

A Photographic Diary of our 2017 Nov-Dec Special China Cultural Expedition:
A Journey by High-speed-train to Southwest
by Yau-Sun Tong



Shanghai, JiangXi province, GuiZhou province, YunNan province...

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Preface

All following images within this “**Photo-diary**” were taken mostly with a *cellphone*, the rest few taken with a little *pocket-sized Leica D-Lux 5 point/shoot 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 one of the western China regions; and for our memories.

A cellphone & the little “point-and-shoot” D-Lux 5 has many limitations in picture taking, little performance in terms of optical quality 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 that...

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

Some of the goals I am trying to achieve in my photography include:

- *True to the moments in nature and culture;*
- *Natural and candid;*
- *Compositionally challenge and unique;*
- *Meaningful in subjects and topics;*
- *Story telling with good impacts;*
- *Not to disturb and intrude into local human subjects’ life.*

Brief intro

Gathered in *Shanghai*, our tour group started the great experience of our
《*2017 Nov-Dec Special China Cultural/Photographic Expedition*》
which was especially
designed for those who were interested in a real cultural experience
in some of the fascinating places for unusual and
rich topics of photography and travel.

The following images in chronological order are intend to share the enjoyments
from some of the events and highlights of our journey of this over 14-day
journey – another successful one of our ongoing specially arranged
Western China Cultural/Photographic Series Expeditions.

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

Featuring: Shanghai entry; by train all the way to western regions of China... with visits To Jiangxi province, Guizhou province, and Yunnan province, many worthy local culture and nature...; another experience of a lifetime!

Taking advantage of the Shanghai-Kunming high-speed-train that just inaugurated this year, combined with the not hot, not cold season in regions along our travel route from Shanghai to Kunming, with a local festivals...



《2017中国江西、貴州、雲南等地区民俗風光文化摄影行》

2017 "Train through the Wonderlands" ...

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Enjoy...



Shanghai Arrival

入境上海

Later in November,
we arrived at Shanghai, as always, the
welcoming dinner was excellent!
(and the daily meals following
were torturing too...)



Wonderful variety... 美食欢迎



A short visit to a local ancient township before our formal itinerary prove to be relaxing... 水乡闲游

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Local townswomen...



Hannah even had a little gift shopping...



Fresh, tasty & healthy good foods with multiple local flavours & styles are always part of the daily rituals in our expeditions...

Welcome dinner – Shanghai style...





We started from the huge, clean and orderly Shanghai high-speed-train station...
開始我們的高鐵西南行...

China's new high-speed-train system is a marvel indeed... those are designed for speeds up to 350km/hr., very stable and comfortable, absolutely on time...





High speed train to Jiangxi

高铁到江西...

Nowadays, the new modern high-speed train system is a great way of traveling in many parts of China... the two hours forty minutes ride to ShaoRao of Jiangxi was a breeze with comfort...

Mary & Grant, Carolyn & David were served by the well-trained, well mannered, pleasant women-conductors...





Yes, got off the train, the first thing was to this garden restaurant for local flavor yummy lunch dishes...

抵达江西上饶午餐...





After lunch, we traveled up to the pretty SanQing Mountain 三清山 - one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Jiangxi province... (see next page)

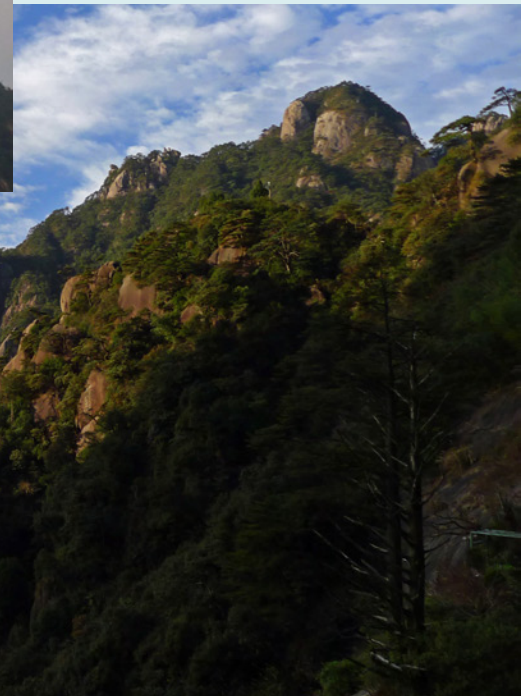




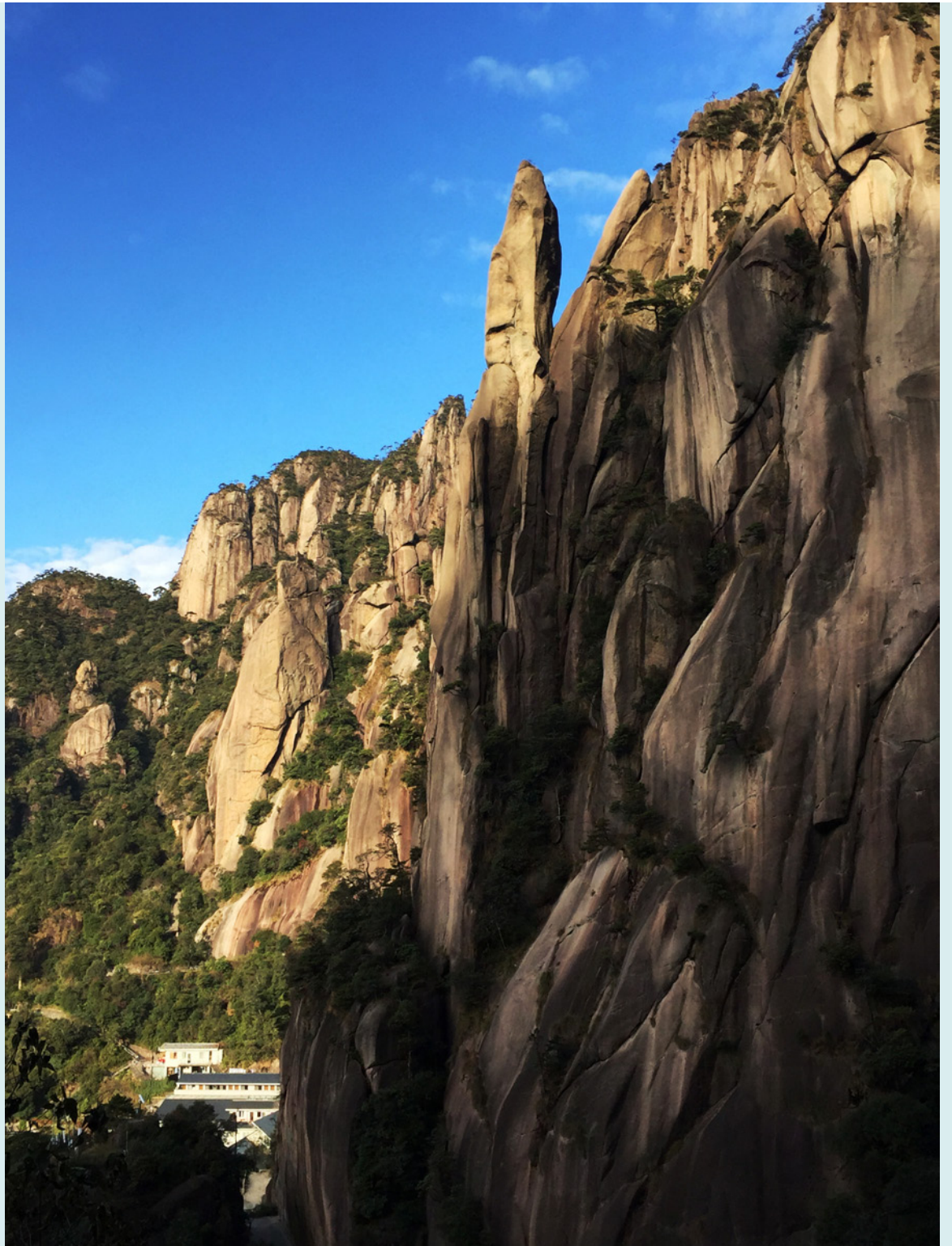
Fascinatingly up on Mt. SanQing
三清山...

UNESCO describes Mt. SanQing as:

“Mount Sanqingshan National Park displays a unique array of forested, fantastically shaped granite pillars and peaks concentrated in a relatively small area. The looming, intricate rock formations intermixed with delicate forest cover and combined with ever-shifting weather patterns create a landscape of arresting beauty.”



Although it needs days to properly explore the beauties and cultures around this UNESCO site designated mounting... but for us, the short encounter still have left a deep impression...



Hey, could you see our hotel...? 😊

Next day, a good morning on some of the mounting trails...





At a mature age, Martin is always the best hiker, full of vitality...👍 much better than many much less mature ones...





Here is a better view of our last night's hotel... 😊

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Local, fresh, tasty, healthy, balanced meals are the standards in our daily meals, throughout my expeditions...

We then arrived to WuYuan region 婺源地区, to a unique ancient village on the hilltop - HuangLing village 篁岭 ...







It's such a wonderful place for those who are interested in photography and studying in details...



Villagers were examining the chrysanthemum putout for drying...
This species produced here is famous and desirable for tea making...









Straight up, the house is my “hotel room” for the night... 😊
don't be fooled by the outer appearance, look inside “my room”...
我的过夜“酒店”外观...

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Spacious, tasteful, comfortable,
clean and with all amenities...

里面整洁宽敞干净舒适...



Left HuangLing village, we arrived another interesting ancient village Yaoli (瑶里古村), located in the Jingdezhen Porcelain-town region...







Our expedition group members found this lady potter's works interesting & in good prices... 村里陶瓷艺人

Here Cynthia was happy to pay for the good bargain... 😊



三级古树

樟树

Cinnamomum camphora (L.) Presl

科属: 科樟树属

树龄: 200年

二〇一七年六月



After another good meal... we were heading to the famous JingDeZhen - known to be the “Porcelain-Capital” of the world... 前往瓷都景德镇 (see next page...)





We checked into this high-class hotel inside JingDeZhen, located right amongst some old porcelain/pottery factories... uniquely interesting... 下榻景德鎮老廠區

Of course, for those who are into the art of porcelain/pottery, JingDeZhen is like a “sacred place”, known as the “porcelain capital of China”, with over 2,000-yrs long history in ceramic industry...





Old porcelain/pottery factories around...





A morning runner passing through this old workshop gate, with the slogan:
“廠舉大慶旗，人學王進喜” - for those who understand the modern
Chinese history, who will understand that... for those who do not,
there is little point to explain here...





In the light of early morning sun, a woman was playing Taiji by this old factory structure...

And also time for us to move onto
The wetland region of the Boyang
Lake – the largest fresh water lake
in China... many waterfowls
depend on the area...
鄱陽湖溼地參觀



By boat, we were into the lake region...







Many species live here, and migratory birds come to stay over the winter...

湖區越冬候鳥...



Sunset, time for us to go for a good meal & check into the hotel in
NanChang 前往南昌 - the capital city of Jiangxi province...





滕王閣
旅游区

旅游文明行为公约

- 文明旅游，从我做起。自觉遵守旅游文明行为规范，做文明游客，做文明景区。文明旅游，从我做起。
1. 遵守公共秩序，排队守秩序，不乱插队，不随意拥挤。
 2. 爱护公共财物，不乱涂乱画，不乱刻乱刻，不乱刻乱画。
 3. 维护环境卫生，不乱扔垃圾，不乱吐痰，不乱吐痰。
 4. 保护文物古迹，不在文物古迹上刻画，不攀折花木，不攀折花木。
 5. 尊重民俗民风，不随意打扰他人休息，不随意打扰他人休息。
 6. 尊重他人权利，不随意侵犯他人隐私，不随意侵犯他人隐私。
 7. 文明用语，不恶语相向，不随意辱骂他人，不随意辱骂他人。
 8. 文明着装，不穿奇装异服，不穿奇装异服。

Convention on Civilized Tourist Behavior

文明旅游，从我做起。自觉遵守旅游文明行为规范，做文明游客，做文明景区。文明旅游，从我做起。

1. Observe public order, queue up, do not cut in line, do not crowd.
2. Protect public property, do not scribble, do not graffiti, do not graffiti.
3. Maintain environmental hygiene, do not litter, do not spit, do not spit.
4. Protect cultural relics, do not carve on cultural relics, do not pick flowers, do not pick flowers.
5. Respect local customs, do not disturb others' rest, do not disturb others' rest.
6. Respect others' rights, do not invade others' privacy, do not invade others' privacy.
7. Use polite language, do not use abusive language, do not use abusive language.
8. Dress appropriately, do not wear strange clothes, do not wear strange clothes.

滕王閣文明公约

文明旅游，从我做起。自觉遵守旅游文明行为规范，做文明游客，做文明景区。文明旅游，从我做起。

文明公约 文明公约 文明公约

文明旅游，从我做起。自觉遵守旅游文明行为规范，做文明游客，做文明景区。文明旅游，从我做起。



TengWangGe Tower in NanChang city has long been ranked first among the three famous pavilions in China... with its history, architecture, literature & calligraphy that are well-known among Chinese...
參觀江南三大名樓之滕王閣...





王郎醉後更在...
...

黃鶴岳陽而此...
...

Guizhou Province 前往贵州黔东南

It is time to Guizhou province... and we were on our second leg of high-speed-train ride... 4 hr 20 min later arrived this landlocked province, to visit the traditional Dong people in the southeastern region of the province...



Lookout from our train car windows while closer to destination of Guizhou...



Normally Guizhou's weather often to be cloudy and wet...
but during our visit, it put out the best for us!

The QianDongNan region of Guizhou is an enchanting place
full of original cultures, colorful local minority festivals,
unique dancing and singings... wonderful for those
who dislike the modern city, commercial touristic traps,
but like to explore the real thing...

抵达贵州黔东南

And a relaxing enjoyment of
a good supper to celebrate our
arrival to this enchanted region
is a proper thing... 😊
(see next page)

And a short **video** of our great
dinner with Dong waitress
singing in their native
welcoming songs:

<https://vimeo.com/248665468>





See video:
<https://vimeo.com/248665468>

We are here for the annual Dong people's "Big-song" festival of a "Reed-pipe" competition... 原生态侗族大歌芦笙大赛



A true cultural spectacle...

You may view one of my short **videos** to see how the Dong reed-pipes were playing out:

<https://vimeo.com/249001691>











占里古村 Zhanli village - For those who can read the words on this plaque, who would find the wisdoms of the villagers philosophical... and for centuries life in this village keeps excellently balanced...

Even in the village, we were eating excellently...





Happy festivity... great for cultural feeling and those into photography...





Rice drying rack...

And further we were into another county festival...







Dong people are known for their Dong-pavilions...







Our meal is still no shabby...



And here we were welcomed into another unique village – DiQing 地青村
would you like to know what takes to enter the village?
See my short **video here**: <https://vimeo.com/248816657>



With dancing, singing, music... villagers led and welcome our group (the only outsider group) into DiQing village, totally natural & wonderful...

Today is the "Yudong Festival" in the village, being celebrated once a year... "鱼冻节"
侗族村民们载歌载舞欢迎我们入村...



DiQing village has interesting history, in 1934 December, the "long march Red Army passing through here, Mr. Zhou EnLai dismount from his horse, going through this building... The locals named it "Red-army Pavilion" 红军楼

Lunch, the village chief prepared a special meal for us in his house...
of course, with Dong people's hospitality, singing, wine drinking, Dong cooking...
fascinating cultural experience... and the foods are tasty with local touch...
could not be any fresher than this just from the field... fish, veggie... good rice etc...



我们在村长家里
午餐侗家村莊菜



Standing left is the village chief and our host of the lunch... 😊

And you must see my short **video** in order to have a feel why this lunch event is so special & enjoyable... :

<https://vimeo.com/248900889>





The ancestor-worship ceremony as well the Street Dong song singing competition were very culturally worthy & interesting...
祭祖儀式





侗族對歌 See my short **video** of this “antiphonal style”
singing between the two groups of Dong villagers... :

<https://vimeo.com/248902576>



Our group & villagers celebrate together... See my short **video** of this happy moment: <https://vimeo.com/248904361>

Continuing, we are into another Dong-township, torture with dinner, all empty,
at least six bottles those large bottled beer... one word our group members
learnt well in Chinese is to say “beer” in Mandarin... 😬
都學會了如何用中文說要啤酒了...







Definitely another "torture"...

We arrived the capital city of Guizhou, in order for our next day taking our third leg of high-speed train ride to Yunnan province...

For the dinner, a special Guizhou cuisine in an elaborated local restaurant was the theme of the night...
貴州名菜酸湯魚宴...



我們高鐵從貴陽到昆明2.5小時...

Guiyang to Kunming, only 2.5 hrs by this high-speed train...

On board the train, Grant became instant star, piles of local women rushing to pose photo with him...
洋高個子 Grant 成明星了... (looks like Mary might not like that too much... 🤔)





Yunnan Province 抵达雲南

A good meal before we head down to southern Yunnan in the afternoon...



Before even out of the station... we could already feel it's Yunnan's weather... 🙌

元陽哈尼梯田 The Yuanyang Rice Terraces have long been attracting photographers...

After it's designation as a UNESCO site in 2013, it's name has been even more famous...

See UNESCO's description of this region: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1111>









Along the Red-river, we were going towards
the border region with Vietnam...
沿紅河南下往中越邊界地區...



In times roads were congested...



And an unexpected detour required our driver (an excellent driver 🙌) to make a U-turn on this winding mountain road... while Carolyn was inspecting the situation... 😏





We arrived the border town Hekou,
across the bridge is Vietnam...

与越南交界之中国河口镇...



Walking early morning by the riverside in Hekou, met those two Vietnamese strolling around selling souvenirs, they cross the border from Vietnam to China daily to do business... Vietnam is just the other side of the river...
兩位在河口做遊客生意的越南人...





Hekou is also having many touches of Vietnamese things, and is a important border crossing town... I bought some fresh Jackfruits from those two Vietnamese fruit-sellers who came over from Vietnam to China's Hekou to do business daily...

我也向這兩個越南水果攤主買了些她們剛切好的樹上菠蘿來品嚐...



See next page:
A railroad connects the two countries...





We are having nice Vietnamese coffee with border river-views...



The railroad bridge connect **China & Vietnam** here...



The feeling is so nice, we decided to have a relaxing lunch here - Vietnamese style...

A restaurant right by this historic railway bridge, the tastes were great...







From Hekou, we drive north back to Honghe district's center - Mengzi. Mengzi is a very nice, clean and quite little city... the 5-star hotel we stayed is beautiful, with all amenity, facing a charming lake and many art sculptures in the lakeside parks... along with some historical building left from a hundred years ago, when the French was here... 抵达红河州首府蒙自市，下榻官房五星大酒店...



Along the lakeside road walking towards the old
French Custom-house from over a hundred-year ago...





南湖邊上的法國酒莊舊址...

Next page we could see the old French building, back in history, from 1889, some European countries entered here by way of Vietnam, had their colonialism activities in Yunnan for years...



法國花園酒庄

法國花園
地址：...
電話：...
營業時間：...

The Nanhu lake in the center of Mengzi looks nice at daytime or at night too...





Of course, one of the most famous Yunnan cuisine is the: “Cross Bridge Noodles”, which was originated here in Mengzi...

Yes, the waitress is preparing the table for our group only... and the set up of this special noodle is elaborate... and this all dishes & the big bowl of soup is for one person...

云南著名的过桥米线就是出于蒙自...





Yes, here is only for our group's torture... 😊
我們的“蒙自過橋米線”晚宴...



The server is demonstrating how to mix the ingredients with the hot chicken soup, to make a delicious, wholesome “Cross-bridge-noodle”...





碧色寨

BISEZHAI

草坝——黑龙潭

站
正宗
特色
小拉
拉
木
白
13
电
话
15

Next day, we were at a historical site,
With the old French built (1909)
“Vietnam-Yunnan railroad”
major station...

蒙自碧色寨火車站...

Quote:

“碧色寨火车站是中国最早的火车站之一，
建筑规模宏大，保存完好，风格独具特色，
在中铁史上罕见，是研究中国铁路发展史
的重要实物资料。也是：

‘云南十八怪，火车未通国内，先通国外’
的明证。”





的第十...
乎在诉说...
来的、最早的...
的第十...
乎在诉说...
来的、最早的...

A hundred year ago, Bisezhai was the place where France, the United States, Greece and the other merchants gathered. Romantic France has exotic life. So they built a tennis court in the hillside beside the Yunnan-Vietnam railway by using the material from Italy and other countries. This tennis court was the first clay tennis court in Yunnan in a hundred years. The red soil on the sidelines seemed to tell once the prosperity and the earliest gentleman's sport from the Europe





All in all, this old train station place gives a rusty, historically interesting bygone era feeling...



碧色寨

碧色寨車站
Biseizhai Station

碧色寨車站
Biseizhai Station



After lunch, we were heading to Kunming direction for the next day direct flight back to Shanghai for each of our group members our home return flights...

午餐後準備前往昆明飛返上海出境...



On route passing by city of Mile, we stopped by the beautiful
“Mile Hot Spring Resort”, where I led two of our previous
expeditions stayed before... 途经弥勒湖泉...



Arrived back in Shanghai, breakfast at our 5-star hotel, ready for our home return flights... 回抵上海，准备出境回程...



A direct flight from Kunming back to Shanghai for exit ...

Shanghai exit for home return international flights...

a grand completion of our another worthy expedition... 😊 🙌

What a totally enjoyable journey!

从昆明飞返上海离境，旅程圆满落幕...

Welcome to partake our upcoming non-commercial, alluring - 2018 April:

“From China’s Shangri-La through the Golden-Triangle to Laos” ! Please see details:

http://photoart.chebucto.org/photos-folder/2018April_From_Shangri-La_to_the_Golden-Triangle_Expedition.pdf

See epilogue in the next page... 🙌

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 "2017 Train through the Wonderlands Expedition" ...

for Yau-Sun Tong's special "Western China Cultural/Photographic Series"
non-commercial expeditions for 2018

e.g. the 2018 April **"From Shangri-La through the Golden-Triangle to Laos" Expedition:**
<http://photoart.chebucto.org/photonews.html>

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or my previous inviting photo-diaries:

<http://photoart.chebucto.org/gallery5.htm>

Good-bye for now...