



Potala Palace, Tibet

Trail of the Tea Horse South West China and Tibet

8 – 21 September 2019



Jon Baines
tours



Black Dragon Pool, Lijiang

The Trail of the Tea Horse is an ancient part of the Silk Road that linked Yunnan and Tibet. Tea porters carried enormous bricks of tea along this road, traversing dramatic mountain passes, and in exchange, Tibet traded its coveted horses. Follow this trail from remote south west China, an area of incredible geographical and ethnic diversity. Visit spectacular Lugu Lake in the remote northwest plateau of Yunnan, home of the matrilineal Mosuo people. The Mosuo community were largely sequestered from the outside world until recently and their ancient, unique traditions and culture are still intact.

Cross the mountains into Tibet, a land that is, above all, uplifting – both spiritually and physically. It is a land where the devotional dominates art, culture, architecture and politics on every level, and where Buddhism has settled more firmly than in any other country. Located on the “Roof of the World”, encompassing the highest points on the earth, it offers extraordinary landscapes and an almost otherworldly sense of tranquility. Little travelled, wild and sparsely populated, this tour to the remote, fascinating province of Yunnan and extraordinary Tibet is for the culturally curious.

Arrive in Kunming, a relaxed city with excellent food and a spring-like climate. Check into your hotel for the night. Next day take an orientation tour of Kunming and visit the old city square and flower market. Spend the afternoon exploring the old town with time at leisure before a welcome dinner in the evening.

Next morning take the train to the ancient walled city of Dali. The ancestral home of the Bai people, Dali nestles between Lake Erhai and a range of marble mountains. Transfer to your lakeside hotel and take a walking tour of the lively and colourful town with its cobbled streets lined with teahouses, cafés and wood fronted shops.



The Three Pagodas in Dali



The streets of Lijiang

Next morning take a cruise across Lake Erhai to visit a Bai village and temple. In the afternoon visit the Three Pagodas.

Next morning drive through stunning scenery to the pristine waters of Lugu Lake, stopping en route to wander through the bustle of the local market with traditional textiles. Transfer to your lakeside hotel and spend the rest of the day at leisure by the lake.

The Mosuo lake people are one of the world's last practising matrilineal tribes, where inheritance and family ties pass through the female line and the matriarch is the head of the house. There is no traditional marriage in Mosuo society, where partners live monogamously in the same household, but instead a tradition of 'walking marriages' where a man may visit a woman in her family home at night, and return to his own family home in the morning. Next morning visit the Mosuo People's Museum and learning of their fascinating, deeply traditional culture and customs before take a cruise on the huge, spectacular lake, visiting temples and villages on the way. There is the option to take an exploratory bike ride or simply spend the rest of the day at leisure.

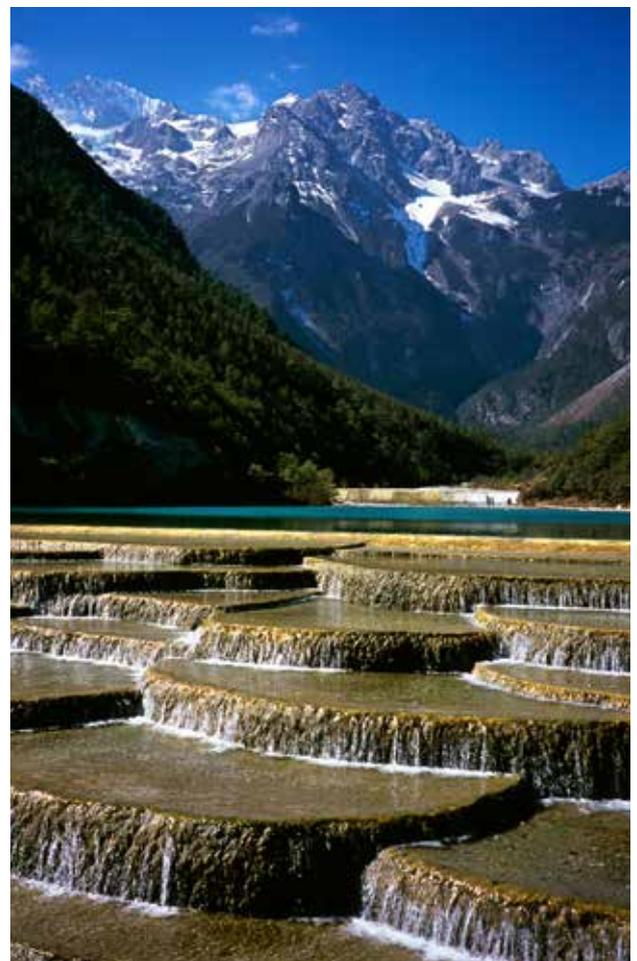
The following morning head 'Beyond the Clouds' toward beautiful Lijiang, past snow-capped mountains, terraced green fields, farmers at work and villages of eaved roofs. The town of Lijiang, the ancestral home of the Naxi people,

sits in the shadow of Jade Dragon Mountain and is a maze of cobblestone streets, lined with canals, wood fronted shops and willow trees. Check into your hotel and take a walking tour, including a rooftop view of old Lijiang.

Learn about the unique Naxi culture next day, which has its own language, belief system, music, script and dance. Visit Black Dragon Pool and the Museum of Naxi Culture, where the curator will talk about the many minority ethnic groups in Yunnan. After lunch take a chairlift ride up Jade Dragon Mountain before visiting the spectacularly situated water meadows at the foot of the mountain.

Fly to Tibet the next morning and transfer to your hotel in Lhasa. Spend the rest of the day at leisure to acclimatise.

Lhasa has been the spiritual heart of Tibet for centuries and is still an object of devout



Water meadows at the foot of Jade Dragon Mountain, Lijiang



encapsulating the cultures of both China and Tibet. Visit a traditional teahouse and enjoy a hot pot dinner in the evening.

Next morning drive out to West Sichuan to visit the outstanding Wo Long Nature Panda Reserve and see giant and red pandas in the semi-wild amongst beautiful mountain scenery. Return to Chengdu to enjoy a farewell Sichuan dinner that evening.

Depart Chengdu the next day.

pilgrimage. Although it has probably changed more in the last twenty years than in the previous thousand, it is still a deeply spiritual, mesmerising place. Shuffling, prostrating pilgrims circumnavigate the medieval Barkhor, the pilgrim circuit surrounding the Jokhang in the spiritual heart of the old city. The white and ochre Potala Palace rears imposingly above the city and everywhere there are small monasteries and active temples just off the beaten track. Amongst all this devotion life goes on in a cacophony of tea houses, cafés, bars and market stalls. A tour of Lhasa will take you to Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple and Barkhor Street, as well as a hospital of traditional Tibetan medicine.

The following morning visit Tandruk Temple. The original structure is believed to be the oldest building in Tibet and the site where holy Buddhist texts descended from the heavens. In the afternoon visit Samye Monastery, Tibet's first monastery, which is approached by a beautiful crossing over the Brahmaputra River. Return to Lhasa later in the afternoon.

Fly to Chengdu the next morning. Chengdu is the most important city in southwest China,



A view of Lugu Lake (top); Inside Jokhang Temple, Tibet; Yumbulagang Palace, Tibet (above)

Itinerary 8 – 21 September 2019

B = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner

2 nights Kunming - 2 nights Dali - 2 nights Lugu Lake - 2 nights Lijiang - 3 nights Lhasa
- 2 nights Chengdu

8 Sept (Sun) Kunming D	Pm	Take a chairlift ride up Jade Dragon Mountain. Later walk around the water meadows at the foot of the mountain
Pm	Arrive Kunming and transfer to the Empark Hotel	
9 Sept (Mon) Kunming B D	Am	Take an orientation tour of Kunming and visit the old city square and flower market
Pm	Explore the old town and at leisure	
Eve	Welcome dinner and briefing	
10 Sept (Tues) Kunming / Dali B D	Am	Take the train to Dali
Pm	Arrive and transfer to the lakeside Grand Bay View International Hotel. Take a walking tour of Dali old town	
11 Sept (Wed) Dali B D	Am	Take a cruise on Erhai Lake, visiting a local Bai village and temple
Pm	Visit the Three Pagodas	
12 Sept (Thur) Dali / Lugu Lake B D	Am	Depart for Lugu Lake. Stop at a local market en route to see traditional textiles
Pm	Check into Hu Tu Sui Yue Inn. At leisure by the lake	
13 Sept (Fri) Lugu Lake B D	Am	Visit the Mosuo People's Museum to learn of their culture and customs. Take a lake cruise
Pm	At leisure or optional bike ride	
14 Sept (Sat) Lugu Lake/ Lijiang B D	Am	Drive to Lijiang and transfer to Palace Wangfu Hotel
Pm	Walking tour of the old town	
15 Sept (Sun) Lijiang B D	Am	Visit Jade Dragon Mountain and Black Dragon Pool and the Museum of the Naxi People
	Pm	
16 Sept (Mon) Lijiang / Lhasa B D	Am	Fly into Tibet and transfer to the Jin Ding Hotel
Pm	Afternoon at leisure to acclimatise	
17 Sept (Tues) Lhasa B D	Am	Visit Potala Palace
Pm	Explore Lhasa, including Jokhang Temple, Barkhor Street (the 'window of Tibet') and the hospital of traditional Tibetan medicine	
18 Sept (Wed) Lhasa B D	Am	Drive to Shan Nan to visit Tandruk Temple
Pm	Visit Samye Monastery and return to Lhasa	
19 Sept (Thur) Lhasa / Chengdu B D	Am	Fly to Chengdu
Pm	Arrive Chengdu, check into your hotel and visit a traditional tea house	
Eve	Hot pot dinner	
20 Sept (Fri) Lhasa / Chengdu B D	Am	Drive out to west Sichuan to visit to Wo Long Nature Panda Reserve, where you can see giant and red pandas in the semi-wild amongst beautiful mountain scenery
Eve	Farewell Sichuan dinner	
21 Sept (Sat) Chengdu B D	Am	Depart Chengdu

NB: Itineraries subject to change according to local conditions. This itinerary is ground only and departure and arrival dates may differ.

Panorama of Lake Erhai, Dali





Mosuo people on Lugu Lake, Yunnan

Tour Leader

Janice Liverseidge is a Director of the Royal Society of Medicine. Earlier in her career she worked for the British Medical Association. She is also a registered Blue Badge Tourist Guide and regularly leads groups in London on medical history walks, tours of the Wellcome Collection and other healthcare locations plus provides music and art tours for the Foundling Museum and the London Handel Festival. Janice has travelled extensively and has led highly successful RSM tours to Vietnam and Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Cuba and China.

“Janice Liversiedge was superb and the success of the whole holiday was in large part down to her.”

Stuart Rhys-Williams, *Medicine in Vietnam and Cambodia with the RSM, 2017*

National Guide

Zhang Zhong Jiu (known as John) has worked with Jon Baines since 1994, taking healthcare and cultural groups around China and Tibet. Educated in Beijing and London and widely travelled, John is extremely knowledgeable and popular with our groups for his ability to bring China’s history and society to life with

personal anecdotes. Having led a wide variety of professional groups over so many years, his breadth of knowledge is second to none.

“Wouldn’t ask for a better tour guide. Always in good spirits, positive attitude, very friendly and gave us such good information/history about each place we went.”

Shizuka Igarashi, *OT in China, 2017*

Altitude

Because of its high altitude, largely remote destinations, and semi-arid weather, Tibet presents a unique set of health considerations. The sun burns the skin more quickly at altitude so we recommend that you bring sunglasses, hat and sunscreen. The tour is designed so that you do not reach altitude too quickly. There is preventative and symptomatic medication to help with the minor symptoms of altitude sickness (headaches, nausea) and we recommend that you bring some in addition to our own supplies.



A Mosuo matriarch on Lugu Lake (top);
A Naxi girl in Lijiang (above)

The ground only cost of the tour (excluding international flights and transfers) is US \$4,816

The cost includes:

- 13 nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with private facilities in medium grade and first class hotels

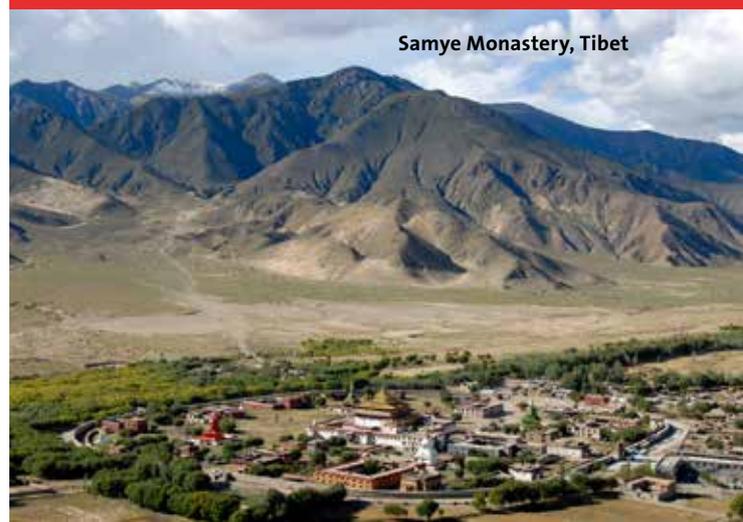
Single supplement: US \$624

- Breakfast and lunch or dinner daily
- An allowance of soft drinks, tea and beer with meals
- All admission fees
- Services of specialist English-speaking local guide
- All transport services and taxes in China & Tibet
- The services of a tour leader (Janice Liverseidge)
- The services of a national guide (Zhang Zhong Jiu)
- All tips

The cost excludes:

- International flights and transfers
- Meals not mentioned
- All optional excursions, tours and visits
- Travel insurance
- Visa

The cost of the tour does not include international flights and transfers. If you would like us to help arrange your flights, please contact the London or the Melbourne office.



Samye Monastery, Tibet

About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

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Women from the Hani minority group at a market, Yunnan (top);
An elaborate Tibetan yak; Young monks in Lhasa;
See pandas in the semi-wild in Chengdu (above)



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