

7-Day Yunnan Dali Shangri-La Lijiang Tour with Tiger Leaping Gorge Hiking

Trip overview

Journey into the heart of Southwest China on this **7-day Yunnan private adventure**, where ancient history meets breathtaking natural grandeur. This curated itinerary takes you along the legendary **Tea Horse Road**, connecting the serene lakes of **Dali**, the cobblestone charms of **Lijiang**, and the mystical Tibetan highlands of **Shangri-La**.

The centerpiece of your journey is a thrilling two-day trek through **Tiger Leaping Gorge**, one of the deepest and most spectacular canyons in the world. Feel the roar of the Jinsha River beneath you and the towering peaks of **Jade Dragon Snow Mountain** above. Beyond the trails, you'll immerse yourself in the vibrant traditions of the Bai, Naxi, and Tibetan peoples, visiting the majestic Songzanlin Monastery and the iconic Three Pagodas. Whether you are a dedicated hiker or a culture seeker, this tour offers an unparalleled look at the "South of the Clouds."

- **Durations:** 7 Days
- **Destinations:** Dali - Shangri-La - Lijiang
- **Tour inquiry:** <https://asiachinatour.com/7-days-yunnan-dali-shangrila-lijiang-tiger-leaping-gorge-hiking-tour/>

Itinerary

Day 1: Dali Arrival

Welcome to **Dali**, the land of wind, flowers, snow, and moon! Upon your arrival at **Dali Airport** or **Dali Railway Station**, your professional English-speaking guide and private driver will be waiting to greet you. You will then be transferred to your hotel in a comfortable, air-conditioned vehicle.

The rest of the day is yours to relax and soak in the laid-back atmosphere of this historic region. Perched between the majestic **Cangshan Mountains** and the shimmering **Erhai Lake**, Dali offers a unique blend of breathtaking scenery and rich ethnic culture. You can spend your evening exploring the vibrant streets of **Dali Ancient Town**, where traditional Bai architecture meets modern bohemian cafés.

Accommodation: Hotel in Dali

Meals: /

Professional Advice:

*Dali sits at an elevation of approximately **2,000 meters (6,560 feet)**. While altitude sickness is rare here, we recommend staying hydrated and taking it easy on your first day to help your body acclimatize before our upcoming hike. If you arrive early, a stroll through the "Foreigner's Street" (Yangren Jie) is a great way to find local silver handicrafts and sample traditional Bai tea.*

Day 2: Dali - Bai Culture & Lakeside Serenity

After breakfast, your guide will lead you into the heart of **Dali Old Town**. Encircled by ancient city walls, this historic hub is a treasury of traditional Bai architecture and cobblestone streets. You will have time to explore its hidden courtyards and vibrant markets where the legacy of the Nanzhao Kingdom still lingers.

Next, a 20 km drive brings you to **Xizhou Old Town**, a cluster of remarkably preserved Bai residences known for their exquisite woodcarvings and colorful frescoes. Here, you will experience the famous **Bai Three-Course Tea ceremony**, a traditional hospitality ritual that represents the "bitter, sweet, and reflective" stages of life. Your cultural journey continues in **Zhoucheng Village**, the "Hometown of Tie-Dyeing," where you will visit a local workshop to see masters create intricate patterns using ancient indigo techniques.

In the afternoon, you will board an **eco-friendly car** for a leisurely tour around the shores of **Erhai Lake**. This "ear-shaped" lake is the soul of Dali, and you will enjoy stunning, unobstructed views of the crystal-clear water set against the backdrop of the verdant **Cangshan Mountains**.

Accommodation: Hotel in Dali

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Advice: *While in Xizhou, don't miss the chance to try a "Xizhou Baba," a delicious local savory or sweet crispy pancake—it's a favorite among travelers. In Zhoucheng, the tie-dyeing workshops are highly interactive; if you're interested, you can often try your hand at the dyeing process. For the Erhai Lake tour, keep your camera ready as the reflection of the mountains on the water offers some of the best photography opportunities in Yunnan.*

Day 3: Dali to Shangri-La - Alpine Lakes & The Moonlight City

After breakfast, you will leave Dali and head north toward the mystical highlands of **Shangri-La**. Your first stop is the breathtaking **Pudacuo National Park**, the first national park in China to meet international standards. Here, you will immerse yourself in a pristine landscape of primitive forests, vast alpine meadows, and the tranquil waters of **Shudu Lake**. The fresh mountain air and the sight of wild flowers and grazing yaks offer a true "Earthly Paradise" experience.

Later, you will continue your drive to the heart of Shangri-La to explore **Dukezong Ancient Town**, also known as the "Moonlight City." As one of the oldest and best-preserved Tibetan settlements in the region, its labyrinthine cobblestone streets are filled with authentic charm. You will walk up to the top of **Guishan Hill** to witness the **Grand Prayer Wheel**—one of the largest in the world. Joining the locals to turn the golden wheel three times is said to bring good luck. From this vantage point, you will enjoy a stunning panoramic view of the entire city as the sun begins to set.

Accommodation: Hotel in Shangri-La

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Advice:

*Today you will ascend to an altitude of approximately **3,300 meters (10,800 feet)**. It is essential to move slowly and avoid strenuous activity this evening to prevent altitude sickness. We recommend drinking plenty of water and avoiding alcohol. Pudacuo National Park involves some walking along well-maintained wooden boardwalks; since the weather at this altitude can change rapidly, please bring a windbreaker or a light down jacket even if it feels warm in Dali.*

Day 4: Shangri-La to Tiger Leaping Gorge - Spiritual Heights & The First Trek

Your morning begins with a visit to the magnificent **Songzanlin Monastery**, often referred to as the "Little Potala Palace." As the largest Tibetan Buddhist monastery in Yunnan, this architectural masterpiece houses golden sculptures, colorful frescoes, and ancient scriptures. You will witness monks in their traditional robes and experience the serene spiritual atmosphere of the Tibetan highlands.

In the afternoon, the adventure shifts to the legendary **Tiger Leaping Gorge**, one of the deepest and most dramatic canyons on Earth. You will drive to Qiaotou to begin your **High Trail Trek**. The hike starts from Qiaotou Primary School and leads you through Changsheng and Zhong Nuoyu villages. The most challenging part of today is the infamous **28 Zigzag Bends**, a steep ascent that rewards you with breathtaking bird's-eye views of the roaring Jinsha River far below. Your day ends at the iconic **Halfway Guest House**, where you can relax on the famous "Balcony of Victory" facing the sheer cliffs of the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain.

Accommodation: Halfway Guest House (Mountain Guesthouse)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Advice:

Today's trek is physically demanding and involves significant elevation gain. Please ensure you have sturdy hiking boots with excellent ankle support. We recommend packing a "trekking bag" with only essentials (water, snacks, rain gear, and basic toiletries) and leaving your main luggage with the driver, who will meet you at the end of the trek tomorrow. The facilities at the Halfway Guest House are basic but clean, offering one of the most spectacular mountain views in the world—perfect for stargazing if the sky is clear.

Day 5: Tiger Leaping Gorge - The Deepest Canyon & Journey to Lijiang

Wake up to the awe-inspiring sight of the sun hitting the peaks of the **Jade Dragon Snow Mountain** right from your guesthouse. After a hearty mountain breakfast, you will continue your trek along the High Trail. The path winds along the cliffs, offering a relatively flat and incredibly scenic walk toward **Tina's Guesthouse**. This section provides some of the most iconic photo opportunities of the gorge, with the Jinsha River snaking through the canyon floor thousands of feet below.

After a well-earned lunch at Tina's, the adventure intensifies as you hike down to the **Middle Tiger Leaping Gorge**. This is the narrowest and most powerful section of the canyon. You will descend deep into the gorge to reach the riverbank, where you can feel the thunderous power of the water crashing against the "Tiger Leaping Rock." After conquering the climb back up, you will meet your

driver and head toward the UNESCO World Heritage City of **Lijiang**.

Accommodation: Hotel in Lijiang

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Advice:

*The descent and subsequent climb out of the Middle Gorge is steep and requires careful footing; please use the "Sky Ladder" only if you are comfortable with heights, otherwise, the traditional trail is a safer alternative. As you arrive in Lijiang, you will find the altitude is slightly lower (**2,400m**) than Shangri-La, making for a very comfortable night's sleep. If you have energy this evening, the Lijiang Old Town comes alive with beautiful lanterns and music—perfect for a celebratory dinner after your trek.*

Day 6: Lijiang - Glaciers, Turquoise Waters & Naxi Heritage

Today is dedicated to the majestic **Jade Dragon Snow Mountain**, the southernmost glacier in the Northern Hemisphere. After breakfast, you will head to the mountain base and board a **cableway to Glacier Park**. During the 25-minute ascent, you will witness a dramatic transition in scenery, from lush pine forests to the rugged, snow-dusted alpine zone. Once at the summit station (approximately **4,506m**), you can walk along the wooden plank roads to marvel at the ancient glaciers and the jagged limestone peaks piercing the clouds.

After descending, you will visit the breathtaking **Blue Moon Valley** (Baishui River). Fed by melting snow, the water here is a stunning, milky turquoise and flows over white terraced pools, creating a landscape that looks like a high-altitude fairyland. In the afternoon, you will transition from natural wonders to local history at **Yuhu Village**, a traditional Naxi settlement at the foot of the mountain. Here, you will visit the **Former Residence of Joseph Rock**, the famous Austro-American explorer who introduced Naxi culture and the beauty of Yunnan to the Western world through *National Geographic*.

Accommodation: Hotel in Lijiang

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Advice:

*Glacier Park reaches an altitude of **4,506 meters (14,783 feet)**, and the air is noticeably thin. We recommend moving slowly and using a portable oxygen bottle (available at the base) if you feel lightheaded. Even in summer, temperatures at the peak are near freezing, so a heavy down jacket is essential; these can also be rented at the cableway station. In Blue Moon Valley, the white limestone rocks can be very bright in the sun, so polarized sunglasses are highly recommended for the best views of the turquoise water.*

Day 7: Lijiang Departure

Enjoy your final breakfast in the peaceful atmosphere of **Lijiang**. If your flight allows, you may wish to take one last walk through the cobblestone alleys of the **Old Town of Lijiang**, watching the locals start their day by the canals or picking up some unique Naxi handicrafts and Pu'er tea as a memento of your Yunnan adventure.

At the appointed time, your travel guide and driver will meet you at your hotel to provide a private transfer to **Lijiang Sanyi International Airport (LJG)** for your onward journey. As you fly out, you'll have a spectacular aerial view of the mountains and gorges you've conquered over the past week. We wish you a safe and pleasant flight to your next destination!

Accommodation: /

Meals: Breakfast

Professional Advice:

*Lijiang Airport is located about 30 kilometers (18 miles) from the Old Town, usually taking around 45 to 60 minutes by car. We recommend arriving at the airport at least 2 hours before your domestic flight. If you are carrying Pu'er tea cakes or delicate local silver jewelry, ensure they are well-packed in your luggage. If you have any remaining energy, a quick morning visit to the **Black Dragon Pool Park** offers a stunning final reflection of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain in the water—a perfect closing photo for your trip.*

Booking Policy

Cancellation Policy

Cancellation by Customer

- Cancellation received before 60 days: FREE of charge
- Cancellation received from 30 days to 59 days prior arrival date: 20% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 15 days to 29 days prior arrival date: 40% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 7 days to 14 days prior arrival date: 70% of total rate
- Cancellation received less than 7 days prior arrival date or No show: 100% of total rate

Children Policy

The rate for children applicable for one child sharing a twin or double cabin with two adults.

- For infant (<04 years old): Free of Charge
- 04 - 11 years old without bed: 50% adult rate
- 04 - 11 years old with extra bed: 75% adult rate
- Above 11 years old with extra bed: 100% adult rate

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