



## **Mysterious Yunnan INS-CN15**

Country: China

Duration: 8 days

Accommodation: Included

Meal: As per program

Transportation: Included

Yunnan is one of the most diverse and interesting regions of China, and offers a huge range of scenery, cuisines and amazing sights. On this journey you will travel to Dali, Lijiang, you'll climb the edge of the Tibetan Plateau to the monasteries and temples of Shangri-La, as well as one of the province's less well-known gems, Shaxi, and tracks a portion of the ancient tea horse trade route from Yunnan to Tibet. We also include the stunning large scale cultural show choreographed by the famous Chinese Director Zhang Yi Mou with more than 500 dancers as well as horses with the Jade Dragon Mountain as the backdrop. It is a journey you will remember for a very long time. Many visitors come to this area, but with the freedom of bespoke holiday and the comforts of the beautiful luxury hotels available en route, our travellers will enjoy a unique experience as well as the very best that this stunning region at the edge of the Himalayas has to offer.

### **Day 1: Arrive Kunming (-)**

Arrival in Kunming Airport according to your own arrangements. Your guide will meet you in the arrival hall after the immigration formalities, and take you to Shilin Stone Forest, a typical karst formation. The hour and a half journey in southeast direction of Kunming bring you to Shilin Stone Forest, upon arrival visit this extraordinary sight. Late afternoon you will return to Kunming, where you stay at the best hotel in town.

### **Day 2: Kunming - Dali - Xizhou (B)**

Today you will drive to Dali and on to Xizhou (no guide service), home of the Linden House - a lovingly converted Bai minority mansion. Yunnan has one of the best road networks in China; traveling north along a highway until you reach Dali - formerly capital of Yunnan's Nanzhao Kingdom. Relax in Dali's Old Town; have a scroll and visit the Three White Pagodas temple (only from outside), before the short drive north to the village of Xizhou. The area around Dali is home to the ethnic Bai people and the tranquil village of Xizhou offers a good opportunity to explore its many old protected houses and courtyards that survived the late Ming and Qing Dynasties. Overnight in Xizhou.

### **Day 3: Xizhou - Shaxi (B,D)**

After breakfast you will start your half-day excursion to neighboring fishing villages. Visit some local families, temples and Xiao Putuo, a little temple built on the small isle of Wase.

In the afternoon it is time to head off the beaten path, as you drive across the Cangshan Mountains to Shaxi (no guide service). Overnight in Shaxi.

#### **Day 4: Shaxi - Lijiang (B)**

In the morning you will have time to explore Sideng Jie, the only surviving market on the Ancient Tea-Horse Caravan Road. Later on you will visit Shibaoshan Grottoes, a unique cultural treasures of the Bai people that was the epitome of the former prosperity of this region and an important sign of the cultural communication between Han and Tibetan cultures through this ancient trade route. After lunch you will visit Shihe, a Bai village known for its skillful carpenters and their exquisite wood carvings. Afterwards you will drive directly to Lijiang (no guide service), the home of the Naxi people. Lijiang was an important historical trade post on the Ancient Tea-Horse Caravan Road. Being influenced by the Han, Tibetan and Bai cultures since the Tang Dynasty, the Naxi people developed their distinctive culture, which finds artistic expression in Naxi pictographic script, Dongba scriptures, music and dances. Dated back to 800 years ago, the well preserved old town of Lijiang with its cobble stone streets, alleyways, limpid canals and many wooden houses is a UNESCO listed site. Be ready to get lost in the charms of this old town. Overnight in Lijiang Old Town.

#### **Day 5: Lijiang (B,L)**

Drive to Jade Dragon Snow Mountain about 30Km away from Lijiang Old Town. Then visit Ganhaizi Meadow, take the sightseeing bus to visit Baishui (White Water) River, which is a green water river because water from the Glacier Park of Yulong Snow Mountain; After that, take the chairlift to visit the Yak Meadow (3700m) in the Yulong Snow Mountain. You will enjoy "Impression Lijiang" Show in the outdoors theater in front of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain. This fantastic and colorful show is about the traditions & lifestyles of the Naxi, Yi and Bai peoples, directed by Zhang Yimou, one of the most famous director in China. In the afternoon drive back to Lijiang; visit Baisha Village. If time permits, you will visit the Yufeng Monastery at the foot of the mountain which is the largest monastery in Lijiang. Overnight in Lijiang Old Town.

#### **Day 6: Lijiang - Shangri-La (B,L)**

We leave Lijiang due north for a scenic drive to Tiger Leaping Gorge. It is an impressive canyon on the Yangtze River and a UNESCO world heritage site, tucked between the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain range (5596m) and the Haba Xueshan Snow Mountain range (5396m). It provides one of the most naturally spectacular views of China. We will drive through the low road of the gorge until the middle (estimate walk is about 2 hours, included entrance fee). After visiting the gorge you will swiftly move on to Shangri-La. Visit a Tibetan family en route. The hospitable host may treat us with bowls of hot yak



butter tea, indispensable daily drink for the Tibetans, and tsampa (roasted barley flour), their staple food. Overnight in Shangri-La.

### **Day 7: Shangri-La (B)**

Free at leisure. Shangri-La is so named because a researcher identifies it as the place where James Hilton must have written about. It is also called Little Tibet both because of the Tibetans who live in the area as well as the outstanding Tibetan Plateau scenery. We devote the morning to visit the Songzanlin Monastery - the largest Tibetan Buddhist monastery in Yunnan Province and one of the 13 famous monasteries of Tibetan Kham. The monastery was built in 1674 with the support of the Fifth Dalai Lama and Emperor Kangxi. Take some time to visit the Ringha Temple, hike up to Songzanlin Monastery, walk the pilgrimage path around Ringha Hill or admire the traditional houses. Overnight in Shangri-La.

### **Day 8: Departure Shangri-La (B)**

Have a leisurely morning and be transferred to the airport or continue to explore other parts of Yunnan.

#### **Included:**

- 7 nights accommodation in a double or twin share room with daily breakfast.
- Meals: as mentioned in the program (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner) at locally selected restaurants
- Experienced English speaking guide during all tours and transfers
- Private air-conditioned vehicle during all tours and transfers
- Admission to all sites stated in the program
- Service charges and government tax

#### **Excluded:**

- International Airfares
- Entry visas to China
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Travel Insurance (We highly recommend that you purchase an adequate insurance)
- Gratuities for guides and driver
- Personal expenses, such as laundry, telephone, drinks, etc.
- Other services which are not specified in the itinerary

