

A Photojourney in Yunnan with Douglas Beasley

March 14-26, 2018



Cover photo by Ron Cooper



LINDEN CENTRE

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Sometimes I do get to places just when God's ready to have somebody click the shutter.

- Ansel Adams

South of the Clouds, there lies a region hidden in the southeast vestiges of the Himalayas, where snow covered mountains tower over 8,000 foot verdant plains, and where whispers from the heavens lead visitors to majestic vistas and timeless villages filled with sun-etched smiling faces and indigo-tinged caresses.

South of the Clouds, memories are created, both spiritually and through the viewfinder of a camera. Shrouded paths, previously reserved for caravans carrying tea and spices to the Silk Road, lead to unveiled providence, where every experience becomes a form of exploration and achievement.

South of the Clouds has always been known as Yunnan- a fabled land of breath-taking scenery, saffron-clad Buddhist monks, exotic ethnic cultures, and year-round Spring-like weather. This region has been the cultural battle ground between many of Asia's leading traditions- Hindu beliefs from the west and the Khmer south, Confucian conventions from the northeast, Tibetan, Thai and Burmese Buddhist teachings from the north and southwest. All of these cultures have left a lasting impression on the local people and their unique iconography. Yunnan is a paradise just waiting for Adams's someone to come click the shutter.

Doug Beasley, an accomplished professional photographer for more than 25 years, will lead and mentor this workshop and tour. As founder and director of Vision Quest workshops, Beasley provides photography workshops that emphasize personal expression and creative vision. He also shoots various fine art commercial assignments throughout the world. For more information on this acclaimed photographer, please visit www.douglasbeasley.com.

Join us in a unique opportunity to bring your photography to the next level. Whether you are considering becoming a professional photographer or just interested in how to take better travel photographs, this workshop can help you achieve your goals. We will spend days photographing in exotic locations, as well as engage in group critiques, portfolio reviews and presentations.

*When words become unclear, I shall focus with photographs.
When images become inadequate, I shall be content with silence.*
- Ansel Adams



TRIP DETAILS

March 14 -26, 2018 13 Days \$4,995

Fare includes all domestic travel, all accommodations, meals, workshop fee, and all activities and cultural services. International airfare is also included from Los Angeles International Airport- to China and back.

Maximum Group Size: 16

While the Linden Centre can comfortably accommodate 30 people, this group is limited to 16 to ensure that all guests can receive personal attention from the Centre's teachers and the Lindens. Many workshops will be hands-on, thus the lower number of guests will ensure ample participation.

To ensure that all can stay within the Centre, we highly encourage double occupancy with a loved one, friend, or colleague, but can assist in finding you an appropriate roommate. Requesting a single room for the duration of the trip is \$600 and subject to availability. All rooms are non-smoking.

PROPOSED ITINERARY

Wednesday March 14: Late evening departure from Los Angeles

Guests who decide to book their air travel with us, will depart from LAX in the late hours of the 14th. The flight over the Pacific will cross the International Date Line, thus arriving in China on the morning of the 16th.

Friday March 16: Arrival to the Linden Centre

We will meet you at the Dali Airport (approximately 11:00 a.m.) and travel an hour in a private bus through the fertile plains between Lake Er, China's sixth largest lake, and the 14,000 foot snowcapped Cang Shan mountains, the southeast vestiges of the Himalayas. After checking into the Centre, which is located in the renowned and protected heritage village of Xizhou, we will have an orientation and a local lunch cooked by the Linden Centre's chefs. You will have time to rest and get acquainted with the area. We will take you on an afternoon walk through the village and learn about the architectural traditions of the Bai people. Xizhou village is small and charming, and this initial walking tour will give you confidence to venture out later on your own or with a Linden Centre guide. Doug will present his first workshop today.

Monday March 17: Xizhou Village-The Portrait

Our first full day of Linden Centre activities will include Western and or Chinese breakfast followed by a visit to the morning markets of Xizhou for interaction with the local villagers. These traditionally clad neighbors are incredibly photogenic, as is the myriad of new fruits and vegetables adorning their stands.



Xizhou is filled with antique shops, and even some of the locals find things in the fields and surrounding mountain villages and offer them for sale. Brian and Jeanee, who deal in Asian antiques and arts in Wisconsin, can assist any interested buyers and advise on prices and export restrictions. After a delicious lunch, we will ride a horse cart to the shores of Lake Er to visit the Tongue of the Lake park and a local temple incorporating Xizhou's unique Benzhu religion.

Tuesday March 18: Ancient Town of Dali

Catch the early sunrise (usually around 7:30 a.m.) before breakfast. The morning time is reserved for meeting with Doug and some free time. After lunch we will drive 12 miles south to the ancient walled city of Dali. Dali was the capital of the Nanzhao and Dali Kingdoms which dated from roughly 700-1300 A.D. Marco Polo was sent to Dali by the Mongol ruler, Kublai Khan, to help negotiate a peace treaty between the Yuan Dynasty and the local Bai rulers. The negotiations failed, and Kublai Khan personally invaded Dali with a Mongol army in the 14th century. We will visit the Dali Photography Museum, the only museum in China dedicated to preserving the history of Photography. We will have a drink of tea with the manager who will update us on his latest projects. After lunch in a local restaurant, you will have free time. Dali has a mixed population consisting of local people and those from other parts of China here to experience the good weather, run a lifestyle business and enjoy the slower pace of life. If you need a memento or gifts for friends, you can find it in here. Dali is also a fun place for people watching and photo opportunities.

Wednesday March 19: Zhoucheng Tie-Dye Village

Three miles north of Xizhou is the largest intact ethnic village in Yunnan- Zhoucheng. This historic site is renowned for its tie-dye cloth-making tradition. We will congregate in a traditional courtyard home where three generations of Bai villagers make tie-dye cloth as a living. The three generations will demonstrate and teach us how to do this ancient craft. After a traditional lunch, we will walk the cobbled-stone paths past the Nine Dragon Well temple to Zhoucheng's picturesque town square. The square, which hosts its outdoor market has a Qing Dynasty performance stage and is shaded by centuries' old canopied Banyan trees. We will have ample time to capture the colors of the lively marketplace that unfolds in this timeless setting.

Thursday March 20: Touching the Cang Shan Mountain Range

Today we will take you on a hiking tour of the Cang Mountains. The Cang Mountains are an extension of the Himalayas from the Tibetan Qinghai range. Our journey will take us to a nunnery, a ride on a gondola and hike to reach a beautiful waterfall and pools. We will keep a leisurely pace that will ensure that you will have time to take pictures, perhaps even spotting an elusive red panda. In the late afternoon, we return for dinner and photographic storytelling at the Centre.



Friday March 21: Timeless Iconography: The Three Pagodas, Cooking Together

During the time of the Tang Dynasty, (618-907) Buddhism permeated Dali's culture which is still alive today. The most iconic symbol of this heritage is the Three Pagodas. The largest and middle pagoda is the one of the highest ancient pagodas in China standing at 229 feet. This central pagoda is flanked by two sister towers built approximately a hundred years later during the 10th Century. It was believed that the space on which the pagodas were built held such power only an exceptional edifice would be strong enough to ground it. Behind the pagodas, a reconstructed complex of temples is filled with the sculptures including Guanyin, Dali's most revered deity; Caisheng, the Wealth God; Miluofu, the Buddha of the Future and others. Rebuilt in 2005, the temple complex spans a length of about 1 mile. We will walk up the temple complex at our leisure exploring at our own pace.

For our last meal in Xizhou, we join up at the Linden Commons to have fun together in our cooking school. We will delight you with some new recipes that will tantalize your palette and leave you with recipes to take home to share with your friends and family. We hope you can recapture the flavors of Yunnan home-style cooking.

Saturday March 22: Xizhou to Yunlong

After breakfast, we will travel west across the Cang Mountains and arrive in the ancient salt mining town of Yunlong. The three hour drive will follow the old Burma Road and a tributary of the Mekong before reaching the banks of the Bijiang River and our destination. A beautiful old wood bridge from the Qing Dynasty is just part of the stunning scenery that we view along today's drive. We will check into our modern hotel (for two nights) along the river before hiking up to the famous Tiger Head Temple that overlooks the town.

Sunday March 23: Mountainside with Tigers

After a buffet breakfast, we will head across the narrow valley and drive up to a viewing platform that overlooks the city and its world famous naturally formed Yin Yang symbol. Shaped by the Bijiang River, this site is one of China's most unvisited famous sites, and we will be able photograph it before continuing to Heavenly Lake and its adjacent alpine meadow. Filled with grazing water buffalo, sheep and yak, we will walk among the animals in this pristine meadow, and share lunch at a herder's home.

In the afternoon, we go to the exotic salt mining village of Nuodeng, which means "Mountainside with Tigers" in the local Bai language. Considered by many to be one of China's most authentic old towns, Nuodeng enchants every visitor with endless photo opportunities and charming people. We will explore its meandering stone walkways and eat dinner under banyan trees in its main square sampling Nuodeng's renowned ham cured from the salt mined from these ancient wells.



March 24: Crossing Rivers and the Hump Mountain range

The Flying Tigers, a group of American volunteer pilots from 1940-41, flew the skies above Yunlong and our next destination, Tengchong. In fact, today's journey will take us down to the Mekong River, up again to the city of Baoshan, down to the Salween River and its verdant coffee plantations, and, finally, up and over the Gaoligongshan Mountain range. Like a bactrian camel's back, the mountains of western Yunnan created a navigational challenge known as "The Hump," for the brave pilots who supplied China in its fight against the Japanese.

Along the way, we see one of the first steel bridges that spanned the Mekong. This bridge was shipped from the US piece-by-piece to China during WWII to help connect the Burma Road. Because of the damming of the Mekong, it has been relocated to the old village of Baofeng. We will stop to walk across the bridge before continuing to the Mekong and the drive west. We will not only cross two major Asian rivers today but also one of the world's largest and tallest suspension bridges that spans a tributary of the Salween.

After arriving in Tengchong, we check into the hotel where we stay for two nights. Nestled among the rooms are various outdoor pools with natural hot spring water which are open into the late evening (if you also fancy a work-out they also have a great gym and swimming pool). After dinner featuring local cuisine, which combines traditional Chinese tastes with the exotic flavors of Southeast Asia, we will join the singing, dancing, badminton and general fun that takes place in the public square across from our hotel!

March 25: Volcanos and Flying Tigers

After a bountiful buffet breakfast, we will visit a local museum dedicated to the history of War between China and Japan. Bilingual signs and audio tours bring this period of time alive with an extensive exhibit on the Flying Tigers. Outdoors, we can visit the memorial gardens. After lunch, we will drive one hour north to the village of Jietou - the future site of another Linden Centre- where we can see and document the renovation process! The future Linden Centre is located in an old village dedicated to the making of paper used by the monasteries in Myanmar. We will visit a paper-making education center built from wood and local bricks and a contemporary Paper Museum designed by one of China's leading architects. The Museum's Director, who is bilingual, will give us a learned introduction to the history and importance of paper making in the region.

Our farewell dinner will be back in Tengchong in an old courtyard home. If you desire, take a soak in the hotel's hot springs before your flight back home tomorrow!

March 26: Thank You

Sadly, today our journey ends. After breakfast, we will accompany you to the Tengchong Airport for a noontime flight to Kunming and beyond.



Summary

What: 13 day cultural excursion and photography tour in Yunnan, China.

When: March 14-26, 2018

Who: Anyone who wishes to explore the romanticism and spirituality of the 'true' China. The traveler who hopes to experience many different cultural challenges and capture those differences through photos.

Cost---\$4,995 Includes Round trip international airfare - Outbound LAX to Dali, Inbound Shangri-la to LAX, domestic travel after arrival, all accommodations, most meals unless specified, and all activities and cultural services. Single supplement is an extra \$600. Medical evacuation insurance is included with round trip air ticket and tour price. Trip insurance is recommended and will be offered for purchase separately. All guests should be fit to travel at altitudes of 8,000 feet and should be able to walk at least 3 miles on uneven ground.

Group Size: This tour group is limited to 16 people to ensure that all participants receive more personal attention from the staff. Our minimum group size is 10 people; we reserve the right to cancel any tour if the minimum size is not met. All rooms are non-smoking.

Not included: Guests are responsible for obtaining their own Chinese visa, costs related to alcohol, beverages not included in regular meals, laundry, personal items, souvenirs, and long distance telephone calls. Airfare to and from Los Angeles. Trip interruption and cancellation insurance is not included but highly recommended.

The Lindens have been living in China since 1984. Their twenty-plus years of contacts will ensure that all participants see and experience aspects of China unknown to other visitors. For most of their previous guests, the experiences throughout these regions of China have been among the most memorable in their lives. Please come and enjoy an indigenous travel experience to one of the world's most storied cultures.

How to reserve space for the tour: Contact us for Reservation Form and Contract or visit www.linden-centre.com. Call and/or email us to reserve space and mail your forms and a check for \$500 or cc information. Initial and sign the Tour Contract and Contract Terms and Conditions. Keep a copy for your records.



The Linden Centre Tour Itinerary 2017-2018