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China Expedition Tours, A Division of CYTS International Tours Co., Ltd. Guilin

China Photography Discovery

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Tour Code: CET-PG02

Length: 23 days and 22 nights

Cities Visited/Stayed: (Hong Kong), Kunming, Dali, Lijiang, Shangri-la, Chengdu, Jiuzhaigou, Tibet, Shanghai

Highlight Attractions: The Stone Forest, Dali Ancient Town, Jade Dragon Snow Mountain (Yulong Xue Shan), The Ancient Town of Lijiang, Songzanlin Monastery, Potala Palace, Yu Yuan Garden, The Bund

Experience & Features: Beautiful Yunnan, Fairyland-like Jiuzhaigou, Mysterious Tibet, Old Part of Shanghai

This tour takes you to the southwest China to take numerous marvelous photos. Fantastic Yunnan, picturesque south Sichuan, mysterious Tibet and modern Shanghai are all in this fascinating tour. Our tour starts in Kunming. The natural sceneries and local minority costumes will add luster to your photographing. How can we miss the heaven-like Jiuzhaigou, there you may be amazed at the splendid water color and wandering for a great time. The highlights of this tour lies on the way to Lhasa in Tibet. Spectacular and fascinating snow-capped Peaks, glaciers, high mountains, wide rivers, unique highland lakes, geothermal springs, vast pastoral areas, magnificent monasteries, and brilliant religious monasteries would run into your camera lens. The last destination is Shanghai, which will amaze you by its modern atmosphere and traditional culture and art. If your camera is ready, welcome to enjoy this amazing tour with us.

Itinerary

Day 1: Hong Kong-Kunming

First, take a flight from Hong Kong to Kunming. When you arrive in Kunming, our guide will greet you at the airport and transfer you to the hotel.

Stay overnight in Kunming.

Meals:

Day 2: Kunming-Dali

Today let's have a day tour to the **[Stone Forest]**. Stone Forest (Shilin), known since the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.) as the "First Wonder of the World", covers an area of 400 square kilometers (96,000 acres) and includes both large and small stone forests, as well as many other scenic spots. An old local saying says that "If you have visited Kunming without seeing the Stone Forest, you have wasted your time." Truly, the site is one of the most important attractions of Yunnan. Later this afternoon we will drive to Kunming Train Station to catch an overnight train to Dali after dinner.

Stay overnight on train.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 3: Dali

You are picked up by your guide at Dali Train Station in the morning, transferred to your hotel in the Old Town. The rest of the morning is for your own arrangement. Next we will head to **[Three Pagoda Temple]** that is made of three ancient independent pagodas forming a symmetrical triangle, forming a unique view in China. And they are one of the most significant and majestic wonders in Dali and look magnificent. **[Dali ancient Town]** is our next stop, whose city layout was uniform, with five main streets from south to north and eight main streets from east to west, while marketplaces were neatly arranged within the city, which has remained unchanged to this date. Meanwhile, you can see countless traditional Bai ethnic minority folk houses, which can give us a different feeling from any other Chinese city. Walking on the cobble-paved streets will be a very impressive choice. The grey-green roof tiles, peculiar workshops, temples, schools and churches with an antique flavor would be a valuable part of our memory. You can just enjoy a relaxed walk to take some photos.

Stay overnight in Dali Old Town.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 4: Dali-Lijiang

We will leave for Lijiang by private car, van or bus after lunch, and it costs about 3.5 hours' drive. The breath-taking scenery on the way will surely make you feel amazingly surprised, and we can stop on the way for you to relax and take some photos at the same time. You will arrive in Lijiang before dinner time.

Stay overnight in Lijiang.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 5: Lijiang

Today we explore the ethnic charm, historical milieu and architectural landscape of the Old Town of Lijiang, a sacred sanctuary which has protected the ethnic minorities and their unique cultures since ancient times. Regarded as the Venice of the Orient with its dizzying array of water canals, quaint bridges and cobble-stoned streets, Lijiang was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997. This morning we go to the **[Jade Dragon Snow-capped Mountain]**. Skyscraping snow-capped peaks and flowing rivers under the old town compose a fabulous picture. When viewing from afar, the snow-capped range looks like a silver dragon with snow curling up its middle, rich forest, herb and animal resources thriving on the mountain and a giant tram cart up here is one of the highest of its kind in China. **[Take cables]** to climb the mountain and enjoy the picturesque scenery must be an unforgettable memory.

Stay overnight in Lijiang.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 6: Lijiang-Shangri-la

We will depart for Shangri-la by private car, van or bus after breakfast and it will be a long drive. Lunch is served in the halfway. The scenery all the way is fantastic, which will offer you a good chance to take photos. And will arrive in Shangri-la before dinner time.

Stay overnight in Shangri-la.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 7: Shangri-la

Today we visit **[Songzanlin Monastery]** -- a spiritual hub for people to discover the mystery and traditions of Tibetan Buddhism, a famous Tibetan style Buddhist temple in China. This scenic spot is attractive to visitors because they can enjoy the view and be lucky to take photos of girls wearing exquisite Tibetan costumes holding perfectly white fluffy lambs against the impressionistic mountains and blue sky. And then we will visit the **[old part of the town]**, a **[Tibetan family visiting]** is included as well. Here you can see distinctive religious house styles influenced by Buddhism and also can taste Tibetan specialties of yak butter tea, local yogurt and Tibetan barley. Later this afternoon is on your own to walk around. And we highly suggest you to get to know more about local people's daily life by visiting the local market..

Stay overnight in Shangri-la.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 8: Shangri-la

[Bitahai Lake] is famous for its limpid water and its beautiful scenery which is set against the mountains and forests surrounded. Bitahai Lake is widely recognized as 'A Pearl on the Plateau' and the most attractive lake in Shangri-La. Today we will have the opportunity to drive 32 kilometers from Shangri-la County to visit Bitahai Lake and enjoy a feast of sceneries. Legend has it that a goddess dropped her mirror carelessly to the earth when she was making up. The mirror was broken into pieces and they became lakes on the plateau. Among these pieces, the most beautiful piece with green jade turned into today's Bitahai Lake. The most outstanding scene is "fish drunk by azalea". As it is known that in late spring and early summer, the flowers bloom, the petals go with the wind and fall into the lake. After the fish eating those azaleas petals, they were just drunk just like human being got drunk, and they become lethargic and slothfully, intoxicated by the flower's chemicals. You are kingly required to either walk or ride a horse around the lake to take photos to preserve the delicate, natural harmony of the area.

Stay overnight in Shangri-la.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 9: Shangri-la-Kunming-Chengdu

First you take a morning flight back to Kunming, and then another flight followed from Kunming to Chengdu. When you arrive, our tour guide will greet you at the airport and transfer you to the hotel. The rest of the day is leisure at relax. If you want to know more about Chengdu culture, you can taste the famous Sichuan cuisine; also you can shop and have tea at a teahouse.

Stay overnight in Chengdu.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 10: Chengdu-Jiuzhaigou

Today we drive to Chengdu Shuangliu airport to take a flight to Jiu Huang airport in **[Jiuzhaigou area]**. We **[take a coach to Muni scenic area to see the Zaga Waterfall]** upon arrival, marvelous pictures can be taken from there. It will take about two hours in hiking along that area. Subsequently, we will drive to Jiuzhaigou, checking into hotel and relax.

Stay overnight at Jiuzhaigou.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 11: Jiuzhaigou

After breakfast, we will go to **[Jiuzhaigou Scenic Area]** where we will visit the **[Shuzheng Valley]**, **[Rize Valley]** and **[Zechawa Valley]**. The Tour Route of Shuzheng Valley is reputed as the epitome of Jiuzhaigou, with mystic and unpredictable independent lakes and lake clusters, as well as colorful beaches, century-old grinders, wood bridges, and powerful waterfalls. Visitors are likely to reach a consensus that Jiuzhaigou is the best of Nature creation. Next we will head for Rize Valley, the most attractive part of Jiuzhaigou. 18 separated amazing lakes and the Nuorilang Waterfall are in this valley. Zechawa Valley has not only seasonal lakes, but also snow-capped peaks because it is reputed as the highest altitude during your Jiuzhaigou tour. Lakes, waterfalls, beaches, water currents, snow peaks, and virgin forests will represent the breathtaking scenery to you to take those fantastic pictures.

Stay overnight at Jiuzhaigou.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 12: Jiuzhaigou-Chengdu

This morning, we will drive to the airport for flight to Chengdu city. You can spend the rest of the day to explore this leisure city of China. Taking a walk to Tianfu Square to see Chairman Mao's marble statue, going to People's Park, or having a sip of Chinese green tea in the tea house there are all nice options. The local products that you could possibly imagine, ranging from snakes and snails to fortunes and foot scrubs, are abundant in the street markets and they are full of life. A **[hotpot dinner]** will let you know what typical Sichuan spicy food is. Besides, some famous souvenirs include Sichuan brocade, stitch works and lacquer.

Stay overnight in Chengdu.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 13: Chengdu-Linzhi-Bomi

Early this morning we will drive to the airport for a flight to Linzhi. Upon arrival, you will be transferred to visit the huge **[cypress forest]**, one cypress tree is more than 2600 years old. If it is in summer, we will go to **[Nulang forest]** to take photos. The boundless forest is so amazingly that you will be unwilling to leave. Later we will drive to Bomi.

Stay overnight in Bomi.

Meals: (D)

Day 14: Bomi-Ranwu

Early this morning, we will go to the **[Ranwu Lake]** with an altitude of 3800m. You will find many thousand-year-old willow trees grown around the Rawu Lake. It is the place where the Palong river originates, beside the lake is a green grassland and rice field just like “the scenery in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze river of china” There are green grassland and colorful azalea flowers as well as boscaige. On top of the mountain is rolling snow peaks that never melt all the year round. The picturesque scenery will remove your tiredness away. You will have abundant time to take the photos here. Later we will drive back.

Stay at one hotel in Ranwu.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 15: Ranwu-Midui Glacier-Bomi

Early this morning, we take photos of the sunrise at Ranwu Lake, and now we will drive to **[Midui Glacier]**. Here you will see the spectacular view that two waterfalls are divided by a primitive forest. The Midui village is beautiful and mysterious with its rural scenery. The most beautiful and wonderful scenes of Chuangzang highway lies in the way from Ranwu to Bomi. We will stop several times on the way for you to take photos.

Stay overnight at Bomi.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 16: Bomi- Namjag Barwa -Baiyi Town

This morning, let’s drive to the **[Namjag Barwa]** to appreciate this magnificent snowy peak which is the highest peak in Lizhi District, and Namjag Barwa is considered as the Saint Girl Peak of Tibet. You cannot help yourself shocking by what you have seen here. Subsequently we will drive to Baiyi Town.

Stay overnight at Baiyi Town.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 17: Baiyi Town-Basongcuo-Lhasa

This morning we will drive to Lhasa, and on half way we will get off and pay a visit to **[Basongcuo Lake]** that has win the reputation of small Swiss in Tibet. The lake is about 12 kilometers long with an area of more than 6 thousand Mu (about 988 acre). Snowy mountains are reflected in the crystal water, and there are Buddhist sculptures on the island in the middle of the lake. Afterwards, we will drive to Lhasa. The rest of the day is on your own to explore the charming city.

Stay overnight in Lhasa.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 18: Lhasa

[Potala Palace] is our first stop in today's list. Situated on Potala Mountain in Lhasa, capital of the Tibet autonomous region, the Potala Palace was first built in the 7th century, for the wedding of the Tibetan king Songtsan Gampo and Princess Wencheng of the Tang Empire. The Potala Palace's halls include worship and pagoda halls, the North Square, the South Square and the Dragon King Pond. The Potala Palace is known as the Pearl on the Roof of the World. Its construction and furnishing reflect the superb skills of ancient artisans and the great attainments of Tibetan architecture. After lunch, we will visit the **[Sera Monastery]**-one of three most famous monasteries in Lhasa. Also included is a visit to the **[Norbulingka Park]**-the Summer Place of Dalai Lamas, where they handle political affairs and hold festival celebrations.

Stay overnight in Lhasa.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 19: Lhasa-Namucuo

After breakfast, we will drive to heaven lake--**[Namucuo]** locating in Dangxiong town, and it consists of a natural painting with the sky. Those peculiar-looking rocks and caves consist of special and fantastic scenery. The stretching Tanggula Snowy Mountain and those colorful long narrow flags along with the charming Namucuo Lake display a breathtaking picture in front of you. When we pass the Yangbajin area, you can enjoy a hot spring bath (better to take your swimming suit along, because it's really expensive to buy at the site). Enjoy a bright sky with diamond like stars.

Stay overnight at Namucuo.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 20: Namucuo-Lhasa

Early this morning we will go and **[watch the sunrise]** at Namucuo, and drive back to Lhasa city. **[Jokhang Temple]**, the ultimate pilgrimage destination for devotional Pilgrims is also our destination. There are many mysterious legends about these architectural styles of the Tang Dynasty. The flourishing **[bazaar of Barkhor Street]** Locating in the old area of Lhasa City is also a must-see place for the tourists. Barkhor Street is an ancient style street full of stalls of exquisite articles, here you may be amazed at delicate handicrafts and be happy to purchase some. We continue to move to the **[Tibet Carpet Factory]**--one of the remarkable enterprises in Tibet mainly producing traditional Tibetan Carpet that are hand-made with beautiful pictures and

excellent quality. Those elegant and colorful carpets are nice decorations and every item is unique. So you can purchase them at competitive prices with various choices. You will have your dinner served in your hotel.

Stay overnight in Lhasa.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 21: Lhasa-Shanghai

This morning you are on your own to walk around and take photos of local minority and the exotic buildings. After lunch, we will go to the airport for a flight to Shanghai.

Stay overnight in Shanghai.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 22: Shanghai

Today we will go to visit [**Yuyuan Garden**] where you find more refined handicrafts and tasty Chinese snacks. Also the journey include a visit to the [**Jade Buddha Temple**], an elegant structure famous for its Buddha statue which is carved of solid white jade and decorated by jewels. Lunch is arranged at a characteristic Shanghai restaurant. The tour guide will lead you to the [**Outer Bund**] where a grand view of Shanghai is available to you. The Outer Bund will represent you how Shanghai can keep modern while still containing its old traditions. [Nanjing Road] is the most prosperous commercial street, and walking along the street is a good chance to shop and find out lots of world famous brands.

Stay overnight in Shanghai.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 23: Shanghai-Departure

This morning we enjoy a walk on [**Hengshan road**]. There are flamboyants in both sides of the street, combing the distinctive European architecture; all these make the Hengshan road more beautiful. Besides, it is also one of the most famous entertainment streets in Shanghai, the bars and the local delicious foods are abundant for you to make a choice. Walking in the streets is a good way to experience this cultural city in a much deeper way. Our tour ends after a farewell lunch. You are free to arrange your time until you are ready to be transferred to the next destination or departure.

Meals: (B, L)



Add: 3rd F, Dongfang Bldg, 30 Qixing Rd, Guilin 541004, China

Website: ChinaExpeditionTours.com

Tel: 86-773-5817222, 5817255

Fax: 86-773-5829185