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

Colorful China Landscape Photography Journey

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Tour Code: CET-PG03

Length: 25 days and 24 nights

Cities Visited/Stayed: Shanghai, Guilin, Xi'an, Chengdu, Jiuzhaigou, Tibet, Beijing

Highlight Attractions: Yu Yuan Garden, The Bund, Terraced Rice Paddies at Longji, Li River, Yangshuo, Terracotta Warriors and Horses Museum, Potala Palace, Forbidden City, Great Wall, Summer Palace

Experience & Features: Old Part of Shanghai, Picturesque Li River Cruise, Fairyland-like Jiuzhaigou, Mysterious Tibet, Fancy 798 Photography Art Studio

This photography tour is especially designed for photographic fans and those who are interested in southwest China. We begin our tour in Shanghai, which will amaze you by its modern atmosphere and traditional culture and art. Then you will marvel at the magnificent Terrace field in Longsheng, experience a cruise on the world-wide famous Li River through stunning karst landscapes in Guilin. 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. Our tour ends in Beijing-the capital of China. Visit magnificent Great Wall and professional photography art studio. Welcome to explore southwest China and enjoy fantastic photography tour with us.

Itinerary

Day 1: Shanghai

Upon your arrival in Shanghai, our guide will welcome you at the airport and transfer you to the hotel.

Stay overnight in Shanghai.

Meals:

Day 2: Shanghai

After a leisurely breakfast, and we will go to visit the **[Yuyuan Garden]**, a place of peace and comfort in the heart of bustling Shanghai, dates back to the fabled Ming Dynasty. Next we move to **[Jade Buddha Temple]**, an elegant structure famous for its Buddha statue which is carved of solid white jade and dotted by jewels. You will have your lunch in a characteristic Shanghai restaurant. **[Outer Bund]** is the first stop after lunch, and you will have a grand view of Shanghai meanwhile you may marvel at how modern this metropolis is while still containing its old traditions. Then we will walk on the **[Nanjing Road]**, the most flourishing commercial street. Lots of world famous brands setting along the street, so you can enjoy a good time in shopping.

Stay overnight in Shanghai.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 3: Shanghai-Guilin

This morning we will enjoy a walk on **[Hengshan road]**, where you are able to take photos and have coffee at one nice bar. After lunch we will drive to the airport for a pm flight to Guilin. When you arrival in Guilin, you will be met and transferred to the hotel.

Stay overnight in Guilin.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 4: Guilin-Longsheng

Longji is a minority area with magnificent terraced rice paddies, and today we will pay a visit there. You may have a chance to take some wonderful pictures of minority people wearing exquisite costumes along the way. The **[Longji Terraces]** with a location in southeast of Longsheng County, were built into the hillsides which look like great chains or ribbons as they wind from the foot to the top of the hill. People in that area are very smart because they make best use of the scarce arable land and water resources in the mountainous area by building this ingenious construction. Later this afternoon we drive to visit **[Huangluo Red Yao minority village]** where women there all keep their hair to a length of more than one meter. The costumes featured with the red color and beauty will make a strong impression on you.

Stay overnight in Longsheng.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 5: Longsheng-Guilin

Longsheng town is waiting for us today! Early this morning we drive to the Longsheng town, and you can get to know the daily life of local people by visiting the local market to have interesting discovery. Then we drive to Guilin city. Upon arrival, you are transferred to the hotel to enjoy a leisurely afternoon.

Stay overnight in Guilin.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 6: Guilin-Yangshuo

Today we start the **[Li River cruise]**. Li River symbolizes the Guilin area because this picturesque river is a major component of Guilin scenery. When it sparkles in the sunlight, the river meanders through lush mountains like a liquid jade belt. A cruise along the Li River between Guilin and Yangshuo will definitely be an unforgettable experience for you. You can stay inside or enjoy the lovely river breezes on the open deck. Lunch will be served onboard. The entire journey lasts about four hours, so you will enjoy the Li River picturesque scenery until you reach Yangshuo. Disembark and walk to the West Street, which has received countless foreigners from all over the world and reputed as "Earth Village in China". After you take a walk on the West Street, you will find out that over 300 cafes, restaurants, hotels art crafts and tourist stores, foreign language clubs, internet centers and Kungfu schools are set along the 600 meters long street. This afternoon you are free at leisure, so you can enjoy a coffee time at the West Street, or walk around the small Yangshuo town.

Stay overnight in Yangshuo.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 7: Yangshuo-Guilin

We drive back to Guilin city after breakfast, spending the rest of the day in Guilin city to discover its shining scenic spots that make the city so fabulous. The first stop is **[Elephant Trunk Hill]** which is the symbol of Guilin, standing in the Li River and looks like an elephant drinking water from the river. Then we will move to the **[Reed Flute Cave]**, and it is a famous scenic spot, mainly offering a magic fairyland of stalactites, stalagmites, stone columns, curtains and flowers in fantastic shapes and colors to you when you are appreciating the landscape and rural scenery. After the visit, we will continue to the nearby **[South China Sea Pearl Museum]**, where we can learn some knowledge of pearls and if you are interested you can purchase real sea pearl at competitive prices. After dinner, we recommend a cruise in the city's central area to you on a water system, which will surely give you a deep impression of Guilin.

Stay overnight in Guilin.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 8: Guilin-Xi'an

After breakfast, we will drive to the airport for a flight to Xi'an which has a long history. It served as a capital for thirteen dynasties, including the famous and significant Western Zhou, Qin, Western Han, Sui and Tang dynasties, spanning over 1120 years. It was the oriental cultural center of the Silk Road. Upon your arrival in Xi'an, you will be met and transferred to the hotel. You can spend the rest of day to explore this ancient city.

Stay overnight in Xi'an.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 9: Xi'an

Xi'an with a history of more than 3,000 years has abundant collection of archaeological relics to express its profound history. This morning we will pay a visit to **[Banpo Museum]**, where you can see lots of precious unearthed cultural relics and artworks, representing the ancient civilization. The **[Terra-cotta Warriors and Horses Museum]** with a location in east of Xi'an city is famous throughout the world for life-sized terra-cotta warriors and horses. The gorgeousness of Emperor Qin Shihuang's Mausoleum in structure can be shown from three pits of the terra-cotta warriors and horses that excavated. Later this evening you can eat local special dumpling dinner in the restaurant named Tang Dynasty Music and Dance Show.

Stay overnight in Xi'an.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 10: Xi'an-Chengdu

Today we will go to visit the ancient **[City Wall]** and the [Provincial Museum] in this morning. **[Provincial Museum]** is a striking Tang-Dynasty style pavilion, and there are houses with a large collection of 113,000 historic and cultural artifacts unearthed in Shaanxi. Also included is a visit to the **[Big Wild Goose Pagoda]**, one of the city's most distinctive and outstanding landmarks, even the most beautiful building remained in Xi'an today. Finally we will take a pm flight to Chengdu.

Stay overnight in Chengdu.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 11: Chengdu-Jiuzhaigou

Today we will drive to Chengdu Shuangliu airport to take a flight to Jiuhuang airport in [Jiuzhaigou area]. After arrival, we **[take a coach to Muni scenic area to see the Zaga Waterfall]**, and you can take marvelous pictures there. It takes you about two hours to hike along that area. Afterwards, we will drive to Jiuzhaigou, checking in hotel and relax.

Stay overnight at Jiuzhaigou.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 12: Jiuzhaigou

What waits for us today is **[Jiuzhaigou Scenic Area]**, and we can visit the **[Shuzheng Valley]**, **[Rize Valley]** and **[Zechawa Valley]** there. Shuzheng Valley is the main valley in Jiuzhaigou scenic area. This valley is at the entrance of Jiuzhaigou, so you will visit it first. There are more than 40 lakes (local people prefer to call the lakes as "haizi" meaning the son of the sea in Chinese). These lakes are just looked like mirrors which reflect the splendid scenery in this area. Then, we head for Rize Valley, the most attractive part of Jiuzhaigou. There are 18 separated amazing lakes and the Nuorilang Waterfall in this valley. Zechawa Valley has not only seasonal lakes, but also snow-capped peaks because it enjoys the highest altitude during your Jiuzhaigou tour. So you just enjoy the natural beauties best demonstrated in its lakes, waterfalls, beaches, water currents, snow peaks, and virgin forests and spend time to take photos.

Stay overnight at Jiuzhaigou.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 13: Jiuzhaigou-Chengdu

After breakfast, we will drive to the airport for flight to Chengdu city. Upon arrival, the rest of the day is free on your own to explore this leisure city of China. We will take a walk to Tianfu Square to see Chairman Mao's marble statue, go to People's Park, or have a sip of Chinese green tea in the tea house. Great streets full of life also exist here in abundance. Markets and street hawkers fill the streets dealing in everything you could possibly imagine, ranging from snakes and snails to fortunes and foot scrubs. A hotpot dinner will let you know the authentic Sichuan spicy food. Besides, Sichuan brocade, embroidery and lacquer ware are famous souvenirs.

Stay overnight in Chengdu.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 14: Chengdu-Linzhi-Bomi

Early this morning we will drive to the airport for a flight to Linzhi. When you arrive, 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 attractive that you will be unwilling to leave. Later we drive to Bomi.

Stay overnight in Bomi.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 15: Bomi-Ranwu

Early this morning, we will go to the **[Ranwu Lake]**, the headstream of one branch of Yaluzangbu River. There are stunning views of the beautiful reflections of the surrounding mountains in Ranwu Lake, the largest in eastern Tibet. The lake is in the Village of Ran about 90 km from the Baiba Town neighboring the Nyingchi Prefecture in Tibet Autonomous Region of China. The lake, 3,800m (about 12 467 feet) above the sea level, has a water area of 22 square kilometers (about 5 436 acre). Ranwu Lake is surrounded by magnificent snow-capped peaks and forests. On the top of the mountain, there are rolling snow peaks that never melt all the year round. The picturesque scenery will blow your tiredness away. You can enjoy a great time to take photos. Later we drive back.

Stay at one hotel in Ranwu.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 16: Ranwu-Midui Glacier-Bomi

Early this morning, we take photos of the sunrise at Ranwu Lake. Then we will drive to **[Midui Glacier]**. Primitive forest divides waterfalls into two parts. The Midui village is beautiful and mysterious with its rural scenery. The most beautiful and fabulous scenes of Chuangzang highway locate along the way from Ranwu to Bomi, so we will stop several times on the way for you to take photos.

Stay overnight at Bomi.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 17: Bomi- Namjag Barwa -Bayi Town

This morning, let's drive to the **[Namjag Barwa]** to appreciate this magnificent snowy peak! Namjag Barwa has the highest peak in Lizhi District, so it is considered as the Saint Girl Peak of Tibet. You will be surprised by what you saw here. Then we will drive to Bayi Town.

Stay overnight at Baiyi Town.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 18: Baiyi Town-Basongcuo-Lhasa

This morning we will head for Lhasa, but we will get off on halfway and pay a visit to **[Basongcuo Lake]** with the reputation of small Swiss in Tibet. The lake is about 12 kilometers (about 39 370 feet) long with an area of more than 6 thousand Mu (about 988 acre). When travelling there, you will be amazed by the lofty snow-capped mountain peaks, well-preserved original forests, cypresses that can grow up to thirty meters, and numerous colorful grasses. Travelers can also take part in various activities, such as mountain hiking, rock climbing and white water rafting, and experience the unique local customs of the Menba and Luoba people. Afterwards, we drive to Lhasa. The rest of the day is on your own to explore the city.

Stay overnight in Lhasa.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 19: Lhasa

Today we will visit the magnificent **[Potala Palace]** which was originally built by King Songtsen Gampo 1,300 years ago in Tang Dynasty (618-907AD). Potala is the name of the place, which means residence of the Goddess of Mercy in Tibetan language and it covers an area of more than 130, 000 square meters (about 32 acre). White Palace (administration building) and the Red Palace (religious building) are its two major parts. Tourists are attracted to come to this grand site to admire complicated architectures, devotional atmosphere and exquisite artworks. And then we will move to visit the **[Sera Monastery]**--one of three most famous monasteries in Lhasa. Next is a visit to **[Norbulingka Park]** where they handle political affairs and hold festival celebrations is also included.

Stay overnight in Lhasa.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 20: Lhasa-Namucuo

After breakfast, we will drive to heaven lake--**[Namucuo]** with a Location in Dangxiong town. Together with the sky, **[Namucuo]** naturally composes a fabulous painting. Those grotesque rocks and caves contribute to the special and fantastic scenery there. The stretching Tanggula Snowy Mountain and those colorful long narrow flags along with the charming Namucuo Lake display an astonishing picture in front of you. When passing the Yangbajin area, you can enjoy a hot spring bath (you'd better to take your swimming suit along, because it's

really expensive to buy at the site). You can enjoy yourself with a bright sky dotted by stars that look like diamond.

Stay overnight at Namucuo.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 21: Namucuo-Lhasa

We will go and **[watch the sunrise]** at Namucuo early this morning, and then we drive back to Lhasa city. Next we will visit the **[Jokhang Temple]**, the ultimate pilgrimage destination for devotional Pilgrims. It is the place that displays architectural styles of the Tang Dynasty and holds the mysterious legends. The flourishing **[bazaar of Barkhor Street]** is also a must-see place for the tourists. Barkhor Street with a Location in the old area of Lhasa City 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. Afterwards, we continue to the **[Tibet Carpet Factory]**--one of the remarkable enterprises in Tibet mainly producing traditional Tibetan Carpet. All the carpets here are hand-made with beautiful pictures and excellent quality, and every item is unique. Those elegant and colorful carpets are nice decorations. Here you can purchase them at competitive prices with various choices. Dinner is served at your hotel.

Stay overnight in Lhasa.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 22: Lhasa-Beijing

You can enjoy a leisurely breakfast, and you are on your own to walk around and take photos of local minority and the exotic buildings this morning. After lunch, we go to the airport for a flight to Beijing--the capital of China. You spend the rest of the day to relax as well as prepare for the next day's tour. Many visitors will try the crispy and tasty Peking duck dinner to make their journey to Beijing a complete one. So we highly recommend a featured dinner for you in one famous restaurant.

Stay overnight in Beijing.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 23: Beijing

After breakfast, let's go to visit the **[Temple of Heaven]**, which is a complex of buildings, gardens, and pathways, which indicates relationship between Earth and heaven. Then we will move to **[Tian'anmen Square]**--one of the largest city squares in the world. It is located in the central axis of old Beijing. Monument

to the People's Heroes stands in the center of Tian'anmen Square. Then we head for the **[Forbidden City]**, Imperial palaces for the emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties. 800 ceremonial buildings, 9,999 rooms, and a courtyard that can hold 100,000 people are contained in the city. Best ancient Chinese architectural styles are well preserved here, providing an imposing view. Later the day, we will drive to the **[798 Photography Art Studio]**. You can look around, admire those photos in the studio, or talk to artists, and enjoy yourself on those wonderful photos.

Stay overnight in Beijing.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 24: Beijing

There is an old famous Chinese saying goes "You are not a hero unless you climb on the Great Wall." This morning we will drive to the **[Jinshanling Great Wall]**, the less developed and commercial section of the Wall. This historic construction is a little dangerous to climb because it winds up and down the precipitous ranges, but as a reward, splendid views are available to you on the top. So you just enjoy taking fabulous pictures of the imposing Great Wall there.

Stay overnight in Beijing.

Meals: (B, L)

Day 25: Beijing-Departure

[Summer Palace] is waiting for us today! The Chinese name for the Summer Palace is Yiheyuan, means "The Garden of Harmonious Unity." The palace is an outstanding example of imperial parks and private gardens of both northern and southern China, and is the best preserved and largest of the Chinese imperial parks. The Summer Palace has long been known worldwide for its gardens, including private gardens and imperial parks, all characterized by the harmony of natural and manmade beauty. The scenic spots contain a nation's profound philosophical and aesthetic tradition. Our tour ends after a farewell lunch. You can arrange your time freely until you are ready to be transferred to the next destination or departure.

Meals: (B, L)

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