



SOUTHWEST CHINA KARSTLANDS
OCTOBER 12 - 26, 2006

- Oct
Thu 12 The group gathers in LAX or JFK for departure just before midnight.
13 Cross Dateline and lose a day.
- Sat 14 Arrive Hong Kong in the morning and feel the rhythms of the Orient. Mary will escort the LAX group to our hotel and Dwight will wait at the airport to meet the JFK group who arrive a little later. We will all unite at our hotel and are then picked up by our tour bus to explore Hong Kong. Highlights include Victoria Peak, Stanley Market, and Repulse Bay with a cruise around the harbor on a local fisherman's junk. Group "welcome to China" Dinner.
Hong Kong, B/D
- Sun 15 Morning in Hong Kong. Breakfast at our hotel. You have time for some exploration of Hong Kong on your own. Evening flight to Guilin. *Guilin, B*
- Mon 16 Awake in this bustling city grown around legendary and spectacular karst towers. Orientation talk on China and Chinese karst before starting to explore Guilin and vicinity. Our private bus will take us to attractions of your choice. Dwight will take those with a special interest in caves to Chi Hsing Yan (Seven Star Cave), a large show cave for over 1,000 years while Mary will take those who prefer other sights such as Puto Hill, Elephant Trunk Park, and Folded Brocade Hill. We will regroup for lunch together. In the afternoon the karst folks can go with Dwight to the classic type-example of a Chinese foot cave complex at Chuanshan Cave while others join Mary and another guide for walking and shopping. A "welcome to the karst" dinner in the evening. *Guilin, B/L/D*
- Tue 17 A highlight of our trip is the 12-km-long Guan Yan (Crown Cave) river system. The non-karst folks should at least visit this one spectacular show cave. We will board our bus and travel south along the eastern side of the Li River to the cave entrance. Lunch in the village of Caoping before driving through spectacular karst above Crown Cave, visiting Xi Tangcun lakes at Xitang and looking down through karst windows to segments of the Crown Cave river system. Return to Guilin. Dinner on your own. An evening show, *Dreaming Li River*, enlivens our evening with good dancing and acrobatics. *Guilin, B/L*
- Wed 18 A highlight will be a visit to the Karst Research Institute and Museum. An introduction to the Museum will be given by Prof. Yuan or his designate. Wonderful exhibits illustrate Chinese karst. After lunch the hard-core can go with Dwight to a large polje and the small village of Nanxu. There four streams come together to form the river flowing 7km through the Crown Cave system. We will hike about a kilometer to the insurgence at Chuan Yen below the Nanxu Arch. Chuan Yen is a magnificent stream passage where explorers can expect to get muddy and wet to the waist. Although everyone may want to go to the Karst Institute, those that wish to forego the hike to the Nanxu Arch and the insurgence, can go with Mary and another guide to other Guilin attractions. *Guilin, B/L/D*
- Thu Up early for breakfast and put our luggage on a truck to go to Yangshuo. We board a boat

19 for a trip through the most spectacular portion of the Li River karst. Lunch is on the cruise boat, and we'll reach Yangshuo about 2 PM. *NOW*, in this small village on the banks of the Li River, you are surrounded by stunning Chinese tower karst! We check into our hotel and are reunited with our luggage.

Yangshuo has developed a tourist section on the river that offers outdoor cafés, cobble stone lanes, and great people watching. Breakfast and dinners the next few days will give you the opportunity to explore the offerings. We can easily visit the countryside with options to walk, bicycle, or sightsee from a minibus. Local attractions include karst, caves, Moon Hill, a giant and famous banyon tree, and more. Cormorant fishing with locals is an evening option. Tonight we have a group welcome dinner.

Yangshuo, B,L,D

Fri 20 The rural village of Xingping is first on our list today. The options are to visit Lotus Cave with Dwight or boat a short distance down the Li River to a local fishing village with Mary. Lunch will be in Xingping. You could also choose to spend a leisurely day in Yangshuo and continue with some of the local options suggested yesterday. More sight-seeing through the karst, with the option to bicycle back to town. Tonight will be the spectacular Night Show on the Li River (*Impression Sanjie*) – a remarkable and very unusual professional performance really beyond your expectations! Breakfast and dinner on your own.

Yangshuo, L

Sat 21 This morning we will travel southwestward to a complex foot-cave system inside Shuiyan hill. We will pass Moon Hill on the way and return to Yangshuo for lunch on our own. We have considerable flexibility for the afternoon and for tomorrow that we will discuss in Yangshuo. We can split into two or more groups. Options include travel across more rugged and scenic limestone landscape of the Dayao Shan (Mountains), to the small towns of Maling and Lipu, visiting more caves and karst such as Silver Cave and Lipu Fengyu Cave (named for the fish in the cave), bicycling or taking various small conveyances around the local countryside (as mentioned above), and various cultural opportunities, such as learning some of the rudiments of Chinese calligraphy. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner on your own.

Yangshuo

Sun 22 We will continue with various options as discussed yesterday. We will have a group lunch somewhere to be determined and may have an opportunity to visit the Yao nationality people who are in this area. Others may want to enjoy free time in Yangshuo. Breakfast and dinner on your own.

Yangshuo, L

Mon 23 We check out from our hotel in Yangshuo and drive north to the high terraces one sees in spectacular photos of China. Lunch is in the village of Sanjiang where we first meet various groups of minority people. Then we will continue to Dong minority villages and marvel at the Chenyang Rain and Wind Bridge. This extraordinary work of art serves as an enclosed town center, teahouse, and religious shrine. We will be treated to a show of traditional Dong singing and dancing, accompanied by lusheng pipes, a local and ancient musical instrument. Dinner and hotel back in Sanjiang.

Sanjiang, L/D

- Tue 24 After breakfast and some time to explore, we board our bus and travel to our lunch stop in Longshen, the closest thing to the Zhuang minority capital. Onward through villages of the longhair Red Yao to where we begin an easy 20-minute walk to our hotel in Pingan. Minority women carry our overnight bags and minority men offer a sedan chair ride for the laisd back. We will stay in the “best” hotel in Pingan which has private showers and Asian-style toilets. Pingan, B/L/D
- Wed 25 After breakfast in Pingan we will spend the morning walking around the Dragon’s Spine Rice Terraces, created by the local Yao minority over the millennia. They have sculpted 2,000-foot tall peaks and created the most astounding terraced rice fields in China. Walk back for lunch in Pingan and then down the hill again aided by local porters. Our bus takes us back to a farewell dinner before taking an evening flight to Hong Kong. Hong Kong, B/L/D
- Thu 26 Breakfast in Hong Kong and free time pending flight time. Return to the US of A and home, arriving the same day and gaining the day lost coming over. B

Optional add-on trips in China are available – let us know what your interests are.

TOUR INCLUDES:

- Round-trip air fare from west coast (either LA or San Francisco)
- Small group with special interests
- Hotel accommodations for 12 nights
- Welcome Banquet, Special Luncheons, and Farewell Dinner
- Most other meals, as shown in the itinerary
- Admissions and costs for activities listed in the itinerary
- English-speaking guides and special guides at times
- Second English-speaking guide in Guilin
- Chartered buses and other transport for our group
- Special arrangements for cave visits and karst studies
- Karst Museum at the Institute of Karst Geology in Guilin
- Visits to villages of minorities
- Special performances in Guilin, Yangshuo, and in minority areas
- Gifts for special people in China
- Escorted personally by Dwight Deal and Mary Fletcher

NOT INCLUDED:

- Transportation from home to west coast and return. Kim’s World Travel, an Asian specialist, will arrange reduced fares for connecting flights from home cities.
- Items of a personal nature
- Airport departure taxes in China
- Meals not included in the itinerary
- Travel insurance
- Visa application

Tour leaders:

Dwight is a hydrogeologist, karst researcher, and caver who has studied and explored major karst areas in China. In 1993, as part of the CRF China Caves Expedition, he spent a month in the Chinese karst. Mary is an experienced travel planner who has led numerous tours to China since 1982. For 10 years she was actively working with Sister Cities International and has accompanied high-level delegations in both countries. Dwight and Mary lead a similar karst trip to this same region in 2004 and have established relationships with professional scientists and guides in the area.