

A Special Chinese New Year Season Cultural | Photographic Expedition



A Photographic Diary of our "Special Western China Tour Feb. 2009"
by Yau-Sun Tong

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Enjoy...

Preface

The following images within this “**Photo-diary**” of 《2009 Feb. Western China Cultural/Photographic Expedition》 were taken with a little pocket-sized **Leica D-Lux 3** camera.

These **snapshots** are only intended **to capture** and **to document** the **events, our travel routes, the joy and fun of our tour members** during this lifetime experience of a fantastic visit to another region of western China; and for our memories.

The little “point-and-shoot” **D-Lux 3** has a lot of limitations in picture taking, little performance in terms of optical quality (certainly not compared to the famed **Leica R and M** camera systems with slide-films I am so often used to and fond of using), but at the same time it poses a challenge to myself for still trying to create meaningful images with it.

High quality slide-film images taken during this tour are **not** shown in this **photo-diary**.

Brief intro

Gathered in *Shanghai* at the end of January, our tour group flew to *GuangXi* province, started this lifetime experience of our

《 **2009 Feb Western China Cultural/Photographic Expedition** 》
which was especially

designed for those who were interested in a real cultural experience
in some of the most fascinating places for unusual and
rich topics of photography and travel.

Some of the most interesting areas and cultural events in *Southwestern China's*
GuangXi, GuiZhou & YunNan provinces were hand-picked
to be arranged in this expedition,

The following images in chronological order are intend to share the enjoyments
from some of the events and highlights of this 18-day journey –
another successful expedition in our
Western China Cultural/Photographic Tour Series.

My sincere appreciation and many thanks to all participants of this very special tour!



Gathered in Shanghai near the end of January, we started our good time by a visit to my good friend Mr. Tan's family...

At 86, Mr. Tan and his wife have been and still great adventure travelers and Mr. Tan is a busy writer, photographer...

Our welcome dinner was rich and yummy! In fact, all meals everyday during our journey were great! I'll show you few photos in this diary, just to tease your taste buds a bit...





The next day, we flew to GuangXi province. Started our Southwestern China journey by a nice visit to the Provincial Museum where lots of valuable information and artifacts give a great introduction to the cultures and history of the place.



See who are looking up...

The next day, after a refreshing morning strolling by the riverside, we headed towards the China-Vietnam border region.



On route, lots to see, to photo and to taste...

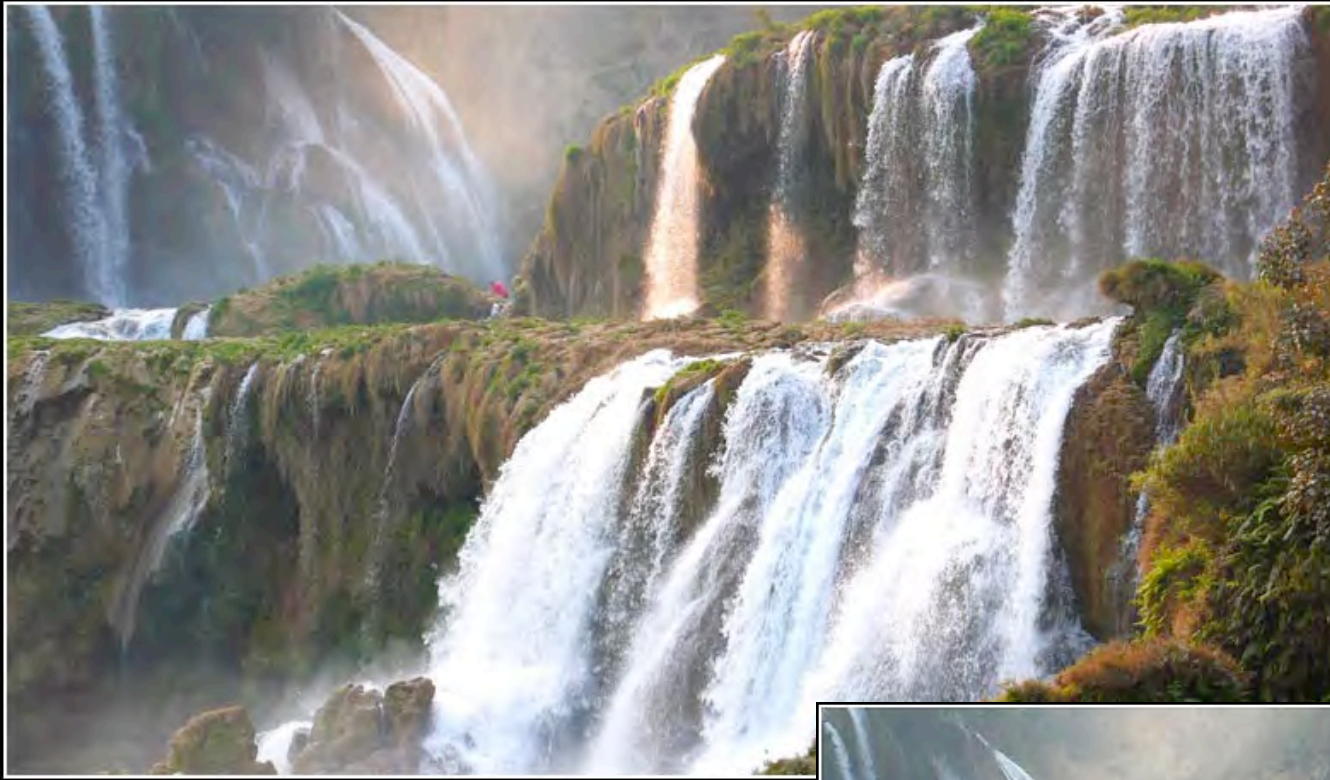


Good foods are daily events, anywhere we go, no question...



We are in the trans-border waterfalls of Detian, looking over the other side is Vietnam...





It is a wonderful place, a unique waterfall, even in the winter dry season it is still powered by plenty of water, the river which runs through it is pristine...

You can see the 1/3 on the left side is in Vietnam while the larger part is within GuangXi in China...



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Across this rock, it is Vietnam already, a small market provides a bit more of human interest things...



From this viewpoint, it gives a bit more overview of the waterfalls...



photo by:
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for a brief moment, some of our members became “black-clothed Zhuang” as well...

The next is JingXi village...

An intended cultural visit is the traditional “black-clothed Zhuang” village. This particular Zhuang minority tribe still retains their unique cultural identity... a very worthwhile visit indeed.





Friend of mine Mr. Lu (4th from left) - the head of the Longlin County had a welcome dinner for us, on behalf of the people of Longlin extending their exceptional hospitality...

(Yau-Sun in the middle with Tilley-hat on)

We are coming to the remote county of Longlin for a unique local minority tribal festival...



Each group member was given gift of a photo introductory book of Longlin...



Local villagers preparing for the joyful festival days...

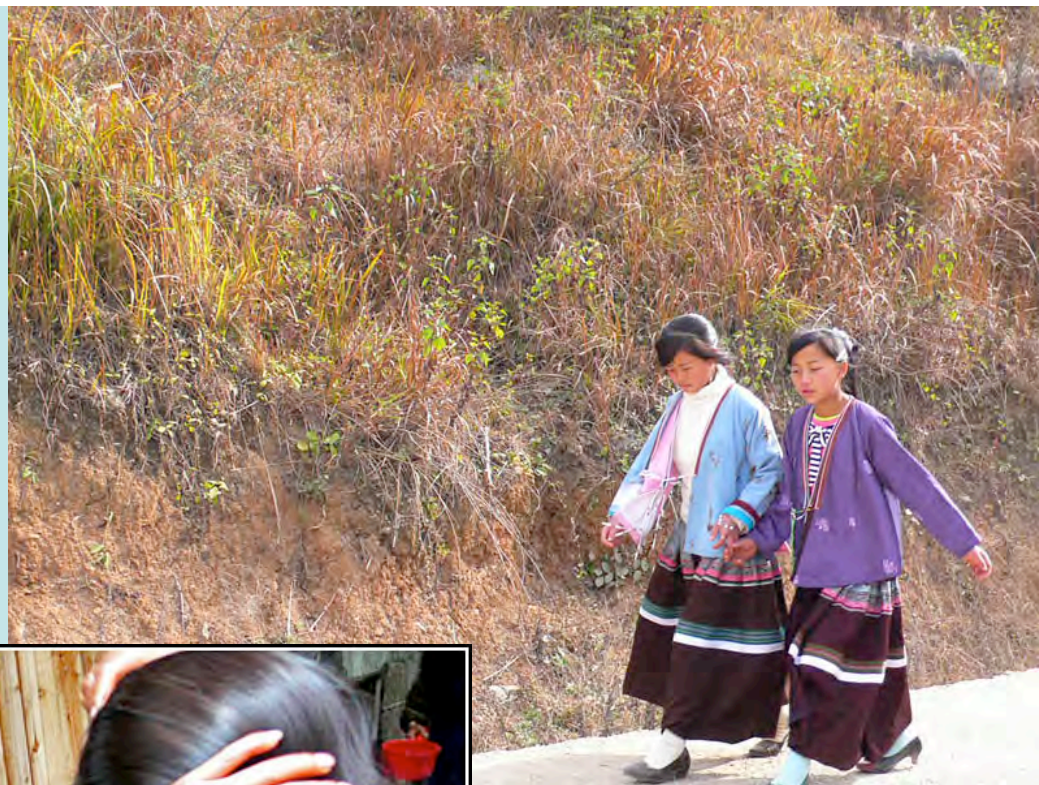


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Crossfire... who are the “stars” of the festival...?





“Power face supply centre” ???

If you know both Chinese and English, you'll likely burst into laughter...

It is a sign on top of a noodles supply counter in a restaurant we dine at while in XinYi.
(photo credit: Daniel)



Daily...tasty and rich in variety...balanced nutritionally, many in our group lost unwanted weight while eating a lot...



Welcomed into a Buyi village while
visiting southwestern Guizhou...





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Buyi villagers had their traditional music and dance welcoming us...

When villagers asked us to show them something back, Jason and Keith did a bit of push-hands...



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The “Ten-thousand-peaks”
area is a part of the UNESCO
World Heritage Sites of Nature
in Southwest China.

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Left southwestern Guizhou,
we entered eastern YunNan...





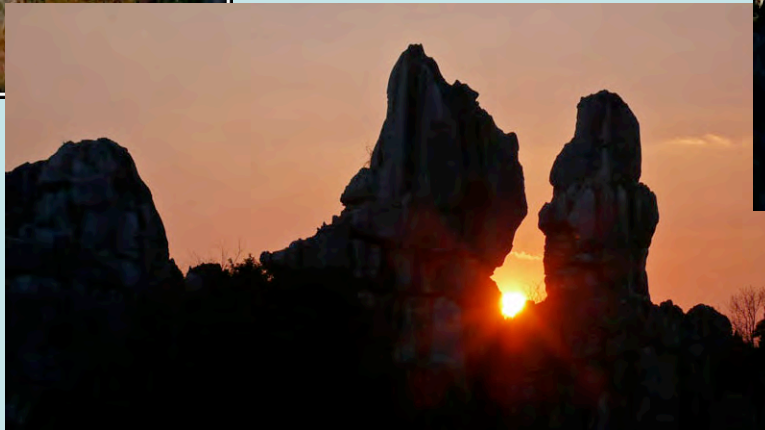
Landscapes and foods continue to be fantastic...

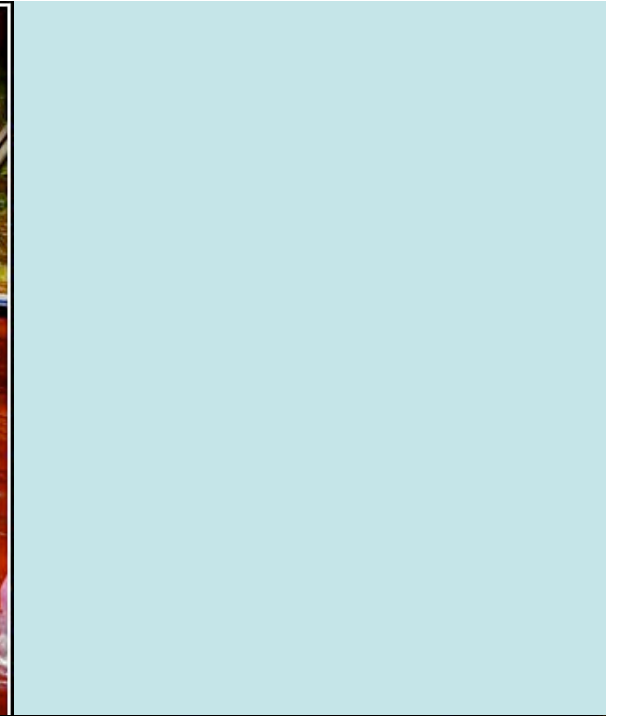
With an observing eye, you may discover
the Yin & Yang formations in nature...





The weather condition was nice...
what a contrast to the harsh
winter back in Canada...





Lusciousness for the taste buds and eyes...



The first thing upon arriving Kungming was a real authentic YunNan “GuoQiao Noodle” meal...

From here we are heading toward the north where junction with southern SiChuan, a remote region with some genuine local cultures, and an extremely colorful festival.





Through some winding and scenic mountain roads,
we arrived the County of YongRen...

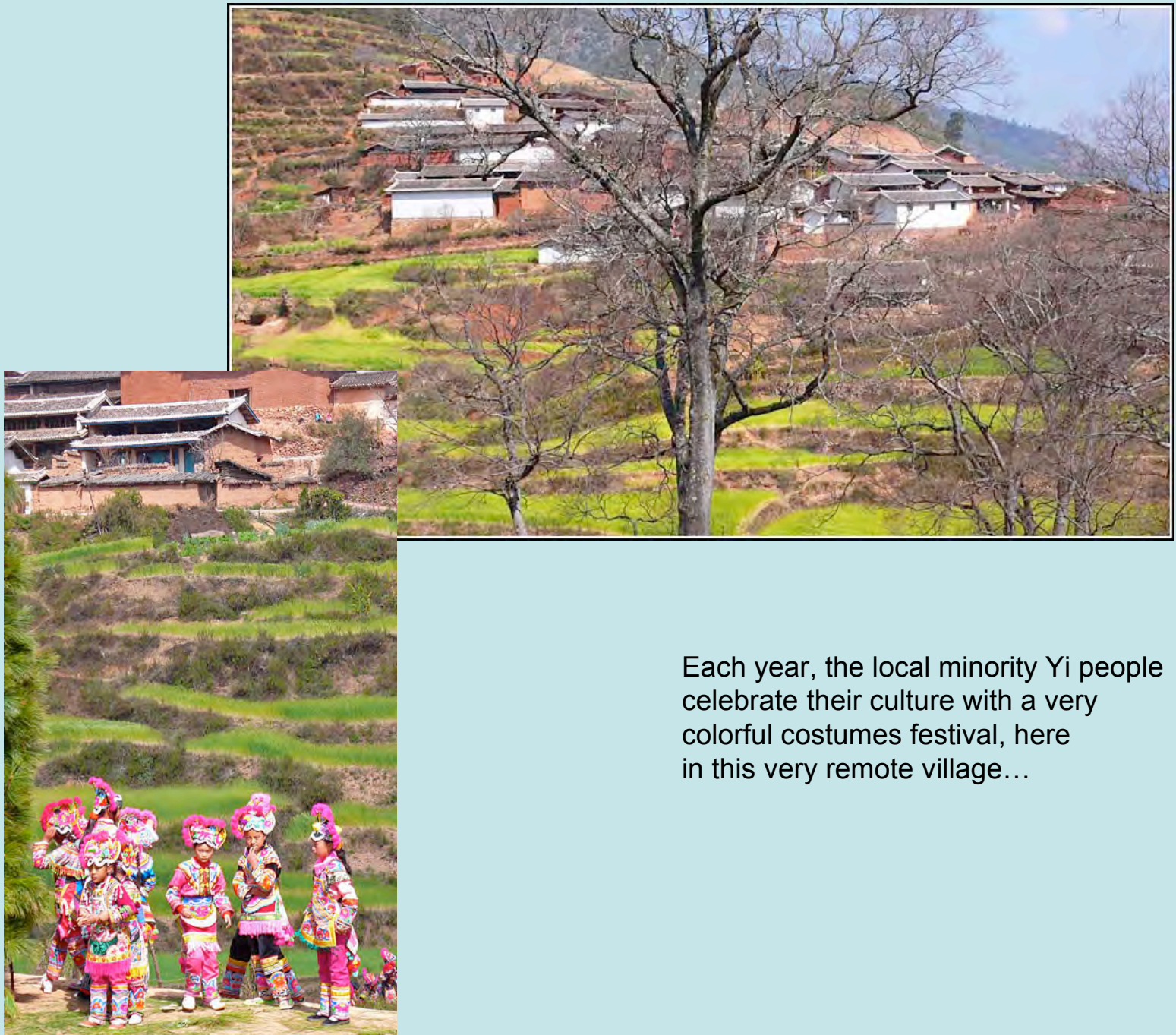


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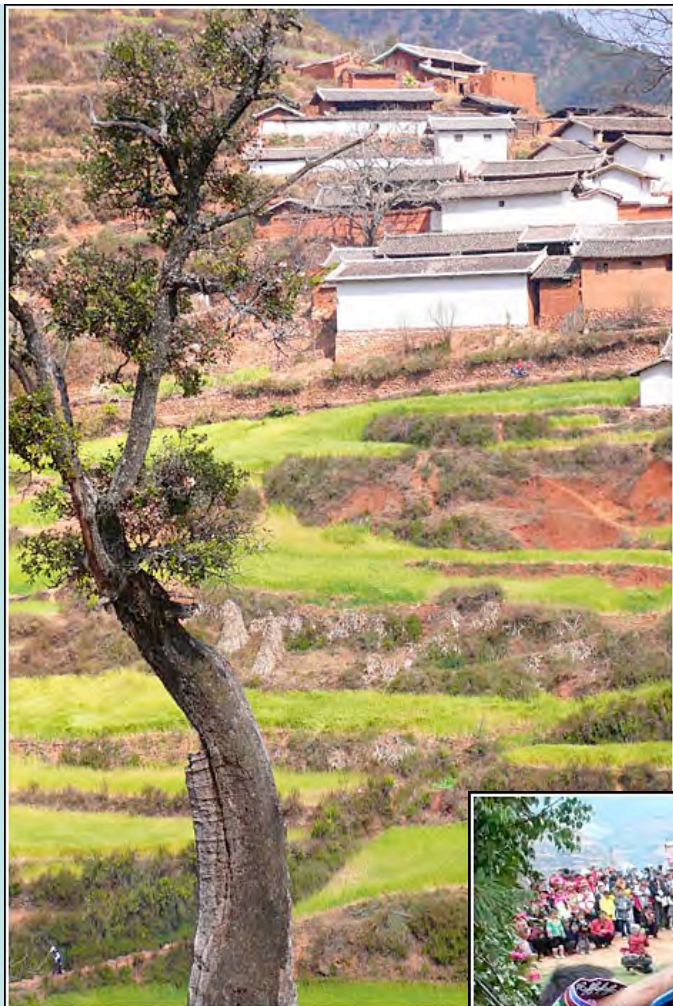
On route, we are traveling towards the village that will hold the unique local Yi costumes festival...



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Each year, the local minority Yi people celebrate their culture with a very colorful costumes festival, here in this very remote village...



The event will be an envy for many photographers... as well just those who are interested in genuine cultures...





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It is not a touristy destination, but it is exactly the type of unusual cultures and natures that I am interested in bringing my groups and my friends come to feel and enjoy...



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On our way out back south,
we even had a visit to an
exclusive geographical
park.



Tasty memory of dishes
still lingers...





At night, some of us even participated in the dance with the local people in the town square...

Arrived XinPing County at nightfall. Friend of mine Mr. Tao who's the Chairman of the Arts & Literature Association had already prepared a welcoming feast of meal for us, local flavored cooking...

Mr. Tao gave us introduction to the local cultures & history during the banquet...





The next morning, after a drive along some winding mountain roads, we arrived at a typical HuaYaoDai village...



Mr. Tao, a writer, photographer, administrator, scholar in local minority cultures, standing inside the museum of HuaYaoDai culture he built...

It was a wonderful day of visit in the HuaYaoDai villages, their unique costumes, their dances and singings, so enjoyable and so distinctive to this tribe.





How about a happy group photo before leaving the village...



Of course, a delicious local flavored meal is a must before depart from the village... tasty, colorful, nutritious, plentiful and wholesome...



And we arrived at our relaxation spot... an opulent lakeside hotel, sunny and clear water..., plush rooms and friendly service... the delectable breakfast was unforgettable...; who needs that bitter icy cold weather back in xxxxxx...





The next day, a morning of leisure drive back to the city of KunMing. Lunch was in a locally famous restaurant for a healthy and lip-smacking special meal - a hotpot style multi-mushrooms, variety of veggies and cuisines...



An afternoon visit of the YunNan Museum with rich contents of cultural and historical, archaeological artifacts...
a real treat to the mind and a flavorsome brain food...



Followed with an interesting stroll around the well known “birds and flower” market...



Next to the five-star lakeside hotel we stayed in KunMing, is the charming Jake Lake Park.

Early in the morning, healthy minded citizens take charge of all spaces for morning exercises, interacting with the birds...

Though the southwest was great, our journey was coming to a conclusion... we flew back to Beijing preparing for our home return trip.

Upon arrival in Beijing, an interesting dinner arrangement was awaiting for us - a Mongolian dinner with dancing/singing show... a scrumptious, refreshing, and relaxing evening, as well as fascinatingly cultural...





The next morning was a pleasant general sightseeing for those whom had not been to Beijing before...



Entering into the Forbidden City...



XiaoXie looks so delightful...



An evening of authentic traditional Beijing “lamb fondue”, it was deliciously tasty...

The “798 Art District” in the northeast part of the city proved to be a very interesting place to visit...



INCARNATIONS 化身



And the next day... a very special visit to a friend of mine - Dr. LuoQing. In her clinic we had time to ask questions about her Chinese traditional medicine practices and her expertise in special ability of “Qi” energy healing...



The evening spent in a marvelous restaurant, the succulent “Peking Duck” was amongst the attractions of the night...



The saying goes *“You won’t be a great man till you’ve been on the Great Wall” ...*; and our members were not disappointed at that...



Mike and Ryan absorbing teachings from Master Feng...

It really is a happy completion of our tour!



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For those in our group who are Taiji practitioners, the pinnacle of the highlights was the family visit with Grand Master Feng...

I took those lucky few to my teacher's home in Beijing... Internationally famous. At 82, Master Feng handles Jason pleasantly at ease...

Epilog

The snapshots in this Photo-diary are in no way able to represent the richness of culture and nature scenes we've seen, the fun and joy we've experienced during our group's 2009 Feb. Chinese New Year Season "Western China Cultural/Photographic Expedition" travel...

for Yau-Sun Tong's special "Western China Cultural/Photographic Series" expedition tours for July 2009 and February 2010
(see next page for description)

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Yau-Sun Tong's Upcoming Special Western China Cultural/Photographic Expeditions

July 14th - 31st, 2009

A very special 18-days "Tea-Horse Ancient Trail" expedition, starting from the very northwestern YunNan, through the very eastern part of Tibet, around the very western of SiChuan, then into the very southeastern of Qinghai - attending the famous yet mysterious Tibetan Horse-back Racing Festival in this very interior part of western China...; and to the source of Yellow River... By 4-wheel-drive vehicles, journey through this most magnificent nature route in the world, with some of the most interesting and authentic cultures still existing...

A true Shangri-La experience for the mind and camera that will last for life. An unconventional itinerary only offered by Yau-Sun Tong's "Special Western China Cultural/Photographic Expedition Series".

Feb 21st - Mar 10th, 2010

A "Chinese New Year Season Cultural/Photographic Special Tour". Starting Beijing travel to unique regions in northwestern China, for the authentic festivals in southern GanSu and northern SiChuan, colorful cultural events and landscapes will keep your cameras busy without a break... tasty local flavored cuisines...; then continuing our fantastic journey by traveling down to some warm and sunny southern China regions...

Completing our expedition by boat along the Xijiang River to Macao, after visiting a UNESCO site, by boat crossing the bay to Hong Kong international airport for exit flight back home... an 18-days unforgettable experience.