

History and Culture: Cycling Tours in China

Why taking a cycling tour in China? It is a vast land full of surprises. Be sure to explore it by your own way. Instead of strapping on the coach seats and driven here and there, taking a bicycle means you can discover it in comfortable pace and see the every detail of Chinese splendid culture, its people and scenery. Ride on the off-the-beaten route and interact with local people in the most beautiful places of China, which are also the most suitable places for all ages to travel by bicycle.



Guilin: Through the Fabulous Karst Landscape

During the cycling tour around Guilin, you will have the chance to ride through the unique limestone mountains, discover idyllic countryside, visit old towns and savor exotic folk customs of the ethnic minorities.

Yangshuo could be the highlight of your cycling excursions in Guilin, which provides the most stunning scenery for cyclists. Here is a suitable phrase that describes Yangshuo's beauty: Guilin's scenery is the most beautiful in the world, and Yangshuo's scenery is far superior to that of Guilin.

Riding around Yangshuo, you can get close to Chinese village life by exploring the countryside outside of Yangshuo town center. Cycling on the flat country roads, you will find many lovely untouched spots, picturesque rivers and streams, numerous fertile rice fields and a plentitude of old-fashioned villages. You also can pay a visit to the local farmer's house and interact with local people and their daily lives.

Trekking along the magnificent terraced rice fields in Longsheng County, cruising down the Li River are other recreational things you could do in picturesque Guilin.

Yunnan: Along the Remote Backcountry Trails in Southwestern China

Yunnan, a mysterious and beautiful land in southwestern China, boosts its multi-culture, various minorities and stunning scenery.

Stepping on the cobbled streets of Lijiang ancient town, walking along every twist and turn of small lanes, here is the place you can lose all your worldly worries, view the well-preserved distinctive architecture houses and rustic Naxi People. Many Naxi people dressed in their traditional costume dance and sing hand in hand. It's said that Naxi women do most of the house works while Naxi men

indulge themselves in other pursuits like poetry and music.

The route is also suitable for brave cyclists who want to challenge physical strength and volition – cycling through the Tiger Leaping Gorge – the world's deepest canyon. The blue sky is so close to you and at the feet is the torrential river which is confined by the narrow high cliffs and roars and crashes spectacularly over huge rocks. Here, you have a chance to talk with local Tibetans who can sing and dance, and always show their worship to the high sacred mountain.

Your cycling in Yunnan can also reach the waterside of Erhai and the dotted white villages nearby or to the Stone Forest of Kunming, where unique rocks in various shapes challenge your unlimited imagination!



Beijing: China's Most Legendary Ancient Venues

Most people refer to Beijing as the current and previous capital of China. But along your riding route in Beijing, skyscrapers standing in great numbers prove that Beijing is a modern and ancient city at a time. You can ride to the Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, Great Wall and other ancient spots.

Cycling in the Hutong areas is full of surprises. At the first glance, they are almost the same, formed by buildings with gray walls and gray tiles. They are narrow but full of life: children playing around, old men singing while playing chess, people preparing food and the local bicyclists traveling through. It is a unique place with different atmosphere. Sometimes you follow into a big street and find many tiny shops, like small hair cutter businesses, small bakeries, and tiny supermarkets.

You will also have the chance to trek along the Huangyaguan Great Wall which is not developed as a tourists' site and where you can experience the primeval grandness of one of the Seven Wonders in the world and stay in the guest house to get more details of the local people's daily life.

Xian: Ancient City Walls

Riding on the ancient city walls of Xian makes your cycling trip perfect. The wall is spectacular and cyclists can have a birds' eye view of the city. The road on the top of the ancient city walls is wide and flat. Lower the speed and you will get the real "history" feeling from the armed soldiers, red lanterns and old walls around.



Taking a look of the Bell Tower, it is more grand and splendid with busy traffic coming and going. Or just put your bike aside, talk with local people and listen to their singing of Shaanxi Opera. Xi'an is surrounded by the 14-kilometer-long ancient city walls. Cycling on the commodious wall, the city is all under your eyes and you will imagine the time one thousand years ago, lined soldiers standing here guarding the ancient capital.

A visit to Xian always includes the amazing archeological relics of the terracotta Warriors and Horses, Bell Tower, Forest of Steles Museum with its extraordinary collection of ancient stone "books" and other historic spots.

Shanghai, Suzhou & Hangzhou – Eastern China Water Towns

Eastern China, especially the area near the lower reaches of Yangtze River, has always been regarded as homeland of scholars and men of letters. The charming water villages, typical and pretty Chinese women and the classical Chinese gardens in that region will definitely give you a deep impression of what eastern China is like.

In Wuzhen, a typical Chinese water town near Hangzhou, the river running through the town was once the main means of transportation for local people. The town is full of black tiled and wooden buildings with white walls in sharp contrast, giving the sense of Chinese oil painting.

Glimpsing into the local house, many of the local men are found to breed silkworms. The houses are dotted along the waterside, so most local people can buy the fruit and vegetables from the boats outside their windows. Local people are fond of flowers and plants, both are in bloom in the sunshine, adding a touch to this quiet old town.

By Mandy Lee

Tang Dynasty Travel is a professional China tour operator based in China, that is working with overseas travel agents, agencies, wholesalers, tour operators, and sports clubs who arrange tours to China.

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