



Yúnnán

POP 46 MILLION

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Best Hikes

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Best Natural Sights

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Why Go?

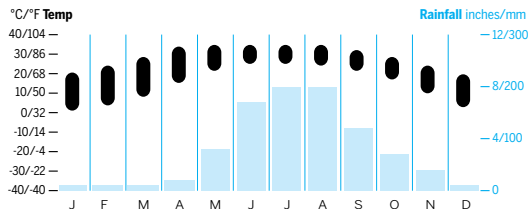
Perhaps more than any other province in China, Yúnnán (云南) boasts the highest degrees of diversity, both in people and landscapes. Its extraordinary sights and peoples have made it one of the trendiest destinations for China's exploding domestic tourist industry.

More than half of the country's ethnic minority groups reside here, providing an unexpected glimpse into China's mix of humanity. Then there's the hugely varied splendour of the land – dense jungle sliced by the Mekong River in the south, soul-recharging glimpses of the sun over rice terraces in the southeastern regions, and snow-capped mountains as you edge towards Tibet.

With everything from laid-back villages and spa resorts to multiday mountain treks and excellent cycling routes, Yúnnán appeals to all tastes. Transportation links are good so getting around is a breeze but you'll need time to see it all – whatever time you've set aside for Yúnnán, double it.

When to Go

Kūnmíng



Apr Prepare to get soaked in Xīshuāngbǎnnà during the Dai water-splashing festival.

Jul & Aug Head for the mountains and glaciers around Dégīn.

Dec & Jan Escape China's winter chill and head for Kūnmíng, the city of eternal spring.



Yúnnán Highlights

- 1 Gaze out over the magical **Yuányáng Rice Terraces** (p648)
- 2 Test your legs and lungs trekking **Tiger Leaping Gorge** (p667)
- 3 Marvel at the peaks (and glacier) around **Déqín** (p677)
- 4 Steal a taste of Tibet in the narrow alleys and temples of **Shangri-la's old town** (p671)
- 5 Look for elephants and hike to minority villages in the jungle of **Xishuāngbǎnnà** (p687)
- 6 Kick back in the cafes and bars of **Dàlǐ** (p651)
- 7 Laze around the shores of stunning **Lǔgǔ Lake** (p670)
- 8 See how time has stood still in the former Tea-Horse Trail oasis of **Shāxī** (p657)
- 9 Get way off the map in the remote **Nù Jiāng Valley** (p679)
- 10 Check out the classic architecture in **Jiànshuǐ** (p646)