

8-day Yunnan Classic Tour to Kunming, Dali, Lijiang and Shangri-la

Tour Code: LCT - Yunnan Classic Tour - 8D-01

Attractions: Stone Forest, Dali Old Town, Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, Tiger Leaping Gorge

Overview: Drawn by the mysterious minority culture in Yunnan? This Yunnan classic tour is suitable for you! You will have a visit to Kunming, Dali, Lijiang and Shangri-la, which have all the highlight sights and cultures covered, including the deepest canyons in the world, the magically formed limestone forests, the pure snowy mountains, the rich minority customs and so much more. Join us to experience the best of Yunnan!

Highlights:

1. Get lost in the dense karst landscape of the Stone Forest;
2. Have a close encounter of the mysterious cultures and traditions of Yi, Bai, Naxi and Tibetan people;
3. Visit an old shaman in the Baisha village and understand the local religion;
4. Take awe in the picturesque Jade Dragon Snow Mountain and Erhai Lake;
5. Enjoy the simple and primitive beauty of Shangri-la old town;

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Kunming

Upon your arrival, your private driver will be waiting for you and ready to take you to hotel. The rest of the day is at your own disposal.

Day 2: Stone Forest, Yuantong Temple, Green Lake Park

After breakfast, you will set off to Stone Forest, a must-see sight in Kunming. Located 95km from the city, Stone Forest is praised as the “essence of the world’s karst landform”. It’s formed by the movement of earth in a wide range of 270million years and it has all kinds of karst landform types like stone teeth, peak clusters, caves, lakes, waterfalls and underground rivers.

Have lunch at a nice local restaurant. Your afternoon tour starts with the Yuantong Temple. Built by the Nanzhao state in Tang Dynasty (618-907), Yuantong Temple is one of the oldest Buddhist temples and the largest one in Kunming temple. The whole temple is grand and antique with all

kinds of trees and Buddhist statues, making it a wonderful place to tour in.

Your last destination is the Green Lake Park. Prior to Yuan Dynasty (1271 - 1368), Green Lake was part of the Dianchi Lake. With the descending of the water level, a lake was formed and it became one of the most beautiful parks in Kunming. As the entire lake is surrounded by the bamboos that remain green all year around, it is named as Green Lake. The environment and the atmosphere here is so superb that tons of seagulls from Siberia come here for winter.

After the tour, your guide and driver will accompany you back to your hotel.

Day 3: Train to Dali, Xizhou, Erhai, Dali Old Town

After breakfast, you will take train to Dali and continue your trip to Xizhou. Situated 18km north of Dali old town, Xizhou Village is a town inhabited by the Bai people. It has the most and the best-preserved building complex of Bai people. Those buildings are often decorated with carved and painted brackets, angled cornices, gate house, screen and gables.

Your next destination is the Erhai Lake. It's the the second largest freshwater lake in Yunnan and a place with rich aquatic resources and amazing scenery. You can enjoy a ever-changing landscape in this beautiful lake. In the early morning, mist covers the lake surface and the peaceful lake seems boundless. When the sun comes out, all the mist is dispersed and the lake will be bathed under the golden light. In the afternoon, evening glow showers all over the lake, creating a unforgettable scene. At night, everything turns to quiet and another round of the splendor is brewing in the dark. In terms of how to visit the Erhai Lake, riding a boat may seem stereotyped, but it's really the best way to experience its beauty.

Taste minority delicacies at a local restaurant. In the afternoon, you will have a leisure stroll in Dali Old Town. In the day time, we recommend you have a stroll in Fuxing Road where there are a lot of stores and shops selling marbles, ethnic costumes, crafts, local food, etc. In the evening, you can hang around like locals in the stylish bars and coffee shops. During lunar March and April, there are a lot of ethnic holidays. It will make a great occasion to experience the local customs.

Afterwards, you will be escorted to your Dali Hotel.

Day 4: Dali to Lijiang, Black Dragon Pool, Mufu Palace, Lijiang Old Town

After breakfast, your journey will proceed to Lijiang, which is about 2 hours away. Your first

destination is Black Dragon Pool. Located at the foot of Xiangshan Mountain, Black Dragon Pool is a great place to take pictures of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain. Meanwhile, there are many important antique buildings here. For example, four stone lions and the original Wenming Archway of Wenmiao Temple form the today's gate of the park. Therefore, Black Dragon Pool is not only a wonderful place for sightseeing but for culture and art.

Next, you will head for the Mufu Palace. Served as the residence for chieftain of family mu, the Mufu Palace is the an architectural icon of Lijiang that integrated the architectural art and styles of central China in Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Bai nationality and Naxi nationality. It's like an epitome of Lijiang. Most of the original palace was destroyed, the buildings we see today are largely reconstructed later.

After lunch, you will continue to wander in Lijiang Old Town. Also called Dayan Town, Lijiang ancient town is one of the important stopovers on ancient Tea Horse. In the town, you will see a lot of antique wooden stores selling all kinds of local specialties, stone paved paths and small beautiful bridges with people coming and going. Raising your head, you will see the picturesque Jade Dragon Snow Mountain afar.

After the tour, we will take you to your Lijiang hotel.

Day 5: Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, Yuhu Village, Baisha Village

After breakfast, you will set off to the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain first. It's another highlight of Lijiang and also the holy mountain of Naxi people. The scenery varies a lot from the mountain foot to the top. The Dry Sea at the foot is a vast grassland. During spring and summer, you will see lot of flowers flourishing around. Going up the mountain about 3200m, you will encounter the Yunshanping, the holy land of Naxi young people. It's another meadow surrounded by the thick forests. Under the mountain are 19 modern maritime glaciers, which look like great waterfalls hanging on the Shanzidou peak.

Next, you will head for the Yuhu Village. Leaning against the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain and facing the Yuhu Lake, Yuhu Village is regarded as the No.1 village in Snow Mountains and one of few villages that haven't been severely commercialized. The first thing comes to your sight is the stone as it's the major material for house building and road paving among Naxi people. Wood is often used as the structure builder and carved with beautiful patterns. If you look at a local

courtyard, you will see a lot of auspicious patterns paved by stones. Moving forward, you will see a the Former Residence of Locker, who was a great American explorer. You will learn a lot of stories about him. Going upwards further into the village, you will see a huge pillar, from where you can have a bird's-eye view of the whole village.

Have lunch at a small restaurant of Yuhu Village. In the afternoon, you will head for the Baisha Village. Situated about 10km from Lijiang Ancient Town, Baisha old town is the origin of the chieftain Mu family of Lijiang. It has the most primitive Naxi villages and the Naxi people living here maintain their traditional lifestyles. Besides the beautiful villages, Baisha Old Town is also famous for the Baisha Murals. They are the results of the great opening of Naxi society in Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). You will have a better understanding of Naxi culture.

At the tour end, you will be escorted back to your Lijiang hotel.

Day 6: Tiger Leaping Gorge, (2h) Drive to Shangri-la Ancient Town

After breakfast, you will set out off to Tiger Leaping Gorge. Located in eastern side of Hutiaoxia Town of Shangri-la County, Tiger Leaping Gorge is a gorge with the greatest tidal variability in the world. It's formed when the Jinsha River is narrowed by the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain and the Haba Mountain, making the waterway only about 20-30 meters' wide. Besides the spectacular sights, Tiger Leaping Gorge is a well-known hiking place. Many trekkers come here for the thrill. After lunch, you will be driven to the Shangri-la Ancient Town and be free for the rest of the day.

Day 7: Songzanlin Lamasery and Pudacuo National Park

After breakfast, you will experience the natural beauty and religious atmosphere of the undeveloped Shangri-la. Your first stop is the Songzanlin Lamasery. It's the largest Tibetan-Buddhist temple in Yunnan and the center of gelug school. It was built in 1679 and regarded as the small Potala as it looks a lot like the Potala Palace at distance. Inside the lamasery, there are a lot of exquisite buildings and the precious cultural treasures. You will experience a great deal of Tibetan culture here.

After lunch, you will leave for the Pudacuo National Park. There are Shudu Lake and Bitu Lake two major lakes inside the park. The Shudu Lake is crystal clear and blue, surrounded by a vast piece of grassland. In spring and summer, wild flowers bloom everywhere and in winter, the water

vapors freeze on the lake like a layer of fog covering the water. Afterwards, you will leave for the Bitu Lake. “Bitu” in Tibetan language means a place with a dense oak forest, which implies that there are numerous oak trees here and among them are the azaleas. During May and June, the petals of the azaleas fall on the water and poison the fish, causing many fish floating on the river. This is one of highlights in the park. If you like, you can also ride boat to experience the beauty of the lakes.

In the end, you will be accompanied back to hotel.

Day 8: Depart from Shangri-la

You will have some free time to explore the primitive town on your own before taking leave. Your driver and guide will meet you at the appointed time and take you to the train station or the airport.

What's Important:

What's included:

Air-conditioned vehicles with experienced drivers.

Licensed Chinese - English bilingual speaking tour guides.

Entrance fee for sights mentioned

Show tickets for Zen Music Performance.

Bottled water.

What's not included:

Meals

Personal expenses or private entertainment items in sights.

Tips or gratuities for guide and driver if we did a good job (recommended)

Accommodation

What to take: smile and an enthusiastic attitude.

Good to know:

1. As our customer, your time is very valuable to us. We will never take you to any factories or shops

for shopping.

2. For lunch, we will take you to a nice local restaurant, where you can enjoy the local food at a fair price. Please inform us about your food preferences in case you have any allergies.

3. A regular day tour will last 8-9 hours. If you want a tour with a duration exceeding the working period of our tour guide and driver, we need to charge you for your extra hours at the standard rate of 100 RMB per hour.

4. The tour we provide you is based on days, not the hours. A regular day tour will last 8-9 hours. In case you only need our service for between 6 hours to 8 hours in one day, we will consider it a day tour.

5. Please be aware that your itinerary can be changed at anytime. Whenever you want to adjust it, we will help you with that.

6. What we provide are high-quality private tours, you will only be with your families or friends. There are no other people joining your tour.

7. Wheelchairs are available, please advise prior to your trip in case you need any.

FAQ:

1. What time does the tour start every day?

Re: Your guide and driver will pick you up at 9:00 a.m.

2. Is end of December a good time to visit Yunnan province in China?

Re: Yes, December is a good time to visit Yunnan as this place in general is in spring all year around. However, it may not be a great time to visit if you want to tour to Dali and Kunming, which is better visited in spring and summer. You may consider visiting Xishuangbanna during this time. Shangri-la is best travelled in spring and autumn.

3. What are the top things to do in Shangri-La, Yunnan?

Re: Shangri-la is famous for the beautiful landscapes and unique ethnic cultures. There are Tiger Leaping Gorge, Pudacuo National Park, Songzanlin Lamasery, Haba Snow Mountain, old town, etc.

4. What are the top things to do in Yunnan?

Re: 1. Enjoy the beautiful sights of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain in Lijiang and the Lijiang Ancient Town, Stone Forest in Kunming and Tiger Leaping Gorge in Shangri-la town. 2. Experience ethnic cultures of Bai, Dai, Naxi and Tibet people. 3. Watch the live show of Impression Lijiang.

5. What is Lijiang famous for?

Re: Lijiang is famous for the picturesque scenery and the diversified ethnic cultures.

6. How far is Lijiang from Kunming?

Re: Lijiang is about 500km from Kunming. We suggest you take high-speed train, which takes about 3 hours.

7. How can I go to Lijiang?

Re: Lijiang is accessible both by train and flight. Either way you can get to Lijiang.