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12 days Yunnan minority tour with Lugu Lake exploration

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Lijiang
Lugu Lake
Shangri-la
Mount Meili
Cizhong
Tacheng
Lijiang

This Lugu Lake tour from Lijiang provides an amazing experience to learn about the ethnic cultures in Lijiang and Shangri-la. Immerse yourself into the picturesque landscapes which include breathtaking lakes, snow capped mountains and much more.

Type
Private
Duration
12 days
Theme
Culture and Heritage, Natural scenery, Overland
Trip code
YE-07
Price
From CN¥ 10,000 per person

Itinerary

This Yunnan minority tour balances an overland trip from Lijiang to Shangri-la and a cultural visit to the peaceful nearby villages. Endless scenery awaits to be discovered as you stop at the Lugu Lake, Tiger Leaping Gorge and Pudacuo National Park. Learn about the unique and ancient cultures of the local Tibetans, Naxi and Mosuo people, which still are vibrant today. These people welcome all the visitors. More including the majestic Mount Meili and Mingyong Glacier await to be explored in this Yunnan private tour.

Day 01 :
Arrive Lijiang

Enjoy a tranquil and memorable trip from Lijiang, a popular travel destination in northwest of Yunnan province. This ancient town is renowned as a fairyland blessed with fresh air, clear streams, magnificent snow mountains and an undisturbed landscape inhabited by a friendly group of Naxi people.

Upon your arrival, your local guide will assist you to register in the hotel. After, we strongly recommend you to spend the rest of the day on roaming this ancient town on your own. Witness an undisturbed life of the locals here.

Day 02 :
Lijiang sightseeing

Start today by heading to the **Jade Dragon Snow Mountain**, which offers a majestic backdrop to the tranquil ancient town of Lijiang. Ride a cable car up to a high grassland meadow, where you can witness the 13 peaks lively in distance. As you descend the mountain, Every step will reveal a breathtaking view.

Next with a visit to the **Baisha Village**, which was the first settlement of Naxi people as well as the economic and political center of Lijiang for centuries. During your stay in this ancient village, visit a local Naxi family to learn about their traditional culture that still in practice today. After, see the most precious treasure of this village, Baisha Murals, Blending the styles of Han, Tibet and Naxi. These murals reflect that Buddhism, Taoism and Tibetan Buddhism have coexisted harmoniously in this village for hundreds of years.

In the afternoon, drive back to Lijiang ancient town to visit the **Black Dragon Pool**. Enjoy a spectacular view of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain in distance and explore traditional stone buildings and bridges here. Make sure your camera is ready as this place is a Mecca for many photographers.

Day 03 :

Lijiang - Lugu Lake

Today you will have about 6 hours spectacular mountain drive from Lijiang to **Lugu Lake**, a beautiful highland lake (2,700m high) located on the border of Yunnan and Sichuan provinces. It is encircled with hills, and the forest around is dense, Mosuo people living in this area retain their traditional customs of a matriarchal society. Women operate production, management, and hold the principal position in their society. Learn about their unique culture and lifestyle by visiting one or two Mosuo families. Overnight in Lige village by the lakeside.

Day 04 :

Lugu Lake

Today you will spend the whole day to explore **Lugu Lake and its surroundings**. You can choose to hike between the small Mosuo villages, drive around the lake, have a horse riding or take a small traditional canoe to visit some of the islands. Have lunch with a local family to learn more about their cultural of Mosuo people. Overnight at Lige village.

Day 05 :

Lugu lake - Lijiang Shuhe ancient town

Morning visit the **Mosuo Culture Museum** to get an understanding of this matriarchal society in depth. There is no marriage in their traditional culture. Men stay in the women's home as mates called 'Axia' and the intimate relationship lasts as long as they like. Afterwards, drive back to **Shuhe ancient town** near Lijiang. Arrive at Shuhe in the late afternoon, check-in and free explore Shuhe on your own. Shuhe, another well-preserved ancient town along the ancient tea horse route and one of the earliest settlements of Naxi people's ancestors.

Day 06 :

Lijiang - Shangri-la

Drive from Lijiang to Shangri-la, which will take about 5 hours on the road. First, come to the Stone Drum Town where you will see the **First Bend of the Yangtze River**. This place got its name as it is a sudden V-shaped bend that has been formed when the Yangtze River flowing by.

Next, stop at the **Tiger Leaping Gorge**, which is one of the deepest and most beautiful gorges in China. The water current is very fast here as the river is surrounded by high peaks, steep cliffs and jagged rocks. Then continue driving to Shangri-la. Upon arrival, get settle into a local hotel. Have the rest of the day to explore this ancient Tibetan town on your own.

Day 07 :

Shangri-la

After breakfast, head to the largest Buddhist monastery in Yunnan province, **Ganden Sumtseling Monastery**. This monastery was built based on the layout and appearance of the Potala Palace in Lhasa. Thus many people also call it 'the Small Potala Palace'. This monastery is reputed as it preserves a series of gorgeous buildings and countless Tibetan Buddhist treasures.

Afterwards, drive to the **Pudacuo National Park**, where you will see one of the spectacular takes, Shudu Lake, which is famous for the lush plants and various wild animals. Also, a local Tibetan family visit is arranged to learn the Tibetan culture and local lifestyle.

Late afternoon drive back to **Shangri-la Tibetan old town**, climb up to the top of Guishan Hill, to see the largest Prayer Wheel of the world and have a panoramic view of this ancient town.

Day 08 :

Shangri-la - Mt. Meili

Today drive from Zhongdian to Deqin, on the way enjoy a bird's view of **Lake Napa**, a seasonal lake where many birds come from the north for the winter here. Continue to Nixi Tibetan village where people specialize in making the famous black fired pottery, you will visit some workshops and masters to see how they work on the pottery. Stop at the Benzilan, where you will see the **Jinsha River Grand Canyon**. As you near Deqin, you will have the first views of **Meili Snow mountains**. Mt. Meili is one of the holy mountains for Tibetans, standing at a height of about 6,740 m. (22,113 ft.). You will spend the overnight at one local guesthouse in Feilaisi, which is the best place to view Mt. Meili.

Day 09 :

Mingyong Glacier - Drive to Cizhong

Have a memorable experience of seeing the sunrise in Feilai Temple. It is a great view that the sunlight turns the white snow-capped Mount Meili into golden yellow. Then proceed to Mingyong Glaciers, spend 3 hours to trek (or have about 2 hours horse ride) to the Viewpoint to see the Glacier. **Mingyong Glacier** is one of the few low altitude glaciers in the world. Resembling a long piece of white silk, Mingyong Glacier Runs from 5,500 m. (18,045 ft.) down to 2,700 m. (8858 ft.).

Afterwards drive 4 to 5 hours to Cizhong, a Catholic wine-growing village set amidst a beautiful mountain valley, down by the Lancang Jiang. Upon your arrive, get settled into the Red Wine Guesthouse where you can taste delicious wine made by the church's caretaker. Free explore the village on your own.

Day 10 :

Cizhong - Tacheng

Visit the **Cizhong Catholic Church** in the morning. It was first constructed in 1909 and became the major church of Yunnan Parish after its completion. Nestled in mountains with lush vegetation, the church architecture complex is designed with Gothic style and dotted with farmer houses. Climb to the top of the tower for a breathtaking view of the whole village and surroundings.

Afterwards, drive to Tacheng along the Mekong River, the drive takes about 5 hours. Tacheng is an important town of the Tea Horse Trade caravan from Yunnan to Tibet and India. Upon arrival, check into one local guest house and free explore on your own.

Day 11 :

Tacheng - Lijiang

Tacheng is renowned for its golden monkeys. This morning you will visit the **Tacheng Monkeys Reserve**. Here you will see lots of so-called Yunnan Golden Hair Monkey and the Black Golden Hair Monkey by locals, which are endemic to China. Then drive about 4-5 hours along the Jinsha River to Lijiang. After you get settled into the hotel in Lijiang, spend rest of the day to walk around Lijiang old town on your own.

Day 12 :

Departure from Lijiang



Today your guide and drive will pick you up from the hotel and drive to the airport or bus station for departure. If you wish to continue your travels, we are experts in tailor made trips and ready to assist you in extending your stay in China.

Inclusions

Tour notes:

Please note prices are based in CNY.

General inclusions:

2 bottles of mineral water provided daily.

All required government taxes and fees.

Your selection of 3, 4 or 5 Stars hotel (shared twin room, private bathroom and daily breakfast)

All entrance tickets as noted in the tour's itinerary.

Guide fluent in English, Chinese or Japanese that is certified by the state tourism build and from the local community. (If your native language is not listed please let us know, we are certain we can assist your needs.)

Airport and/or train station pick-up and drop-off.

All domestic flight and train tickets. Economy-class for flights and soft sleeper / seat for train tickets.

Transportation will be provided via a comfortable and clean car, minivan or tourist bus depending upon the groups size.

General exclusions:

Personal expenses such as laundry, drinks, internet access, fax, telephone calls etc.

Tips for your guide and driver.

Flight and/or railway ticket(s) to the first city of the tour and departure from the last city of the tour.
Meals not specified in the itinerary.

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