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A tourist at the Space Home Pavilion poses in front of flowers bred in outer space.

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## Probing new horizons

The launch of China's second lunar exploration probe has brought the Space Home Pavilion into fashion, **Li Xinzhu** reports.

The successful launch of China's second lunar exploration probe on Oct 1 has turned visitors' attention to the Space Home Pavilion inside the Expo Garden.

A series of celebratory activities took place at the pavilion from Oct 1 to 5, including the giving away of commemorative models of the probe.

The pavilion has earned praise from numerous visitors since the Expo launched in May, with special praise reserved for its outdoor LCD screen showing space-exploration movies.

"The LCD screen is so cool. I couldn't help but stare at it," said Guo Dou, 21, a sophomore at the University of Science and Technology of China. He wasn't as impressed with the exhibits inside, adding that they were "better suited to young kids".

The pavilion, which runs along

the theme of "Harmonious City, Humans and Outer Space", has three main parts, composed of a cinema and two exhibition rooms. It spans 3,000 square meters and is located in Zone D.

The pavilion's main mission is to map the development of space technologies, and the impact of this on mankind's present and future. It welcomes over 20,000 visitors every day.

"We hope to deliver basic knowledge about space in a simple way. We don't want to confuse visitors by presenting abstruse theories," said Wang Juan, a member of staff.

"Movies are widely used at the Expo to disseminate information and we've been heavily relying on this medium as well."

Visitors can get a general idea about the origins of space exploration in ancient China by watching two eight-minute animated movies

at the pavilion's 3D cinema.

Guests can also put on a virtual space suit to simulate life as an astronaut. Meanwhile, an exhibition called "Space Breeding" teaches people how plants and vegetables can be grown much faster outside the earth's atmosphere.

Pavilion Director Wang Qiuyu said he wants to educate the public about the new technology, which has been successfully applied to vegetables such as tomatoes and chili peppers.

"It was amazing that flowers can bloom so quickly then return to their original form," said 13-year-old Xu Xiaohan. "I have no idea how the technology works though."

In the third exhibition room, visitors' eyes are drawn to beautiful images about life in the future.

The major exhibition hall focuses on how to make use of space tech-



A pair of gloves worn by Chinese astronauts.

ASIANEWSPHOTO

nologies to build an "intelligent city", according to Ma Xingqi, who serves as the pavilion's vice-director.

He said that future societies will be able to relegate all kinds of mundane household chores to a hand-held remote control, even tasks such as peeling apples and cleaning windows.

"I can hardly believe it, but my

son keeps saying it is very possible," said 55-year-old Zhao Yunqi. "It was a real eye-opener of a journey for me."

Previous news reports said that Yang Liwei, the first man sent into space by the Chinese space program, will attend the Space Home Pavilion's special pavilion day on Oct 15, however this was not confirmed by pavilion staff.