



Black Dragon Pool, Lijiang

Trail of the Tea Horse South West China and Tibet

16 – 29 June 2018





Mosuo people on Lugu Lake, Yunnan

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 diversity in both landscapes and ethnic groups. 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 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 enjoy a welcome dinner with the group in the evening.

Dali is a lively and colourful town and its cobbled streets are lined with teahouses, cafés and wood fronted shops. Next morning visit the Three Pagodas and take a cruise across Lake Erhai to visit a Bai village and temple, followed by a walking tour of the old town to hear about Yunnan’s long history.



The Three Pagodas in Dali



The streets of Lijiang

Next morning visit the bustle of the local market, see vivid traditional textiles and take part in a culinary tour, ending with a cookery class and lunch. Spend the rest of the day at leisure to further explore or relax by the lake.

Head 'Beyond the Clouds' on a drive toward beautiful Lijiang, stopping at the traditional Bai village of Xizhou en route. Visit the local market, where you can buy anything from batik and broccoli to Tibetan medicine and antique furniture. Enjoy the stunning drive to 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. 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 travel to the spectacularly situated water meadows at the foot of Jade Dragon Mountain and visit the ancient village of Shuhe and see traditional papermaking, textiles and crafts.

Drive via a village of the Yi minority group through stunning scenery to the pristine, crystal

clear waters of Lugu Lake. Transfer to your hotel before meeting with the local Mosuo people and learning of their fascinating, deeply traditional culture and customs. The Mosuo 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 circumnavigate 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 before returning to Lijiang for the night.

Fly to Tibet the next morning and transfer to 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 pilgrimage. Although it has probably changed more in the last twenty years than in the previous thousand, it is still a deeply spiritual,



Water meadows at the foot of Jade Dragon Mountain, Lijiang



Next morning visit the outstanding Chengdu Panda Base, a highly successful non profit research and breeding facility for giant pandas, where you can see pandas of all ages up close. Visit Wenshu Monastery, a large Buddhist monastery famous for its excellent vegetarian food – much of which masquerades convincingly as meat. Later visit the wholesale art market before a farewell Sichuan dinner that evening.

Depart Chengdu the next morning.

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 and spectacularly-situated Yumbulagang Palace. 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, encapsulating the cultures of both China and Tibet. Visit a traditional teahouse and enjoy a hot pot dinner in the evening.



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

Itinerary 16 – 29 June 2018

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

1 night Kunming - 3 nights Dali - 2 nights Lijiang - 1 night Lugu Lake - 1 night Lijiang
- 3 nights Lhasa - 2 nights Chengdu

16 Jun (Sat)	Kunming D	23 Jun (Sat)	Lugu Lake / Lijiang B D
Pm	Arrive Kunming and transfer to the Jinjiang Hotel	Am	Circumnavigate the lake visiting the villages and temples. Option to explore by bike
17 Jun (Sun)	Kunming / Dali B D	Pm	At leisure. Return to Lijiang late afternoon
Am	Take the train to Dali	24 Jun (Sun)	Lijiang / Lhasa B D
Pm	Arrive and transfer to your lakeside hotel	Am	Fly into Tibet and transfer to the Kai Yuan Hotel
Eve	Welcome dinner	Pm	Afternoon at leisure to acclimatise
18 Jun (Mon)	Dali B D	25 Jun (Mon)	Lhasa B D
Am	Visit the Three Pagodas and take a cruise on Erhai Lake, visiting a local Bai village and temple	Am	Visit Potala Palace
Pm	A walking tour of Dali old town	Pm	Explore Lhasa including Jokhang Temple and Barkhor Street (the window of Tibet) and the hospital of traditional Tibetan medicine
Eve	Dinner at Mulan	26 Jun (Tues)	Lhasa B D
19 Jun (Tues)	Dali B D	Am	Visit to Tandruk Temple and Yumbulagang Palace
Am	Visit the local market, see traditional textiles and take part in a culinary tour with a cookery class and lunch	Pm	Take the ferry across the Brahmaputra River to Samye Monastery. Return to Lhasa
Pm	At leisure to further explore or relax by the lake	27 Jun (Wed)	Lhasa / Chengdu B D
20 Jun (Wed)	Dali / Lijiang B D	Am	Fly to Chengdu and transfer to the Tibet Hotel
Am	Drive to Lijiang via Xizhou village market	Pm	Visit a traditional teahouse
Pm	Arrive in Lijiang and transfer to the Palace Hotel. Take a walking tour including a rooftop view of old Lijiang	Eve	Hot pot dinner
21 Jun (Thur)	Lijiang B D	28 Jun (Thur)	Chengdu B D
Am	Visit Black Dragon Pool and Museum of Naxi Culture. Take a walking tour of Lijiang	Am	Visit the Panda Sanctuary
Pm	Visit Jade Dragon Mountain and Shuhe ancient town and see paper making, textiles and traditional crafts	Pm	Visit Wenshu Monastery and the wholesale art market
22 Jun (Fri)	Lijiang / Lugu Lake B D	Eve	Farewell Sichuan dinner
Am	Drive via a village of the Yi minority group through stunning scenery to Lugu Lake	29 Jun (Fri)	Chengdu B
Pm	Arrive at Lugu Lake and transfer to the Hu Tu Sui Yue Inn. Meet with the Mosuo people and learn of their culture	Am	Depart Chengdu

NB: Itineraries subject to change according to local conditions.

Panorama of Lake Erhai, Dali





Potala Palace, Tibet

Tour Leader and 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.

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.

“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



Lanterns in a street in Lijiang



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 \$4,144

The cost includes:

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

Single supplement: US \$683

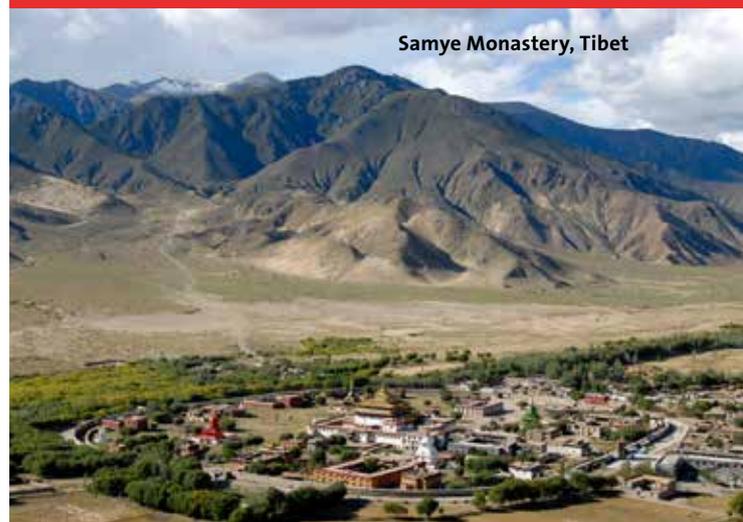
- Breakfast and lunch or dinner daily
- An allowance of soft drinks, tea and beer with meals
- All admission fees
- Services of specialist English-speaking local guide
- All transport services, tips and taxes in China
- The services of a tour leader and national guide (Zhang Zhong Jiu).

The cost excludes:

- International flights
- 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.

All the flights and flight-inclusive holidays in this brochure are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to:
www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate

Jon Baines Tours (London)
Hyde Park House, 5 Manfred Road,
London, SW15 2RS
Tel: +44 (0) 207 223 9485 / 5618
Email: info@jonbainestours.co.uk
www.jonbainestours.co.uk

Jon Baines Tours (Melbourne)
PO Box 68, South Brunswick,
Victoria 3055
Tel: +61 (0) 3 9343 6367
Fax: +61 (0) 3 9012 4228
Email: info@jonbainestours.com.au
www.jonbainestours.com



Women from the Hani minority group at a market, Yunnan (top);
An elaborate Tibetan yak; Young monks in Lhasa;
Visit the panda sanctuary in Chengdu (above)



Jon Baines
tours

