

Journey Idea to China

Escape to Shangri-La -
Luxury Self Driving In China
5 Days



Prepared for
Steppes Travel Clients

QUICK REFERENCE ITINERARY

Day 1	Arrive Kunming
Day 2	Kunming / Lijiang
Day 3	Lijiang / Shangri-La
Day 4	Shangri-La / Tiger Leaping Gorge / Lijiang
Day 5	Lijiang / Kunming

MAP



ESCAPE TO SHANGRI-LA

This five-day itinerary will take you from Kunming, the laidback capital of China's beautiful Yunnan Province, via Lijiang (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) to Shangri-La, the fabled paradise of James Hilton's "Lost Horizon" at the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau.

With the freedom of your own car you will discover the region's stunning, quiet back roads, and the natural beauty that has made north-west Yunnan a 'must-see' for visitors to China. By stopping overnight in Lijiang and Shangri-La, two of the regions' main attractions, you will also enjoy excellent hotels and creature comforts that will make your weekend a great combination of adventure and comfort - the perfect getaway.

Visit the spectacular Tiger-Leaping Gorge, drive through valleys dotted with traditional Tibetan villages, wander Lijiang's ancient cobbled streets, and enjoy delicious Yunnanese cuisine en route. This is one weekend break that will leave all your senses refreshed.

On the Road in China will provide everything that you need for the weekend - from a temporary Chinese driving license to an insured Avis rental SUV to a basket of snacks for the road and all meals and accommodation. All you will need to do is come, drive and enjoy.

JOURNEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover the charm of Yunnan's Shangri-La
- Drive along the upper reaches of the Yangtze, and enjoy close-up vistas of Tiger Leaping Gorge, where the Yangtze roars through a gorge thousands of metres deep, approached from a spectacular and little-used back road
- Stroll through Lijiang's beautiful old town and learn about the region's Naxi people
- Relax in Dali's lovely old town by Lake Erhai
- Dine in a Qing dynasty mansion in Kunming
- And best of all, enjoy the freedom of the open road in one of the most beautiful corners of China.

DETAILED TRIP ITINERARY

Day 1



London Heathrow / Kunming

Today you arrive in Kunming (as early as possible or the day before). You will be met on arrival and taken directly to complete the application for your driving license. All the documents will be ready and you will simply need to take a quick eye test and sign the paperwork. With the formalities out of the way, you will then be taken, if appropriate to, to Kunming's finest hotel by the side of the city's Green Lake. If you have time, take a stroll around the lake to get a taste of the easy-going pace of life in one of China's most pleasant large cities before eating dinner in a beautifully restored Qing-dynasty mansion.

Altitude: 1900m
Distance: 0 km
Duration: 0 hours
Road Conditions: N/A
Hotel: 5* Green Lake Hotel, Kunming

Day 2



Kunming / Lijiang

This morning your driving adventure begins and you are on the road in China.

Today you will drive to Lijiang. Yunnan has one of the best road networks in China, as today's drive will demonstrate. You will set out from Kunming and drive along a world-class highway for the first part of the day until you reach your lakeside lunch-stop, Dali. Relax in Dali's old town and feel your workday stresses ebb as you ease into the rhythm of travelling...

The afternoon's drive is along a wonderful broad country road to Lijiang, former capital of the 'Naxi Kingdom' introduced to the West by eccentric American botanist Joseph Rock in the 1930s and 40s. The cobbled streets of Lijiang's old town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, run alongside crystal clear streams and up the steep slopes of Lion Hill where you will stay overnight in a lovely boutique hotel.

Altitude: 1950m
Distance: 500 km
Duration: 7 hours
Road conditions: In the morning, wonderfully paved roads with gently winding turns; in the afternoon, a modern divided highway.
Hotel: 4* Zen Garden

Day 3

Lijiang / Shangri-La

Today's drive will take you up a wonderful back road towards Shangri-La, through lovely valleys and over high mountain passes, through an ethnically Tibetan area, and Shangri-La.



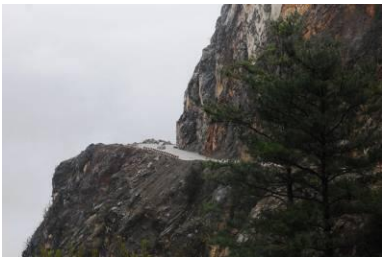
You will stay at the lovely Gyalthang Dzong Hotel on the outskirts of Shangri-La. Relax in the hotel's lovely courtyard, or have a massage to ease out any kinks in your travel weary muscles.



Eat dinner in the hotel's atmospheric Tibetan-style dining room and take a night time stroll to see the stars - here, at almost 3300m altitude they look much closer and brighter than at sea-level. Given the altitude, it's important that you take things easy and avoid over-exerting yourself.

Altitude: 3250m
Distance: 250 km
Duration: 8 hours
Road conditions: Mixed
Hotel: 4* Gyalthang Dzong Hotel, Shangri-La

Day 4



Shangri-La / Tiger Leaping Gorge / Lijiang

After breakfast depart for Shangri-La. The drive starts with crossing a 4,000m pass on perfectly paved roads that wind their way south toward Tiger Leaping Gorge. The morning's scenery is spectacular and among the most untouched along the entire journey - the mountains are steep and the vegetation lush, this region truly is the edge of the Tibetan Plateau. When you reach the Yangtze, which here carries the poetic name of Golden Sand River, the road narrows and hugs the river cliffs as you approach Tiger Leaping Gorge on a road inaccessible to anyone without their own transport.



After lunch and a visit to Tiger Leaping Gorge, you will continue driving for another two hours, returning to the old town of Lijiang, where you will stay overnight before continuing your journey back to Kunming the next day.

Altitude: 2470m
Distance: 300 km
Duration: 6 hours
Road conditions: Winding, but perfectly paved and smooth; 15km or so of gravel road which is narrow and hugs a cliff; it requires careful attention and slow speed
Hotel: Zen Garden Hotel

Day 5



Lijiang / Kunming

Return by road to Kunming. The journey ends. You could extend your trip in Yunnan or continue your journey in China.

TRIP PRICE

Price from:

£925.00 per person - four people / one car / sharing two hotel rooms.

It is possible to arrange a personal chauffer for an additional charge. Please ask for details.

For prices of other combinations of people / car, hotel rooms, please ask for details.

Price includes:

Car (Toyota Prado GXX 4.0l 240 hp), satellite navigation system with pre-programmed route for the journey, walkie-talkies, local support crew including licensed tour guide and driver, 24 hour medical assistance provided by International SOS, detailed pre-departure pack & route map for the journey, Chinese driving license and fees, petrol & road tolls, accommodation, all meals (except breakfast, lunch on Day 1 & dinner on Day 5), drinks with meals, Home-Away-from-Home kit (wet towels, anti-bacterial gel, basic toiletries, daily picnic basket containing fresh fruit & fruit juice & water, mixture of sweets & nibbles) car rental, driving documentation, entrance fees to tourist sites and basic gratuities for jointly attended activities.

Price excludes:

Visas, travel insurance, international airfares or taxes, meals unless indicated, camera/video fees.

Departures: 2012:

From June on demand

Notes:

Pre and post journey sightseeing in China (and beyond), accommodation and transport can be arranged. We will be pleased to discuss options further with you.

The quality of ordinary rental SUVs in China is very low: they are of old design and have clocked up very high mileage with hardly any care or maintenance. Our partners, On the Road in China, on the other hand are able to offer international standard, modern SUVs to our customers on account of their unique relationship with Avis China.

Our fleet consists of brand new Toyota Prados (4.0L GX 240hp), a fantastic SUV that is easy to drive, superbly comfortable, and can take the toughest terrain. Since they are new and will be maintained and serviced by Avis China, you will enjoy cars that are safe, reliable, and fun! They are simply the best in the China self-driving holiday business.

Why Travel with Steppes?

Steppes Travel was founded in 1989 with the objective of creating a travel company where service and knowledge are of the highest priority. We aim to design itineraries and include the highlights of any country, whilst taking travellers off the beaten track to see lesser known, interesting places not frequented by large numbers of tourists. We offer individuals the ability to travel safely in remote areas, with the knowledge that we have travelled there before.

Financial Protection

Steppes Travel is a fully bonded tour operator that complies with the Civil Aviation Authority bonding conditions of the UK. This fully guarantees your money in the unlikely event of us going out of business before you start your holiday. Our ATOL number is 6945 and we have full insurance to cover the financial failure of an airline. In addition, all accommodation-only bookings (such as hotels, lodges and boats) which are not covered by the ATOL regulations are financially protected with all payments being held in a separate trust account until the date of departure. This is in accordance with the Package Travel Regulations Act 1992.

Specialist Knowledge

We demand and employ only a very high calibre of staff. All of our specialists have a wealth of travel experience and have travelled, and continue to travel, extensively throughout their regions of specialisation. You can therefore rely on their first hand knowledge and expertise. Some have been with us for more than ten years. They will tell you about those intimate, friendly hotels and introduce you to our charismatic guides - those little extra qualities that make your holiday both unique and special.

A Tailor-made Journey

After an initial discussion with you, one of our specialists will create a unique itinerary for your trip, designed around your own interests, preferred style of accommodation and the pace at which you like to travel. This will be fine tuned until you are completely satisfied with it. Throughout this whole process, you will be dealt with by the same specialist and you are welcome to call them at any time.

24 hour Emergency Service

We have an emergency service so that we can be contacted 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Recognition

More than 65% of our business is achieved through recommendations, referrals and repeat bookings. This, for us, is the highest endorsement we could have. In addition, our 20 years of experience in this specialist travel sector confirms our expertise.

Please contact Steppes Travel on 01285 880 980 or visit our website www.steppestravel.co.uk for further information.



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