

MOMENTS

on the road

Yunnan through a Lens:
Red Earth & Fields of Gold (9 Days)





ON THE ROAD EXPERIENCES

BACK ROADS | HIDDEN GEMS

We love road journeys. They are by far our favourite way of traveling. We think the world of western China and the countries that border on this region – think Vietnam, Lao, Thailand, Myanmar, for example.

On the Road Experiences is all about sharing with like-minded travelers just how beautiful a road journey in these varied lands can be. Now turn the page to find out what we've come to love so much...



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Yes, it is possible...

A driving holiday in this part of the world is indeed possible. We take care of everything. All you need to do is come, drive and enjoy a rare adventure!

Yunnan through a Lens: Red Earth & Fields of Gold is a nine-day photographic exploration of Yunnan's epic natural scenery.

Join professional photographer Ron Yue on a driving journey that will take you from the rust red earth of Dongchuan to Luoping's glorious sun-yellow fields and end at the amazing Yuanyang rice terraces—the 'looking glass of Heaven'.

We run this journey early in the springtime, when tendrils of mist hang over the hillsides, when the golden rapeseed blossoms and when the rice fields are at their mirror-like finest. En route, join a series of specially arranged photography master classes and workshops in the field, where Ron will help you to capture the beauty of these landscapes on camera.

On the Road Experiences has paved the way for you to drive in your own properly insured SUV, so that you can enjoy the romance of a classic overland journey without any of the logistical headaches that typically accompany such journeys...

About Master Photographer Ron Yue

Originally from the North Shore in Vancouver, Canada, and based in Hong Kong since 1998, award-winning photographer Ron Yue travels widely to capture the inspiring image. His work has taken him throughout much of Asia to some of the most intriguing places. Initially trained as a chartered accountant, he now uses his diverse photography skills and outdoor experience to produce spectacular photographs for his clients. He has photographed in locations ranging from the torrid heat of Death Valley to Alaska's frozen tundra, from the jungles of southeast Asia to the Tibetan plateau, and from executive boardrooms to the pinnacle of China's skyscrapers.

Many of Ron's images are built around spectacular environments, captured at their peak moments, often incorporating authentic, local people in their native life surroundings. The images frequently blur the division between the dramatic, nostalgic, and the serene.

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He produces images for international commercial clients, editorials, and travel and documentary features primarily in the Asia region. Ron's fine print images are found in both home collections and corporate offices. Ron has photographed for the

National Geographic Channel on projects in Vietnam and Hong Kong, and he spent two months traveling in remote areas of Tibet and across thirteen provinces in China on a documentary assignment for Nokia, accompanying On the Road in China founder, Peter Schindler. His work has also been featured as part of a

documentary program for CCTV.

Ron has conducted inspiring lectures to audiences throughout Asia, and he has instructed at international schools and accreditation programs. He is a guest lecturer for Nikon.

Ron feels that photography journeys, or "photographic learning

experiences" as he describes them, is a perfect way to improve your photography. Our guests will discover that the new and interesting environments will significantly enhance the learning experience, and there are plenty of opportunities to try out concepts right away. The regular feedback,

plus the camaraderie of sharing images with fellow travelers further adds to the enjoyment of your new abilities. When you embark on an amazing journey, you will want to ensure that you bring back images that do justice to the places you have been to so you can show all your friends the incredible experience that you have had.

Throughout the course of this journey, Ron will be on hand to answer questions, review photographs and give hints and tips that will help to make guest's photographs as beautiful as the scenes that inspired them. As well as specially arranged workshops and field sessions en route, Ron will also be available to ride in guest's cars during each day's drive.

Ron Yue will make it easy for your family to understand photography and after a lecture you can practice right away together.

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Photography concept 1: Light

Concept 1: *Understanding light in terms of its quality, direction, and ratios can turn a good photograph into a much more dramatic image*



Photography concept 2: Composition

Concept 2: *Learning to keep a composition simple can result in a more powerful and less distracting photograph*



Photography concept 3: Your imagination!

Concept 3: *Drawing on the knowledge of various photographic concepts and using your imagination can significantly alter the look and quality of an image*



Journey of discovery





“RED EARTH,
rich copper
wherever you
look...”



“ADORABLE smiles of MIAO minority children...”

In Puzhehei, Yunnan

“Bright YELLOW
fields of
RAPESEED...”

The fields near Luoping...

“ LIME STONE
peaks shaping
the LANDSCAPE
of Luoping...”

The fields near Luoping...

“EASY does it...
on a BACK ROAD
in Yunnan...”

Along the Red River...

“Fishermen
on the RED RIVER
at SUNSET...”



“MAGIC
REFLECTIONS
at SUNRISE...”

The Yuanyang Rice Terraces



“MIRRORS of
GOD...
rightfully so!”



“ In the LATE
AFTERNOON LIGHT...
the terraces at
Laohuzui...”

The Yuanyang Rice Terraces

“Not only RICE
TERRACES, but
also CHARMING
VILLAGERS...”

In the Yuanyang Rice Terraces...





“BEAUTIFUL
GARDENS to
conclude your
PHOTOGRAPHIC
Journey...”

Zhu Family Garden, Jianshui

Day-by-day



Day 1 Arriving in Kunming and preparing for your journey

Arrive in Kunming according to your own arrangements.

We will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel. If you require a temporary Chinese driving license, we will take you to the hotel via the Vehicle Licensing Bureau. All the documents for your temporary license will be prepared; you will just need to take a simple eye test and sign the forms.

After settling into the hotel, you may want to go for a stroll along the city-center Green Lake where many locals enjoy relaxing hours. The vicinity of the lake bustles with people young and old and throughout much of the year is lush green. Depending on the season, migratory birds make the lake their temporary home.

In the evening, enjoy a group dinner together in a lovely, local restaurant near your hotel and attend our staff's safety briefing.

Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: NA

Duration: NA

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 1900m

Overnight: 1850m

Hotel

Green Lake Hotel, Kunming
[****]

Dinner will be an opportunity to begin to acquaint yourself with the many flavours of Yunnan's cuisine and to meet your fellow travellers.

Day 2 To the rust red earth of Dongchuan

Today you will set out from Kunming for the short drive to Dongchuan. Drive along an excellent divided highway before turning off onto a country lane for the last part of the trip. Even though the road is a highway, it has the feel of a country road passing by small villages and paddy fields.

After checking into our small courtyard hotel and a delicious lunch in Dongchuan, join a

classroom session on technical and landscape photography. Once Ron has shared his secrets, it's time to head to the hills! The most beautiful area of red earth is tucked high up in the mountains above Dongchuan, a pretty but winding drive away. Arrive at the most beautiful section just in time to catch the gorgeous late afternoon light from two dramatic viewpoints, before retiring to the hotel for dinner.

Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 205 km

Duration: 5.5 hours

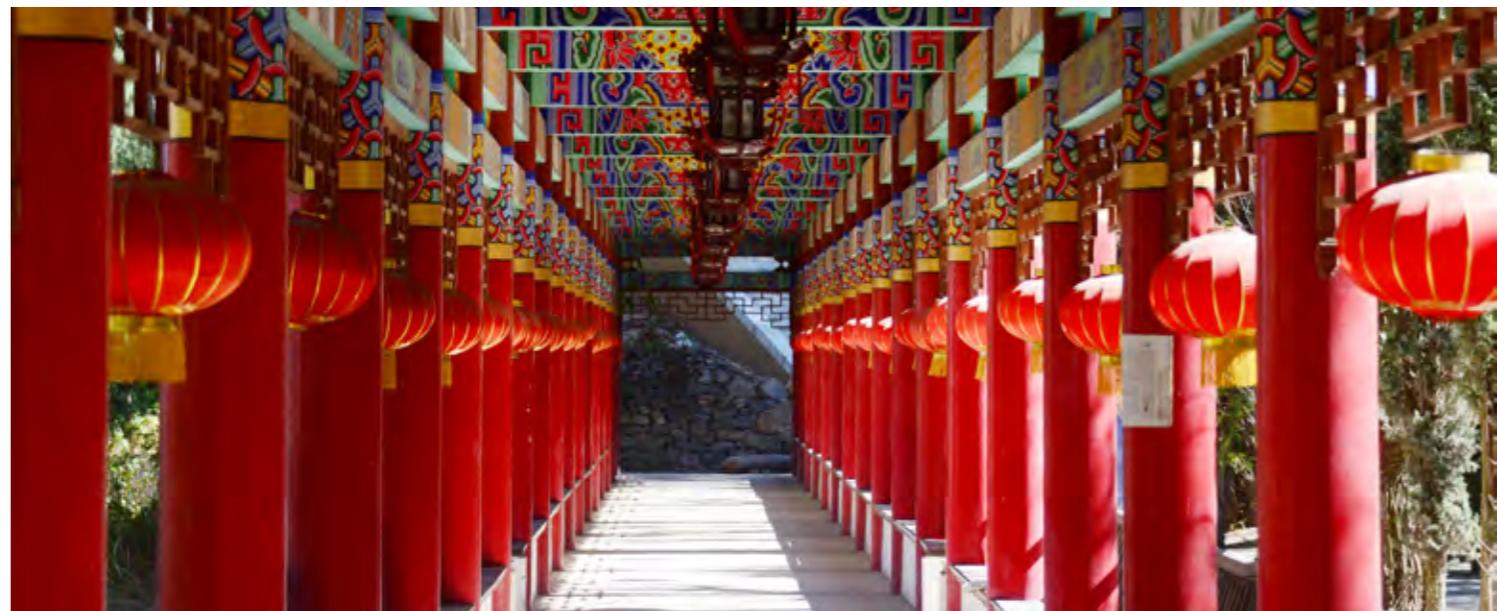
Elevation

Highest Daytime: 2200m

Overnight: 1600m

Hotel

Impressions of Red Earth, outside Dongchuan [**]



Day 3 Fields of red and gold

Make an early start today, in time to watch sunrise over the dramatic mountain landscape, when the light is at its best. Then set out for the drive to Luoping, first following a winding mountain road and completing the journey on a stretch of highway. The first three hours of driving are highly scenic so be prepared for many photo stops. After a local lunch a beautiful highway leads all the way to Luoping.

The county of Luoping in eastern Yunnan is known for its beautiful scenery in spring, when its fields of canola plants (also known as rapeseed) are in full bloom, surrounding the area's mountains with a sea of golden flowers to spectacular effect.

Arrive in Luoping in time to enjoy the 'golden hour' just outside the small town, where limestone karst hills emerge dramatically through the gleaming yellow fields of rapeseed.

Dinner will be in a local restaurant. After dinner, Ron has another photography lecture prepared for you and two beautiful and more relaxing days are to follow.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 390 km

Duration: 8 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 1800m

Overnight: 1600m

Hotel

Cloud Hotel, Luoping (*****)

Day 4 Golden Rooster Peaks and Snail Fields

Spend the whole day today exploring Luoping with your camera, discovering the otherworldly patterns scored into the fields of this region. Terraces form shell-like curls at Luositian ('Snail Fields') and karst towers erupt from the plains at Jinjifeng ('Golden Rooster Peak'). Drive through a remote region of limestone karsts, and stop where you like for photos.

Aside from photographers, Luoping's blooming rapeseed flowers and the refreshing smell of spring attract bees. Luoping is a national base for raising bees and producing honey products. You will have a chance to see a bee farm up close while driving on small farm roads through the rapeseed fields.

Rapeseed flowers are planted to harvest cooking oil from their seeds after the flowers have withered. They are planted

all over China but bloom at different times of the year, depending on the temperature of the locations. The rapeseed farms in Luoping are among the largest in China.

Our scheduled activities will be concentrated when the light is best—at dawn and just before dusk—leaving time to relax and explore in between... Also Ron will hold a lecture in between in order to help you to take even better photos.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 80 km

Duration: 2 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 1800m

Overnight: 1200m

Hotel

Cloud Hotel, Luoping (*****)

Day 5 South along winding country lanes

Today will see you enjoying a stunningly beautiful drive along dramatic mountain roads from Luoping to the old town of Puzhehei. It is a long, but scenic drive. Stop en route at rural markets and bucolic villages, before arriving in Puzhehei for a late lunch.

In the dialect of the Sani People branch of the Yi ethnic minority, “Pu Zhe Hei” means a place abounding in fish and shrimps. The scenic area is known for it’s hills, lakes, underground Karst caves and ethnic villages. There are altogether 300 isolate hill peaks, 83 caves, 54 lakes and 40,000 acres of Karst wetland.

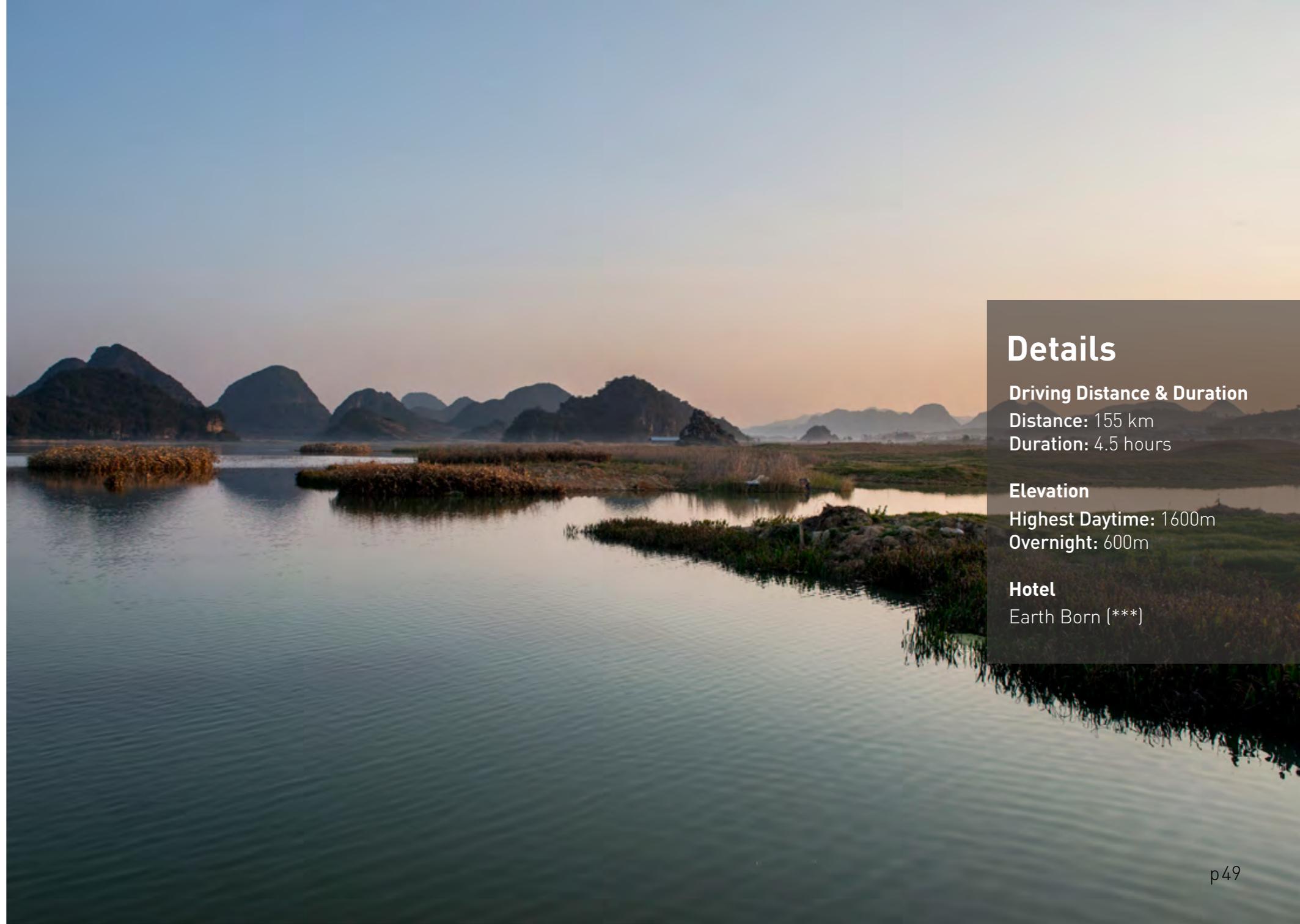
Therefore spending some time in the afternoon wondering through the karst mountains is a great photo opportunity.

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Alternatively you can spend the afternoon walking or riding around the old town in a horse and carriage, before hiking to Guanyin Cave Mountain (porters available to help with your camera gear!) to watch the sunset over the surrounding countryside—bliss...

Your hotel is the best in Quibei, a small town not far from the Puzhehei park.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 155 km

Duration: 4.5 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 1600m

Overnight: 600m

Hotel

Earth Born (***)

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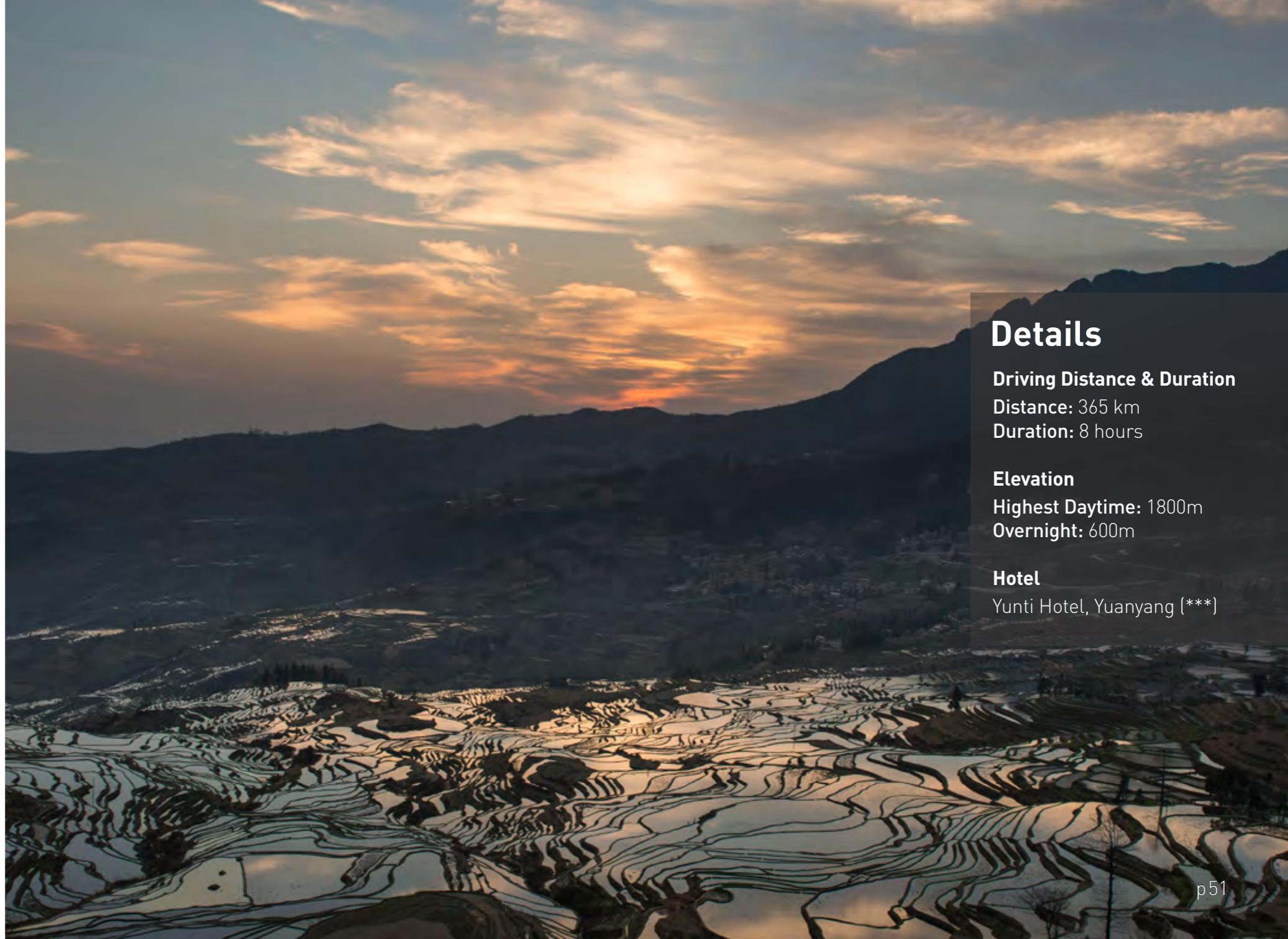
Day 6 On to the “Mirrors of God”

Today will be the longest driving day on the journey as you head southeast to the rice terraces of Yuanyang. The drive will be not as remarkable as the days before, but gives you the feeling of being on China’s mountainous roads as you first climb up to 2,000m and then descend through many turns on a perfectly paved, wide road to the banks of the Red River which lies at only just over 200m elevation.

Just before you reach the river, you will see both sides of the ride lined with sellers of all sorts of nuts and fruits, local

and exotic. It is a good moment to stop, soak up the afternoon sun and stock up on sweet tangerines or mangoes or pineapples.

From there it is a little more than an hour before you arrive in Yuanyang. The small town of Yuanyang sits high up in the hills to the south of the Red River, near several spectacular areas of many-tiered rice terraces. This evening you will visit one of the most breath taking, at Tiger’s Mouth, where the lowest fields are more than 1,000 metres vertically below the highest. At sunset, the dying rays of light glitter off the water in the empty fields, making for some outstanding photo opportunities!



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 365 km

Duration: 8 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 1800m

Overnight: 600m

Hotel

Yunti Hotel, Yuanyang (***)

Day 7 Ladder Fields and Market Day

Today's main event will be the hands-on, in the-[rice]-field workshop on landscape photography conducted by Ron. Since the rice terraces are at their most beautiful at sunrise, this will mean a very early start into the day.

Therefore at dawn (or before it, depending on the season), you will drive to one of the best viewing points in Yuanyang.

We will serve you coffee while you wait for the sun to rise above a mountain range that casts a long shadow over the valley. Well before the sun rises, the rice terraces begin to reflect the ever-changing light.

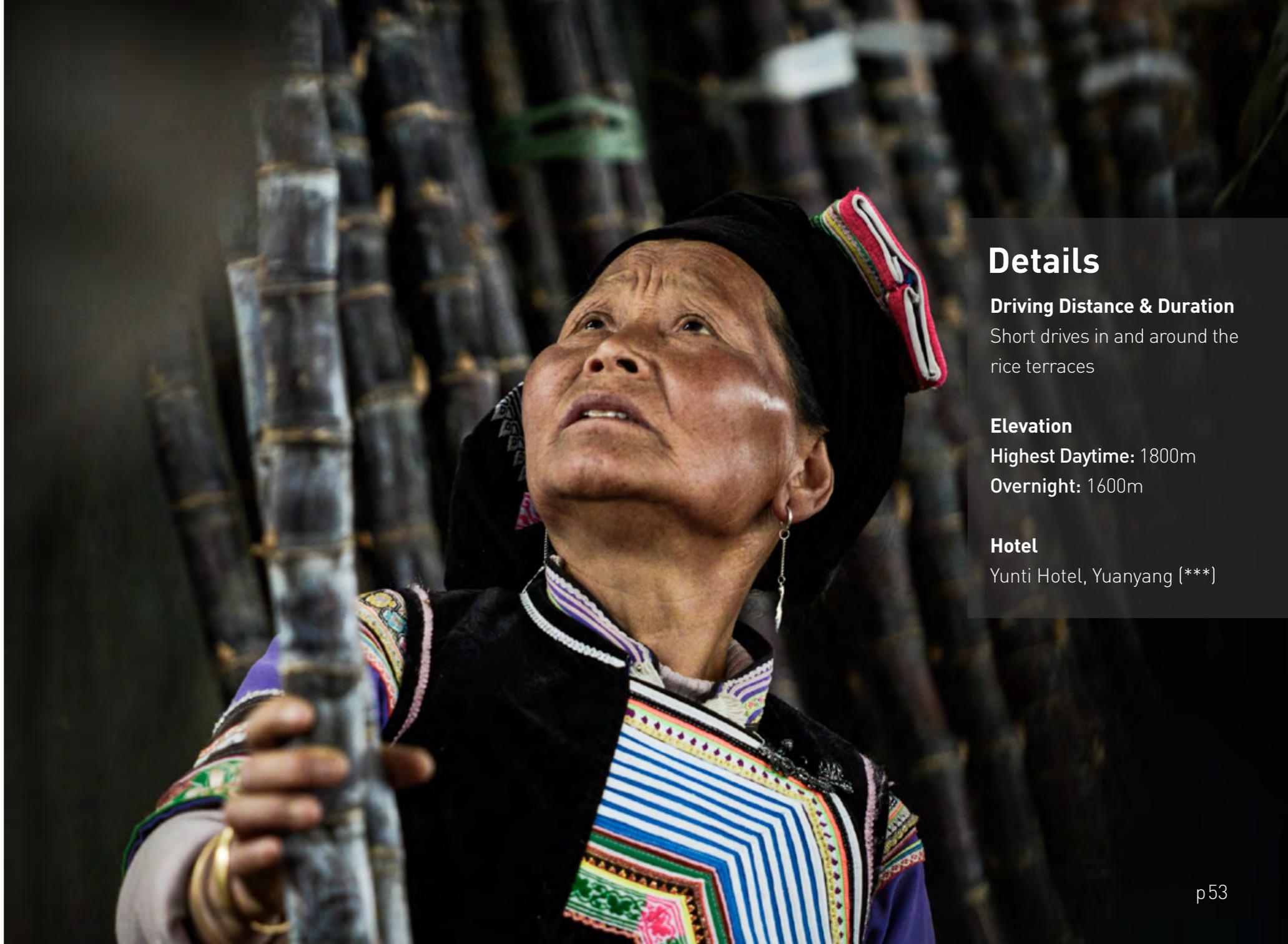
Once the sun peeks across the mountaintop, the terraces begin to glitter as the golden early morning sunlight dances across the surface of the water. Later in the morning, make a stop at a local market where

Hani and Yi people gather to do their shopping.

After lunch we return to the hotel and you can join a workshop with Ron on portraits and architecture.

In the afternoon we head out again as we have prepared a photography session in Qingkou Hani village, which lies off the main road at the bottom of a steep and muddy track. It is an opportunity to work on your portrait photography skills with a rice farmer and his (or her) water buffalo. And if you are up for it Ron will take you afterwards to a different area of terraces to capture the beauty of another sunset at Bada.

In the evening, we will take you, if you're up for it, to a small eatery that is about as local as you can get...prepare for a culinary adventure!



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Short drives in and around the rice terraces

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 1800m

Overnight: 1600m

Hotel

Yunti Hotel, Yuanyang (***)

Day 8 Old towns and long histories

Early birds have another opportunity to wake up and watch sunrise at Duoyishu or Qingkou, before hitting the road for the scenic drive to Jianshui, where you will arrive in time for a late lunch in the town's historic quarter. Spend the afternoon at Tuanshan Village, an attractive village nearby that's full of local character. It will be your last opportunity

to practice architecture and portrait photography before returning to Jianshui. Prepare your photos for the evening's wrap-up session, where you will have the opportunity to share your favorite photos from the past week with the rest of the group, and share memories and smiles from the last week together over a farewell dinner.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 180 km

Duration: 5.5 hours

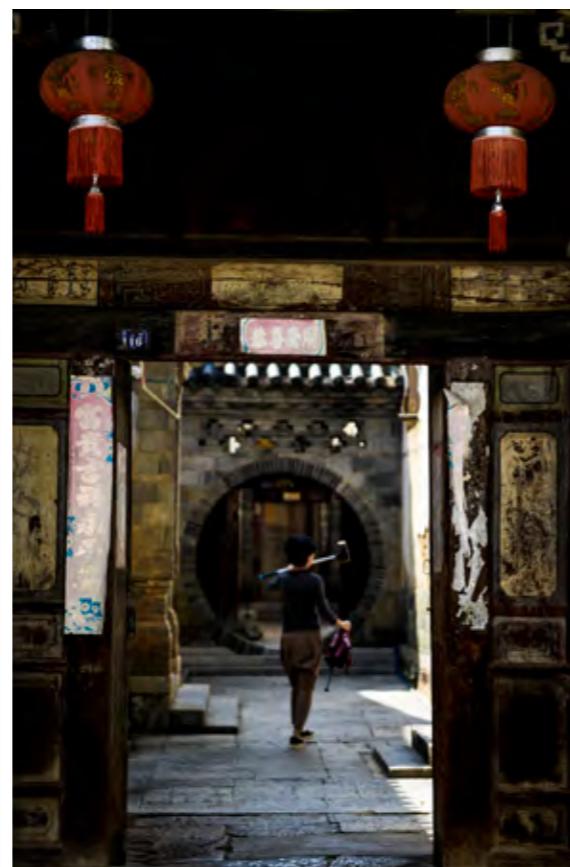
Elevation

Highest Daytime: 2000m

Overnight: 1500m

Hotel

Tingziyun Resort, Jianshui
[****]



Day 9 Life must go on...

Start your journey home this morning with the drive to Kunming.

Some of you may want to stay on in Kunming for a day or so to relax or play a round of golf. For others, today will be the day on which you return home and life must go on...

Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 215 km

Duration: 3.5-4 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 2000m



Choice of Cars

We include in the package price an SUV we procure from Avis or Hertz or another reputable car rental company. Most of the SUVs are Toyotas, but on occasion Mitsubishi's or other brands may also make an appearance. For some itineraries, we are able to offer you an option to upgrade your car to the new models from Audi.

We wish the car rental markets of China would be more developed and we could give you more choice, but this is not so: since we want to provide well-maintained and well-insured cars, the choice is rather limited.

But SUVs are in fact the right choice for driving journeys in this part of the world because they are spacious enough to accommodate a lot of luggage, photography equipment, and

good-and-bad-weather gear. Also, they reinforce the feeling of adventure, exploration and discovery...which is, in the end, the mood of journeys in this region, no matter how comfortable or even luxurious the night's hotel may be.

What's more, they offer sufficient clearance when required and thus add a sense of safety and all-round ability. (4-wheel drive capability is hardly needed in China these days since all roads are either very well-paved or, with good gravel, offer solid support.)

And so SUVs from reputable brands are our car of choice!

**“ ANY car,
as long as
it is an SUV”**



Adventures and Discoveries in Local Cuisines

While this itinerary is not one of our 'Foodie'-themed journeys, we do believe that each one of our journeys should introduce you not only to hidden gems of cultural and scenic beauty, but that sampling local cuisines is also a must.

Wherever you travel with us, we will order, with very few exceptions, dishes fresh and on location with an emphasis on local produce. It is not uncommon for our guides to venture into the kitchen to pick this, that or the other vegetable and to ask the cook to prepare them in the finest possible way. (On occasion we do pre-order a meal: this will normally be the case only for special occasions!)

Wine and beer is always included in our meals for you

to enjoy. (When we travel into high-altitude, we suggest moderation!)

Finally, if you have special dietary requirements are particularly interested in the culinary aspect of one of our journeys, please let us know.

For private journeys, we can, of course, tailor the meal experience to your taste (and budget).



What's Included / Best Months to Go...

Generally speaking, our journey packages and prices are all-inclusive. Once you've paid and you arrive at the starting point, you really won't have to take out your wallet again.

- **Cars** – a modern SUV is provided for all driving days, expertly maintained and serviced by Avis, Hertz, or other reputable car rental companies, and covered by the best insurance available, and hire car return from Kunming is also included
- **International Journey Host, Guide and Support Vehicle** – you will be accompanied by a registered Chinese tour guide, an On the Road in China host and a fully equipped lead car with a local support driver
- **Routes** – we provide an extensively researched and carefully designed itinerary and “state-of-the-art” satellite navigation system with a pre-programmed route for the journey. You will also receive a detailed pre-departure pack and route book for the journey
- **Driving License** – You will need a temporary Chinese driving license for which all arrangements and fees are included.
- **Fuel & Tolls** – we provide petrol for the car throughout the journey and pay all tolls



Best months to go...

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN
JUL AUG SEPT OCT NOV DEC

- **Airport Transfers** – all airport transfers are included
- **Hotels** – the best available or five-star accommodation is included in each overnight stop
- **Meals** – breakfast (a choice of Western and Local is provided), and lunch and dinner are included on all driving days, as are drinks. Meals on non-driving days as specified above. Prepare for a culinary adventure!

- **Goodies** – you will enjoy an On the Road Home-Away-from-Home Kit containing wet towels, anti-bacterial gel and basic toiletries, and a daily picnic basket containing fresh fruit, fruit juice, water, and a mixture of sweets and nibbles
- **Other Essentials** – we provide each car with walky-talkies

- **Travel Insurance** – 24-hour medical assistance, evacuation and repatriation emergency service provided by International SOS is included, as is cancellation insurance
- **Tips & Entrance Fees** – basic tips and entrance fees for jointly attended activities are included
- **Activities, Meals, Transport** during ‘free times’ as indicated in this Journey Dossier
- **Top-up Collision Damage Waiver** insurance

What's Not Included

The only items not included in our prices are flights to and from Kunming, your Chinese visa and personal purchases (e.g., gifts, souvenirs).



Photo Credits

- © Joanna James - page 36
- © King Lin - page 22
- © Liam Wynn-Williams - page 32
- © Peter Schindler - pages 18, 28, 30, 38, 40, 42, 44, 55-56, 60
- © Ron Yue - Front and back cover, pages 2, 4, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 24, 26, 34, 45-49, 50-54, 62, 65
- © Unkown - page 10, 58-59

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“ A picture is worth a thousand words. True, but when it comes to a road journey, moving images are priceless. Please visit :

<http://www.ontheroadexperiences.com/en/video-gallery>”





ON THE ROAD EXPERIENCES

BACK ROADS | HIDDEN GEMS

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

