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## Cultural Tour of China Classic plus Yunnan Plus School Exchange

*Shanghai - Beijing – Xi'an – Lijiang  
Shangri-La - Dali*



### Day 1 – AUSTRALIA TO SHANGHAI

Depart home city.

### Day 2 – SHANGHAI

Arrive Shanghai. Met and transferred to; Hotel.

Balance of day free. Suggest after checking in and freshen up a short walk exploring your local area. **D**

### Day 3 – SHANGHAI

Tour visiting the Yu Gardens, the bund and the French Concession. Then a visit to the Tian Zi Fang area and the ZigZag bridge. Attend an evening acrobatic show. **B L D**

### Day 4 – SHANGHAI - BEIJING

Depart hotel for transfer to railway station for fast train to Beijing. ou are met upon arrival and transferred to your hotel.

Afternoon Sightseeing; Hutongs by rickshaw. **B L D**

### Day 5 – BEIJING

After breakfast begin your full-day tour of the Chinese capital. Visit the **Forbidden City** and **Tiananmen Square**, the largest public square in the world. Then visit the **Summer Palace** with its famous **Marble Boat**. **B L D**

### Day 6 – BEIJING

After breakfast, meet your guide and visit the **Great Wall of China**. After a restaurant lunch, visit the largest temple in China, the **Temple of Heaven**. Balance of day free. Evening Beijing Opera. **B L D**





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**Day 7 – 07/04 XIAN**

Depart hotel approximately to railway station. Fast train to Xian. Own arrangements for lunch on train. After arrival visit **the City wall** and **Bell Tower**. Balance of afternoon free. **B D**

**Day 8 – XIAN**

Guided tour to the ancient **Terracotta Warriors**. Balance of day free. This evening there is time to explore the Muslim markets and sample a local restaurant. **B L**

**Day 9- FLIGHT XIAN - LIJIANG**

Transfer to airport for departure flight to Lijiang. Upon arrival met and transferred to accommodation. Balance of day free. Easy walks to start acclimatisation. You are at 2400 meters altitude. **B D**



**Day 10- LIJIANG**

Transfer to the **Dongba Culture Museum**, then on to the **Black Dragon Pool**. After lunch visit **Shuhe Old Town**. The Ancient Town of Shuhe is located 4 kilometers to the northwest of the Ancient City of Lijiang. **B L D**

**Day 11- LIJIANG**

Walking tour of the central **Lijiang Old Town**. Lijiang is one of the best preserved ancient towns in China and is on UNESCO's World Heritage List. You then visit **Baisha Naxi Village**. Here you have the chance to learn Chinese embroidery at the embroidery school situated here. **B L D**

**Day 12- LIJIANG SHANGRI - La**

Today you start your climb up onto the Tibetan Plateau. On route, visit **Tiger Leaping Gorge** which is believed to be the deepest gorge in the world. There is a stunning walk down (and climb back up - steps) to the rapids and its viewing platform. Upon arrival, check in the hotel. Altitude is 3200 meters. Balance of day free for rest. **B L D**. Welcome to the land of Yak Steaks! The temperature will be much cooler so make sure you have your warmer clothes in your day pack when you depart Lijiang as you may need them on the climb up. You will also see the tail end of the Himalaya Mountain Range. Keep hydrated as you ascend and walk slowly if you stop anywhere. Check into hotel. Balance of day to rest and acclimatise.

**Day 13- SHANGRI – La**

Morning visit to **Songzanlin Tibetan Buddhism Monastery**, Next you visit a traditional **Tibetan house**. From here you drive back to visit **Zhongdian old town** with old streets and wooden houses. Watch the local people dancing in the middle square of old town in the evening. **B L D**



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#### **Day 14- SHANGRI – La DALI**

After breakfast you depart this Himalayan ‘Kingdom’ and descend as you travel to Dali. Upon arrival check into hotel.



#### **Day 15 -DALI**

Your driver will collect you at 7:00 for the 30 minute drive to the Chinese school. Class begins at 8:00 and ends today at 12:00. You will be transferred you back to the hotel. Lunch own arrangements. After lunch you will be taken to visit the **Three Pagodas** Upon return to the town centre there is time for a walk around the old town centre and town walls. **B D**

#### **Day 16 -DALI**

After breakfast, a visit will be made to a **local market** whilst on route to the Bai Village, of **Zhoucheng**. Here you can see traditional Bai houses and a **Tie Dying Workshop** where the folk craftwork of tie dyeing cloth is produced, you will have the chance to learn about tie dyeing. Lunch own arrangements. The guide will assist with selection of a suitable place. From here you will see the **Three Courses Tea** to learn about local tea culture and then a class for **Chinese calligraphy** – all within in the village. **B D**

#### **Day 17 -DALI**

Again the driver will collect you at 7:00 for the drive to school, Class begins at 8:00 and ends at 12:00, after lunch (you eat with students and/or local restaurants paying directly if required) and recess period, class begins at 14:00 and ends at 17:30. You will be transferred back to the hotel. **B D**

#### **Day 18 - DALI**

Again the driver will collect you at 7:00 for the drive to school, Class begins at 8:00 and ends at 12:00, after lunch (you eat with students and/or local restaurants paying directly if required) and recess period, class begins at 14:00 and ends at 17:30. You will be transferred back to the hotel. **B D**

#### **Day 19 – DEPART DALI**

Depart hotel for transfer to the airport. (**B**)

#### **Day 20 – Arrival Australia**

Arrive home city.



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## Why Yunnan Province China

We have been operating tours to China for 22 years now. Beijing, Shanghai and Xian form the classic triangle of most visited destinations. This can be both a good and bad attribute. Until recent years Beijing and Shanghai have been the most convenient place to enter China due to airline connections. Also tourism infrastructure developed in these cities more quickly than other places. Naturally there is much history, but this can be tempered by the dramatic seasonal climate variations, huge populations, crowded venues and increasing pollution.

The Yunnan region is now easily accessible by airlines and offers a counter foil to some of negatives of the 'Big Three'.

**Climate** – a year round destination. Due to its famed climate the region has more than one crop production cycle per year. The only portion of this province which would have a seasonal restriction would be the high altitude area on the Tibetan Plateau, home to the Tibetan people. Due to snow travel between late November and the end of March is not recommended. The remaining areas of Yunnan can be visited year round.

**Population** - For China this is one of the least populated regions after Tibet proper. As a repeat traveler to China this author noticed this obvious difference. Whilst large urban areas will still seem crowded, by comparison to home, they are almost village like when compared to Shanghai! Outside of the provincial capital of Kunming other cities and towns are small, low rise and far cleaner than other areas of China.

**Pollution** – Lower population density means less overall pollution. The climate also helps, you can look across a valley and see the other side! Mountain tops are clear and you can see the distant shores of lakes. That omniscient haze so prevalent in other areas of China is not so obvious here!!

**History and Diversity** – Yunnan has a rich ancient and modern history that matches other areas of China. Where it stands out is with its Ethnic Minority people history. The number of minority tribal groups within this area is dazzling. With this ethnic variety comes variances in cuisine, clothes, music and art, all changing within comparatively short travel distances.

**Tourism infrastructure** – Substantial improvements have been made over the years and are continuing at a rapid rate. Your writer was staggered by some of the new freeway systems he drove on and saw being built. Whilst to some these are considered eyesores and destroy the 'cute' archaic way it was, to the locals this is progress and something they aspire to have. These types of infrastructure improve travel times dramatically and also increase safety, benefits that are their right. Accommodation and understanding of tourists expectations have improved as well.

### Our Homestay and School Experience in Dali

Dali was chosen as it is a clean, small and well organized city, beautifully sited in a valley with majestic mountains on one side and a large lake on the other. There is the ancient walled central city area and then the more modern surrounding suburbs. The city is easy to get around and the feeling of 'safe' is very evident. After seven months of protracted 'Red Tape' our local partner has managed to secure all the necessary, chops (stamps), signed papers and official approval notices to allow Australian students organized by us to partake in classes at certain local 'middle schools' in Dali. These schools are considered the more elite for this city. In addition, families from the said schools will home host our Australian students. This is a 'first' for this city and region, so you will be assured a very 'fresh' experience. While there is no expectation Australian schools would be welcome to organize a sister school relationship.



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### **Attending local school**

What better way to really engage and absorb contemporary Chinese culture and language. The students will be provided with Chinese language classes to suit their level. Their Australian teachers can also be involved with this process. The students will go to school with the child from the host family who attends the school. Naturally the host families will probably have a student who is also learning English so there will be an amount of, two way language assistance. This opportunity will really benefit the students as it provides language and cultural immersion in a structured environment not found in other tours. This should give long lasting improvements to the students language skills.

### **Tours**

We have presented some sample tours. Naturally we can customize all tours, something we are well know for. We can combine Beijing with Yunnan, or you can spend all the time in Yunnan. You could take out the homestay and school attendance, but this is a very unique feature. Visiting Shangri La would be an additional highlight if time allows you to do this. Shangri La is on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau at 3,300 meters. The dominant culture is Tibetan, although this is not within the delicate borders of the Tibet Autonomous zone, which means no extra permits are required. The central Monastery rivals the Potala Palace of Lhasa and I have been told that you see more inside this monastery than you would at Lhasa. The contrast presented to students visiting Yunnan is already rich. Adding Shangri La and its Tibetan people offers a chance denied many who travel to China.