Supporting Information

Highly Enantioselective Synthesis of Functionalized Azepino[1,2-*a*]indoles *via* NHC-Catalyzed [3+4] Annulation

Shi-Ya Zhu¹, Yuanzhen Zhang¹, Xin-Fa Chen¹, Jun Huang¹, Shi-Hui Shi², Xin-Ping Hui^{1,*}

¹State Key Laboratory of Applied Organic Chemistry, College of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Lanzhou University, Lanzhou 730000, P. R. China ²Shaanxi Key Laboratory of Chemical Reaction Engineering, College of Chemistry and Chemical

Engineering, Yan'an University, Yan'an 716000, Shaanxi, P. R. China

E-mail: huixp@lzu.edu.cn

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1. General information

¹H NMR and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker AVANCE III 400 spectrometer using tetramethylsilane as internal reference, and chemical shifts (δ) and coupling constants (*J*) were expressed in ppm and Hz, respectively. The HRMS analysis was obtained on a Bruker Apex II FT-ICR mass spectrometer with ESI ionization method. Optical rotation was measured by the Perkin Elmer 341 polarimeter. The *ee* value determination was carried out using HPLC with chiral Chirapak column on Agilent 1260 with a UV-detector. Melting points were taken on an X–4 melting point apparatus and were uncorrected. Dichloromethane, trichloromethane and 1,2-dichloroethane were freshly distilled from phosphorous pentoxide. Toluene and THF were freshly distilled from a deep-blue solution of sodium-benzophenone under nitrogen. DABCO, DMAP, Cs₂CO₃ and DIPEA were purchased from commercial suppliers and used directly. Triethylamine was dried by calcium hydride and freshly distilled under nitrogen atmosphere. All syntheses and manipulations were carried out under a dry nitrogen atmosphere. Flash column chromatography was carried out utilizing 200–300 mesh silica gel.

2. General procedure for preparation of substrates 1a–1c



The substituted 2-indolecarboxylic acid (20 mmol) was dissolved in dry THF (60 mL) and the reaction was cooled to 0 °C. Then LiAlH₄ (40 mmol, 1.52 g) was added slowly with stirring. After this, the reaction was kept for 10 min, and then warmed to room temperature and reacted for 6 h. The reaction was monitored by TLC. After completion, HCl solution (5.0 M) was added dropwise. The mixture was extracted with EtOAc (20 mL×3) and washed with saturated brine. The organic phase was combined and purified by column chromatography to give the substituted 2-indole methanol as a white solid.

The substituted 2-indole methanol (10 mmol) was dissolved in dry DCM (30 mL) and then added MnO_2 (50 mmol, 4.35 g) in portions. The reaction was carried out at room temperature and TLC monitored until substituted 2-indole methanol was consumed completely. Then, the remaining MnO_2 was removed by filtration through celite. The filtrate was concentrated and purified by column chromatography (PE / EA = 10:1) to give the substituted 2-indole formaldehyde as a white solid.

The substituted 2-indole formaldehyde (7.5 mmol) was dissolved in toluene (30 mL). Diethyl malonate (9 mmol, 1.03 mL) and piperidine (0.3 mL) were added with syringe to the solution. Then, the reaction was refluxed for 4 h at 120 °C. After the reaction was completed, the mixture was cooled to room temperature

and the toluene was evaporated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified by column chromatography (PE / EA = 5:1) to afford pale yellow solid.

The pale yellow solid (5 mmol) was dissolved in dry THF (30 mL) and the reaction was cooled to 0 °C. Sodium borohydride (5.5 mmol, 0.21 g) was added in portions. The reaction was stirred for 3 h at 0 °C. After the material was consumed completely, an aqueous solution of hydrogen chloride (5.0 M) was added dropwise until no bubbles are formed. The mixture was extracted with dichloromethane (20 mL×3) and the organic phase was combined, washed with water and saturated brine successively. The solution was dried, filtered and concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatography (PE / EA = 5:1) and the product was obtained as a pale yellow solid.

The product (4 mmol) was dissolved in dry DCM (10 mL) and DMF (0.8 mL) and was cooled to 0 °C. A solution of POCl₃ (8 mmol, 0.75 mL) in DCM (3 mL) was added slowly. The reaction was stirred for 5 min, and then warm to room temperature. After the reaction was completed, concentrated HCl (1.5 mL) was added and then saturated potassium carbonate solution was added dropwise at 0 °C to adjust the pH to 7–8. The aqueous phase was extracted with dichloromethane (10 mL×3) and the organic phase was combined. The solution was washed with brine, dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, filtered and concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatography (PE / EA = 2:1) to give the desired products 1 as a pale yellow solid.

dimethyl 2-((3-formyl-1*H*-indol-2-yl)methyl)malonate (**1a**). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.24 (s, 1H), 9.40 (br s, 1H), 8.20 – 8.18 (m, 1H), 7.41 – 7.36 (m, 1H), 7.30 – 7.27 (m, 2H), 3.92 (t, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1H), 3.76 (s, 6H), 3.69 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H).

dimethyl 2-((5-chloro-3-formyl-1*H*-indol-2-yl)methyl)malonate (**1b**). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.24 (s, 1H), 9.41 (br s, 1H), 8.18 – 8.16 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.37 (m, 1H), 7.28 – 7.27 (m, 1H), 3.92 (t, J = 6.4 Hz, 1H), 3.76 (s, 6H), 3.68 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 2H).

dimethyl 2-((3-formyl-5-methyl-1*H*-indol-2-yl)methyl)malonate (**1c**). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.23 (s, 1H), 9.40 (br s, 1H), 8.02 – 7.98 (m, 1H), 7.41 – 7.38 (m, 1H), 7.30 – 7.27 (m, 1H), 3.92 (t, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1H), 3.75 (s, 6H), 3.69 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 2.45 (s, 3H).

3. General procedure for the enantioselective synthesis of products 3a-3t.



To a solution of dimethyl 2-((3-formyl-1*H*-indol-2-yl)methyl)malonate (1) (0.10 mmol), substituted (*Z*)-2-bromo-3-phenylacrylaldehyde (2) (0.14 mmol, 1.4 equiv) and *N*-heterocyclic carbene catalyst **D** (10

mol %, 0.01 mmol, 3.7 mg) in DCM (1 mL), NEt₃ (0.154 mmol, 21 μ L, 1.54 equiv) was added at room temperature under nitrogen atmosphere. The reaction was stirred at room temperature (monitored by TLC). When the substrate **1** was disappeared, the reaction was quenched by water (2 mL). The mixture was extracted with ethyl acetate (10 mL×3) and the combined organic layer was dried over anhydrous MgSO₄. After removal of the solvent under reduced pressure, the crude residue was purified by flash column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/EtOAc (5:1–3:1) to afford the product **3**.

Racemic samples 3a-3t for the chiral HPLC spectra were prepared by the reaction of 1 (0.1 mmol) with 2 (0.14 mmol, 1.4 equiv) using racemic NHC precursor E (20 mol %) in the presence of Cs_2CO_3 (0.11 mmol, 1.1 equiv).

4. Characterization of compounds 3a-3t and 4

dimethyl (*R*)-11-formyl-6-oxo-8-phenyl-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3a)



White solid, mp 186 – 188 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –176 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.23 (s, 1H), 8.40 – 8.28 (m, 2H), 7.45 – 7.39 (m, 2H), 7.32 – 7.23 (m, 6H), 4.37 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.16 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.00 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.91 (dd, *J* = 12.0, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.28 – 3.23 (m, 4H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.42, 171.28, 169.79, 169.18, 142.37, 139.69, 135.67, 128.39, 128.35, 127.77, 126.50, 125.96, 125.59, 121.15, 119.71, 115.90, 61.26, 53.25, 52.74, 42.11, 41.88, 29.37. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₂NO₆ (M+H)⁺: 420.1442, Found: 420.1444. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 80/20, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 15.050 min, t_{major} = 16.957 min, 98% ee).

dimethyl (*S*)-8-(2-bromophenyl)-11-formyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3b)



White solid, mp 158 – 160 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –132 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.44 (s, 1H), 8.43 – 8.41 (m, 1H), 8.33 – 8.31 (m, 1H), 7.62 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.42 – 7.40 (m, 2H), 7.25 – 7.21 (m, 1H), 7.12 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 5.12 (d, *J* = 9.6 Hz, 1H), 4.56 (d, *J* = 16.4 Hz, 1H), 3.99 (d, *J* = 16.4 Hz, 1H), 3.59 (d, *J* = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 3.52 (s, 3H), 3.28 (s, 3H), 3.17 (dd, *J* = 2.4, 15.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.36, 185.32, 170.84, 169.59, 169.04, 142.01, 141.82, 135.73, 131.51, 131.43, 130.95, 129.90, 127.31, 126.63, 126.05, 125.69, 122.33, 121.15, 119.89, 115.90, 61.23, 53.31, 52.90, 41.76, 41.67, 29.44. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁BrNO₆ (M+H)⁺: 498.0547, Found: 498.0548. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 95/5, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 42.992 min, t_{major} = 50.924 min, 98% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-8-(3-bromophenyl)-11-formyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3c)



White solid, mp 187 – 189 °C, $[\alpha]_D^{20}$ –117 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.24 (s, 1H), 8.38 – 8.36 (m, 1H), 8.30 – 8.27 (m, 1H), 7.45 – 7.39 (m, 4H), 7.22 – 7.15 (m, 2H), 4.39 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.10 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.00 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.90 (dd, *J* = 12.0, 17.6 Hz, 1H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.36 (s, 3H), 3.21 (d, *J* = 17.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.35, 185.31, 170.83, 169.58, 169.03, 142.00, 141.81, 135.72, 131.50, 131.42, 130.94, 129.89, 127.30, 126.62, 126.04, 125.69, 122.32, 121.14, 119.89, 115.89, 61.22, 53.30, 52.89, 42.75, 41.66, 29.43. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁BrNO₆ (M+H)⁺: 498.0547, Found: 498.0551. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{major} = 25.550 min, t_{minor} = 26.910 min, 91% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-8-(4-bromophenyl)-11-formyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3d)



White solid, mp 171 – 173 °C, $[\alpha]_D^{20}$ –171 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.22 (s, 1H), 8.38 – 8.35 (m, 1H), 8.29 – 8.27 (m, 1H), 7.44 – 7.41 (m, 4H), 7.13 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 4.37 (d, *J* = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 4.09 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 3.98 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.89 (dd, *J* = 12.4, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 3.71 (s, 3H), 3.33 (s, 3H), 3.19 (d, *J* = 17.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.33, 170.94, 169.68, 169.06, 141.88, 138.73, 135.68, 131.46, 130.20, 126.59, 126.00, 125.66, 121.85, 121.14, 119.81, 115.87, 61.09, 53.31, 52.88, 41.86, 41.47, 29.39. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁BrNO₆ (M+H)⁺: 498.0547, Found: 498.0553. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 85/15, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 25.161 min, t_{major} = 29.280 min, 96% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-11-formyl-6-oxo-8-(*p*-tolyl)-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3e)



White solid, mp 175 – 177 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –139 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.23 (s, 1H), 8.39 – 8.37 (m, 1H), 8.30 – 8.28 (m, 1H), 7.41 (t, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 2H), 7.11 (brs, 4H), 4.37 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.12 (d, *J* = 11.6 Hz, 1H), 4.12 (d, *J* = 11.6 Hz, 1H), 3.99 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.88 (dd, *J* = 12.4, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 3.68 (s, 3H), 3.29 (s, 3H), 3.22 (d, *J* = 17.2 Hz, 1H), 2.31 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.46, 185.42, 171.36, 169.85, 169.26, 142.45, 137.47, 136.61, 135.70, 129.01, 128.26, 126.47, 125.99, 125.57, 121.14, 119.70, 115.91, 61.23, 53.14, 52.71, 42.27, 41.66, 29.37, 20.97. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₅H₂₄NO₆ (M+H)⁺: 434.1598, Found: 434.1601. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 20.014 min, t_{major} = 25.775 min, 97% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-11-formyl-6-oxo-8-(*m*-tolyl)-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3f)



White solid, mp 175 – 177 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –139 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.25 (s, 1H), 8.40 – 8.38 (m, 1H), 8.31 – 8.29 (m, 1H), 7.43 – 7.40 (m, 2H), 7.18 (t, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.08 – 7.02 (m, 3H), 4.39 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.13 (d, J = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.02 (d, J = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 3.92 – 3.88 (m, 1H), 3.69 (s, 3H), 3.28 – 3.22 (m, 4H), 2.32 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.45, 171.31, 169.81, 169.26, 142.42, 139.64, 137.99, 135.73, 129.09, 128.48, 128.25, 126.51, 126.02, 125.59, 125.44, 121.14, 119.76, 115.95, 61.25, 53.22, 52.66, 42.27, 41.95, 29.44, 21.41. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for $C_{25}H_{24}NO_6$ (M+H)⁺: 434.1598, Found: 434.1599. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: $t_{minor} = 16.726$ min, $t_{major} = 18.910$ min, 96% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-8-(3-chlorophenyl)-11-formyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3g)



White solid, mp 157 – 159 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –151 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.24 (s, 1H), 8.38 – 8.28 (m, 2H), 7.42 (d, J = 2.8 Hz, 2H), 7.25 – 7.16 (m, 4H), 4.39 (d, J = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 4.11 (d, J = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.01 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.91 (dd, J = 12.8, 16.8 Hz, 1H), 3.73 (s, 3H), 3.35 (s, 3H), 3.22 (d, J = 17.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.29, 170.63, 169.54, 168.97, 141.49, 139.92, 135.71, 132.47, 132.06, 130.55, 130.24, 128.03, 126.68, 126.05, 125.73, 121.14, 119.93, 115.86, 61.09, 53.41, 52.98, 41.67, 41.32, 29.43. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁ClNO₆ (M+H)⁺: 454.1052, Found: 454.1055. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 24.826 min, t_{major} = 28.925 min, 96% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-8-(4-chlorophenyl)-11-formyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3h)



White solid, mp 170 – 172 °C, $[\alpha]_D^{20}$ –162 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.22 (s, 1H), 8.37 – 8.35 (m, 1H), 8.29 – 8.27 (m, 1H), 7.43 – 7.40 (m, 2H), 7.27 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 4.37 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.11 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 3.97 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.89 (dd, *J* = 12.4, 17.6 Hz, 1H), 3.71 (s, 3H), 3.33 (s, 3H), 3.19 (d, *J* = 17.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.34, 185.30, 170.95, 169.69, 169.07, 141.89, 138.23, 135.69, 133.72, 129.88, 128.49, 126.58, 126.02, 125.66, 121.14, 119.81, 115.88, 61.16, 53.34, 52.83, 41.98, 41.38, 29.39. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁ClNO₆ (M+H)⁺: 454.1052, Found: 454.1058. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 19.954 min, t_{maior} = 22.269 min, 96% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-8-(4-fluorophenyl)-11-formyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3i)



White solid, mp 168 – 170 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –157 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.24 (s, 1H), 8.39 – 8.37 (m, 1H), 8.30 – 8.28 (m, 1H), 7.42 (t, *J* = 3.6 Hz, 2H), 7.26 – 7.23 (m, 2H), 6.99 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 4.38 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.13 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.00 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.91 (dd, *J* = 12.0, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.32 (s, 3H), 3.22 (d, *J* = 17.6 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.36, 171.06, 169.77, 169.17, 163.34, 160.88, 142.00, 135.73, 135.55, 135.51, 130.23, 130.15, 126.59, 126.05, 125.66, 121.16, 119.83, 115.92, 115.36, 115.14, 61.25, 53.29, 52.83, 42.20, 41.28, 29.42. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁FNO₆ (M+H)⁺: 438.1347, Found: 438.1351. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 23.726 min, t_{major} = 25.900 min, 97% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-8-(3-fluorophenyl)-11-formyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3j)



White solid, mp 179 – 181 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –109 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.23 (s, 1H), 8.38 – 8.36 (m, 1H), 8.29 – 8.27 (m, 1H), 7.43 – 7.41 (m, 2H), 7.30 – 7.28 (m, 1H), 7.02 – 6.95 (m, 3H), 4.38 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.14 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 3.99 (d, *J* = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 3.89 (dd, *J* = 12.4, 17.6 Hz, 1H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.32 (s, 3H), 3.23 (d, *J* = 17.6 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.32, 170.89, 169.65, 169.03, 163.69, 161.23, 142.24, 142.17, 141.87, 135.73, 129.88, 129.80, 126.59, 126.06, 125.66, 124.04, 121.14, 119.86, 115.91, 115.70, 114.86, 114.65, 61.24, 53.32, 52.81, 41.86, 41.64, 29.45. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁FNO₆ (M+H)⁺: 438.1347, Found: 438.1348. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 93/7, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 31.490 min, t_{major} = 34.618 min, 96% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-11-formyl-8-(4-nitrophenyl)-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3k)



White solid, mp 196 – 198 °C, $[\alpha]_D^{20}$ –119 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.25 (s, 1H), 8.38 – 8.36 (m, 1H), 8.30 – 8.28 (m, 1H), 8.17 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.47 – 7.43 (m, 4H), 4.43 (d, *J* = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 4.23 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.05 – 3.94 (m, 2H), 3.75 (s, 3H), 3.33 (s, 3H), 3.21 (d, *J* = 17.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.26, 170.43, 169.50, 168.81, 147.32, 147.09, 141.21, 135.72, 129.70, 126.76, 126.07, 125.80, 123.43, 121.14, 120.02, 115.88, 61.16, 53.51, 52.98, 41.82, 41.53, 29.50. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁N₂O₈ (M+H)⁺: 465.1292, Found: 465.1294. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 32.450 min, t_{major} = 37.718 min, 98% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-11-formyl-8-(4-(methoxycarbonyl)phenyl)-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3l)



White solid, mp 107 – 109 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –183 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.24 (s, 1H), 8.39 – 8.36 (m, 1H), 8.30 – 8.28 (m, 1H), 7.97 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.44 – 7.41 (m, 2H), 7.33 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 4.40 (d, *J* = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 4.20 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.02 (d, *J* = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 3.98 – 3.93 (m, 1H), 3.91 (s, 3H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.27 (s, 3H), 3.23 (d, *J* = 17.6 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.34, 170.87, 169.63, 168.98, 166.53, 144.86, 141.81, 135.73, 129.59, 129.57, 128.61, 126.62, 126.05, 125.68, 121.14, 119.89, 115.91, 61.20, 53.34, 52.83, 52.19, 41.94, 41.79, 29.74. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₆H₂₄NO₈ (M+H)⁺: 478.1496, Found: 478.1499. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 39.198 min, t_{maior} = 53.570 min, 99% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-11-formyl-8-(naphthalen-1-yl)-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3m)



White solid, mp 209 – 211 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –192 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.27 (s, 1H), 8.40 (d, J = 5.6 Hz, 1H), 8.31 (d, J = 5.2 Hz, 1H), 7.79 – 7.77 (m, 3H), 7.72 (s, 1H), 7.48 – 7.42 (m, 4H), 7.34 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.43 (d, J = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 4.33 (d, J = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.11 – 4.00 (m, 2H), 3.71 (s, 3H), 3.35 (d, J = 17.2 Hz, 1H), 3.15 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.41, 171.24, 169.83, 168.28, 142.27, 137.08, 135.75, 133.03, 132.58, 127.95, 127.90, 127.71, 127.52, 126.53, 126.38, 126.29, 126.05, 125.61, 121.14, 119.81, 115.92, 61.30, 53.25, 52.73, 42.27, 42.18, 29.52. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for $C_{28}H_{24}NO_6 (M+H)^+$: 470.1598, Found: 470.1602. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: $t_{minor} = 19.690 \text{ min}$, $t_{major} = 25.953 \text{ min}$, 98% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-11-formyl-8-(naphthalen-2-yl)-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3n)



White solid, mp 217 – 219 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –188 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.27 (s, 1H), 8.40 (d, J = 5.6 Hz, 1H), 8.32 (d, J = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 7.79 – 7.77 (m, 3H), 7.72 (s, 1H), 7.48 – 7.42 (m, 4H), 7.35 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.43 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.33 (d, J = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 4.11 – 4.00 (m, 2H), 3.71 (s, 3H), 3.35 (d, J = 17.6 Hz, 1H), 3.15 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.65, 170.30, 170.10, 169.25, 142.79, 136.58, 135.73, 133.81, 131.35, 128.75, 128.65, 126.54, 126.48, 126.02, 125.97, 125.66, 124.92, 124.60, 123.76, 121.05, 119.83, 116.47, 61.07, 53.40, 52.10, 43.79, 35.79, 25.34. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₈H₂₄NO₆ (M+H)⁺: 470.1598, Found: 470.1600. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{major} = 32.008 min, >99% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-8-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-11-formyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)dicarboxylate (30)



White solid, mp 152 – 154 °C, $[\alpha]_D^{20}$ –132 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.23 (s, 1H), 8.37 – 8.35 (m, 1H), 8.29 – 8.27 (m, 1H), 7.44 – 7.41 (m, 2H), 7.39 – 7.35 (m, 2H), 7.11 (dd, J = 2.4, 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.39 (d, J = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 4.06 (d, J = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 3.98 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.90 (dd, J = 12.0, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 3.73 (s, 3H), 3.40 (s, 3H), 3.17 (d, J = 17.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.28, 170.62, 169.53, 168.97, 141.48, 139.91, 135.71, 132.46, 132.05, 130.54, 130.23, 128.03, 126.68, 126.04, 125.72, 119.93, 115.85, 61.08, 53.41, 52.97, 41.67, 41.31, 29.43. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₀Cl₂NO₆ (M+H)⁺: 488.0662, Found: 488.0669. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 38.943 min, t_{major} = 53.120 min, 98% ee). dimethyl (S)-11-formyl-6-oxo-8-(thiophen-2-yl)-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3p)



White solid, mp 189 – 191 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –93 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.26 (s, 1H), 8.36 – 8.33 (m, 1H), 8.30 – 8.27 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.40 (m, 2H), 7.20 (d, J = 5.2 Hz, 1H), 6.92 (t, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 6.87 (d, J = 3.2 Hz, 1H), 4.43 (d, J = 11.2 Hz, 1H), 4.37 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.97 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.90 (dd, J = 12.0, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.46 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 3.41 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.47, 170.53, 169.71, 168.95, 141.92, 141.43, 135.69, 126.55, 126.46, 126.43, 125.98, 125.62, 125.24, 121.18, 119.79, 115.80, 61.31, 53.34, 53.08, 42.75, 38.06, 29.01. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₂H₂₀NO₆S (M+H)⁺: 426.1006, Found: 426.1009. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 30.133 min, t_{major} = 37.459 min, 76% ee).

dimethyl (S)-11-formyl-8-methyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3q)



White solid, mp 101 – 103 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –147 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.27 (s, 1H), 8.34 – 8.32 (m, 1H), 8.30 – 8.28 (m, 1H), 7.43 – 7.36 (m, 2H), 4.26 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.83 (s, 3H), 3.80 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.76 (s, 3H), 3.42 (dd, *J* = 10.8, 18.0 Hz, 1H), 2.87 – 2.76 (m, 2H), 1.13 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.90, 172.00, 170.01, 169.79, 142.50, 135.66, 135.66, 126.42, 125.95, 125.46, 121.26, 119.67, 115.62, 59.42, 53.18, 52.93, 42.36, 32.51, 29.22, 18.52. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₁₉H₂₀NO₆ (M+H)⁺: 358.1285, Found: 358.1286. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 80/20, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 17.240 min, t_{major} = 20.795 min, 93% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-8-cyclohexyl-11-formyl-6-oxo-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3r)



White solid, mp 165 – 168 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –185 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.16 (s, 1H), 8.34 – 8.31 (m, 1H), 8.27 – 8.24 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.35 (m, 2H), 4.24 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.13 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 3.82 – 3.78 (m, 4H), 3.74 (s, 3H), 3.13 (dd, *J* = 11.6, 18.4 Hz, 1H), 2.97 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 2.44 (d, *J* = 11.2 Hz, 1H), 1.85 (t, *J* = 10.8 Hz, 1H), 1.75 – 1.72 (m, 2H), 1.65 – 1.59 (m, 2H), 1.27 – 1.21 (m, 3H), 1.12 – 1.07 (m, 2H), 0.97 – 0.90 (m, 1H). HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₈NO₆ (M+H)⁺: 426.1911, Found: 426.1915. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 23.333 min, t_{major} = 26.554 min, 93% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-2-chloro-11-formyl-6-oxo-8-phenyl-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3s)



White solid, mp 178 – 180 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –165 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.19 (s, 1H), 8.31 – 8.29 (m, 2H), 7.36 (dd, J = 2.0, 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.33 – 7.23 (m, 5H), 4.36 (d, J = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 4.17 (d, J = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.02 (d, J = 16.0 Hz, 1H), 3.89 (dd, J = 12.0, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 3.69 (s, 3H), 3.28 – 3.24 (m, 4H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 184.98, 170.97, 169.73, 169.05, 143.37, 139.50, 133.98, 131.38, 128.41, 128.36, 127.87, 127.09, 126.71, 120.94, 119.01, 117.00, 61.18, 53.32, 52.79, 42.09, 41.85, 29.38. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁ClNO₆ (M+H)⁺: 454.1052, Found: 454.1056. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 93/7, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 24.806 min, t_{major} = 32.109 min, 98% ee).

dimethyl (*R*)-11-formyl-2-methyl-6-oxo-8-phenyl-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (3t)



White solid, mp 131 – 134 °C; $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –116 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.23 (s, 1H), 8.39 – 8.37 (m, 1H), 8.30 – 8.28 (m, 1H), 7.43 – 7.40 (m, 2H), 7.18 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.08 – 7.02 (m, 3H), 4.37 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 4.13 (d, J = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 4.01 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 3.88 (dd, J = 12.4, 17.6 Hz, 1H), 3.69 (s, 3H), 3.28 (s, 3H), 3.24 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 185.44, 171.31, 169.79, 169.23, 142.44, 139.62, 137.96, 135.69, 129.07, 128.46, 128.22, 126.47, 125.98, 125.56, 125.42, 121.13, 119.71, 115.92, 61.22, 53.21, 52.65, 42.22, 41.91, 29.93, 21.40. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₅H₂₃NO₆Na (M+Na)⁺: 456.1418, Found: 456.1411. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 95/5, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{major} = 33.451 min, t_{minor} = 36.741 min, 88% ee).

5. A Scale-up Synthesis of compound 3e

To a solution of dimethyl 2-((3-formyl-1*H*-indol-2-yl)methyl)malonate (**1a**) (1.73 mmol, 0.50 g), (*Z*)-2-bromo-3-(*p*-tolyl)acrylaldehyde (**2a**) (2.42 mmol, 0.54 g) and *N*-heterocyclic carbene precatalyst **A** (0.173 mmol, 63.66 mg) in DCM (15 mL), NEt₃ (2.66 mmol, 0.37 mL) was added at room temperature under nitrogen atmosphere. The reaction was stirred at room temperature (monitored by TLC), and then was quenched by water (5 mL). The mixture was extracted with ethyl acetate (10 mL×3) and dried over anhydrous MgSO₄. After removal of the solvent under reduced pressure, the crude residue was purified by flash column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/EtOAc (5:1) to afford the product **3e** as a white solid (0.637 g, 85% yield, 96% ee).



6. The reduction of product 3e

To a solution of **3e** (0.1 mmol, 43.3 mg) in THF (1 mL) was added NaBH₄ (0.11 mmol, 4.2 mg) at 0 °C, and the reaction mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 8 h. After completion of the reaction (monitored by TLC), and then was quenched by saturated NH₄Cl. The mixture was extracted with ethyl acetate (5 mL×3) and the solvents were removed *in vacuo*. The crude product was purified by flash column chromatograph (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 3/1) to afford the product **5** (38.3 mg, 88%).



dimethyl (*R*)-11-(hydroxymethyl)-6-oxo-8-(*p*-tolyl)-7,8-dihydro-6*H*-azepino[1,2-*a*]indole-9,9(10*H*)-dicarboxylate (5)

White solid, mp 199 – 201 °C, $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ –99 (c 1.0, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.42 (dd, *J*= 1.6, 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.68 – 7.66 (m, 1H), 7.39 – 7.31 (m, 2H), 7.07 (s, 4H), 4.82 – 4.73 (m, 2H), 4.06 (dd, *J* = 1.2, 11.6 Hz, 1H), 3.90 – 3.80 (m, 3H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.30 (s, 3H), 3.13 (dd, *J* = 1.20, 17.2 Hz, 1H), 2.30 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 172.27, 170.93, 169.84, 137.31, 137.17, 135.95, 130.36, 128.91, 125.52, 124.10, 120.89, 118.63, 116.36, 61.51, 54.99, 53.10, 52.51, 42.35, 42.25, 29.98, 21.01. HRMS (ESI): Exact Mass Calcd. for C₂₅H₂₆NO₆ (M+H)⁺: 435.1676, Found: 435.1677. HPLC (Chiralpak AD–H column, *n*-hexane/*i*-PrOH = 70/30, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, retention time: t_{minor} = 10.644 min, t_{major} = 21.661 min, 92% ee).

7. X-Ray crystal structure of compound 3d



8. NMR spectra of compounds 3a–3t and 5

¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3a** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)







¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3c** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)



^1H NMR spectrum of compound 3d (CDCl_3, 400 MHz)





¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3f** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)



¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3g** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)



¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3h** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)





¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3j** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)



¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3k** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)



¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3l** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)



$^1\mathrm{H}$ NMR spectrum of compound **3m** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)



¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3n** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)





¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3p** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)









¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3s** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)

¹H NMR spectrum of compound **3t** (CDCl₃, 400 MHz)







9. HPLC spectra for compounds 3a-3t and 5





Peak	Processed	Retention	Peak area	Peak neight	Peak area
	channel	time (min)	(mAU*s)	(mAU)	(%)
1	PDA 254 nm	15.882	3079.31323	92.88444	50.20
2	PDA 254 nm	17.913	3054.67798	81.81023	49.80









Peak	Processed	Retention	Peak area	Peak height	Peak area
	channel	time (min)	(mAU*s)	(mAU)	(%)
1	PDA 254 nm	43.020	1780.43250	21.27642	50.30
2	PDA 254 nm	50.778	1759.50159	17.59102	49.70







Peak	Processed channel	Retention time (min)	Peak area (mAU*s)	Peak height (mAU)	Peak area (%)
1	PDA 254 nm	25.053	5498.93164	113.13150	49.21
2	PDA 254 nm	26.999	5675.34619	107.40786	50.79















4425.96680

84.38345

52.56

25.735

2

PDA 254 nm

















сно	
	CO-Me
N Y	CO ₂ Me
0	
3h	

2352.74219

51.75787

49.76

22.430

2

PDA 254 nm























Peak	Processed	Retention	Peak area	Peak neight	Peak area
	channel	time (min)	(mAU*s)	(mAU)	(%)
1	PDA 254 nm	39.366	2449.46362	29.93681	49.75
2	PDA 254 nm	53.859	2474.37280	21.33892	50.25















Peak	Processed	Retention	Peak area	Peak height	Peak area
	channel	time (min)	(mAU*s)	(mAU)	(%)
1	PDA 254 nm	30.632	2473.70239	42.91519	52.32
2	PDA 254 nm	37.722	2165.68555	30.77025	47.68





Peak	Processed	Retention	Peak area	Peak height	Peak area
	channel	time (min)	(mAU*s)	(mAU)	(%)
1	PDA 254 nm	17.616	1.04763e4	321.77036	50.85
2	PDA 254 nm	21.673	1.01247e4	262.41068	49.15



























