

# YUNNAN, CHINA

THE FABULOUS REGION "SOUTH OF THE CLOUDS"



VISION GROUP

LUXURY  
EXPERIENCES

Yunnan is an incredible region, with a fabulous natural beauty, a large province immersed in history and culture.

Yunnan Province—which literally means “South of the Clouds” due to its location just south of the Tibetan Plateau—is home to some of the most diverse cultures, ecology, and terrain in China. With verdant low-lying valleys, spectacular white-capped mountains, rustic towns and villages, and a lively ethnic diversity with its 55 ethnic minority communities and over sixty languages and dialects. Yunnan has long inspired poets and travellers alike.



# EXPERIENCE

- Get invited to a Tibetan family home for a warm welcoming feast together with the family members between plenty of food, drinking, singing and dancing. Get to know their customs and learn their way of life.
- Nestled between mountains, 2000 mt above sea level, the shimmering waters of Erhai Lake are vast as far as the eye can see. A major source of fish for the Bai people, who still use cormorants to help with their catch, Erhai is an otherworldly experience, made especially beautiful at sunrise when the first rays of light turn the reflective waters into a sea of vibrant hues. Get an early start on your day and watch as the world comes alive on this vast lake-side shore, walk through Xizhou, a traditional Bai village on the shores of the Lake to explore the markets and learn about Bai architecture.
- Meet a local Shaman, a Bimo, walk through his village at the feet of the Jade Snow Mountain and listen to his perspective on local life, the challenges posed by development and his animist faith, a series of cults predating the arrival of Buddhism in China. The Bimo is a sacred hereditary office held by one family over centuries. The present Shaman is a well-respected scholar who mediates tribal disputes and presides over Yi ceremonies. Witness the preservation of ancient traditions in a challenging new world.
- Enter a traditional Naxi family home to experience the hospitality, culture, and cuisine of the Naxi people. In the courtyard immerse yourself in the colours and sounds of local dancing and music performers, whose traditional style survives only here, learn about the spices and flavours of Naxi cooking from the lady of the house, and enjoy the warmth of a local family in their home.



# ART

- A Buddhist thangka painting captivates its viewers with intricate depictions of deities and religious symbolism. At the Shangri-La Thangka Academy we'll delve deep into the religious, social and political context of pieces that take years to complete. This ancient Buddhist art form also serves a spiritual practice, acting as a visual tool to meditate on religious principles.
- Admire the handicrafts and learn about local techniques in Nixi Village, situated on the Yangtze River, is best known for its black pottery. Together with a local artisan, observe and learn how to knead, fashion and fire their famous black clay crafts.
- Set against a surreal backdrop of snowy peaks north of Lijiang is the village of Baisha, one of the oldest Naxi settlements with a slow and serene ambience. Get access to the town's glorious collection of murals dating the 16th century, a perfect artistic syncretism of religious tales belonging to the Naxi, Tibetan and Han cultures.
- Visit Zhoucheng, a resplendent village resting at the base of Cangshan Mountain, a major center of Bai culture renowned for its unique tie-dye products. Alongside the locals, you'll use indigo-based dyes to transform white cotton fabric into a dazzling variety of patterns and scenes, using the same simple stick tools and rubber bands as their predecessors centuries before.
- Dive into the depth of Naxi culture by visiting the Dongba Cultural Museum. Your personal guide, through the artifacts collection, will illustrate the importance in history of the trade routes of Yunnan, reaching all the way to India. Get access to a viewing of a unique system of pictographic glyphs, the Dongba symbols, developed in the 7th century to serve a particular ritual purpose, it is still in use nowadays.



# CULTURE

- Friday is market day in Shaxi village, UNESCO site, the ethnic groups Yi, Bai, Lisu, Naxi, Hui, and Tibetan descend the surrounding mountains to gather in town and trade farming products, livestock, and handicrafts. Men and women are proudly dressed in their traditional and colorful costume, carrying large baskets and leading pack horses and mules down the network of narrow lanes leading to the central square. Access this vibrant rural scene and mingle with locals.
- Visit the Stone Dragon Village where 'Those who can walk, dance; and those who can talk, sing.' Meet the star of the regional Folk Music and assist to a captivating musical performance full of longing and excitement.
- Make your way to the industrious village of Manzhao, known throughout the region for its traditional paper-making techniques. Discover the fascinating process from strips of mulberry bark then boiled, pulverized, and dried into something as universally relatable simply as a sheet of paper.

VISION GROUP



法輪常轉

法輪常轉 心正身安 萬事如意



# CULTURE

- Ganlanba, or “Olive Dam,” is a complex of several villages where the Dai community’s bamboo “hanging tower” homes are the unbeatable highlight. Designed to help promote air circulation and heat reduction, the upper story is about two meters above the ground and is made accessible by a wooden ladder. Meet with villagers and learn about Dai culture and its traditions.
- Get to know one of the most peculiar ethnic group of the region, the Jinuo; they were the last to be named a “national minority” in China in 1979. The Jinuo used to be organized in matrilineal clans, and still consider the maternal uncle (and not the father) to be the most important person in the family, he is still consulted on all major decisions. You’ll spot a Jinuo village by the welcome given by the women of the village, generally they wear their hair in a white hood and the men wear a predominantly white outfit, jazzed up with some strips of color.
- Meet the descendants of the first tea cultivators in a Bulang minority village. Living high up in the mountains, the Bulang people are exceptional farmers growing rice, cotton, sugar cane, and tea. The region is home to China’s famed fermented tea called Pu’er which is known for its unique flavor. The tea leaves are picked from the wild trees growing at high altitudes and then undergo a special aging process, which results in the tea’s distinctive earthy taste. Explore the village, mingle with the locals, and exclusively try exquisite varieties of Pu’er in an authentic setting.



# LANDSCAPES & OUTDOORS

- Legend has it that whilst fleeing a hunter through the mountains of northern Yunnan, a tiger leapt across the raging rapids blocking its escape. This is how Tiger Leaping Gorge got its name, but its reputation comes from epic hiking trails shared with local shepherds and farmers that deliver views of outstanding natural beauty below. The hike is not for the fainthearted, after all, this is one of the deepest gorges in the world at 3,790 meters deep.
- Take in the fresh air but be ready for breath-taking views as you set out along one of the trails snaking around the foot of Mount Meili. Known as one of the most beautiful mountains in the world, Meili's snowy summits are sacred for Tibetan Buddhists and are the land of frequent pilgrimages. As you hike along the winding mountain paths amidst snow-capped tops and lush greenery, your mind is sure to conjure up images of faraway expeditions and unparalleled meditation spots.
- A visit to Yuhu Village will bring you right up to the foot of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, its stone buildings seemingly tucked into the mountainside. Explore the streets before taking your hiking route. At the top look back over Wenhai Valley, framed by mountains with flowers in bloom, Lijiang far in the distance.
- Get access to Napahai Lake, with its lush green grass and clear water, located 3,270 meters above sea level. After winding through the region's grasslands, over a dozen rivers meet to form the lake, which surrounded by mountains covered by snow in winter. Yaks, sheep and horses graze in the marshy wetlands that surround the area, which are dry from late fall to winter. In spring they become wet again, attracting countless birds and making for great bird watching opportunities. In winter, you find the rare species Black Neck Crane flew from the north all the way here for a home.
- Explore Yuanyang and its terraced rice fields, a true masterpiece of agricultural organization. Descending down the slopes of the Ailao Mountains to the banks of the Hong River, the rice terraces are a truly mesmerizing sight. Meticulously developed by the Hani people since the 8th century, the patchworked fields are not only impressive to look at — they are a complex water delivery system for the mountaintop plantations, essential for the village's wellbeing.



# EPICUREAN

- A balanced mix of Buddhist and Han cooking traditions, Bai cuisine is noted for its mix of spicy, sour and sweet flavours, hearty meat stews, peppery ham, and flaming hot pots. Recharge over a traditional meal, learn more about Bai culture and customs and hear how their culture was influenced by their role along the Tea and Horse Road.
- Step into the home of Mrs. Shi Fumei, a local cheesemaker and discover how region boasts its own unique cheese culture, a remnant of earlier Mongolian influence. Here we get up a close look as Mrs. Shi steams milk on a wood-fired stove before separating the curds from the whey. Wait for your delicious cheese snack to cool and chat with Mrs. Shi as she stitches cloth shoes.
- For decades, Yin Family Pickles has ruled the roost when it comes to pickled vegetables. From daikon radish and black beans in winter to broad beans and string beans in summer, the family business has a recipe for every season. Go behind the scenes to discover what it takes to keep the pickle venture booming, gazing upon rows of jars working their magic and family members busily snipping away at colorful vegetables. You may even be lucky enough to happen upon the pickle empress herself: the entrepreneurial octogenarian Madame Chen.
- Pu'er Tea is a variety of fermented tea traditionally produced in Yunnan. We'll visit a local Pu'er tea workshop where we will taste the tea and also make our own Pu'er tea cake. The friendly staff at the processing workshop will introduce Pu'er tea and the process of tea making from steaming, rolling, and pressing into a tea cake. Afterward, we'll learn more about the role Pu'er tea plays in the daily lives of the people in Lijiang.
- Tucked away in the Bai village of Panqu (just north of Dali Old Town) is the country farm of Gil, a French national of Spanish descent and travel writer who has called China home for the past decade. Gil has transformed an abandoned traditional home into Casa Bai, a private dining experience that fuses French and Spanish flavors with seasonal, locally grown and sourced ingredients.





## ADDRESS

### ITALY

Via Giorgio Scalia, 10B Roma  
tel.: +39 06 93570780

### USA

252 East 61st Street  
Suite N5B, New York, NY 10065  
tel.: +1 (917) 754-8133

### HONG KONG

805 Prosperity Millennia Plaza,  
663 King's Rd., North Point  
tel. : +852 6461 8387



VISION GROUP

# LUXURY EXPERIENCES

[www.visiongrouppltd.com](http://www.visiongrouppltd.com) - [info@visiongrouppltd.com](mailto:info@visiongrouppltd.com)