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## OLD TEA PLANTATION DOUBLES AS PRODUCTION AND EXHIBITION SPACE



ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

### A Chinese architectural firm has converted three old tea plantation buildings into a cultural centre near Guangzhou

**Spotted:** O-office Architects, a firm founded by He Jianxiang and Jiang Ying in Guangzhou in 2007, has converted three old tea plantation buildings into a cultural centre. The idea was conceived as part of the (Re)forming Duichuan Tea Yards project, which is working to restore production at an old tea plantation in the Duichuan Village. The three converted buildings were old production factories, left derelict after the plantation fell into disrepair at the start of the 21st century. Now, they will offer exhibitions on Duichuan tea culture, in line with the first new batches of Duichuan tea on the 300 acres of land and water on site.

The entire site has been designed to evoke and enhance the connection between nature and industry. The factory conversions kept as much of the traditional structural heritage of the buildings as possible, retaining and mimicking the old concrete structures and narrow steel windows.

The buildings are positioned on an island in the centre of a reservoir, which is surrounded by woodland and housing for the farmers, and a dark granite podium lies at the base of the buildings, through which various trees and ponds poke. This podium doubles up as both an exhibition space and a viewing platform and also connects to the rooftop for a full panoramic tour space. The architects [explained that](#) “We hope this tour can evoke a sense of ‘in search of a lost time’ [whilst] at the same time acting as a response against the rapid industrialisation of modern urban and rural areas.”

The centre also features various public spaces such as rooftop gardens, which are connected to each other by bridges for breathtaking views and are surrounded by bamboo screens; a fine-dining

restaurant; and office space.

Written By: Holly Hamilton

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5th February 2021

Website: [o-officearch.com](https://o-officearch.com)

### **Takeaway:**

In a world rapidly adjusting to the pressing environmental issues of the day, we at Springwise have noticed an ever-increasing growth in innovations using and celebrating the natural world, especially within architecture. Recently, we saw how these British developers are wanting to bring this "Green Quarter" into a dense urban area, and how this hemp-built country house incorporates the natural light and beautiful views of the area into its design. If nature is the new 'aesthetic', this can only be achieved by working in harmony with the natural world, an idea which has the potential to make design and architecture more sustainable, for good.