Gay China Adventure Tour

Future Dates to be Announced

A Gay Travel China Adventure Tour

Physical Challenge:

1 2 3 4 5

Join us on our Gay China Adventure Tour of epic proportions! Among the picturesque mountains of southwest China’s Yunnan Province, cycle through villages holding tight to traditional Tibetan and other ethnic cultures. Hike to a Holy Waterfall, brimming with contagious spiritual
energy. Experience romantic sunrises, partake in the feeding of the black snub-nosed monkey, and hike through the famous 10,000-foot-deep Tiger Leaping Gorge, almost twice as deep as the Grand Canyon! Experience all this and more as we take a journey through a region of China still mostly unchanged by the pace of modern life.

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- **Highlights**
- **Overview**
- **Itinerary**
- **Extensions**
- **Price Includes**
- **Testimonials**
- **FAQ**

- **Explore** the Holy Waterfall where Yubeng’s name originated
- **Hike** Tiger Leaping Gorge with its 28 Zigzag Bends
- **Cycle** around Lashihai Lake
- **Relax** and take in a sunset view of Meili Snow Mountain
- **Tour** Tacheng Black Snub-Nosed Monkey National Park
- **View** Mt. Kawagebo Glacier while hiking to Binghu Ice Lake

On this trip, we will explore and meet charming and prideful Naxi people along the way. We’ll trek the famous Tiger Leaping Gorge, cycle around the Old Town of Shangri-la, visit a monastery, hike to Binghu Ice Lake of the Meili Snow Mountain and much more. Fascinating cultural encounters, heart-pumping adventure, and breath-taking scenery abound on this once in a lifetime adventure.

**Map:**
Day 1: Welcome to Lijiang!

Today, we arrive in Lijiang and head to our hotel to get settled in. Lijiang, a well-preserved old city of ethnic minorities and radiant culture, is a central town of the Lijiang Autonomous County of the Naxi Ethnic Minority in Yunnan Province. Located at 7,874 feet above the sea level plateau, embraced by the tree-covered Lion Mountain in the west, Elephant and Golden Row Mountains in the north and vast fertile fields in the southeast with crystal-clear water running throughout. The Old Town is also referred to as the “Town of Big Ink Slab (Dayanzhen) due to its resemblance to a big jade ink slab. There are no activities scheduled for today. Enjoy time to recover from your long flights.
Day 2: Relax in Lijiang

Enjoy your morning and sleep as long as you need. This afternoon, we’ll have a briefing about our activities for the next 10 days. Welcome dinner to follow!

Day 3: Lijiang-Qiaotou Town-Tea Horse Guesthouse (7.5 miles/5hrs hiking)
Elevation: 8530 feet, Up 2690 feet, Down 984 feet

This morning we’ll check out of our hotel and drive to Qiaotou Town, also known as Tiger Leaping Gorge Town. During our ride, we’ll pass Naxi ethnic villages and the Upper Yangtze River with a beautiful panoramic view of the First Bend of the Yangtze River on the way. Our first trek will take place at Tiger Leaping Gorge. This 12,795 feet deep gorge is renowned as one of the world’s four great gorges and is honored as one of the deepest and most marvelous.

We begin our journey at the Qiaotou Primary School and head to Changsheng Village where we’ll pay a visit to Changsheng Hope Primary School. After we’ve met a few smiling faces, we’ll continue onward to Zhong Nuoyu village where we’ll arrive around noon for lunch in a Naxi Family Guesthouse. Once we’ve enjoyed our lunch, we’ll take on our first challenge; the 28 Zigzag Bends trail. The lovely Tea Horse Guesthouse is our final destination for the day and where we’ll stay for the evening.
Day 4: Onward to Shangri-la (4.5 miles/3hrs hiking, BLD)
Elevation: 7,824 feet, Up 984 feet, Down 2,296 feet

This morning we’ll rise early for a hike down to Tina’s Guesthouse, passing a high waterfall along the way. At Tina’s, we’ll enjoy a phenomenal view of the astounding Jade Dragon Snow Mountain. After we’ve taken some time to soak in the scenery, Shangri-la is just a drive away. Upon arrival in Shangri-la, we enter the Tibetan cultural area and a landscape adorned with barley fields and yak scattered valleys. If time permits, we’ll walk around Dukezong Ancient Town, a crucial checkpoint on the Ancient Tea-horse Trade Caravan spanning from Yunnan, Tibet and ending in India. Here we’ll have the opportunity to see the Thang-ga painting. Thang-ga is a unique style of painting developed in the 7th century Tibetan area and is a Tibetan word that refers to scroll painting mounted with vibrantly colorful satins and fabrics.

Day 5: Shangri-la: Not Just a Fairytale (13.6 miles Elevation 7,874 feet)

Today will be spent sightseeing and cycling around the Old Town of Shangri-la and getting further acclimated to the high elevation. This area dates back 1300 years and with its rich Tibetan-style architecture, there will be plenty to gaze at! We’ll eat breakfast together and continue our journey by bike to Songzanlin Monastery. The Songzanlin Monastery (constructed in 1679) is the largest Tibetan Monastery in Yunnan and is nicknamed the “Lesser Potala” due to its resemblance to the magnificent structure in Lhasa. We’ll gander at its iconic architecture for a couple of hours before enjoying lunch at a local restaurant.

After lunch, it’s back on our bikes to pedal over to Napa Lake and its Nature Reserve. This reserve is the country’s largest grassland and most scenic area of the plateau. We’ll have time to walk around and take in its splendor while enjoying authentic Tibetan culture. Don’t forget to bring a camera, there will certainly be plenty of things to
photograph today. We’ll return back to our hotel this evening for a delicious dinner together. You’ll want to get plenty of rest this evening, we have a big and exciting day ahead of us tomorrow!

**Day 6: Mountains & Beautiful Scenery Abound**

We begin our morning with a drive to Deqin County. Along the way, we’ll have fantastic views of various tree species, shimmering streams down the valley, prayer flags, stupas (Buddhist shrines), and Tibetan villages. We’ll also make a stop to visit Nixi Pottery Village and take a jab at our creative side with a local pottery lesson. Then it’s back on the road for more serene views along the Jinsha River. Benzilan Town will be our next destination for a lunch break.

After a delicious lunch, we’ll drive to visit Moon Bend, the First Bend of the Jinsha River, which is the boundary between Sichuan and Yunnan. The Moon Bend is a wonderful place to take in the impressive scenery of the surrounding mountains. If weather permits, we’ll have the rest of the day viewing spectacular sights of impressive Baimang Snow Mountain and a spectacular sunset view of Meili Snow Mountain from a sightseeing Platform where we’ll also catch a view of a cluster of pagodas appropriately named “Prince’s 13 Peaks.” Today is an activity free day to allow for acclimating to the elevation.

**Day 7: Making Our Way to Great Heights (11.1miles/7h trekking 10,006 feet)**

Fancy a picturesque sunrise today? If you’re an early riser, head out to enjoy the Golden Mountain where the sunrise delicately graces its snowcapped peak. After breakfast, we will drive along the Mekong River to reach
today’s trailhead. We’ll exit our transportation in Xidang Village, then proceed to hike up to and over a mountain pass to Yubeng, with a picnic lunch along the way. Once we’ve arrived in Upper Yubeng Village we’ll enjoy dinner tonight in a traditional Tibetan living room. We’ll certainly rely on horses to carry our luggage to a local guest house where we’ll be spending the evening.

**Day 8: Mt. Kawagebo Glacier’s Ice Lake (11.1 miles/7h trekking out and back)**

This morning will be another wonderful opportunity to catch a spectacular sunrise view, this time of the Mt. Kawagebo glacier from the comforts of our guesthouse. We’ll begin the day with a walk up to Binghu Ice Lake on the Meili Snow Mountain where we’ll journey through the original forest of Yubeng Village where horses and yaks call home. If we’re lucky enough and keep our eyes peeled for the possibility, we’ll be graced with the sight of local wild animals.

In Glacier Park, a beautiful river walk lined with spruce trees and jaunts over wooden bridges will give us a wonderful view of Mt. Kawagebo Glacier. Our adventure will take us to Ice Lake, located just at the foot of the glacier. After we’ve taken some time to take in all of the splendor of the day, we’ll trek back to Upper Yubeng to stay overnight in a local guesthouse.

**Day 9: Holy, Waterfall! (8.6 miles/4h trekking roundtrip)**

If the weather permits, we’ll wake up to another impressive view of the Mt. Kawagebo glacier. After we’ve enjoyed breakfast, today’s hike will take us to the Holy Waterfall, from which Yubeng’s name originated. Buddhists have
been coming to this area for centuries on pilgrimages to circumambulate the waterfall 13 times with the belief that this act will erase all sins from this life. After we’ve soaked up the energy of such a spiritual environment, we will head back up to Yubeng for another night’s stay in our guesthouse.

**Day 10: Cizhong and the Grand Canyon (13 miles/5h trekking, 1h drive 6,560 feet)**

This morning we’ll say goodbye to our home over the past few days and again rely on our luggage to be transported by horseback. Today’s journey will take us on a walk along the least traveled path of Yubeng, leading us to Ninong Village. After a scrumptious lunch together we’ll drive to Cizhong where we’ll stay overnight. On the way to Cizhong, we will stop to view the impressive and awe-inspiring Grand Canyon, with its seemingly endless depth and idyllic scenery.

**Day 11: Monkeying Around in Tacheng Town**

First, we will begin the morning with a visit to a local Tibetan Catholic Church and act as spectators during their gathering of prayer. The iconic church was built by French missionaries in 1867 and is shared by Tibetan, Naxi and Lisu people. You’ll notice old grapevines planted by these missionaries where the traditional way of winemaking is certainly still held close to heart.

Next, we’ll drive to visit Tongle Village, the most original and ethnic village in the Yunnan Province and home to Lisu and Naxi people. People here reside in charming, traditional houses built with wooden walls and tile roofs.
In the late afternoon, we’ll arrive in Tacheng Town to pay a visit to the Tacheng Black Snub-Nosed Monkey National Park, home to hundreds of magnificent animals. We’ve reached our destination for the evening so we’ll enjoy dinner together before turning in for the night.

**Day 12: Lijiang Around Lashihai Lake (20 miles/2h elevations of 7,217-7,874 feet)**

Hopefully, you’ve had enough rest for an easy transition from aquatic to pedaling legs! Our adventure today lands us back on the bike seat for a cycling tour of Lijiang Old Town. We’ll get a car ride to Baisha Old Town first to avoid the traffic, with a stop to visit Baisha Murals. Painted over 1,000 years ago, the murals display the life stories of China’s main religions, including Confucianism, Taoism, and Tibetan Buddhism.

After we’ve had a chance to take in the culture of the city, it’s time to jump on our bikes and head to Lashihai Lake. Lashihai Lake is a nature reserve rich in biodiversity, here we’ll have the opportunity to pedal around the lake at our leisure. If we carry our lucky charms with us today, we may get the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the endangered black-necked crane. We’ll loop around the lake, beginning on a paved road which leads us through Naxi villages where Naxi and Yi minorities call home. Have no fear, you adventurous souls, the terrain transitions from pavement to rougher terrain as we loop back around.

**Day 13: Farewell, Yunnan Province!**

Today we say goodbye to beautiful Yunnan. After breakfast, transfer to Lijiang airport and begin the journey home.
Note: While we plan to follow the itinerary as much as possible, weather, trail conditions, river crossings, and other circumstances may force us to alter the itinerary in this remote and relatively untraveled region.

Check out our [China Cultural Tour](#) for a different option.

**Beijing Pre-Tour Dates TBD**

For those with a little extra time, we invite you to come early and join us for a 3-night visit to Beijing.

**Day 1: Arrival in Beijing**

![Image of Beijing architecture](image)

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be transferred to your hotel to get settled in. There are no activities scheduled for today after a long day of traveling. Rest up for tomorrow.

**Day 2: Temple of Heaven - Tiananmen Square - Forbidden City**

![Image of the Temple of Heaven](image)

After breakfast, we will head to the magnificent Temple of Heaven; an imperial building complex of religious buildings. We will then tour Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City with lunch at the Qing Dynasty-inspired Fangshan Restaurant. Later this afternoon we will make our way north of Coal Hill for a fun rickshaw tour of the old Hutong District of Beijing.
Day 3: Ming Tombs - The Great Wall

Today will be an early departure for a full day of touring. Our first stop will be the Changling Tomb of the Ming Tombs; which house the best relics from the Ming Emperors’ tombs that have been opened. Will we grab some lunch before making our way to the Mutianyu section Great Wall! We will walk up a short path that will lead us to a cable car that will take us to the wall itself. After exploring this area; we can either walk 45-minutes or so along the Wall and return to the bottom on a “toboggan” or we can take the cable car down.

This afternoon, we will pass by the Olympic Park built for the 2008 Summer Olympics. Stopping at a tea house before returning to our hotel for the night. Dinner will be on your own after this full day of activities.

Day 4: Departure

After breakfast, a private transfer will take you to the airport for your flight to Lijiang to join the main tour.

Price includes: All transportation within China, Airport transfers on arrival and departure days; All hotel service charges, government taxes, porterage, and gratuities for included meals; Lodging in boutique hotels for all nights; All meals beginning with welcome dinner on Day 2 through breakfast on last morning of Day 13; Services of knowledgeable, bilingual local guides and the services of a knowledgeable HE Travel tour host (with a minimum number of participants); Entrance fees to all sites listed on the itinerary; HE Travel provides complimentary Medical & Evacuation Insurance for every US Resident on our group tours who does not have other coverage.

Not included: Airfare to and from starting and ending points; meals on Day 1 and lunch on Day 2; Personal items including alcoholic beverages, snacks, laundry, and telephone calls; gratuities for guides and HE Travel host.

Optional Tour Choices:

$TBD Single Supplement (for solo travelers who wish to enjoy a private bedroom and bathroom)

We recommend purchasing trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment. Click Here for more information.
Beijing Pre-Tour Extension

**Price includes:** All vehicle transportation within China, Airport transfers on arrival and departure days; Flight from Beijing to Lijiang on last day of pre-tour; All hotel service charges, government taxes, porterage, and gratuities for included meals; Lodging in boutique hotels for all nights; Breakfast on all days; 1 lunch and 1 dinner; Services of knowledgeable, bilingual local guides and the services of a knowledgeable HE Travel tour host (with a minimum number of participants); Entrance fees to all sites listed on the itinerary; HE Travel provides complimentary Medical & Evacuation Insurance for every US Resident on our group tours who does not have other coverage.

**Not included:** Airfare to starting point in Beijing; meals on arrival day; 1 lunch and 1 dinner; Personal items including: alcoholic beverages, snacks, laundry, and telephone calls; gratuities for guides and HE Travel host.

**Beijing Pre-Tour Choices:**

*TBD* per person in a shared room

*TBD* Single Supplement (for solo travelers who wish to enjoy a private bedroom and bathroom)

“The trip was an adventure at every turn.” – Doug, Roswell, GA

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**What if I am traveling alone?**

Most of our trips draw more single travelers than couples. When couples do join us, it’s usually because they’re looking forward to interacting with a gay group; if they wanted a holiday by themselves, they wouldn’t have signed up to travel with us. Furthermore, the activities included with our trips serve as natural ice-breakers. Within a day, you’ll be traveling with friends. You don’t need to pay the single supplement if you’re traveling alone. We’ll be happy to match you with a roommate. Pay the single supplement only if you want a bedroom to yourself. For selected trips, including cruises, we will charge half the single supplement if you request a roommate but we can’t match you with someone.

**Where does the tour start and end?**

This tour starts and ends in Lijiang, China.

**When do I need to arrive and depart?**

Plan to arrive in Lijiang, China any time on Day 1 and depart anytime after 1 PM on Day 15.
What is the Activity Level of This Tour?

1 2 3 4 5
Travelers should be comfortable spending a full day walking on uneven hilly, high elevation terrain and enjoy mountain biking, and other activities. This tour will have activities at high altitudes. Most hotels will be modern and comfortable, with private facilities. However, be prepared for one night of lodging at a rustic mountain inn. If you are a gay adventurer in good physical shape and like a challenge, this trip is for you!

What will the hotels be like?

Due to the remoteness of the locations, most hotels are 3 or 4 stars, as options are limited on most nights. We do stay at the best-rated accommodations in the remote areas.

Additional Questions

For answers to your additional questions, please email info@hetravel.com or call 305-294-8174