



# China



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## PLAN YOUR TRIP

Welcome to China .....	6
China Map .....	8
China's Top 30 .....	10
Need to Know .....	26
First Time China .....	28
If You Like .....	30
Month by Month .....	34
Itineraries .....	38
Eat & Drink Like a Local .....	47
Cruising the Yangzi ....	51
Regions at a Glance....	57

## ON THE ROAD

<b>BĚIJĬNG</b> .....	64
<b>Around Běijīng</b> .....	120
Ming Tombs .....	120
Chuāndìxià .....	122
Wǎnpíng Town .....	123
<b>THE GREAT WALL</b> .....	124
Great Wall History .....	124
Visiting the Wall .....	125
Mùtiányù .....	126
Gǔběikǒu .....	127
Jiànkǒu .....	127
Zhuàngdàokǒu .....	128
Jīnshānlíng .....	129
Huánguā Chéng .....	130
Bādǎlíng .....	132

<b>TIĀNJĪN &amp; HÉBĚI</b> .....	133
<b>Tiānjīn</b> .....	135
<b>Héběi</b> .....	142
Shíjiāzhuāng .....	142
Zhèngdìng .....	145
Yújiācūn .....	147
Chéngdé .....	147
Shānhǎiguān .....	152
Jīmíngyì .....	155

<b>LIÁONÍNG</b> .....	157
Dàlián .....	159
Dāndōng .....	165
Shěnyáng .....	169
Xīngchéng .....	173

<b>JÍLÍN</b> .....	175
Chángbái Shān .....	177
Yánjī .....	180
Jí'ān .....	181
Běidáhú Ski Resort .....	183
Chángchūn .....	183

<b>HĒILÓNGJIĀNG</b> ...	186
Harbin .....	188
Mùdānjiāng .....	195
Jīngpò Lake .....	195

Wúdàlián Chí .....	197
Mòhé .....	199

<b>SHĀNDŌNG</b> .....	201
Jǐ'nán .....	203
Zhūjiāyù .....	207
Tàir'ān .....	207
Tài Shān .....	211
Qūfù .....	214
Zōuchéng .....	219
Qīngdǎo .....	220
Láo Shān .....	229
Yántái .....	231
Pénglái .....	234

<b>JIĀNGSŪ</b> .....	236
Nánjīng .....	238
Sūzhōu .....	250
Mùdú .....	258
Tónglǐ .....	259
Lùzhí .....	260
Zhōuzhuāng .....	261

<b>ZHÈJIĀNG</b> .....	263
Hángzhōu .....	265
Mògānshān .....	276
Wúzhèn .....	277
Nánxún .....	279
Xīnyè .....	281
Zhūgē .....	281
Sìpíng .....	283
Jīnhuá .....	283
Pǔtuóshān .....	284
Níngbō .....	288
Shàoxīng .....	289

<b>SHÀNGHǎI</b> .....	290
<b>Around Shanghai</b> .....	336
Zhūjiājiǎo .....	336

<b>FÚJIÀN</b> .....	337
Xiàmén .....	339
Gǔlàng Yǔ .....	344
Fújiàn Tǔlóu .....	347



LǐJIĀNG P693



BĚIJĬNG P64

# Contents

Quánzhōu .....	350
Around Quánzhōu .....	354
Fúzhōu .....	355
Wǔyí Shān .....	356

## SHĀNXÍ ..... 358

Dàtóng .....	360
Around Dàtóng .....	363
Wútái Shān .....	365
Tàiyuán .....	368
Around Tàiyuán .....	371
Píngyáo .....	371
Around Píngyáo .....	375
Qíkǒu .....	377
Jinchéng .....	378
Around Jinchéng .....	378

## SHAANXI ..... 379

Xī'ān .....	381
Around Xī'ān .....	391
Huá Shān .....	394
Hánchéng .....	397
Yúlín .....	398

## ĀNHUÍ ..... 400

Tūnxī .....	402
Xidi .....	406
Hóngcūn .....	407
Píngshān .....	408
Shèxiàn .....	409
Huángshān .....	410
Jiǔhuá Shān .....	415
Héféi .....	418

## HÉNÁN ..... 420

Zhèngzhōu .....	422
Nánjiēcūn .....	425
Sōng Shān & Dēngfēng .....	425
Luòyáng .....	428
Around Luòyáng .....	431
Guōliàngcūn .....	433
Kāifēng .....	434

Zhūxiān Zhèn .....	439
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## HÚBĚI ..... 440

Wǔhàn .....	442
Jīngzhōu .....	447
Around Jīngzhōu .....	448
Wǔdāng Shān .....	448
Shénnóngjià .....	451
Yíchāng .....	452

## JIĀNGXÍ ..... 454

Nánchāng .....	456
Around Nánchāng .....	459
Lúshān .....	459
Jīngdézhèn .....	460
Wùyuan .....	463
Sānqīng Shān .....	467
Lóngfǔ Shān .....	468
Lóngnán .....	470

## HÚNÁN ..... 471

Chángshā .....	473
Sháoshān .....	476
Héng Shān .....	478
Zhāngjiājiè .....	480
Déhāng .....	485
Fènghuáng .....	486
Hóngjiāng Old Town .....	489
Fúróng Zhèn .....	490

## HONG KONG ..... 499

## MACAU ..... 536

## GUǎNGDŌNG ..... 557

Guǎngzhōu .....	559
Around Guǎngzhōu .....	571
Fóshān .....	571
Kaiping .....	572
Yángjiāng .....	576
Zhàolíng .....	577
Around Zhàolíng .....	579
Qīngyuǎn .....	580

Nánlíng National Forest Park .....	580
Shēnzhèn .....	581
Zhūhǎi .....	585
Cháozhōu .....	587
Around Cháozhōu .....	590
Méizhōu .....	590
Dàbù .....	592
Cháoyáng Old Town .....	592
Bǎihóu Old Town .....	593
Shàntóu .....	593

## HǎINÁN ..... 594

### Hǎikǒu ..... 596

### Around Hǎikǒu ..... 599

### Central Highlands .... 601

### Bǎotíng ..... 601

### The East Coast ..... 602

Bó'áo .....	602
Shíméi Bay & Rì Yuè Bay .....	605
Sǎnyà (Dàdōnghǎi) .....	605
Xínglóng .....	609

## GUǎNGXÍ ..... 610

Guilín .....	612
Around Guilín .....	616
Ziyuán .....	617
Lóngjǐ Rice Terraces .....	617
Sānjiāng .....	619
Yángshuò .....	621
Liúgōng .....	626
Xíngpíng .....	627
Huángyáo .....	627
Nánníng .....	628
Yángméi .....	631
Běihǎi .....	631
Weizhōu Island .....	634
Huashān Cliff Murals .....	634
Píngxiáng .....	635
Détian Waterfall .....	636
Tónglíng Grand Canyon .....	636
Lèyè .....	636

## ON THE ROAD

### GUÌZHŌU ..... 638

#### Central Guizhōu ..... 640

Guiyáng ..... 640

Qīngyán ..... 643

#### Eastern Guizhōu ..... 644

Kǎilǐ ..... 644

Bāshā ..... 646

Léishān ..... 647

Lónglǐ ..... 647

Xījiāng ..... 647

Zhàoxīng ..... 648

Zhènyuǎn ..... 649

Around Zhènyuǎn ..... 651

#### Western Guizhōu ..... 652

Ānshùn ..... 652

Around Ānshùn ..... 654

Wēining ..... 656

#### Northern Guizhōu ..... 657

Chishuǐ ..... 657

### YÚNNÁN ..... 666

#### Central Yunnan ..... 668

Kūnmíng ..... 669

Around Kūnmíng ..... 676

Shílín ..... 677

Hēijīng ..... 678

Jiànshuǐ ..... 678

Yuányáng

Rice Terraces ..... 680

Xiàguān ..... 682

Wēishān ..... 683

Dàilǐ ..... 684

Ērhǎi Lake ..... 688

Cāng Shān ..... 689

Xīzhōu ..... 690

Nuòdèng ..... 690

Shāxī ..... 691

#### Northwest Yunnan ..... 693

Lǐjiāng ..... 693

Báishā ..... 700

Shùhé Old Town ..... 701

Tiger Leaping Gorge ..... 701

Lúgū Lake ..... 704

Shangri-la ..... 706



HONG KONG P499

Around Shangri-la ..... 710

Déqín & Kawa Karpo .... 711

#### Nù Jiāng Valley ..... 713

Liùkù ..... 714

Fúgòng ..... 714

Bǐngzhōngluò ..... 715

Dúlóng Valley ..... 715

#### Bǎoshān Region ..... 716

Téngchōng County ..... 716

#### Déhóng Prefecture ... 718

Ruili ..... 719

Around Ruili ..... 721

#### Xīshuāngbǎnnà

Region ..... 722

Jǐnghóng ..... 723

Around Jǐnghóng ..... 727

### SÌCHUĀN ..... 730

#### Central Sichuān ..... 734

Chéngdū ..... 734

#### Around Chéngdū ..... 744

Dǔjiāngyàn ..... 744

Four Sisters Mountain .. 745

Éméi Shān ..... 746

Lè Shān ..... 750

Liǔjiāng ..... 752

Yǎ'ān ..... 753

#### Southern Sichuān ... 754

Zìgòng ..... 754

Yíbīn ..... 755

Bamboo Sea ..... 756

#### Western Sichuān ..... 757

Kāngdìng ..... 757

Northern Garzê

Prefecture ..... 761

Southern Garzê

Prefecture ..... 768

#### Northern Sichuān ..... 773

The Road to Gānsù ..... 773

Sōngpǎn ..... 773

Jiǔzhàigōu

National Park ..... 777

Lángzhōng ..... 780

Guǎngyuán ..... 781

### CHÓNGQÌNG ..... 782

Chóngqing City ..... 784

Dàzú Buddhist Caves ... 795

Láitān ..... 796

Zhōngshān ..... 797

Wǔlóng ..... 797

Ānjū Ancient Town .... 798

### XĪNJIĀNG ..... 799

#### Central Xinjiang ..... 802

Ūrūmqi ..... 802

Tiān Chí ..... 807

Turpan ..... 808

Around Turpan ..... 810

Hāmì ..... 811

Kuqa ..... 812

# Contents

## UNDERSTAND

### Southwest Xīnjiāng – Kashgaria . . . . . 814

Kashgar . . . . . 814  
Karakoram Highway . . . . . 819

### Southern Silk Road . . . . . 822

Yengisar . . . . . 823  
Charklik . . . . . 823  
Cherchen . . . . . 823  
Hotan . . . . . 824  
Yarkand . . . . . 827  
Karghilik . . . . . 827

### Northern Xīnjiāng . . . . . 828

Bù'ěrjīn . . . . . 828  
Kanas Lake . . . . . 829  
Yīníng . . . . . 830  
Sayram Lake . . . . . 831

### GĀNSÙ . . . . . 832

#### Lánzhōu . . . . . 834

#### Southern Gānsù . . . . . 839

Xiàhé . . . . . 839  
Around Xiàhé . . . . . 844  
Hézuò . . . . . 844  
Lángmùsì . . . . . 845

#### Héxī Corridor . . . . . 848

Wūwēi . . . . . 848  
Around Wūwēi . . . . . 849  
Zhāngyè . . . . . 849  
Around Zhāngyè . . . . . 851  
Jiāyùguān . . . . . 852  
Dūnhuáng . . . . . 855  
Around Dūnhuáng . . . . . 858

#### Eastern Gānsù . . . . . 861

Tiānshuǐ . . . . . 861  
Around Tiānshuǐ . . . . . 862  
Píngliáng . . . . . 863

### NÍNGXIÀ . . . . . 864

Yínchuān . . . . . 866  
Hélán Shān . . . . . 870  
Zhōngwèi . . . . . 870  
Gùyuan . . . . . 872  
Tóngxīn . . . . . 874

### INNER MONGOLIA . . . . . 875

Hohhot . . . . . 877  
Shàngdū . . . . . 882  
Bāotóu . . . . . 883  
Genghis Khan Mausoleum . . . . . 884  
Hǎilǎ'ěr . . . . . 884  
Ēnhé . . . . . 886  
Mǎnzhōulǐ . . . . . 886  
Shì Wěi . . . . . 887

### QĪNGHǎI . . . . . 891

Xīníng . . . . . 893  
Hùzhù Běishān Forest National Park . . . . . 901  
Tónggrén . . . . . 901  
Guidé . . . . . 903  
Yùshù . . . . . 904  
Princess Wencheng Temple . . . . . 905  
Nangchen . . . . . 906  
Golmud . . . . . 907  
Mǎduō . . . . . 908

### TIBET . . . . . 909

#### Lhasa . . . . . 915

#### Around Lhasa . . . . . 922

Drepung Monastery . . . . . 922  
Ganden Monastery . . . . . 922  
Sera Monastery . . . . . 923

#### Ü . . . . . 924

Samye Monastery . . . . . 924

#### Southern Ngari . . . . . 924

Saga . . . . . 924

#### Tsang . . . . . 925

Gyantse . . . . . 925  
Shigatse . . . . . 926  
Lhatse . . . . . 929

Sakya . . . . . 929

Everest Base Camp . . . . . 929

Tingri . . . . . 930

#### Far West Ngari . . . . . 930

Darchen & Mt Kailash . . . . . 931  
Lake Manasarovar . . . . . 932

China Today . . . . . 934

History . . . . . 936

People of China . . . . . 954

Religion & Philosophy . . . . . 958

Chinese Cuisine . . . . . 965

Arts & Architecture . . . . . 973

China's Landscapes . . . . . 985

Martial Arts of China . . . . . 992

## SURVIVAL GUIDE

Directory A–Z . . . . . 996

Transport . . . . . 1009

China by Train . . . . . 1015

Health . . . . . 1020

Language . . . . . 1026

Index . . . . . 1040

Map Legend . . . . . 1053

## SPECIAL FEATURES

Off the Beaten Track Map . . . . . 42

Forbidden City Walking Tour . . . . . 72

Hútòng Walking Tour . . . . . 83

Guide to the Bund . . . . . 300

Essential China . . . . . 491

Hong Kong Walking Tour . . . . . 518

# Itineraries



4  
WEEKS

## Northern Tour

China's richest seam of historic antiquity runs through rugged, dry north China. This route takes in the north's signature sights, all the way from Běijīng and the Great Wall via the Terracotta Warriors to the Silk Road of the distant northwest.

**Běijīng** is fundamental to this tour, so give yourself five days to do the Forbidden City, size up the Great Wall, the Summer Palace and and the city's *hútòng* (narrow alleyways). The splendour of the **Yúngāng Caves** outside the rebuilt ancient city of Dàtóng should put you in a Buddhist mood, sharpened by a few nights on monastic **Wútái Shān**. Make a three-day stopover in **Píngyáo**, an age-old walled town, followed by the historic walled city of **Kāifēng** in Hénán, once the traditional home of China's small community of Chinese Jews; move on to **Luòyáng** and the Buddhist spectacle of the Lóngmén Caves and the Shàolín Temple, also within reach. Four days' sightseeing in **Xī'ān** brings you face-to-face with the Army of Terracotta Warriors and gives you time for the Taoist mountain of **Huà Shān**. Xī'ān traditionally marked the start of the Silk Road which you can follow through Gānsù province all the way to the oasis town of **Dūnhuáng**, and beyond.

4  
WEEKS

## Yangzi River Tour

This epic tour follows the astonishingly long Yangzi river, from the foothills of the Himalayas to the bustling boom town of Shànghǎi.

After exploring north Yúnnán's ancient Naxi town of **Lǐjiāng**, pick up the trail of the Jinshā River (Gold Sand River, which spills down from Tibet and swells into the Yangzi River) on a breathtaking multiday hike along **Tiger Leaping Gorge**. Rest your worn-out legs before discovering the scattered villages and old towns around Lǐjiāng, including **Shāxī** and **Shùhé** on the old Tea Horse Road, and being blown away by the magnificent views of Yùnlóng Xuěshān. Also consider (warmer months only) a trip from Lǐjiāng north-east towards west Sīchuān and the gorgeous **Lúgū Lake** on the provincial border, where you can spend several days unwinding by the lakeside. During the winter months this entire area is snowbound, so you may have to fly on from Lǐjiāng. Daily minibuses do the seven-hour run from Lúgū Hú to **Xīchāng** in Sīchuān, from where you can reach **Yíbin** and then **Chóngqīng**; alternatively, return to Lǐjiāng to fly to Chóngqīng, home of the spicy and searing Chóngqīng hotpot and gateway to the Three Gorges. Detour by bus to the stunning landscapes and natural beauty of **Chishuǐ** on the Guǐzhōu border to relax, unwind and explore the region before returning by bus to urban Chóngqīng. You'll need around three days in Chóngqīng for the sights in town and for a journey to the Buddhist Caves at **Dàzú** and a trip to the Yangzi River village of **Sōnggǎi** to keep a perspective on historic, rural China. Then hop on a cruise vessel or passenger boat (or even a bus followed by hydrofoil) to **Yíchāng** in Húběi through the magnificent **Three Gorges**. Journey from Yíchāng to the Yangzi River city of **Wúhàn** via the walled town of **Jīngzhōu**, where it's worth spending the night. After two days in Wúhàn, jump on a bus to **Lúshān** in Jiāngxī province, from where you can reach **Nánjīng** or make your way to **Huáng Shān** in the Yangzi River province of Ānhuī. Alternatively, travel direct to Nánjīng and thread your way to **Shànghǎi** via a delightful string of canal towns – Sūzhōu, Tónglǐ, Lùzhí and Zhūjiājāo. Explore Shànghǎi and consider launching yourself into the East-Southwest Rural Tour (p44).



## Silk Road Tour

This breathtaking journey takes you from the must-see Terracotta Warriors via the Buddhist heritage of Gānsù to the vast desert distances of Xīnjiāng and far-flung Kashgar.

From the southernmost extents of the Silk Road at **Xī'ān**, discover one of imperial China's most iconic remains at the Army of Terracotta Warriors and, for a major workout, climb the precipitous Taoist mountain of **Huá Shān** – just don't look down. Back in Xī'ān, explore the Muslim Quarter to feast on local Hui specialties – one of the culinary high points of China travel – and climb atop the imposing city walls. Hop aboard the train to **Lánzhōu** but get off in southeast Gānsù at **Tiānshuǐ** for the remarkable Buddhist grottoes at verdant Mǎijī Shān. From Lánzhōu you have the option to disengage temporarily from the Silk Road to ramble along the fringes of the Tibetan world in the Buddhist monastic settlements of **Xiàhé** and **Lángmùsì**. The Hèxī Corridor draws you on to the ancient Great Wall outpost of **Jiāyùguān**, via the Silk Road stop-over town of **Wǔwēi**, and the Great Buddha Temple with its outsize effigy of a reclining Sakyamuni in **Zhāngyè**. Stand on the wind-blasted ramparts of Jiāyùguān Fort, the last major stronghold of imperial China, and tramp alongside westerly remnants of the Great Wall. The delightful oasis outpost of **Dūnhuáng** is one of China's tidiest and most pleasant towns, with the mighty sand dunes of the Singing Sands Mountains pushing up from the south, a scattered array of sights in the surrounding desert and some excellent food. The town is also the hopping-off point for China's splendid hoard of Buddhist art, the spellbinding Mògāo Grottoes. From Dūnhuáng you can access the mighty northwestern Uighur province of Xīnjiāng via the melon town of **Hāmì** before continuing to **Turpan** and **Ürümqi**; consider also spending the night in a yurt or camping on the shores of mountainous **Tiān Chí**. Thread your way through a string of Silk Road towns by rail to the Central Asian outpost of **Kashgar**, or reach the distant Uighur town via the Marco Polo-journeyed southern Silk Road along the cusp of the Taklamakan Desert. From Kashgar, hatch exciting plans to conquer the Karakoram Hwy or, in the other direction, work out how to get back into China proper.



4  
WEEKS

## Coastal China

This coastal tour journeys through China's largest collection of concession-era heritage as well as big-ticket port towns, all set to a sublime maritime backdrop.

From **Běijīng**, zip to **Tiānjīn** en route to the Ming dynasty garrison town of **Shānhǎiguān** on the edge of Manchuria. Beyond the ancient port town of **Xīngchéng** and around the coast lies urbane **Dàlián** and trips to the North Korean border at **Dāndōng**, or the ferry crossing to **Yántái** en route to a two-day sojourn around breezy **Qīngdǎo**. Cashing in on dashing **Shànghǎi** is crucial – allow five to six days to tick off surrounding sights, including a trip to the cultured former southern Song dynasty capital of **Hángzhōu**. Work your way south around the coast to **Xiàmén** (Amoy) to capture some of the magic of **Gǔlàng Yǔ**, using the port town as a base to explore the roundhouses around **Yǒngdīng**. Conclude the tour feasting on dim sum and getting in step with the rhythms of **Hong Kong** before surrendering to the Portuguese lilt of **Macau**, or go further along the coast to the sleepy port town of **Běihǎi** in Guǎngxī and bounce over the sea in a boat to the volcanic outpost of **Wéizhōu Island**.

2  
WEEKS

## Big Ticket Tour

Tick off the top sights on this varied tour that covers everything from antiquity to some of China's most awesome landscapes and the modern allure of Hong Kong.

Give yourself four days for **Běijīng**'s mandatory highlights before zipping by high-speed G-class train across north China to **Xī'ān** to inspect the Terracotta Warriors, walk around the city's formidable Ming dynasty walls and climb the granite peaks of Taoist **Huá Shān**. Then climb aboard the overnight high-speed sleeper, which pulls into pulsating **Shànghǎi** before 8am. After three days of sightseeing, museum-going, shopping and sizing up the sizzling skyscrapers of Pūdōng, detour for a day to the former southern Song dynasty capital of **Hángzhōu**, before flying from either Hángzhōu or Shànghǎi to **Gūilín** for some of China's most serene and ageless panoramas, the breathtaking karst landscapes of **Yángshuò**. For a fitting and natural conclusion to your journey, fly straight from Guilín to **Hong Kong**, or to Guǎngzhōu or Shēnzhèn to make your way south across the border to the former British territory. Squeeze in a day for exploring **Macau** to add a Portuguese complexion to your voyage.

## Off the Beaten Track

### BĪNGLÍNG SÌ

Take a boat to this remote Silk Road temple where a 27m-high Buddha is carved into a cliffside above the turquoise waters of Liújiāxiá Reservoir. (p837)

### KHARA KHOTO

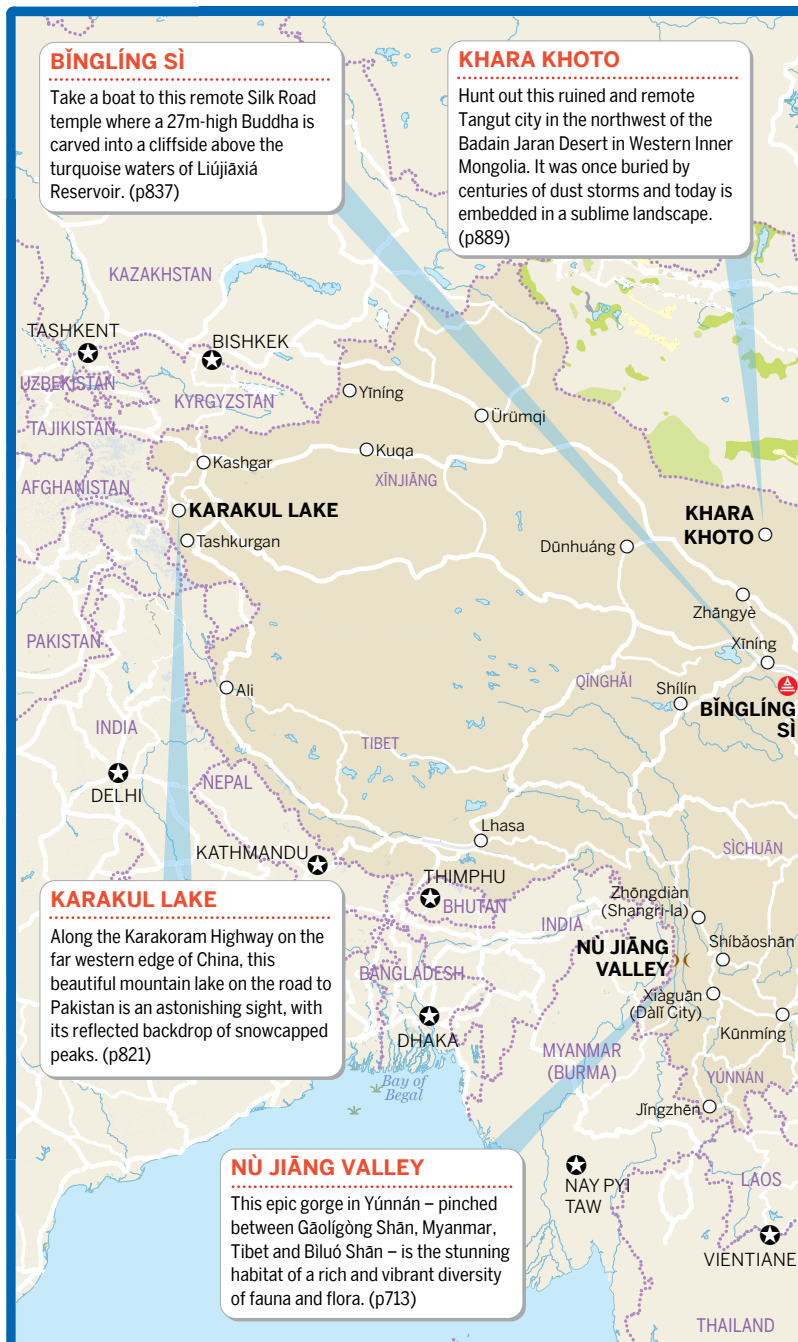
Hunt out this ruined and remote Tangut city in the northwest of the Badain Jaran Desert in Western Inner Mongolia. It was once buried by centuries of dust storms and today is embedded in a sublime landscape. (p889)

### KARAKUL LAKE

Along the Karakoram Highway on the far western edge of China, this beautiful mountain lake on the road to Pakistan is an astonishing sight, with its reflected backdrop of snowcapped peaks. (p821)

### NŮ JIǎNG VALLEY

This epic gorge in Yúnnán – pinched between Gǎolígǒng Shān, Myanmar, Tibet and Bìluó Shān – is the stunning habitat of a rich and vibrant diversity of fauna and flora. (p713)



A short journey by bus from Dàtóng brings you to the ruined spire of the 19th-century Holy Mother Church, standing sublimely next to a dilapidated stretch of the Great Wall that reaches off into the Shānxī hills beyond. (p364)

Scattered outside Jī'an, the ruins, stone pyramids and tombs of the ancient Korean Koguryo kingdom dot a striking landscape of remote fields, terraces and green hills. (p181)

## CĀNGZHŌU'S IRON LION

Standing proud but battered (and missing the Buddhist statue that once rode it), Cangzhōu's Iron Lion – China's oldest and largest cast-iron sculpture – was devised to calm the seas in a distant corner of Héběi province. (p146)

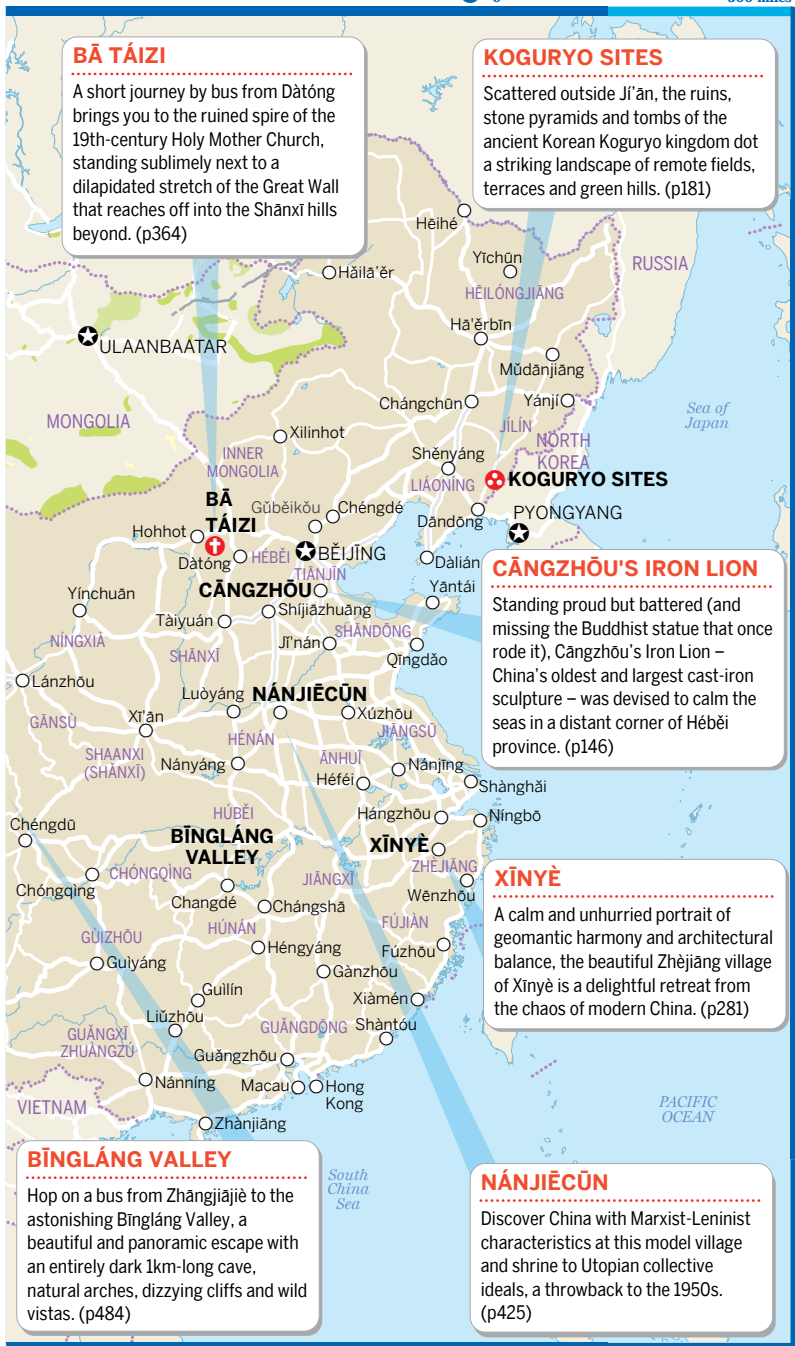
XĪNYÈ

A calm and unhurried portrait of geomantic harmony and architectural balance, the beautiful Zhèjiāng village of Xīnyè is a delightful retreat from the chaos of modern China. (p281)

Hop on a bus from Zhāngjiājì to the astonishing Bīngláng Valley, a beautiful and panoramic escape with an entirely dark 1km-long cave, natural arches, dizzying cliffs and wild vistas. (p484)

NÁNJIĒCŪN

Discover China with Marxist-Leninist characteristics at this model village and shrine to Utopian collective ideals, a throwback to the 1950s. (p425)



2  
WEEKS

## East-Southwest Rural Tour

Flee the big cities and go rural on this tour that takes you through some of China's best-looking villages and water towns as well as choice scenic areas and sublime panoramas.

From **Shanghai**, head to **Zhujiajiao** for its canalside charms, followed by the pretty water towns and villages of Jiangsu and north Zhejiang – including **Tongli**, **Luzhi** and **Wuzhen**. From either **Suzhou** or **Hangzhou**, bus it to **Tunxi** in Anhui province to spend several days exploring the delightful ancient Huizhou villages of Hongcun, Xidi in **Yixian** and **Shexian** and to scale gorgeous Huang Shan. Hop on a bus again to cross the border to Jiangxi province for two or three days' fabulous hiking from village to village in the gorgeous rural landscape around **Wuyuan**. Take the bus to **Nanchang** and then a high-speed train to **Changsha**, the Hunan provincial capital, from where you can fly or take the train to the stunning karst panoramas of **Zhongjiajie**. Jump on a bus to the funky rivertown of **Fenghuang**, from where it's a hop, skip, and a bus-then-train jump via Huailu through the backdoor into Guizhou and the scenic riverside town of **Zhenyuan**. **Kaili** and the rest of the province lies beyond.

3  
WEEKS

## Southwest China

Embark on this tour of China's southwest for vibrant ethnic colour, some outstanding landscapes, an array of ancient towns and villages, all the bubbly magic of Hong Kong and a profusion of hiking opportunities around China's southwest borders.

Four days' wining and dining in **Hong Kong** and **Macau** should whet your appetite, before you head inland to **Guilin** and three days' immersion in the dreamy karst landscape of **Yangshuo**. Join a local tour from Yangshuo to delightful **Huangyao** before backtracking to Guilin and journeying north to the **Lóngjǐ Rice Terraces** and the wind-and-rain bridges and ethnic hues of **Sānjiāng**. Creep over the border to explore the minority-rich villages of eastern Guizhou, including **Lónglǐ**, **Bāshā** and **Zhàoxīng**, before continuing to **Guiyang** and on by train to the capital of Yunnan province, **Kūnmíng**. Spend a few days in Kūnmíng before heading north to explore **Dàlǐ**, **Lǐjiāng** and **Shangri-la**. Consider exploring the border area with Sichuan at the remote **Lúgǔ Hú**, from where you can enter Sichuan. In the other direction, the fertile **Xīshuāngbǎnnà** region lies in the deep south of the province, where Yunnan's Southeast Asian virtues comes to the fore.

10  
DAYS

## Qīnghǎi to Sìchuān

An epic journey along the outer fringes of Han China, through a region deeply coloured with Tibetan culture, this colossal, rough-and-ready journey draws you through stunning landscapes from Xīníng to Chéngdū.

Do this trip only in summer (it's too cold even in spring); take cash and lots of food with you (you can't change money). Prepare also for bus breakdowns, simple accommodation and high altitudes. The bus journey from **Xīníng** to **Sharda** in the former Tibetan kingdom of Nangchen, where monasteries and dramatic scenery await, takes 20 to 24 hours. From Sharda you can continue to Sìchuān by looping back to the Tibetan trading town of **Yùshù**. You can also fly direct (or bus it) from Xīníng to Yùshù to continue to Sìchuān from there. Buses from Yùshù run through some stunning scenery to **Mánigāngē** (with a fantastic side trip to **Dégé** and **Yarchen Gar**), the Tibetan town of **Gānzī** (check ahead to see it's open) and on past **Tǎgōng** to **Kāngdīng** along the Sìchuān–Tibet Hwy, from where you can head west towards Tibet or east to **Chéngdū**. Direct buses also run from Yùshù to Chéngdū.

3  
WEEKS

## Tibet Fringes Tour

An arduous undertaking at the best of times, Tibet is a land periodically inaccessible to foreigners. This tour immerses you in more accessible areas around its long edges.

Only undertake the tour in the warmer summer months; other times can be dangerous. From **Lánzhōu** in Gānsù province, head southwest to **Lángmùsī** and **Xiàhé**, before passing awesome scenery by bus or taxi into **Qīnghǎi** via the monastery town of **Tónggrén**. Pick up a *thangka* (Tibetan sacred art) and continue by bus to **Xīníng**, then fly to **Chéngdū** in Sìchuān and take the bus to **Kāngdīng**, or fly to Kāngdīng via Chéngdū. The long, overland bus route from Xīníng to Kāngdīng is also possible via Yùshù in south Qīnghǎi. (Allow an extra week if taking this route.) From Kāngdīng you can journey by bus west to the stupendous scenery around **Lǐtáng**, with some breathtaking hiking opportunities, or travel south by minivan to **Xiāngchéng** and on to **Shangri-la** and the gorgeous Tibetan region of north Yúnnán. From Shangri-la take a bus to high-altitude **Dégqīn**, enveloped in gorgeous mountain scenery.



**10 DAYS**

## Northeast Tour

Hop aboard this tour through the less-visited northeast for raw scenic beauty, borderland towns, modern, dapper towns and intriguing traces of imperial Manchurian heritage.

Start in **Běijīng**, then spend a few days exploring the historic walled coastal towns of **Shānhǎiguān** and **Xīngchéng** en route to stylish **Dàlián**. You'll need several days for Dàlián's sights, including the historic port of **Lǔshùn**. Border watchers will be keen to get to **Dāndōng**, on the border with North Korea. Take a boat tour along the Yālù River, dine on North Korean food and visit Tiger Mountain Great Wall. Consider a trip by rail and bus to **Heaven Lake** in **Chángbái Shān** (the largest nature reserve in China) via **Tōnghuà**. Straddling the North Korea border, the volcanic lake is a stunning sight (only accessible mid-June to September). Alternatively, take the train to **Shěnyáng** and visit its Qing dynasty Imperial Palace and the tomb of Huang Taiji, founder of the Qing dynasty. Hop on a bus or a train to **Harbin** to wonder at the city's Russian and Jewish ancestry. If you've really picked up momentum and can't stop, carry on to China's 'North Pole Village' to try to catch the aurora borealis in **Mòhé** or to bask in the summer's midnight sun.



**1 WEEK**

## Běijīng to Mongolia

For a taste of Inner Mongolia's ranging grasslands, esoteric temples, imperial ruins and Russian borderland regions, head towards Mongolia on this one-week tour.

After sightseeing, wining and dining in **Běijīng**, jump aboard a train to **Hohhot** in Inner Mongolia where a late-July arrival should coincide with the Naadam festivities at Gegental to the north, when the grasslands are turning green. Explore Hohhot's lamaseries and temples and make a trip to the grasslands outside town for a taste of the epic Inner Mongolian prairie. From Hohhot you can either take the train direct to Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia; or an alternative route to Mongolia is to first journey by bus from Hohhot to **Zhènlánqí** and **Shàngdū** – vanished site of Kublai Khan's celebrated palace at Xanadu – and then on to **Hǎilǎ'ěr** in the far north of Inner Mongolia, towards the border with Mongolia and Russia. The grasslands outside Hǎilǎ'ěr are a real highlight, so consider spending the night under the stars in a yurt on the prairie. If you are Russia-bound, you can enter the country via the nearby trading town of **Mǎnzhōulǐ** on the border. Alternatively, jump aboard a flight to **Chóibalsan** in eastern Mongolia.

# Map Legend

## Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

## Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

## Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

## Eating

- Eating

## Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

## Entertainment

- Entertainment

## Shopping

- Shopping

## Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

## Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

## Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

## Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro/MRT/MTR station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Skytrain/Subway station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

## Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

## Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

## Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

## Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

*Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book*



### **Bradley Mayhew**

**Tibet**

Bradley has been writing guidebooks for 20 years now. He started travelling while studying Chinese at Oxford University, and has since focused his expertise on China, Tibet, the Himalaya and Central Asia. He is the co-author of Lonely Planet guides to Tibet, Nepal, Trekking in the Nepal Himalaya, Bhutan, Central Asia and many others. Bradley has also fronted two TV series for Arte and SWR, one retracing the route of Marco Polo via Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia and China, and the other trekking Europe's 10 most scenic long-distance trails.



### **Rebecca Milner**

**Anhui, Zhèjiāng, Hàinán**

California born and longtime Tokyo-resident (14 years and counting!), Rebecca has co-written Lonely Planet guides to Tokyo, Japan, Korea and China. Her freelance writing covering travel, food and culture has been published in the *Guardian*, the *Independent*, the *Sunday Times Travel Magazine*, the *Japan Times* and more. After spending the better part of her twenties working to travel – doing odd jobs in Tokyo to make money so she could spend months at a time backpacking around Asia – Rebecca was fortunate enough to turn the tables in 2010, joining the Lonely Planet team of freelance writers.



### **Kate Morgan**

**Shànghǎi**

Having lived and travelled extensively in North Asia, Kate was very keen for the chance to get back to explore Shànghǎi. Days were spent shooting up to the top of Pǔdōng skyscrapers, hunting out the best boutiques in the French Concession, tracing Jewish history in Hóngkǒu, taste-testing oolong tea and dining on dump-lings...not a bad day's work. Kate has worked for Lonely Planet for over a decade now on destinations including Japan, India, Melbourne and Zimbabwe.



### **Christopher Pitts**

**Hénán, Héběi, Tiānjīn**

Chris started off his university years studying classical Chinese poetry before a week in 1990s Shànghǎi (en route to school in Kūnmíng) abruptly changed his focus to the idiosyncracies of modern China. Several years in Asia memorising Chinese characters got him hooked, and he returns whenever he can to immerse himself in what is surely one of the world's most fascinating languages. He's written for Lonely Planet China since 2004. Visit him online at [www.christopherpitts.net](http://www.christopherpitts.net).



### **Tom Spurling**

**Fújiàn, Húběi, Jiāngxī, Guizhōu**

Tom is an Australian guidebook author and high school teacher currently based in Hong Kong in search of the long-lost expatriate package. He's worked on 13 Lonely Planet titles, including *Japan*, *China*, *Central America*, *Turkey*, *India*, *South Africa* and *Australia*. When not chasing his tail, he enjoys tucking it under his crossed legs for minutes on end.



### **Phillip Tang**

**Guǎngdōng, Hēilóngjiāng, Liáoníng, Jílín**

Phillip grew up on typically Australian pho and fish'n'chips. A degree in Latin-American and Chinese cultures launched him into travel and writing about it for Lonely Planet's *Canada*, *China*, *Japan*, *Korea*, *Mexico*, *Peru* and *Vietnam* guides. Phillip has made his home in Sydney, Melbourne, London and Mexico City. His travels include most countries in Europe, much of Asia and Latin America, as well as the greatest hits of North America. Phillip writes about travel and the people there, who just call it living. He likes smelling fresh mint in a market in a new town and imagining a parallel life there. More pics and words: [philliptang.co.uk](http://philliptang.co.uk). Phillip also wrote the Survival Guide chapters.



**Helen Eifer****Hángzhōu, Shànghǎi**

Helen made Shanghai her home between 2007-10, so she was delighted to be able to return and contribute to the latest Lonely Planet *China* and *Shanghai* guides. After a two-year stint in Abu Dhabi, she moved back to London, working as a travel writer for various newspapers and magazines. She's currently Lonely Planet's Destination Editor for the Middle East and North Africa.

**Daisy Harper****Shāndōng, Jiāngsū**

Born in the Shāndōng town of Qīngdǎo, Daisy grew up in China before going to university in Beijing to study English and then moving to the UK to pursue a career as a journalist and travel writer. A native speaker of Chinese, She has concentrated her energies on China travel, exploring and further fathoming her home country, working on four editions of Lonely Planet China to date.

**Trent Holden****Běijīng**

A Geelong-based writer, located just outside Melbourne, Trent has worked for Lonely Planet since 2005. He's covered 30 plus guidebooks across Asia, Africa and Australia. With a penchant for megacities, Trent's in his element when assigned to cover a nation's capital – the more chaotic the better – to unearth cool bars, art, street food and underground subculture. On the flipside he also writes

books to idyllic tropical islands across Asia, in between going on safari to national parks in Africa and the subcontinent. When not travelling, Trent works as a freelance editor, reviewer and spending all his money catching live gigs.

**Stephen Lioy****Sichuān**

Stephen is a photographer, writer, hiker, and travel blogger based in Central Asia. A 'once in a lifetime' Eurotrip and post-university move to China set the stage for what would eventually become a semi-nomadic lifestyle based on sharing his experiences with would-be travellers and helping provide that initial push out of comfort zones and into all that the planet has to offer.

**Shawn Low****Qīnghǎi**

After many hot, sticky and sweaty years in Singapore, Shawn made for the cooler but more temperamental climes of Melbourne in 2001. He found his way into Lonely Planet as a book editor in 2006. Since then, he's done two stints as a commissioning editor and has constantly (sometimes successfully) flirted with the Lonely Planet TV. Shawn has penned a dozen LP guides and recently co-founded a London-based travel startup Firefly.

**Tom Masters****Xīnjiāng**

Tom has been travelling in China since 2004, having begun teaching himself Mandarin in his bedroom aged 14 during a bout of Sinophilia from which he's never quite recovered. Tom has written many books about off-the-beaten track destinations for Lonely Planet, including as a regular author on the *Central Asia* guide, which made him an obvious choice to cover Xīnjiāng for this book. Tom lives in Berlin and can be found online at [www.tommasters.net](http://www.tommasters.net)

**Emily Matchar****Chōngqīng, the Yangzi, Hong Kong**

A native of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Emily first caught Relapsing Travel Fever during a high-school semester abroad in Argentina. To date, Emily has contributed to some two dozen Lonely Planet guides. She also writes about culture, travel, politics and food for the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *New Republic*, the *Atlantic*, *Men's Journal*, *Outside*, *Gourmet* and many more. When she's

not busy rating Memphis barbecue joints, wandering around night markets in Laos, or tramping in New Zealand, she can be found chowing down on dumplings in her adopted city of Hong Kong.



## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### Damian Harper

Guǎngxī, Húnán, Shaanxi, Shānxī, Inner Mongolia, Ningxià

Ten years of British boarding school gave Damian every incentive to explore new horizons beyond home. A degree in History of Art at Leeds University followed in 1995 and a few years later Damian applied to work on the Lonely Planet China guide. Since then, Damian has served as coordinating author on seven editions of the guide and has co-authored multiple editions of the *Beijing* and *Shanghai*

city guides, *Malaysia*, *Singapore and Brunei*, *Vietnam*, *Thailand*, *London*, *Great Britain and Ireland*: Damian also wrote the 1st edition of *Shanghai Encounter* and *Best of Shanghai* and co-wrote *China's Southwest* (3rd edition) and two Hong Kong titles.

Damian also wrote the Understand and Planning chapters.



### Piera Chen

Hong Kong

When not on the road, Piera divides her time between hometown Hong Kong, Taiwan and Vancouver. She has authored more than a dozen travel guides and contributed to as many travel-related titles. Piera has a BA in Literature from Pomona College. Her early life was peppered with trips to Taiwan, China and Southeast Asia, but it was during her first trip to Europe that dawn broke. She

remembers being fresh off a flight, looking around her in Rome, thinking, 'I want to be doing this every day.' And she has.



### Megan Eaves

Gānsù

Megan is Lonely Planet's North Asia Destination Editor and her writing has appeared in Lonely Planet's guidebooks to China and South Korea. Having lived everywhere from her home state of New Mexico to eastern China and Prague, she's now based in Lonely Planet's London office, where she's the resident beer nerd and dumpling addict. If lost, she is likely to be found stargazing in a desert somewhere.



### David Eimer

Yúnnán, Běijīng

David has been a journalist and writer ever since abandoning the idea of a law career in 1990. After spells working in his native London and in Los Angeles, he moved to Beijing in 2005, where he contributed to a variety of newspapers and magazines in the UK. Since then, he has travelled and lived across China and in numerous cities in Southeast Asia, including Bangkok, Phnom Penh and Yangon. He has been covering China, Myanmar and Thailand for Lonely Planet since 2006.

OVER MORE  
PAGE WRITERS

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