenxing Grape Orchard in Huating Town, a group of visitors were in high spirits plucking fruit right off the vines in its greenhouses.

In spite of the high temperature, people were adept at using scissors to cut off branches with grapes.

"It was great fun," said a female tourist surnamed Lu.

A tourist surnamed Chen said: "My child has stayed home almost everyday since the beginning of the summer vacation. He should go outdoors more often."

Grape picking season lasts about three months and is available daily from 8am to 7pm.

The peach harvest is also in full swing at Juyuan Orchard, which has about 3,000 peach trees, including Yangshan melting flesh and yellow flesh varieties. Peach picking season runs until August and each kilogram costs 50 yuan.



A new line of sparkling water drinks crafted from Malu grapes debuted at this year's Malu Grape Culture Festival. — Si Shushu

Orchard manager Zhang Guorong said: "Currently we sell more than 500 kilograms of peaches daily. In peak selling season the daily sales volume is expected to reach around 2,000 kilograms."

At Lijiang Ecological Park in Jiading Industrial Park, the harvest of Shanghai Honey Pears and Cuiguan Pears has begun.

Shanghai Cuiguan Pears are nicknamed "June Snow" for their snowy white pulp and fragrance.

"Thanks to abundant rainfall in June, our first batch of pears is both juicy and large. By July, their sugar content reaches peak levels, making this an excellent season for fruit picking," said Shen Weigao, chairman of Shanghai Lijiang Ecological Park Co.

Shen also explained how the pear blossoms are pollinated since they have a very low rate of self-fertilization.

Pear trees blossom in March. At that time, branches from different varieties of pear trees will be cut and placed inside bottles filled with water, then hung on the trees waiting to be pollinated. This attracts bees and, together with the aid of the wind, facilitates cross-pollination, Shen said.

Pear picking season at the park continues through the end of August.

If you go:

• Wenxing Grape Orchard

Opening hours: 8am-7pm
Address: 392 Shicun, Tanghang Village, Huating Town
华亭镇唐行石村392号



• Juyuan Orchard

Opening hours: 8:30am-5pm (closed on Mondays, last entry 4pm)
Address: No.23, Lane 5050 Huyi Highway
沪宜公路5050弄23号



• Lijiang Ecological Park

Address: 5088 Shuangzhu Highway
霜竹公路5088号



A group of expatriates and their families enjoyed the fun of picking grapes at Shanghai Malu Grape Park. — Xu Chenyi

Expatriates try their hands at picking grapes

Hu Min

IT was nearly 39 degrees Celsius in the afternoon, and the temperature was even higher underneath the grape trellises inside the greenhouses of Shanghai Malu Grape Park in Jiading District.

However, the broiling mercury did not dampen the enthusiasm of a group of expatriates who beat the summer heat and enjoyed the fun of picking grapes.

The famous sweet and succulent Malu grapes are ripening in Jiading.

The annual Shanghai Malu Grape Culture Festival, in its 24th version, kicked off in Malu Town on July 5, inviting residents and tourists to enjoy the delight of picking and tasting the juicy fruit over the next few months.

Scott Kyle Stockton from the United States said he had a very pleasant experience.

"Today is a very hot day, but it is really nice to get out in the nature, and that was fun," he told Shanghai Daily.

It was his first visit to the park.

"I have never been to this grape park before, and there were a number of different types of grapes, and they tasted really really sweet and very delicious," he said.

"Today was very surprising and interesting," he said. "I got a lot of grapes, and I have some to share with my friends. I will definitely recommend the place."

It is the second year of Stockton in Shanghai, who lives in Jiading and works as a teacher.

"I am still finding many new places (in Jiading), which offer interesting experiences," he said. "The Jiading Old Town with historic buildings is always nice to visit."

Kenny, from the United States, visited the park with his daughter.

"It is the first time that my daughter

is here, which brings more sense for me," he said. "I am so happy about that and the atmosphere."

They picked a lot of grapes.

"I have every variety and all the varieties are good, really sweet," he said. "My daughter enjoyed it so much."

The expats also visited a cultural and creative bazaar and experienced the everlasting charm of China's intangible cultural heritage as part of the festival.

Among the offerings were *haipai* (Shanghai-style) *pankou* (buttons on cheongsam), lacquer fans and Suzhou embroidery.

The summertime village gala presented a true visual feast, showcasing a diverse array of performances from dragon dances and Yueju opera to cross talk and magic shows.

The festival, which runs until October 8, includes a variety of engaging activities such as grape picking, grape planting, wine making, stir-frying grape tea, and educational presentations about grapes. The park is expected to attract a large number of visitors during this period.

The Jiayuanhai Art Museum in Dayu Village which is pretty close to the park offers a short respite from the summer heat, where people can browse nearly 10,000 collection of books from art to design and sip coffee at an outdoor terrace.

If you go:

Shanghai Malu Grape Park
Tickets: 15 yuan (free for children under 1.3 meters and seniors over 70 years old)
Opening hours: 8am-4:30pm
Address: 29 Dazhi Road, Malu Town
马陆镇大治路29号

Jiayuanhai Art Museum
Opening hours: 9:30am-5:30pm
Admission: Free
Address: 39 Dazhi Road, Malu Town
马陆镇大治路39号