



*"See World Differently"*

## Adventure Program

### CN7 - Pushing China's Western Frontier - Western Sichuan – 12

#### Days



#### Detailed Day-by-Day Itinerary

##### Day 1: Arrive Chengdu (540m)

Meet our local guide at Chengdu airport and transfer to hotel. The rest of day is free for you to explore this provincial capital city or relax at the hotel.

Overnight: Crown Plaza (5\*)

Meals: D

##### Day 2: Chengdu/Luding/Kangding (2560m)

Today we drop in at **Wang Anting's Mao Museum**. Mr. Wang has spent the last few decades collecting medals and other souvenirs emblazoned with Chairman Mao's image, as well as historic newspapers and books associated with Mao. Walking through the collection rooms and speaking with Mr. Wang, we will learn his remarkable personal history and hear some fascinating stories from China's past.

After our stop at the museum, we will depart Chengdu, having lunch enroute. After a 3-4 hour drive, we will make a stop in **Luding** at the site of a historic battle in the Chinese Revolution, where the Red Army fought a valiant battle against local warlords after a 24-hour march. They gained access to the **Iron Chain Bridge** across the thundering Dadu River; without the bridge, the army would most certainly have been destroyed.

We continue for a 1.5 hours drive to **Kangding**, widely considered the "Gateway to Tibet" and a major outpost on historic trade routes. Tucked in a river valley between towering mountains, Chinese Muslims, Catholics, and Tibetan Buddhists coexist peacefully in this diverse frontier town. The colorful markets still do brisk business in wild mushrooms, Tibetan medicines, yak skins, prayer flags and pottery, as well as basic necessities manufactured in China's East.



*"See World Differently"*

Overnight: Qing Ge Hotel (Tibetan style)

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 3: Kangding/Xinduqiao/Tagong (2600m)**



This morning, we will visit **Ngachu Monastery** located inside the town of Kangding . Then we drive 1.5 hours to the sparkling aquamarine **Mugecuo Lake**, considered sacred by local people for thousands of years. Mugecuo, together with nearby springs and pools, sustains thousands of rare and endangered plant, animal and bird species. Spiritual pilgrims, tourists, botanists and photographers from around the world visit the area every year. We will spend two hours and hike along the Mugecuo Lake and picnic lunch on an open area facing the lake. Due to time limits, we will return to our starting spot by the same hiking route. Then we will continue our 2 hour drive over the Tsedo Mountain Pass,

where we will arrive in **Xinduqiao**. We will enjoy lunch in this well-preserved Tibetan village. Afterwards, we press on for a stop at the **Tagong Grasslands**, green prairies nestled in valley surrounded by snow-capped mountain peaks. We get an up-close look at Tibetan herdsmen and their Yaks.

Overnight: Tagong guesthouse

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 4: Tagong/Yajiang (2,600m)**

This morning, we will visit **Tagong Monastery** and a **nunnery** nearby the Tatong town and explore the nuns' daily life. We will have lunch at the nunnery. After lunch, we continue our 3.5 hours drive to **Yajiang**.

Overnight: Yajiang Guest house

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 5: Yajiang/Litang (4014m)**

We set out (3-4hours) for **Litang** in the morning, making the three hour drive in time to allow us most of the day in the area. At 4014 meters elevation, Litang is one of the highest towns in the world, with an elevation exceeding that of Lhasa. Firmly situated in the Tibetan world, the local economy is dependent on semi-nomadic yak, goat, and sheepherders. Khampas - dressed in yak skin coats, draped in colorful necklaces and hair ornaments, long daggers hanging from their belts - amble into town from the surrounding region to stock up on food and supplies, play pool on the streets and hang out in the local teahouses.



*"See World Differently"*

We will pay a visit to **Changqingchunker Temple**, one of the most prominent monasteries in the eastern Tibetan plateau. Originally built by followers of an ancient animist religion, the monastery was seized by the Buddhist Yellow Hat Sect in the 1500s. A hotbed of Tibetan dissent, the monastery was destroyed during the 1950s, but has subsequently been rebuilt. We will learn about the area's complex history and religious practices during a personal audience with a living Buddha.

Overnight: Litang White Crane Guest House

Meals: B, L, D

#### **Day 6: Litang/Daocheng (3700m)/Yading (3900m)**

We will spend today enroute to Yading Nature Reserve, one of the world's most dramatic and beautiful mountainous areas. The soaring glacial peaks of three sacred Tibetan mountains - Chenresig (Avalokitesvara, 6032m), Jambayang (Manjusri, 5958m), and Chanadorje (Vajrapani, 5958m) and the meadows and forests below are utterly unspoiled. We will encounter Tibetan Buddhist pilgrims on their journey to circumambulate the mountains: it is believed that making this Kora (pilgrimage) brings great merit to the individual and the world. The mountains are said to represent compassion, wisdom and energy - attributes one must cultivate on the path to enlightenment. The drive from Litang to **Daocheng** will take approximately 3 hours (180km), and the trip from Daocheng to **Yading** (60km) will take approximately 3.5 hours, as much of the road to the park is dirt track. We will make several stops along our route.

Overnight: Yading Tourist Reception Inn

Meals: B, L, D

#### **Day 7: Hiking or Horse Riding in Yading (3900m)**

From the reserve entrance, we take a winding pathway through the woods to the foot of the sacred Mt. Chanadorje. Along the way, we pass countless piles of thousand-year old stones inscribed with prayers and family names in Tibetan script. Some of these stones, called Mani because they are inscribed with the mantra Om Mani Padme Hum, have been carried from Lhasa and farther by pilgrims. We follow the valley at the foot of Chanadorje, enjoying some of the most spectacular views in the reserve, and finally reach **Tshonggo Gonpa** (Chonggu Si in Chinese) - a small Tibetan temple, alive with worshippers whose rough and tumble frontier feel caused botanist and explorer Joseph Rock to nickname the place 'Bandit Monastery' in the early 1920s. We continue our trek to Luorong Pasture, where we reach our campsite. The rest of the day will be free to rest and enjoy the scenery.

Overnight: Tent

Meals: B, L, D



*"See World Differently"*

### **Day 8: Hiking or Horse Riding in Yading (3900m)**



We will wake up with the dawn for a chance to photograph the sunrise as breathtaking golden rays strike the snow-white peaks. We continue our mountain circling journey today, passing Milk Lake, Five-Color Lake and Pearl Lake, all various shades of emerald and jade green. Local legend holds that these lakes can reveal your future if you spend a few moments gazing at the waters in quiet contemplation. We follow the route of the Kora along with local Tibetan

pilgrims, passing meadows and lakes and eventually ascending to an overlook surrounded by a colorful spider's web of prayer flags waving in the breeze. Here our descent begins, and we return to the meadow at the foot of Mt. Chanadorje and spend the night in a tent hotel.

Overnight: Yading Tourist Reception Inn

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 9: Yading/Daocheng/Xiangcheng**

In the morning, we drive 3 hours to **Daocheng**, where we stop for a long soak in a volcanic hot spring fabled to have medicinal healing powers. We can visit **Dagon Monastery** enroute. After lunch, we depart Daocheng for the city of **Xiangcheng**, with visits to **Gongpung Monastery** en route. Gongpung Monastery is more than 900 years old, and still home to a bustling temple and many monks. We arrive in Xiangcheng in the evening.

Overnight: Bamushan Hotel

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 10: Xiangcheng—Zhongdian (3300m)**

Today we make the long, (7-8 hours, 290km), but scenic drive to **Zhongdian** (3,300m, 10,000 ft). Zhongdian is a small town on the Tibetan Plateau with an altitude nearly as high as Lhasa. Deep unspoiled forest and spectacular mountain scenery is interspersed with Yi and Tibetan villages along our route. We may also catch a glimpse of wild deer and yaks grazing at pasture along the way. Our hotel is near the base of the largest monastery in Yunnan province, Ganden Songzanlin Monastery. Tonight we will have our hotpot dinner in the Zhongdian old town.

Overnight: Songzanlin Hotel (Tibetan style)

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 11: Zhongdian**



In the morning, we will visit the largest Monastery in Yunnan, the Tibetan-Buddhist Ganden **Songzanlin Monastery**. This monastery is built in the same style as Potala Palace in Lhasa, and is home to a number of living Buddha and over 700 monks.

Built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by order of the 5<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, the buildings are in the style of Potala Palace in Lhasa. This sprawling temple complex is home to more than 700 monks, and is built on

a hill at the southern end of the Zhongdian valley, affording a magnificent view. Officially renamed "Shangrila" in 2002 by the Chinese government, the valley is a truly idyllic world of yaks at pasture, fields of fragrant barley, wetlands in bloom, and shaggy ponies hitched outside homes built in the traditional Tibetan style. After a visit to the monastery, we drive to **Nixi village** and study the local Tibetan's life and skill of pottery making.

Overnight: Songzanlin Hotel (Tibetan style)

Meals: B, L, D

### **Day 12: Zhongdian to Kunming**

We take a morning flight back to Kunming, where services end.

Meals: B



*"See World Differently"*

### Quotation for Group (more than 4pax, guaranteed group departure)

2008

#### Land Prices (CAD)

Dates	April	Summer	Autumn	Festival
	20Apr-01May	7-18June 6-17Sep	11-22Oct	27July-07Aug
Land cost: 4-22pax	2,880	2,880	2,880	2,980
Single supplement	500	500	500	500

#### Flights

Call for international air.

Suggest to combine the pre and extension trip

#### Discount

This tour does not provide half-board service

Call our tour expert for tailor-made tour program

#### Price includes:

- Domestic economy flights and airport taxes.
- Land transfers for whole trip
- All accommodations on a twin-sharing basis, at the hotels specified in the itinerary where available
- All admissions and activity expenses as noted on itinerary
- Meals, drinking water, and soft drinks during meals as program indicates
- All programs as per itinerary
- Private tour guide and driver
- Tour leader service along the whole trip when group size is bigger than 10pax.

#### Price excludes:

- Discretionary gratuities for drivers, local guides, and staff
- Expenses of personal nature, e.g. mini-bar, laundry, telecommunications, alcoholic beverages etc.
- Travel insurance
- Excursions not included in the itinerary
- International flights and airport taxes
- GST