



China

In search of Shangri-la – Trekking & Pandas

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



Do something extraordinary.....

Itinerary

China • In search of Shangri-la – Trekking & Pandas

11 Days • 10 Nights

Chengdu – Four Girls Mountains – Leshan – Shangri-la – Lijang – Blue Moon Valley – Lugu Lake – Kunming

HIGHLIGHTS

- 🌿 Visit the amazing Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding
- 🌿 See the tallest Buddha statue in the world – Leshan Giant Buddha
- 🌿 Sing and dance around a fire together with Zang people
- 🌿 Have a walk on the famous Walking Marriage Bridge, located in Lugu Lake

TOUR ESSENTIALS

Tour Style	Trekking Adventure
Tour Start	Chengdu
Tour End	Kunming
Accommodation	Hotel / Guest Houses
Included Meals	10 Breakfasts, 9 lunches, 10 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Medium - Difficult

The mountain areas in the Southern provinces of China have been largely inaccessible to outside adventure travelers until relatively recently. On this trip we have the opportunity to see and experience some treasures of this fascinating region – from hiking in the scenic beauty of mountain areas as high as the Alps, to local minority groups which still retain their traditional clothes, cuisine and culture – and their warm hospitality. We will see ancient monuments and temples, including the largest stone Buddha the world has known, completed in 803AD. Of course, no trip to this region would be complete without getting close to the Giant Pandas – protected and bred in Chengdu, also home to the famous Sichuan spicy hotpot.

Itinerary



DAY 1: CHENGDU (D)

Arrival. We will transfer from the airport to our hotel then head out for dinner. Sichuan is famous for its fantastic (spicy) food. This evening will give you a chance to become acquainted with this surprisingly relaxed city.

Overnight

DAY 2: CHENGDU GIANT PANDA RESEARCH (B,L,D)

After breakfast we drive (approx. 1.5 hours) to see the famous pandas. This is a panda sanctuary where they are housed in a primordial forest with many endemic plants and there are more pandas here than you will ever see outside China. There are opportunities for feeding and close interaction as well as taking photos with these wonderful creatures. You may also have the chance to see young babies which are born here.



Back in Chengdu we have dinner and rest.

Overnight



DAY 3: FOUR GIRLS MOUNTAIN (B,L,D)

We drive (220km – around 2.5 h) to Four Girls Mountain to hike. This is a great mountain for hiking with lovely views and a picturesque river. It is highly thought of amongst hikers in China. We will hike 4-6h, stopping to share a BBQ near the river, enjoy the amazing views and peace of this area before we head back to Chengdu for dinner and rest.

The surrounding mountains rise to 6250m. 4000m below, where we will walk is the forest with flowers everywhere, grassland, rivers and local minority groups Zang and Qiang with their unique cultures.

Overnight



DAY 4: LESHAN GIANT BUDDHA & FLIGHT TO SHANGRI-LA (B,L,D)

We drive (126km - 1.5h) to see the largest stone Buddha and by far the tallest pre-modern statue in the world. It is a 71m tall stone statue. We will walk and explore there, including the surrounding park and temples. We will have dinner on the way back then go to Chengdu airport to get our night flight. The flight is just 1h20 to get to another amazing town: Shangri-la. We will go straight to rest in our delightful local hotel.

Shangri-la: Most people will have heard of this town. It is a Zang nationality town with wooden buildings. Zang people often have fire parties, traditional mixing with modern.

Overnight



DAY 5: PUDACUO PARK (B,L,D)

After breakfast we head to Pudacuo Park. Local people say this place is a fairytale world. We will hike here, about 5 hours or longer. You can take a (optional) boat on the lake. The local people are called “bright pearl of highland”. We will walk around the lake and share a picnic there. Then back for dinner after which we can go to the square to see local Zang people dancing around a fire. You have the opportunity to join in with them as they Sing and dance together.

Overnight



DAY 6: NAPAHA LAKE (B,L,D)

Close to Shangri-la we can bicycle from our hotel for around 40m with lovely views on the way.

This is a mythological place. The lake is fed by the melted snow from the mountains, surrounded by a huge grassland. The people are called “plateau pearl”. We hike a few hours, then stop for a picnic on the grassland near the lake. There will be (optional) horse riding on the grassland with the local



Zang people and we can bicycle around the amazing lake. Later, back in town, we have dinner in a great local restaurant, then go out for drink or see local show if you're not tired

Overnight

DAY 7: LIJIANG TOWN & BLUE MOON VALLEY (B,L,D)

We drive to Lijiang town in time for lunch when we arrive (176 km - 3.5h). There is lots to see and explore in this town, then we will go to Blue Moon Valley for 3 hours hiking. Dinner in town followed by exploring the local town – quaint shops and unusual buildings, dancing with local people around a fire, listening music.

Lijiang : Lijiang town has varied local minority customs and entertainment. Naxi (one of the smaller minority nationalities) have their own ancient music, the Dongba ceremony and the torch festival. There are delightful wooden buildings and different styles of restaurant around a small river. People are often singing on the street, dancing at night.

Blue Moon Valley: At the foot of Yulong mountain-famous in China. This delightful valley is named for its shape and the vibrant color of the water in the sunshine.

Overnight

DAY 8: LUGU LAKE (B,L,D)

We have a long drive today (207km – 5h), so we need to get up early to go to Lugu Lake. The time will pass quickly as we have amazing views on the way with frequent stops for photos and a picnic.

We go to Lige island to get to our hotel which is terrific. We will have dinner there and relax near the lake.

Lugu Lake: this place is very special. The local Mosuo tribe live near the lake. This nationality still has unusual marriage traditions. Families are matriarchal. They still have a tradition of “walking marriage”. They sing and dance every night with traditional clothes. It is a very mysterious place.



Overnight

DAY 9: LUGU LAKE: CYCLING / HIKING (B,L,D)

After breakfast, once you can tear yourself from the view, we can go cycling or hiking around part of the lake which in total is 60km around. There are many tribes on the way and great views. We stop for lunch, and may take a local wooden boat on the lake (optional)...then back to the hotel for dinner. At night we can go out dancing around a fire with local people.

Overnight

DAY 10: LUGU LAKE: WALKING MARRIAGE BRIDGE (B,L,D)

We can bicycle or drive there. This wooden bridge is the only bridge on the whole lake. Under the bridge, sand accumulation for years, made the water shallow and with dense reeds, it is like an ocean of grass. It is possible to walk



on the lake near the bridge, the most peculiar feeling. The Walking Marriage Bridge is a signature of Lugu Lake that represents the walking marriage culture of the region. Remember not to walk to the end of the bridge, because it means that your marriage will come to an end soon.

Enjoy our final dinner.

Overnight

DAY 11: KUNMING – FLIGHT HOME (B)

After breakfast, we transfer to the airport to Kunming where our adventure ends.

Important Information

INCLUDED

- 🍽️ All meals as described (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)
- 🍷 A soft drink &/or local beer with meals
- 🏠 Accommodation as described
- 🧭 Experienced local guide
- ✈️ All transfers
- 🎫 All National Park entrance fees
- ✈️ Domestic flights

NOT INCLUDED

- Meals other than mentioned
- All other drinks
- International flights
- Personal expenses
- Travel Insurance

Additional Information

ACTIVITY DURATION	2 – 6 hours
SEASON	August - November
GROUP SIZE	The price is per person & based on a private trip based on 2 people travelling
EXPEDITION SCHEDULE	This is run as a private trip, so we are able to suit your dates and requirements. We can also tailor the trip to suit.
DIFFICULTY LEVEL	Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has a 'Medium' to 'Difficult level' (2 – 6 hours of activities per day). This means that you will need to an average level of fitness with regular trekking.

