

Orient Odyssey – Journeys beyond the ordinary™

19 Day Grand Shangri-la, Hidden Tribes, & Tibet

An unique in-depth exploration of some less visited but spectacular part of China & Tibet
Spin beyond normal tourist-trod paths for an extraordinary look at the ethnically diverse villages and tribes
as well as some magnificent hidden scenery only known to avid travelers

- **Guiyang** - The ancient Jiaxiu Pavillion, serene Qianling Lake, and the impressive Hongfu Monastery
- **Kaili** – Home of many Miao ethnic minority tribes and their unique costumes, folk songs and ceremonies
- **Anshun** – Sky Dragon Garrison Fortress: an unspoiled, authentic Ming Dynasty village frozen in time
- **Huangguoshu Waterfall** – The magnificent fall is the largest in Asia with roaring water thundering down 250 ft
- **Kunming** – “The city of eternal spring”, interesting cliff side temples at Western Hill, scenic Dian Lake
- **Stone Forest** – An unique geological wonder formed 270 million years ago, of strange and awe inspiring landscapes
- **Dali** – The serene Lake Erhai, beautiful Three Pagodas, Bai Ethnic Minority Museum, and the bustling Old Town
- **Lijiang** – Naxi minority old town and its busy market square, Naxi folk music orchestra, highland meadow of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, Sacred Yufeng Temple, Mu Palace, Black Dragon Pool, and the mysterious Dongba Culture
- **Tiger Leaping Gorge** – The breathtaking scenery of roaring water and high cliffs, and mighty Yangtze’s first bend
- **Tibet** – Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple, Barkhor Street, the rarely seen monk debate at the sacred Sera and Drepung Monastery, Dalai Lama’s exquisite summer palace of Norbulinka, the breathtaking beauty of Yamdrok Lake...



Special Highlights- We cut no corners!

Explore some of the less known and spectacular UNESCO World Heritage and Culture Sites
Upgraded luxurious 4 and 5 star hotels and boutique properties exclusively for 2017
Experience unique costumes and life styles of ethnic minority tribes rarely discovered by outsiders
Marvel at Tibet’s sacred grounds, holy temples and the magnificent palaces of Dalai Lama
Carefully planned logistics to enable you to observe rarely seen Monk Debate in a Tibetan Temple
Experience the beauty of Shangri-la with turquoise snow ranges and razor sharp cliffs
Unique “**People to People Contacts©**” feature throughout the journey
Interact with locals to obtain true insights of daily life, random stops at villages, farmer’s home and markets
Miao tribal village ceremonies, ancient Grand Opera, Naxi Folk Music Orchestra, Yi Minority Dance,
Delicacies with local flavor – Sour Fish Soup, Cross Bridge Noodles, Steam Pot Chicken..... & more

Enjoy our signature True All Inclusive© value

There are no last minute surprises, optional tours, hidden costs.....
This tour is all inclusive - all listed sightseeing, shows, and daily meals are included

Tour Cost Includes:

1. Guided comprehensive sightseeing, admission and culture shows as per specified
2. Luxury accommodations - luxurious 5 star, or local best 4 star hotel room and surcharges
3. Daily meals, special local flavor dishes, and delicious banquets as per specified
4. China domestic transportation via flight, train, bus, water craft and cruise ships as per specified
5. Handpicked experienced certified English speaking guide in each city
6. Round trip transfers and luggage handling
7. Foreigner Entering Tibet Permit

Tour Cost Does Not Include:

1. International airfare between USA & China,
2. Tipping, Travel Insurance, China single entry visa fee and handling
3. Any misc. charges with personal natures that are not mentioned in the itinerary

Call Orient Odyssey 1-800-637-5778

1385 Gulf Road, Suite 203, Point Roberts, WA 98281, E-mail: orientodyssey2001@yahoo.com Web: www.orientodyssey.com

Orient Odyssey – Journeys beyond the ordinary™

Tour Name: Grand Shangri-la, Hidden Tribes and TIBET
Tour Code: GST - 2017

Unsurpassed Flexibility.....

- Join the following suggested departures or pick your own departure date – prices are the same!

Personalize Your Journey.....

- Extend the journey to explore more sites of China or Asia, or eliminate some cities and cut short the trip to match your schedule, or even upgrade or delete meals to personalize your tour budget and style.....we are flexible and can work with travelers to customize each and every departures.

Premium Quality and Optimum Personal Attentions.....

- All our journeys feature optimum personalized service with professional English speaking local guides, a chauffeur and a vehicle serving your party exclusively throughout the trip.

Travel with Friends and Family Together and Save

- Inquire about generous discounts when you plan a trip together with families and friends.

SUGGESTED GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Or choose your own departure date – you can depart on any date throughout the year!

Tour Code	Arrival Date	Exit Date	Land Cost	Single Supplement
	Day 2 - Arrive Shanghai	Day 19 - Exit Chongqing	(not include int'l air) Day 2-19 Shanghai-Chongqing	
0312GST	Mar 13, 2017	Mar 30, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
0402GST	Apr 3, 2017	Apr 20, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
0507GST	May 8, 2017	May 25, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
0514GST	May 15, 2017	Jun 1, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
0521GST	May 22, 2017	Jun 8, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
0625GST	Jun 26, 2017	Jul 13, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
0723GST	Jul 24, 2017	Aug 10, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
0903GST	Sep 4, 2017	Sep 21, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
0910GST	Sep 11, 2017	Sep 28, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
1015GST	Oct 16, 2017	Nov 2, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
1022GST	Oct 23, 2017	Nov 9, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
1029GST	Oct 30, 2017	Nov 16, 2017	\$5550	\$1288
1112GST	Nov 13, 2017	Nov 30, 2017	\$5550	\$1288

Important Remarks:

- China domestic air ticket tax and fees of \$73 per person is extra.
- Sample low season fares for your proposed round trip international flight **USA – Shanghai**, open jaw, **Chongqing – USA** are as below:
 From Los Angeles: Economy class fm. \$650 p.p. Business class fm. \$3150 p.p., incl. tax / fuel / fees
 From San Francisco: Economy class fm. \$700 p.p. Business class fm. \$3770 p.p., incl. tax / fuel / fees
 From New York: Economy class fm. \$820 p.p. Business class fm. \$3180 p.p., incl. tax / fuel / fees
 Fares are subject to availability and seasonality. Prices may change without notice. Lower rates might be available due to local sales.
- Prices quoted are in US currency, based on per person double occupancy. Payment can be made by check, money order, or credit cards – we accept Visa, Master, and Discover card.

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Orient Odyssey – *Journeys beyond the ordinary™*

19 Day Grand Shangri-la, Hidden Tribes, & Tibet

Tour Code: GST - 2017

Operated by Orient Odyssey



B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner, F-In flight snacks & meals, SL / SD-Special local flavor meal or banquet

Day 01 USA – Shanghai

Depart from Los Angeles, New York, or any other major US gateways. Enjoy in-flight meals and services. Move your watch one day ahead as you fly cross the international dateline. **F**

Day 02 Arrive in Shanghai

Your flight will land in Shanghai Pudong International Airport. After immigration and customs, VIP private transfer service will greet and take you to the 5 star, luxurious, newly renovated, ***Ocean Hotel Shanghai***. **F**

Day 03 Shanghai – Guiyang

After breakfast, transfer to the airport to board ***China Southern Airlines*** flight CZ3652 at 11:35 a.m., arriving in Guiyang at 2:45 p.m.. Rarely featured in conventional tour packages, Province of Guizhou, meaning “*the precious state*”, has Asia’s largest waterfall and is home to over 17 ethnic minority groups, each with a unique legacy of culture, dress-style, food, folklores and dances. The province has long been a photographer’s paradise, owing to its relatively isolated location, the stunning landscape, colorful minority culture, towering mountains, plunging ravines, spectacular rock formation, graceful limestone caves, and unspoiled tribal villages. Today we explore Guiyang, the provincial capital, built during the Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644). Drive by the mystic Qianling Lake, set solemnly amidst the

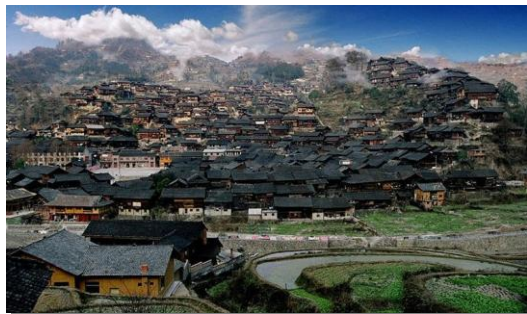
verdant cypresses and pines covered mountains. We first take a leisurely stroll in the three-hundred-years old Hongfu Monastery, then continue on a footpath tucked away in a cluster



of ancient trees twisting and turning downhill towards the lakeside. On route we may encounter wild monkeys. Next we explore the 500 years old Jiayiu Pavillion. Built in 1589, the majestic tower is connected by a floating “*jade bridge*”. Check-in at the 5 star, luxurious, ***Novotel Guiyang Downtown***. **B/F/D**

Day 04 Guiyang – Kaili

A scenic morning drive takes us to terraced fields and small quiet towns towards Kaili in Eastern Guizhou. After check-in at the 4 star, local best, deluxe ***Grand Metropark Hotel Kaili***, we head to the fascinating Qingman Village, a home to the Miao ethnic minority tribes. There are numerous theories on the origins of the Miao people. Most believe Miao’s history can be traced to a legend happened 4,000 years ago, when a war was broken out between the Yellow



Emperor and a local tribal chief named Chiyou who was eventually defeated. They believe

Miao are the descendants of Chiyou's troops, who hid deep in the mountain valleys for generations. These



mountain dwellers built wooden houses on high stilts along the slope side in overlapping rows. A large Miao village can contain over 1,000 families. Rarely visited by outsiders, Miaos are one of the most hospitable ethnic groups in China. Today we will

encounter the welcome ceremony, which involves beautiful village girls in glistening and jingling heavy silver headdresses and beautiful embroidered costumes inviting guests to try the homemade rice wine, while singing welcome folk songs. Travelers should sip just very little



wine from each cup, as it is common that they encounter as many as 16 to 20 cups of welcome wine on the way in! Visitors will then be entertained in the Bronze Drum Square with colorful ethnic music and dances. Pay special attention to the Bamboo Lusheng, a unique music instrument in various sizes with hollow sounds. The largest Lusheng are usually played by the most respected village elders. Enjoy

Orient Odyssey's

unique **"People to People Contact"**,

we will stroll on a village trail amidst the beautiful rice fields to a school

or a tribal members' house, where we can interact with peasants, or students and teachers to uncover the genuine insight of the local life. Late afternoon we continue our journey on a scenic drive to another village – Shiqiao, to observe the ancient technique of paper making, which is still in use today. Dinner features the



delicious local style cuisine of Sour Fish Soup and other local delicacies! **B/L/SD**

- ❖ Based on local weather, road condition and logistics, we might visit different tribal villages than the ones mentioned in the itinerary. All of them feature spectacular costumes, welcome ceremonies, music and dances, and heart-warming hospitality. School visits and observing classes in session might not always be possible due to school schedules.

Day 05 Kaili - Anshun

Our morning program calls for a visit to another Miao tribes - Jidao Miao Village.

There are many different groups of Miao, each with unique costumes, dialects, and songs. They are named and distinguished by both the color and pattern of their dresses, or the hairstyles, the length of lady's skirts, and the locations where they live. Thus there are Black, Red, White, Blue and Flowery Miao, Side Comb Miao, Long and Short Skirt Miao,

Mountain and River Miao, etc. After the visit, we set out on a



magnificent drive through deep mountain valleys lined with rice terraces, rivers and verdant peaks to the highlight of the day, a stroll back in time in the Sky Dragon Garrison Fortress, "Tianlong Tunbao". Even today, most residents of this fortress still wear distinctive long blue robes and



speak a strange unheard of language. The fortress was established in the Ming Dynasty

(around 1413) when the imperial court sent an army to control the indigenous people. These soldiers, originally from central and eastern China, settled and flourished in their ever expanding fortress. Self sufficient and separated from the outside society, they have meticulously maintained a six-hundred-years tradition of culture, dress, architecture, art, and life style. When first discovered, historians were amazed to see an authentic ancient Ming Dynasty society in every possible detail. All the houses here are made with stone - the walls, door frames, window panels, and flat roof tiles. Each household are connected by winding cobble stone alleys so man powers can be mobilized in shortest possible time should the fortress be under attack. Today we will enjoy our stroll in the fortress, mingle with the residents, and witness the amazing Ground Opera performance, the “*living fossil*” of an ancient art form that was



thought to have been lost long ago. It can be traced back thousands of years to military rituals that sought to boost the soldiers’ morale when fighting the enemy. During the performance actors wore fancy embroidered war costumes with colorful fighting flags at their back. Their faces are covered with black veils, on top of which are wooden masks decorated with pheasant feathers which are worn at the foreheads. Clear high pitched melodies is backed up by rush and exciting drum beatings, along with the presentation of various elaborate fighting postures. Tonight we will stay at the 5 star, luxurious, ***Hotel Double Tree By Hilton Anshun***, one of the newest deluxe properties in town. ***B/L/D***

Day 06 Anshun – Huangguoshu Water Fall - Guiyang

After breakfast, we set out to explore the magnificent Huangguoshu Water Fall, Asia’s largest with a height of 250 feet and a width of 280 feet. The roaring Baishui River leaps out of



the mountain into giant fractures and breaks into five columns while tumbling down to the bottom of the cliff, forming a dense fog through which one can frequently spot a rainbow. Let us hike to the Water Curtain Cave behind the falls to get closer to the action! The cave, a 440 feet long corridor, has six unique naturally formed windows through which the falls can be watched, heard and literarily, touched. Listening to the thundering voice while stretching our hands to touch the columns of the cascading water is certainly an unforgettable experience! After lunch, another spectacular drive takes us through verdant mountain valleys to the Dragon Palace, a mysterious network of underground river that passes through 20 mountains in caves of varying



sizes. We board a small wooden sampan, plying zigzagging underground waterway. Sometimes we enter gigantic caves that can holds an entire army, while some other times we barely squeeze through the extremely narrow lanes. Savor the serene experience and the solitude - only the dripping water, the oars, and the folksongs sung by our boat handler will disturb the peace. Early evening, the scenic drive leads us back to Guiyang. We overnight again at the 5 star, deluxe, ***Hotel Novotel Guiyang Downtown***. ***B/L/D***

Day 07 Guiyang – Kunming (6,200 feet)

After breakfast, the guide will take us to the airport, and assist our check-in for ***China Southern Airlines’*** flight CZ3857, leaving at 10:25 a.m., reaching Kunming at 11:30 a.m..

We will be greeted and transferred to the 5 star, luxurious, **Grand Park Hotel Kunming**. Welcome to Province of Yunnan; literarily means “*South of the Clouds*”. It is a magnificent combination of spectacular landscape and minority cultures, described by **Marco Polo** as “*a land fertile in rice and wheat..... (with a*



capital) very great and noble, in (which) are found merchants and artisans, with a mixed population.”

Overlooked in the North by Tibet – roof of the world, surrounded by jungles of Myanmar from the West, and connected to Laos and Vietnam in the South, there are 22 ethnic minority races call here home, including Yi, Naxi, Tibetans, Mongols, Lahu, and Lisu. The provincial capital of Kunming, at an altitude of around 6,200 feet, is often called “*the city of eternal spring*” for its consistent spring like climate. Today we will explore the Western Hills, a sheer cliff face rising 2,000 ft above the shore of Lake Dian Chi. We walk on the paths, stairways, and tunnels that carved into the faces of the cliff, hiking upward to the Dragon’s Gate at summit, checking out interesting temples, cliff side grottoes and Buddhist carvings on route. We may stop at the Huating Temple, Taihua Temple and Taoist Pavilion of Sanqing. Enjoy the magic bird’s eye view of the lake Dian, or in Chinese, “*Dian Chi*”. The evening is free to explore the city at own leisure. This is a great walking town, whose markets and busy streets, as well as cobbled side alleyways evoke the old China. **B/F/D**



Day 08 Stone Forest Excursion

Today’s excursion calls the visit to the legendary Stone Forest, the strange rock formation reputed by ancient Chinese poet as “*the most fantastic scenery under heaven*”. This geological wonder is composed of numerous dark gray limestone karsts formed 270 million years ago at the sea bottom. When seen from a distance, the vast area of jagged stones dotted with green trees and colorful flowers has the look of a unique forest. When viewed up close, the oddly shaped rocks



seem to take on a life of their own. Near Return to the city in the afternoon, we head to the Green Lake, or “*Cui Hu*” for a leisurely stroll, taking in scenic views of ornate boats and bright pavilions. Time permitting, we may also stop at the flower gardens to watch the Tai Chi devotees at their art, or visit the 700-year old Bamboo Temple, festooned with statues of Buddhist notables. Tonight’s dinner is a specially arranged local experience. We will enjoy the famous Cross Bridge Noodles, and Steam Pot Chicken, complete with ethnic dance and music performance. **B/L/SD**



Day 09 Kunming – Dali (7,200 ft)

Our morning flight on **China Eastern Airlines’** MU5941 leaves at 9:00 a.m., reaching Dali at 9:50 a.m.. Dali is located under the imposing, snowcapped Cangshan Mountain Range, by the shore of the Lake Erhai, at the cross roads to Burma and Tibet. The ancestors of Bai People have lived and cultivated here for over 3,000 years. They still remain in the region today as the main ethnic group. In 8th century, Bai people’s most powerful kingdom Nanzhao was found, spreading long lasting influences over all of Southeast Asia, until 1253 when **Kuyblai Khan’s** Mongolian army asserted its control in this region. After check-in at the 5 star, luxurious, **Grand Bayview International Hotel**, we venture to the Bai Ethnic Minority State Museum. Bai in Chinese means “*White*”, and Bai people regard



themselves as descendants of the White King. White however is not referred to the color of dress – as a matter of fact, Bai women are more in favor of blue and red, and prefer colorful ethnic dresses to modern ones. We enjoy a comfortably paced stroll through the imposing South Gate to the bustling Old Town bazaar, looking at the traditional houses lining at both side of the alleys.

Amazing variety of exotic wares can be found here. We will stop to explore a unique Catholic Church, comfortably



tucked in a traditional elaborate Chinese style building, a proof of the influences of western religion which first reached here in late Ming Dynasty. This afternoon we enjoy a drive to Lake Er-Hai, meaning “*Ear Lake*”, named after its shape. Let’s take a boat ride to enjoy the tranquil sceneries, and a demonstration of Cormorant Fishing by local fishermen. Also on the agenda is a visit to the famed Three Pagodas.



Their elegant, balanced, and stately style is unique in China’s ancient Buddhist architecture. They were initially built for auspicious reasons. According to local legends, Dali was once a swamp inhabited by breeding dragons before the humans arrived. As the dragons, which were believed to deliberately create natural disasters to dispel human intruders, revered pagodas. Thus, the Three Pagodas were built to deter them. After taking pictures in front of the reflecting pool, if time allows, we head next to the splendid Chongsheng Monastery. Once the royal temple of Kingdom of Dali, the magnificent sprawling compound was recently rebuilt in 2005. B/F/D

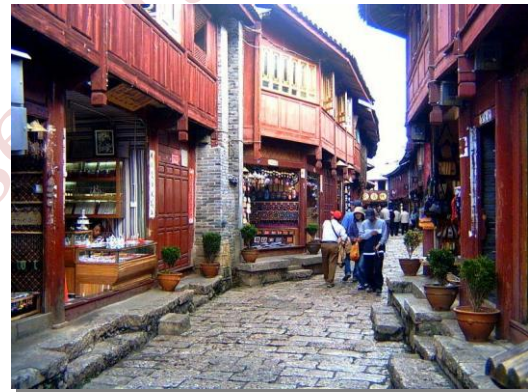
Day 10 Dali – Lijiang (Dayan Old Town) (7,872 ft)

After breakfast, we depart for Lijiang on an ancient tea trading road, passing many small villages, lush dense forests, and flower-laden grasslands.



Fascinating stops are planned on route where we will inspect the unique Bai architecture, stroll in the Bai Minority Bazaar

and taste Three Course Tea while attending the performance of ethnic singing and dancing. At Zhoucheng Village we explore the interesting Batik textiles cottage industry that Bai people are known of. Early afternoon we reach the rugged frontier town of Lijiang. The name was given by **Kublai Khan** in 1254, meaning “*Beautiful River*”. Nestled at a broad valley at just under 8,000 feet, the Old Town of Lijiang - Naxi town of Dayan, is now a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site for its well preserved Naxi



architecture and the breathtakingly beautiful dramatic landscape. The town, as if it has been frozen in time, preserves most of its traditional style in the original lay-out, and is considered one of the best of its kind in the country. The main inhabitants here are Naxi ethnic group, believed to be the descendants of the ancient “*Qiang*” tribe from

Northeastern Tibet. Recent scholars are increasingly fascinated with the Naxi culture, which seems to be evolved without interruption in the last 2,000 years in relative isolation, and passed down to generations through Naxi’s own pictographic script. In today’s daily life, Naxi



women seem to still be responsible for most of the work. Their religion, “*Dongba*”, resembles many aspects of the nature worship. After check-in at the 5 star, luxurious, *Wonderport International Hotel*, we venture out to the famous waterwheel to explore the Old Town, a maze of unique traditional architecture. Although the town was founded almost 1,000 years ago, travelers today can still easily identify the original charm through the narrow cobblestone streets lined with weeping willows, and canals of constantly flowing clear snowmelts. We will have plenty of time to enjoy our stroll in this idyllic section, exploring the Old Market Square, the many teahouses, art galleries, bars and restaurants lining the street. Tonight we enjoy the unforgettable traditional Naxi Folk Music Orchestra Performance, incorporating



many unique, one of a kind instruments. The first of the similar Naxi orchestra was founded in **Kublai Khan's** time. The techniques and notes were since passed on from generation to generation by written records in pictographs. Tonight's music we hear has literally remained unchanged for more than seven centuries! *B/L/D*

Day 11 Lijiang

In the morning we head to the majestic Jade Dragon Snow Mountain.



Standing grandly at 18,355 feet, it has never been conquered by man. Many of its cliffs, ravines, creeks, and meadows bear Naxi names, and for a thousand years, have been the setting for the myths and legends of the Naxi people who made this plain their home. From White Water Creek, we take a cable car up to the steep slope of Yunshanping, a delightful meadow at 10,827 ft (based on local weather and logistics, we might visit another highland

meadow “*Maoniuping*” instead). Enjoy a



leisurely stroll and marvel at the magnificent views of tall firs, verdant grasslands, and glittering snow. Next we will visit the small and sacred Yufeng Temple, dedicated to Tibetan Buddhism. We will also stop at the Baisha Village, once an important, bustling trading post on the Southern Silk Road that links China, Tibet with Southeast Asia and on to Europe. We



come here to see the vivid colors and intriguing figures of the ancient murals. Before the day

ends, we will reach Jade Lake Village – “*Yuhu*”, as it is called by Chinese. The quiet, unspoiled village is rarely featured in conventional tour programs yet *Orient Odyssey* feels it is important to include it in our journey. It tucked comfortably in the Lijiang Valley at the foot of



the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain. The famous explorer, geographer, linguist, and botanist **Dr. Joseph Rock** ventured here in 1922, and stayed here for 27 years while conducting the research and exploration in surrounding areas. It is through his articles and photos published by *National Geographic*, the world learnt about the existence of Naxi culture and the spectacular scenery of this region for the first time. Not much have changed in the village today – most of the houses and village paths are still built with the unique rocks called “*Money head*”, actually a mixture of rock and dried earth. The village still looks very much the same as when **Dr. Rock**

first saw it almost a century ago. We will enjoy a comfortable stroll in the village, mingle with residents, and also visit the old house that Dr. Rock once lived. Return to Lijiang in early



evening, we still have some time to enjoy the town at our own pace. Many believe that Lijiang is the exact place described as the mythical Shangri-la in **James Hilton's** novel "*The Lost Horizon*". Its geographic specification, climate, people and costumes matches descriptions in the novel perfectly. B/L/D

Day 12 Tiger Leaping Gorge

We first take a magnificent drive north to pristine highlands and mountains. The journey through the vast Lijiang Valley is breathtakingly beautiful, as we drive pass the verdant ridges and meadows covered by wild flowers, massive gorges formed by tens of thousands of years of punctuation of waterfalls and rivers, interestingly textured wheat fields lined with haystacks, wild horses roaming freely, and children herding yaks and goats.



Before long we reach the stupendous Tiger Leaping Gorge, arguably one of the deepest and the most spectacular gorges in the world. The 12 miles long gorge, with a natural drop of whopping 623 feet, has a narrowest point of only 98 feet. Legend says hunters use to see a fleeing tiger



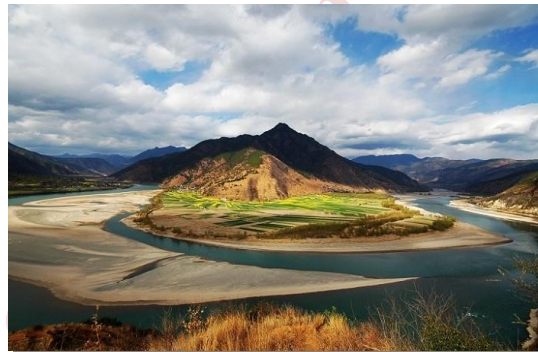
leaping across the gap to safety. We will follow the paved pathways for a half an hour hike, winding along the cliff side,

cutting through several boulders, taking in the breathtakingly beautiful sceneries. Through final

descend to the bottom of the gorge; we can enjoy a magnificent close-up view of sharp cliffs and roaring rushing water cascading through the narrow riverbed in unbelievable



speed, causing a thunderous roar that can be heard miles away. On the scenic return journey, we drive along along the Golden Sand River, the beginning of the mighty Yangtze. We will stop for the amazing view of the spectacular First Bend where the Yangtze, cutting through several



mountains, suddenly changes its floating directions in four unbelievable 90 degree turns.

The last stop of the day is the quiet ancient town of Shigu, literally means "*the Stone Drum Town*" where we will take time to stroll the old narrow cobble-stone alleys, checking out the surrounding centuries-old buildings and an ancient cantilever bridge. B/L/D

Day 13 Lijiang

After breakfast we visit the Mu Palace. The palatial residential compound of the then tribal leader **Mu** offers us an interesting glimpse into the Naxi tribal life, and the pinnacle of the ancient ethnic architecture. Next stop is the



Black Dragon Pool

where we take in the majestic scenery of a graceful arched marble bridge and a beautiful three storey pavilion, both being reflected in the calm mirror like lake with the

majestic Jade Dragon Snow Mountain as a backdrop. We will also tour the Dongba Culture Research Institute and Museum, where modern

day Naxi scholars preserve, research and translate the valuable old religious manuscripts and pictographic records. It hosts a remarkable collection of Naxi relics and cultural displays. This afternoon is free for us to rest or explore at our own pace. Savor the calm atmosphere on century old cobble stone alleys, listen to the water singing and flowing in the street side creeks, and browsing the bustling art and craft vendors. Enjoy a restful evening and get ready for tomorrow's expedition to Tibet, the "*Roof of the World*"! B/L

Day 14 Lijiang - Lhasa, Tibet (11,811 ft)

The guide will accompany us to the airport and assist our check-in for *Sichuan Airlines'* flight 3U8817, departing at 8:25 a.m., reaching Lhasa, the spiritual heartland of Tibet at 10:35 a.m.. The flying journey itself is an unforgettable experience with breathtaking scenes of snowcapped mountains over the Tibetan Plateau, the earth's highest ecosystem, and the source of many of Asia's greatest rivers. During the incredible flying journeys, one can have a peek of the formidable Mt. Gongga at 24,783 feet, over the deep valleys of Hengduan Range. Shortly the easternmost rampart of Himalaya



appears before us. Photo journalist **Galen Rowell** wrote in his 1983 book of *Mountains of the Middle Kingdom: Exploring the high peaks of China and Tibet*, describing his first journey flying into Tibet ".....*hundreds of snow peaks in all directions, a vision off the scale of my experience..... I saw distant peaks that looked Everest-sized. They rose on the horizon behind an ocean of lesser whitecaps..... more miles of more jagged peaks, with a greater feeling of height, than anything I knew existed on the planet*". Our air craft will land at Gongkar International Airport at a lofty 12,129 feet. The

Tibetan guide will greet and accompany us on a scenic drive along the mighty Lhasa river to the city. Check-in at the deluxe, 5 star, *Jardin Secret Hotel Lhasa*, one of the newest luxury properties in the region.

This afternoon we rest for couple of hours - it is important not overexert ourselves on the first day in Tibet. A good rest is necessary to acclimate to the high altitude (11,811 feet). Should the need arise; oxygen and Chinese herbal medicines are available at the hotel to help easing symptoms of AMS (Acute



Mountain Sickness). Lhasa rose to prominence in the 7th century AD when **Songtsen Gampo**, the first Tibetan king who united Tibet, decided to establish his capital here and began to construct the spectacular Potala Palace. His Chinese and Nepali wives brought many precious Buddhist relics, carvings and paintings to Tibet as dowries. The name Lhasa, literally means "*country of the gods*". It is the home for **the Dalai Lama**, the re-incarnation of **Avalokiteshvara**, the essence of compassion for all

sentient beings. To ensure the success of your journey to Tibet, **Orient Odyssey** had exert special effort to secure the best, knowledgeable,



ethnic Tibetan guide, who will accompany you in the next few days to roam from sacred temples to magnificent palaces to grand monasteries. Early evening, we will head out for a leisurely stroll on the bustling street of Lhasa to our restaurant for our welcome dinner of Tibet. B/F/D

Day 15 Lhasa and Surrounding Area



The unforgettable day begins with a visit of the majestic Potala Palace, the most imposing structure in the city. The 13-story building was Tibet's spiritual and governmental heartland. Built in the 7th century, the Potala Palace contains over 1,000 rooms. Its ceilings are supported by more than 15,000 columns. It has numerous ceremonial halls, small chapels and meditation halls; each contains priceless centuries-old wall paintings, striking statues, and ancient Buddhist scriptures written in 24 karat gold. We will be awed by eight vaults of deceased Dalai Lamas, all were lavishly



decorated with gold, diamonds, turquoise, corals, and pearls. French missionary traveler **Abbé Huc**, wrote in *Travels in Tartary, Tibet, and China 1844-46*, *"The palace of the Tale (Dalai) Lama merits, in every respect, the celebrity which it enjoys through the world"*. **Dr. Robert Alexander Thurman**, professor of the Columbia University, also wrote about the Potala Palace, *".....the Potala expresses to the beholder that it is the residence of the bodhisattva of compassion:*



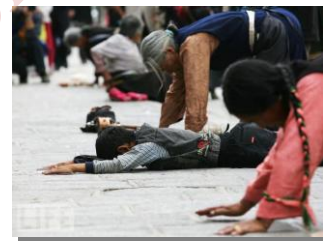
It is powerful yet inviting, secure and stabile, yet fantastic and delightful". At the rooftop of the Palace, we visit the 14th Dalai Lama's apartment. Exiting the palace, we head to Jokhang, Tibet's holiest temple. Built by **King Songsten Gampo** in 647 A.D.,

it is home to the most precious statues and carvings. The most holy piece is a 7th century statue of **Jobo Buddha**, which is said to be one of the only three in the world blessed by **Lord Buddha** himself. It is said that during the brutal Communist Culture Revolution, one of the monks risked his life and hid the statue in a



secret cave. Now every day from dawn to dusk, Tibetan pilgrims come in the number of thousands, many have walked days, weeks or even months, just to pay homage to this sacred statue. Circling Jokhang is the famous Barkhor Street where we will be strolling. It is a sacred

ritual path where pilgrims and traders gather. To gain merit, the pilgrims prostrate themselves in the dust and circle around the Jokhang while others turn their prayer wheels.



The air of a medieval bazaar filled the sky, and the street is full of actions from dawn to dusk. One can observe Tibetans in colorful traditional robes chanting with their prayer wheel in hand; vendors selling their wares from religious crafts to daily needs; monks meditating at the side of the road; housewives and store



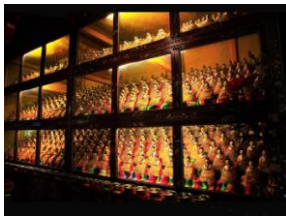
keepers doing the cleaning; kids on their way to school..... It is also a good place to bargain for almost anything from Thangkas, Tibetan hats and boots to turquoise jewelry..... We will take our time to browse this area to experience the heartbeat of Tibet! **B/L/D**

Day 16 Lhasa and Surrounding Area

After breakfast, it is time for our excursion to two of the most sacred grounds of central Tibet: Drepung Temple and Sera Monastery. Both

of them were once home to over ten thousand Lamas, and were served as the primary religious

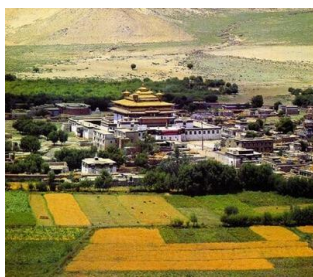
educational centers and pillars of the theocratic state. If we are lucky, we might arrive during their prayer session during when hundreds of



monks chanting the sutras in a booming lilting sound. We will even go behind the scenes to the temple kitchen to learn how 5,000 dishes were prepared at every meal. Enjoy the magnificent collection of priceless murals, carvings, and crafts inside the hall. Feel free to chat with monks, who are always friendly to answer our questions. **Orient Odyssey** had carefully planned the logistics so our travelers on each trip can reach the site on



the right time to observe the rarely seen theatrical monk debate. In the back yard of the monastery, we observe hundreds of monks engage in their debate about Buddhist philosophy, using interesting ritualistic body and



arm movements to present their points. In the afternoon we head to the

Norbulinka, meaning

“*Precious Stone Garden*”, the Dalai Lama’s

exquisite, beloved summer palace. It is from here his holiness went into exile in 1959 and was never able to return. We will explore his living quarter, where we take in the magnificent wall paintings in the audience hall, describing in great detail the stories of the **14th Dalai Lama**, along with legends from the lives of the Buddha and



the holy **Tsongkhapa**. We visit his holiness’ meditation room, the bedroom, and the reception hall with the striking God King’s throne. The furniture has been untouched from the moment his holiness left the building in 1959. The clock on the wall was stopped and pointed at the very minute of his departure. The big radio in the living room was set on the station his holiness listened to at the very night before he left his homeland..... Tonight, through special arrangement of **Orient Odyssey’s** unique “**People to People Contact®**”, we will have our dinner at a Tibetan home.

Sip the yak butter tea, chat with the family members – feel free to ask any questions, and



explore the authentic local life.

B/L/SD

Day 17 Yamdrok Lake Excursion



This morning we set out for a spectacular drive through the Yarlong Valley,

following Kyichu (also called the Lahsa

River) to the mighty Yarlong Tsangpo River, the highest major river in the world. After crossing the Tsangpo, we begin a hairpin ascent to the Kampa La Pass, which is at 15,700 ft, followed by a quick a one thousand foot descent. The blue green color of the famous, tranquil Yamdrok

Yumtso (tso means lake) suddenly appears before us. It is a brilliant alpine gem higher than any mountain in the contiguous United States. Yamdrok, literally mean “*The Lake of the Swans*”, shaped like a Swan who is about to fly and is stretching her wing. We travel along the lake shore and stop for a waterfront picnic. Savor the beauty of Tibet in solitude, and marvel



at the spectacular sceneries of clear sky, majestic blue water and snow capped mountains. Enjoy **Orient Odyssey's** exclusive “**People to People Contact®**” we randomly stop at a nearby village to visit a family, chat with the household members, observe the true, authentic, insight of the local Tibetan life. Return to Lhasa in the evening. **B/L/D**



Day 18 Lhasa – Chongqing

In the morning we reminisce about our visit to the “*roof of the world*” on our scenic drive to the airport. On route, we enjoy **Orient Odyssey's** unique “**People to People Contact®**” again with a random stop at a Village (or a school if possible), where we again enjoy interactions with Tibetan peasants, or teachers and students. By visiting different Tibetan households in different region on this journey – some are in the city, some are in the suburbs, while others are near the pristine wildness of Yamdrok Yumtso, we observe the different living standard and life styles, which will enable us to gain a better and a more in—depth understanding of today's Tibet. **Sichuan Airlines** flight 3U8634 will leave at 11:55 a.m., reaching Chongqing at 2:10 p.m.. Enjoy a VIP private transfer service to the 5 star, luxurious, **Hotel Harbour Plaza Chongqing**, with prime downtown location. Remaining of the day is free to explore, rest or shop. The hotel is

conveniently located on the busiest pedestrian-only shopping street in the city center. Restaurants, bars, shopping arcades, subway station and street markets are all within a short stroll! **B/F**

Day 19 Chongqing – USA

After breakfast, there is still some free time to explore, pack or savor the memory of the thrilling odyssey to Shangri-la, hidden tribes, and Tibet. Enjoy VIP private transfer service to the airport and check-in for homebound transpacific flight. We will arrive back to USA on the same day depends on the international flight schedule. **B/F**

Kindly refer to General Terms & Conditions

Featured luxury hotels and cruisers:

- | | | |
|----|--|-------|
| 1. | <i>Ocean Hotel Shanghai</i> | ***** |
| 2. | <i>Novotel Guiyang Downtown</i> | ***** |
| 3. | <i>Grand Metropark Hotel Kaili</i> | ***** |
| 4. | <i>Double Tree By Hilton Anshun</i> | ***** |
| 5. | <i>Grand Park Hotel Kunming</i> | ***** |
| 6. | <i>Grand Bay View Int'l Hotel Dali</i> | ***** |
| 7. | <i>Wonderport Int'l Hotel Lijiang</i> | ***** |
| 8. | <i>Jardin Secret Hotel Lhasa</i> | ***** |
| 9. | <i>Harbour Plaza Chongqing</i> | ***** |

Sample int'l flight schedule from Los Angeles:

MU586	LOS ANGELES – SHANGHAI	1230 / 1730+1
MU5424	CHONGQING – SHANGHAI	0850 / 1120
MU583	SHANGHAI – LOS ANGELES	1300 / 1005

Sample int'l flight schedule from San Francisco:

MU590	SAN FRANCISCO – SHANGHAI	1200 / 1820+1
MU5424	CHONGQING – SHANGHAI	0850 / 1120
MU589	SHANGHAI – SAN FRANCISCO	1425 / 1030

Sample int'l flight itinerary from New York JFK:

CX841	NEW YORK JFK – HONG KONG	1000 / 1405+1
CX5890	HONG KONG – SHANGHAI	1500 / 1730
CX6129	CHONGQING – HONG KONG	1510 / 1725
CX846	HONG KONG – NEW YORK JFK	1855 / 2240

- Special contract fares from other major US cities are available upon request.
- International and domestic flight schedules are subject to change without notice.

Important Notice

- ❖ Itinerary is subject to change due to local condition and weather. Kindly refer to attached General Terms and Conditions. Living conditions and culture in China and Tibet are different from those in North America and passengers should be aware and prepared.
- ❖ Never pack your passport, international air tickets, insurance documents, and medication into the check-in luggage. Please always keep those important documents with you.
- ❖ Domestic flight schedule might involve minor changes. Guides in each city will advise the most updated schedule and assist the group to check-in for each segment.

Any questions for logistics and sightseeing details, please feel free to call **Orient Odyssey** at

1-800-637-5778

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