
Yunnan Province, China: Gateway to Shangri-La

A PRIVATE TRAVEL JOURNEY WITH COX & KINGS

Kunming • Dali • Lijiang • Zhongdian • Kunming

TOUR DETAILS

STARTS/ ENDS

Kunming/ Kunming

2009 TOUR PRICE

Valid: January – December 2009 except April 30 –
May 5, 2009, September 30 – October 5, 2009 &
December 15, 2009 – January 5, 2010

\$4,435 per person, double occupancy
\$2,325 single supplement

Internal flights \$ 330 per person in Economy
(Subject to Change)
(Kunming/Dali; Zhongdian/Kunming)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

All hotel accommodations based on superior rooms
with daily breakfast and lunches/dinners as listed

All drives & sightseeing by private car and driver

Entrance fees into historical sights and monuments

Services of English Speaking Provincial Guide
throughout your travels

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

International air travel

Airport departure taxes

Visa fees

Travel insurance

Excess baggage fees

Personal items and alcoholic beverages

Gratuities to guides, drivers, porters, hotel services

Yunnan, the sixth largest of China's provinces, lies in the southwest part of the country. Towering ice-capped mountains adjoin Tibet and Myanmar in the northwest, and lush tropical rainforests border Laos and Vietnam in the South. Yunnan offers some of the most picturesque topography and diversified culture in the world. It is home to 25 different ethnic groups, a third of China's ethnic minorities, and half of the country's plant and animal species. With a unique array of fascinating ecological resources, including snow-capped mountains, lakes and hot springs, tropical rainforests, as well as a healthy climate and the friendly people, Yunnan is one of the most alluring destinations in China. End this fascinating tour with a stay at the luxurious new spa/resort of **Banyan Tree** in the land of Shangri La!

Day One **Arrival in Kunming** **D**
Arrival at Kunming's International Airport where you will be met as you EXIT the ARRIVALS TERMINAL. Your Cox & Kings representative will transfer you to your hotel. Enjoy the rest of your day at leisure.

The Grand Park, Kunming (Lakeview Room)

Day Two **Kunming [Stone Forest]** **B,L**
Today you will drive [2 hours] outside of Kunming to the fascinating **Stone Forest**, one of China's most remarkable phenomenon. It consists of innumerable bizarre-shaped ancient limestone cliffs and peaks created by wind and water erosion some two hundred million years ago. You will lunch at the Forest in one of its quaint local restaurants. Later in the day you will the **Bamboo Temple** in the hills above the city and also the 1,000 year old **Yuangtong Temple** and the old **Yongdao Street**.

The Grand Park, Kunming (Lakeview Room)

Day Three **Kunming to Dali** **B,L**
Take a short 45 minute flight to Dali and explore this former capital of Nanzhao and early Dali Kingdom. It is home to the **Bai Minority**. Standing against the **Cangshan Mountains** in the west and adjoining the **Erhai Lake** in the east it is a picturesque and quaint area of Yunnan Province. Visit the **Three Pagodas**, on the outskirts of the old city. The Three Pagodas were constructed in about 850 and 1050 AD following the models of the Small Wild Goose Pagoda in Xian. For centuries they have been considered a landmark in this region. From **Dali's old town** you will drive to the shore of the Erhai Lake where you will board your private boat for a cruise on the lake, reaching the far shore in about 1 hour's time and disembarking at Jin Suo Isle. You will tour this **Bai minority fishing village** on the Isle with its **colorful market** and **Benzhu Temple**. In the afternoon take a chairlift ride up midway to Zhonghe Peak of the Cangshan Mountains. Here you will visit a **Taoist temple** and walk along the Jade Belt Bath to inhale pine-scented fresh air of this mountain region with a bird's eye-view of the town of Dali and nearby Erhai Lake. The Cangshan Mountains stretch for more than 42 kilometers and has 19 peaks, averaging over 3500 meters with 18 streams springing from the mountains.

Asia Star Hotel, Dali (Deluxe Room)

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Day Four **Dali to Lijiang** **B,L**
 Today experience 'true China countryside' on your drive from Dali to Lijiang, along the ancient Yunnan-Tibet Road. This drive is approximately 5 hours, covering a distance of about 200 kilometers. Enroute you will visit **Shibaoshan [Stone Treasure Mountains]** and the Sideng village, which is halfway between Dali and Lijiang. Shibaoshan is hidden in a remote mountain region some 130 kilometers north of Dali. Apart from fine depictions of Buddhist deities and disciples, the grottoes at **Stone Bell Temple** are outstanding for their presentation of life under the Nanzhao Kingdom [748-902 AD]. The works are entirely of carvings, with no frescoes. Two lesser sites within **Shibaoshan region namely Lions Pass and Shadeng village**. Artistic accomplishment of Shibaoshan grottoes are regarded by scholars as among the best in the entire South of China. Sideng village was a prosperous town on the old South China Silk Road that connects China with South Asia, Southeast Asia and West Asia. **Traditional Bai houses** line up to form the village 'chessboard'. The **century-old Xingjiao Buddhist Temple** and wooden theatre are worth a visit. Sideng Villages were enlisted as one of the 101 World Monumental Constructions in late 2001 by the World Monumental Construction Fund. Arrival in the afternoon in Lijiang, a small mountain town constructed of stone and tile walkways laced with swift canals. It has recently been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
The Banyan Tree, Lijiang (Garden Villa)

Day Five **Lijiang** **B,L**
 This morning visit the beautiful **Old Town** of Lijiang called "Dayan" and which is located at an altitude of almost 8,000 feet and is a UN World Heritage Site. The old part of the town has wonderful old cobbled streets, meandering streams and views that will take your breath away. Also visit the **Black Dragon Pool**, where the snow-capped mountains seemingly shimmer as they reflected in the waters of the lake, which is also the source of water for Dayan. The afternoon is at leisure for independent activities. This evening enjoy a performance of the **Naxi Orchestra**
The Banyan Tree, Lijiang (Garden Villa)

Day Six **Lijiang** **B,L**
 Today enjoy a full-day in the countryside outside of Lijiang. Visit the **Yu Hu Village** the former home of renowned naturalist, Dr. Joseph Rock and where the traditional Naxi way of life still continues. Also visit the **Yongfeng Monastery** offered as a journey by 4WD, on foot or even on a horse-back (the horses are led by the local owners) over the mountains to **Wenhai Lake**, which is rarely visited. The small villages in this area are reminiscent of a China from many years ago and is a perfect way of seeing a more rural China. A simple lunch is offered at the Wenhai Eco Lodge during this trip and you then drive back to the Old Town of Lijiang, Dayan.
The Banyan Tree, Lijiang (Garden Villa)

Day Seven **Lijiang – Zhongdian** **B, L**
 Today depart Lijiang on your 5 hour drive along the **Yunnan-Tibet Road** to Zhongdian. Enroute stop at the **First Bend of the Yangzi River**. Approaching **Stone Drum** offers a dramatic view of the Yangzi's 180 degree turn, where the wide, swift waters perform a miraculous about-face. For nearly 20 kilometers the river, first flowing south, then north, runs parallel to itself. Locals say if it were not for their village standing guard at the bend, China would lose the water of the Yangzi to Southeast Asia, like that of the adjacent Mekong and Salween Rivers.

Tiger Leaping Gorge, or Hutiaokia in Chinese, is the Yangzi's best known gorge after the Three Gorges in Sichuan and Hubei. Wedged tightly between gigantic cliffs, the river is so narrow here, as legend tells us, that a hunted tiger made his escape to the other side in a single bound. Here, the Jade Dragon Snow Mountains and the Haba Snow Mountains are very close proximity causing the large volume of water to cut deeper and deeper into the gorge, over many centuries. In some places there is a drop of 3000 meters to the water! Zhongdian [soon to be renamed Shangri-La

County] lies in a landscape of rolling hills, snow-capped peaks, virgin forests of spruce, pine and meadow dotted with wild

flowers and tranquil lakes. The old town, still entirely in local Tibetan style, is to the south of Zhongdian.
Banyan Tree Ringha Resort & Spa, Zhongdian (Tibetan Suite)

Day Eight **Zhongdian 'Shangri La'** **B,L**
 Today visit the **Ganden Songzanglin Monastery, the Shudu Lake and a typical Tibetan household**. You will also have the opportunity to stroll through the local market.

Gangden Songzanglin Monastery: Founded in the 17th century during the reign of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama and nicknames as Lesser Potala Palace, Ganden Songzanglin Monastery is one of the 13 Tibetan monasteries in the Kangba Region, where Tibet, Yunnan and Sichuan join. Approximately 700 monks are in residence as well as one living Buddha, the monastery is a must-see.

Shudu: Is one of the biggest plateau lakes in Zhongdian and is situated 35 kilometers outside of the county proper and at an elevation of 3700 meters. The Lake is surrounded with deep primeval forests of fir and dragon spruce. The silver birch covering the eastern part of the Lake turns to golden yellow in autumn, providing spectacular photographic opportunities. The natural grassland around the Lake is the best pasture in Zhongdian. In spring and summer one has impressive scenes of the lake surrounded by herds of sheep and cattle grazing in the lush grasses.

Tibetan Minority: With a population of 112,000 people, the Tibetan minority makes up one-third of the total population in Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. They believe in Lamaism, a major branch of Buddhism. During the new year of the Tibetan calendar and the horse racing festival on the fifth day of the fifth month on the Chinese Lunar calendar, there are large gatherings of Tibetans in Zhongdian, Deqin and Weiki celebrating colorful festivals.

Banyan Tree Ringha Resort & Spa, Zhongdian (Tibetan Suite)

Day Nine **Zhongdian to Kunming** **B**
 This morning transfer to the airport in time to board your flight back to Kunming, where you will connect with your homeward bound flight.

End of Cox & Kings Tour Arrangements

VISA: A visa is required for US Passport Holders visiting China and this visa must be obtained in the US prior to departure.

WEATHER: The optimum time for visiting Yunnan Province is September, October, November and March, April, May - when the weather is best. Temperatures during these periods are 70's during the day and 50's in the evenings. The rainy season is June, July and August.



RECOMMENDED ADD ON JOURNEY Classic China – 12 Nights/ 13 Days

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