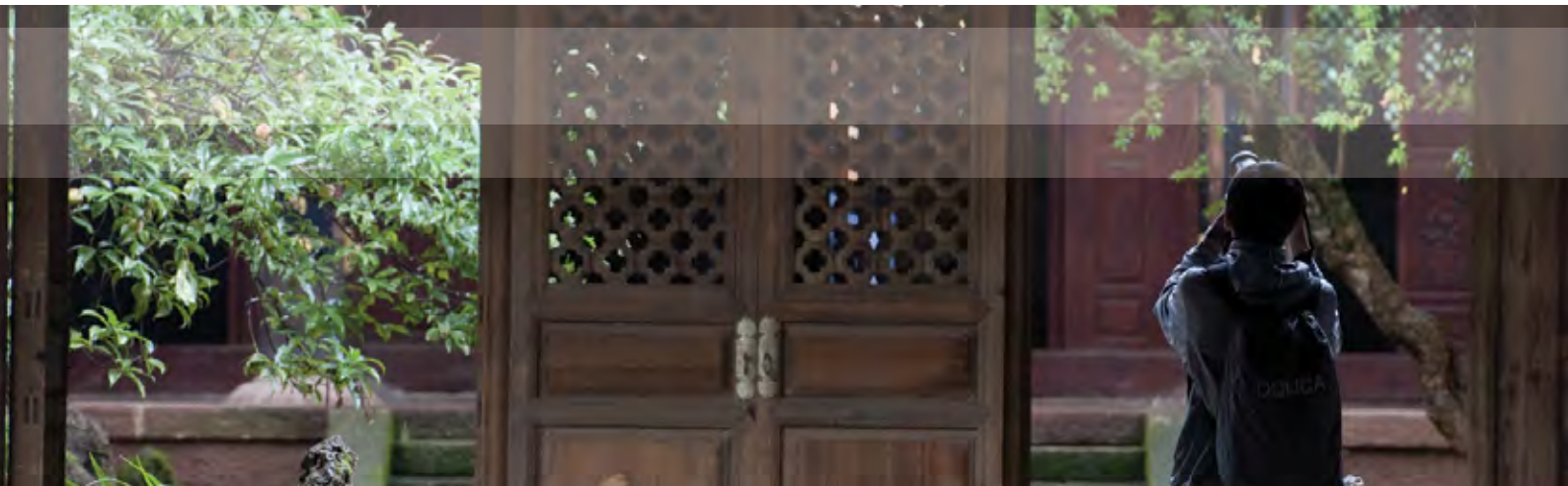


MOMENTS

on the road

Yunnan through a lens: Tea Horse Trails
(6 or 9 Days)





ON THE ROAD EXPERIENCES

BACK ROADS | HIDDEN GEMS

We love road journeys. They are by far our favourite way of traveling. We think the world of western China and the countries that border on this region – think Vietnam, Lao, Thailand, Myanmar, for example.

On the Road Experiences is all about sharing with like-minded travelers just how beautiful a road journey in these varied lands can be. Now turn the page to find out what we've come to love so much...



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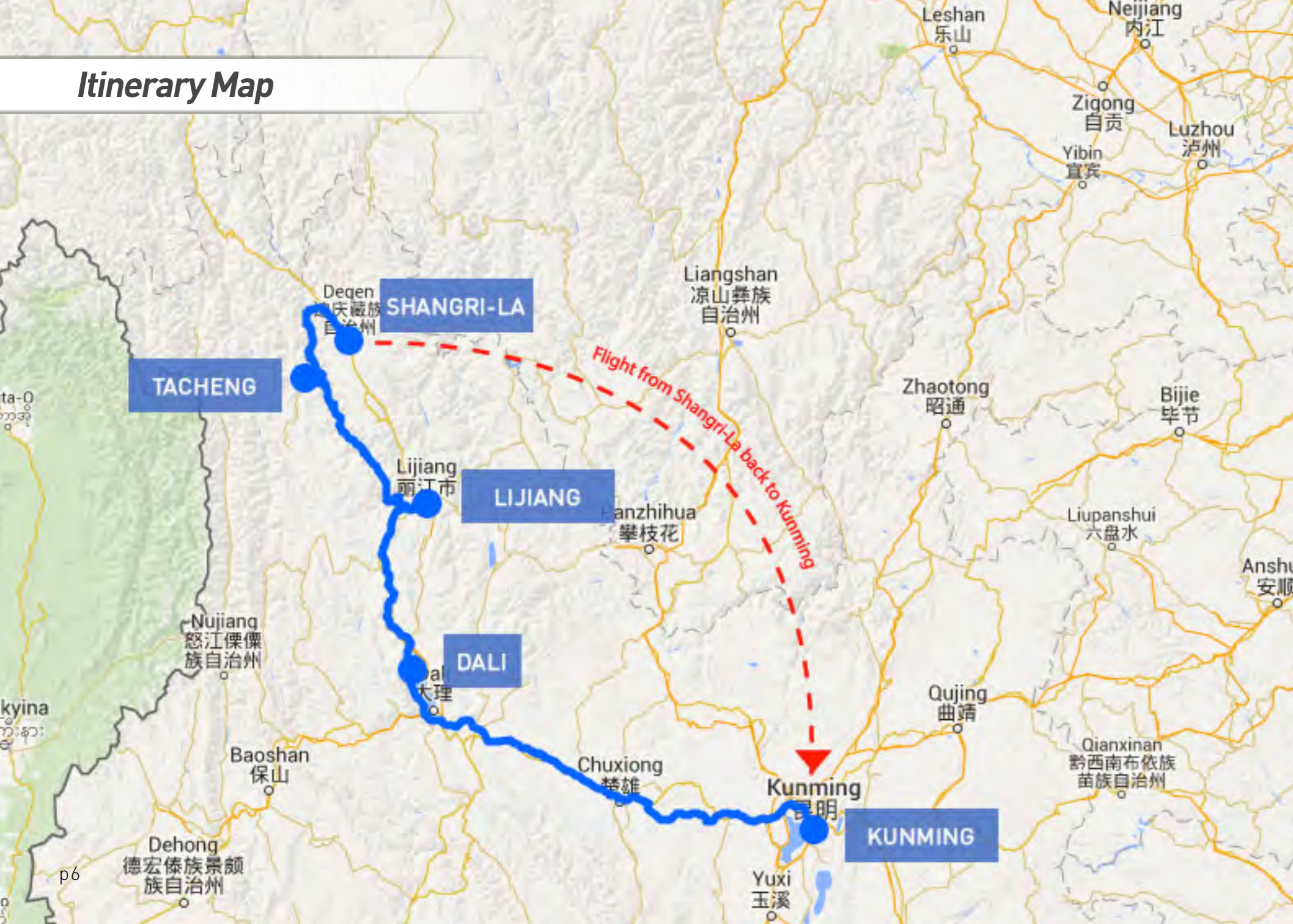
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Itinerary Map



Day-by-Day

Day1

Arrival in Kunming –
Preparing for your journey

Day2

Kunming to Xizhou –
To the heart of the Nanzhao Kingdom

Day3

In Xizhou –
Explore the shores of Lake Erhai

Day4

Xizhou to Lijiang –
On the road to Lijiang and the Naxi Kingdom

Day5

In Lijiang –
Lijiang, Yuhu Village, and more...

Day6

Lijiang to Tacheng –
Along the Yangtse, toward the edge of Tibet

Short Itinerary: Farewell Yunnan –
we will take you to Lijiang airport to begin your journey home

Day7

Tacheng to Shangri-La –
Up up up to the Tibetan Plateau

Day8

In Shangri-La –
Enjoy a day in Shangri-La to get a glimpse of Tibetan life

Day9

Farewell Yunnan –
Life goes on...

Yes, it is possible...

A driving holiday in this part of the world is indeed possible. We take care of everything. All you need to do is come, drive and enjoy a rare adventure!

Capture memories as beautiful as the landscape on this photographic journey through breath-taking north-west Yunnan...North-west Yunnan has enchanted travellers and explorers for centuries –from Marco Polo in the thirteenth century to Joseph Rock and fellow botanist Frank Kingdon Ward in the early years of the twentieth.

Today, this region's incredible diversity of plant and animal life, and the large number of ethnic minorities that make this area their home, make this part of Yunnan Province a wonderful and colorful region of China to explore.

The Yunnan through a Lens: Tea Horse Trails journey will be a driving holiday with a difference, as you will be joined by Hong Kong-based professional photographer, Ron Yue. Ron will be on-hand to coach you through a series of formal lectures and workshops as you travel along a route specifically designed with budding travel photographers in mind.

Travel to tiny rural backwaters to shoot photographs of local people in traditional dress, drive through beautiful mountainous regions and discover how to make your landscape photographs come to life, and wander cobbled streets in well-preserved old towns and feel as though you and your camera are travelling back in time...For those with more time, it is also possible to extend your journey with Ron, by continuing north from Lijiang to Shangri-La, at the eastern edge of the Himalayas, an ethnically Tibetan region. Your photographic journey will be enjoyed in style and comfort. All along this exciting route you will enjoy the best accommodation available – staying in some of Asia's loveliest hotels – and travel through an area steeped in the cultures of many different ethnic minorities and through some of the region's most stunningly beautiful countryside.

On the Road Experiences has paved the way for you to cross borders in your own properly insured SUV, so that you can enjoy the romance of a classic overland journey without any of the logistical headaches that typically accompany such journeys...

About Master Photographer Ron Yue

Originally from the North Shore in Vancouver, Canada, and based in Hong Kong since 1998, award-winning photographer Ron Yue travels widely to capture the inspiring image. His work has taken him throughout much of Asia to some of the most intriguing places. Initially trained as a chartered accountant, he now uses his diverse photography skills and outdoor experience to produce spectacular photographs for his clients. He has photographed in locations ranging from the torrid heat of Death Valley to Alaska's frozen tundra, from the jungles of southeast Asia to the Tibetan plateau, and from executive boardrooms to the pinnacle of China's skyscrapers.

Many of Ron's images are built around spectacular environments, captured at their peak moments, often incorporating authentic, local people in their native life surroundings. The images frequently blur the division between the dramatic, nostalgic, and the serene.

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He produces images for international commercial clients, editorials, and travel and documentary features primarily in the Asia region. Ron's fine print images are found in both home collections and corporate offices. Ron has photographed for the

National Geographic Channel on projects in Vietnam and Hong Kong, and he spent two months traveling in remote areas of Tibet and across thirteen provinces in China on a documentary assignment for Nokia, accompanying On the Road in China founder, Peter Schindler. His work has also been featured as part of a

documentary program for CCTV.

Ron has conducted inspiring lectures to audiences throughout Asia, and he has instructed at international schools and accreditation programs. He is a guest lecturer for Nikon.

Ron feels that photography journeys, or "photographic learning

experiences" as he describes them, is a perfect way to improve your photography. Our guests will discover that the new and interesting environments will significantly enhance the learning experience, and there are plenty of opportunities to try out concepts right away. The regular feedback,

plus the camaraderie of sharing images with fellow travelers further adds to the enjoyment of your new abilities. When you embark on an amazing journey, you will want to ensure that you bring back images that do justice to the places you have been to so you can show all your friends the incredible experience that you have had.

Throughout the course of this journey, Ron will be on hand to answer questions, review photographs and give hints and tips that will help to make guest's photographs as beautiful as the scenes that inspired them. As well as specially arranged workshops and field sessions en route, Ron will also be available to ride in guest's cars during each day's drive.

Ron Yue will make it easy for your family to understand photography and after a lecture you can practice right away together.

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Photography concept 1: Light

Concept 1: *Understanding light in terms of its quality, direction, and ratios can turn a good photograph into a much more dramatic image*



Photography concept 2: Composition

Concept 2: *Learning to keep a composition simple can result in a more powerful and less distracting photograph*



Photography concept 3: Your imagination!

Concept 3: *Drawing on the knowledge of various photographic concepts and using your imagination can significantly alter the look and quality of an image*



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Journey of discovery



“Awaking in
China’s RURAL
COUNTRYSIDE...”



“LIJIANG
is touristy, but
there ARE
HIDDEN GEMS to
DISCOVER...”



Jade Lake not far from Lijiang...

Jade Dragon Snow Mountain seen from the Black Dragon Pool, Lijiang...



“The lovely winding alleys of LIJIANG’S OLD TOWN are a UNESCO World Heritage site...”



“ Where
DR. Joseph Rock
lived and worked
to INTRODUCE
northwest
YUNNAN to the
outside world...”

Naxi minority lady in Yuhu, near Lijiang



“Your JOURNEY
in the THREE
PARALLEL
RIVERS region...”

The Yangtze's upper reaches

“Lunch
in THE
MIDDLE OF
NOWHERE...”

In the Tacheng lodge



“ SLEEPING
WELL while
FAR AWAY from
anywhere...”

“Visiting the
CUTEST
MONKEYS in
the world...”



Yunnan Snub-Nosed monkeys

“A colourful
WELCOME as
you APPROACH
TIBET...”



Tibetan prayer flags



“ Along the way,
one of the **LARGEST**
MONASTERIES in
SOUTH-WEST China...”

“RED-ROBED
MONKS in
Shangri-La...”



At the Ganden Sumtseling Monastery

“

A chance to
**PURIFY
YOUR
MIND?”**

Day-by-day



Day 1 Preparing for your journey

Arrive in Kunming according to your own arrangements.

We will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel. If you require a temporary Chinese driving license, we will take you to the hotel via the Vehicle Licensing Bureau. All the documents for your temporary license will be prepared; you will just need to take a simple eye test and sign the forms.

After settling into the hotel, you may want to go for a stroll along the city-center Green Lake where many locals enjoy relaxing hours. The vicinity of the lake bustles with people young and old and throughout much of the year is lush green. Depending on the season, energetic migratory birds make the lake their temporary home.

In the evening, enjoy a group dinner together in a lovely, local restaurant near your hotel and attend our staff's safety briefing.

Dinner will be an opportunity to begin to acquaint yourself with the many flavours of Yunnan's cuisine and to meet your fellow travellers.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: NA

Duration: NA

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 1900m

Overnight: 1900m

Hotel

Greenlake Hotel, Kunming
[*****]

Day 2 To the heart of the Nanzhao Kingdom

Today you will drive to Dali and on to Xizhou, home of the Linden Centre – a lovingly converted Bai minority mansion, where you will stay for the next two nights.

After a relaxed start to the day you will set out from Kunming and drive along a world-class highway until you reach Chuxiong – today's lunch stop.

After lunch continue northwest toward the picturesque town

of Dali, formerly capital of Yunnan's independent Nanzhao Kingdom. Dali lies on a strip of land between the brooding Cangshan Mountains and Lake Erhai, a beautifully scenic location. Continue north for a short distance to the tranquil village of Xizhou.

Photography Session:

In order to prepare you for tomorrow's field sessions, this afternoon Ron will discuss the finer points of taking portraits and photographing buildings – the Bai people around Dali have distinctive styles of architecture and dress, perfect material for photographers.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 360 km

Duration: 5 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 2000m

Overnight: 2000m

Hotel

Linden Centre, Xizhou [****]

Day 3

Explore the shores of Lake Erhai

Spend the morning at one of the bustling, colorful village markets in the Xizhou region. The beautiful traditional clothing of the Bai people and fresh produce on sale will fuel your imagination (as well as your appetite).

After a delicious home-cooked lunch in a nearby village, photographers will spend the afternoon with some villagers in a specially arranged portrait session before reviewing their work with Ron individually – a great opportunity to learn and improve technical skills.

Photography Session:

After a morning spent in the field at a nearby market, work head out to a batik-making factory to practice polish your portrait photography technique by capturing Bai minority ladies at working making batik. In the late afternoon, spend

time right by the shore of Lake Erhai to practice landscape photography.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 20 km

Duration: 40 mins

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 2000m

Overnight: 2000m

Hotel

Linden Center, Xizhou (****)

Day 4

On the road to Lijiang and the Naxi Kingdom

After a leisurely morning in Xizhou – perhaps working some more with Ron – we set out for Lijiang along a wonderful country road.

Lijiang, former capital of the “Naxi Kingdom”, was introduced to the West by eccentric American botanist Joseph Rock in the 1930s and 40s. The cobbled streets of Lijiang’s old town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, run alongside crystal clear streams and up the steep slopes of Lion Hill, from where you can enjoy a wonderful view over Lijiang’s old town to 5,000 metre (16,400 feet) tall Jade Dragon Snow Mountain.

For the next two nights you will stay in the InterContinental Lijiang, which lies right near the old town of Lijiang.

Photography Session:

In the morning, you may want to join Ron for a sunrise photography session by Erhai Lake. On the way to Lijiang, Ron will accompany guests for part of the morning, and join you in your car for today’s drive – benefit from his experience as you go. After arriving in Lijiang, Ron has organised a special dusk photography session in the old town of Lijiang.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 105 km

Duration: 3 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 2470m

Overnight: 2470m

Hotel

InterContinental Lijiang (*****)

Day 5 Lijiang, Yuhu Village and more

For those on the 6 day itinerary, this will be your last full day with us – and a beautiful day it will be...

This morning you will take an early morning walk through Lijiang's quaint old town, guided by Ron. Best explored in the morning before the tourist buses arrive, you will see old Lijiang at its best (pictured here).

After lunch, visit the tiny village of Yuhu, Joseph Rock's home while he was stationed in the Yunnan region. Yuhu is a pretty Naxi minority village very close to Jade Dragon Snow Mountain that is the opposite to Lijiang's old town: so far it is more or less undiscovered and almost entirely tourist free!

Photography Session:

Walk around Lijiang's old town in the quiet of the early morning to experience and photograph the town as it

was in years gone by. In the afternoon visit the tiny Naxi village of Yuhu and work with Naxi ladies with their horses to choreograph scenes to capture best their natural lives as you imagine it.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: very little

Duration: 1 hour

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 3000m

Overnight: 2470 m

Hotel

InterContinental Lijiang

(*****)

Day 6 Along the Yangtse, toward the edge of Tibet

Today your journey will continue further north. After about an hour and a half of driving on the main road that leads from Yunnan to Tibet (the G214), you will turn left onto a small, but wonderful provincial road to follow the course of Yangtse.

After only a few minutes you will come to what the Chinese hold in high regard, the “first bend of Yangtse” where, at a town called Shigu, this mighty river does, indeed, make a 120-degree turn and seemingly begins to flow uphill.

You will continue along the Yangtse in a broad, but gradually narrowing valley, more or less level with the river. In a tiny village called Qi Zhong, you will turn west, leaving the Yangtse behind, and drive a little distance further

until you come to the idyllic hamlet of Hada where, to your great surprise, you will find a beautiful lodge set in one of Yunnan’s loveliest regions. This lodge, in Tacheng county, is located between the Yangtse and Mekong rivers, where some of the best old-growth forests in the world can be found. This region also harbors one of the most fertile valleys in Yunnan with two crops of rice annually and fruit trees. The semi-wild boars of the area, which feed on wild nuts before winter, make the best ham in the world. Tacheng is also famous for its rich Tibetan culture and Naxi and Lisu villages with charming distinctive black-roofed farmhouses.

The rare species of Yunnan Golden monkey (*Rhinopithecus biteti*), is one of the world’s most endangered primates: less than 2000 can be now found in the wild. They live at the highest altitude (3,000-4,500m) of any primate, except for humans.

After arriving at the lodge in mid-afternoon, you will have time to enjoy the lodge’s surroundings and at least get a glimpse of this wonderful region.

Photography Session:

On the drive from Lijiang to Tacheng, there will be opportunities to take photos along the Yangtse river valley. Before dinner, Ron will accompany you to a small

village near the Tacheng lodge for you to continue to practice your skills to capture rural Naxi life.

Short Itinerary:

We will take you to Lijiang airport to begin your journey home.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 210 km

Duration: 4 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 2470m

Overnight: 2000m

Hotel

Songtsam Lodge, Tacheng

(***)

Day 7 Up up up to the Tibetan Plateau

Today's drive is short, all the better to enjoy some more the Tacheng region after breakfast and then one of the largest Tibetan monasteries (the Ganden Sumtseling) in Shangri-La in the lovely afternoon light, bright and invisible and crisp as it is at this altitude.

While Shangri-La is far from Lhasa, this region is nonetheless imbued with Tibetan "flavours", from the red-robed monks to the golden-roofed temples, from the weather-beaten faces of the Tibetan people to the colourful prayer flags, from the white stupas that protect the region to robust houses that dot the landscape. While Shangri-La's atmospheric old town was tragically destroyed by a large fire in January 2014, it's still possible to get a taste of the region's Tibetan culture in the area surrounding the imposing Songzanlin Monastery.

You will spend the night at the Songtsam Retreat, a very special hotel set in the grounds of the Sumteseling monastery.

Photography Session:

In the morning, we will drive and then take a short hike to the Golden Stub-Nosed Monkey reserve where Ron will work with you on techniques to capture these primates in the wild.

Note: This is the highest stop on your journey with us, please be prepared to take everything more slowly to help your body adjust to the altitude – and ask us for details of what else you can do to prevent altitude sickness from impacting your holiday.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 125 km

Duration: 3 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 3300m

Overnight: 3300m

Hotel

Songtsam Retreat, Shangri-La
(*****)

Day 8 Enjoy a day in Shangri-La to get a glimpse of Tibetan life

Spend today exploring the area around Shangri-La. You will have the opportunity to visit a local Tibetan family home and to try some traditional butter tea before exploring the monastery – and getting a blessing from one of the monks. The monastery buildings are all new, but the candlelit halls are full of traditional religious statues and paintings, making them a fascinating place to explore.

In the evening we will meet for our farewell dinner at the hotel restaurant. We hope you enjoyed the family time and will return home with many happy memories and pictures capturing them.

Photography Session:

Depending on the weather conditions today (highland weather can be very unpredictable), you will either visit one of the stunning natural regions around Shangri-La or visit a Tibetan

family home and work with the family members.

Visit the Ganden Sumtseling Monastery where we have arranged for you a private prayer session with monks... chanting in a beautiful prayer hall, lit only by yak butter candles. In the afternoon and evening you will have an opportunity to review your best photographs individually with Ron.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: under 60 km

Duration: 1-2 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 3300m

Overnight: 3300m

Hotel

Songtsam Retreat, Shangri-La
(*****)

Day 9 Life goes on...

Today you will start your journey home. After breakfast at the hotel, we will take you to Shangri-La's Airport to catch a flight back to Kunming (50 minutes, the one-way economy class ticket is included in your journey).

You will be free to start your onward journey from Kunming any time after 1pm today (but check with us before you make your flight bookings).

We hope that you leave having enjoyed an amazing journey through Yunnan – discovering both an unexpectedly beautiful side of China and new photographic skills that will enable you to take photographs as vibrant and special as your memories, wherever you travel.





Choice of Cars

We include in the package price an SUV we procure from Avis or Hertz or another reputable car rental company. Most of the SUVs are Toyotas, but on occasion Mitsubishi's or other brands may also make an appearance. For some itineraries, we are able to offer you an option to upgrade your car to the new models from Audi.

We wish the car rental markets of China would be more developed and we could give you more choice, but this is not so: since we want to provide well-maintained and well-insured cars, the choice is rather limited.

But SUVs are in fact the right choice for driving journeys in this part of the world because they are spacious enough to accommodate a lot of luggage, photography equipment, and

good-and-bad-weather gear. Also, they reinforce the feeling of adventure, exploration and discovery...which is, in the end, the mood of journeys in this region, no matter how comfortable or even luxurious the night's hotel may be.

What's more, they offer sufficient clearance when required and thus add a sense of safety and all-round ability. (4-wheel drive capability is hardly needed in China these days since all roads are either very well-paved or, with good gravel, offer solid support.)

And so SUVs from reputable brands are our car of choice!

**“ ANY car,
as long as
it is an SUV”**



Adventures and Discoveries in Local Cuisines

While this itinerary is not one of our 'Foodie'-themed journeys, we do believe that each one of our journeys should introduce you not only to hidden gems of cultural and scenic beauty, but that sampling local cuisines is also a must.

Wherever you travel with us, we will order, with very few exceptions, dishes fresh and on location with an emphasis on local produce. It is not uncommon for our guides to venture into the kitchen to pick this, that or the other vegetable and to ask the cook to prepare them in the finest possible way. (On occasion we do pre-order a meal: this will normally be the case only for special occasions!)

Wine and beer is always included in our meals for you to enjoy. (When we travel into high-altitude, we suggest moderation!)

Finally, if you have special dietary requirements are particularly interested in the culinary aspect of one of our journeys, please let us know.

For private journeys, we can, of course, tailor the meal experience to your taste (and budget).



What's Included / Best Months to Go...

Generally speaking, our journey packages and prices are all-inclusive. Once you've paid and you arrive at the starting point, you really won't have to take out your wallet again.

- **Cars** – a modern SUV is provided for all driving days, expertly maintained and serviced by Avis, Hertz, or other reputable car rental companies, and covered by the best insurance available, and hire car return from Shangri-La to Kunming is also included
- **International Journey Host, Guide and Support Vehicle** – you will be accompanied by a registered Chinese tour guide, an On the Road in China host and a fully equipped lead car with a local support driver
- **Routes** – we provide an extensively researched and carefully designed itinerary and “state-of-the-art” satellite navigation system with a pre-programmed route for the journey. You will also receive a detailed pre-departure pack and route book for the journey
- **Driving License** – You will need a temporary Chinese driving license for which all arrangements and fees are included.
- **Fuel & Tolls** – we provide petrol for the car throughout the journey and pay all tolls



Best months to go...

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN
JUL AUG SEPT OCT NOV DEC

- **Flight** – a one-way flight from Lijiang to Kunming (6day itinerary) or from Shangri-La to Kunming (9day itinerary)
- **Airport Transfers** – all airport transfers are included
- **Hotels** – the best available or five-star accommodation is included in each overnight stop

- **Meals** – breakfast (a choice of Western and Local is provided), and lunch and dinner are included on all driving days, as are drinks. Meals on non-driving days as specified above. Prepare for a culinary adventure!
- **Goodies** – you will enjoy an On the Road Home-Away-from-Home Kit containing wet towels, anti-bacterial gel and basic toiletries, and a daily picnic basket containing fresh fruit, fruit juice, water, and a mixture of sweets and nibbles

- **Other Essentials** – we provide each car with walky-talkies
- **Travel Insurance** – including 24-hour medical assistance, evacuation and repatriation emergency service
- **Tips & Entrance Fees** – basic tips and entrance fees for jointly attended activities are included
- **Activities, Meals, Transport** during ‘free times’ as indicated in this Journey Dossier
- **Top-up Collision Damage Waiver** insurance

What's Not Included

The only items not included in our prices are your flights to and from Kunming, your China visa, and personal purchases (e.g., gifts, souvenirs).



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“ A picture is worth a thousand words. True, but when it comes to a road journey, moving images are priceless. Please visit : <http://www.ontheroadexperiences.com/en/video-gallery>”





ON THE ROAD EXPERIENCES

BACK ROADS | HIDDEN GEMS

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

