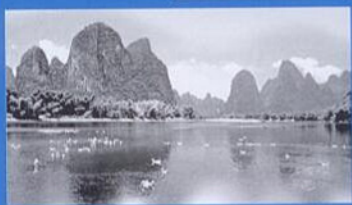


Longji Terraced Fields





Introduction



As a famous tourism city and a historical and cultural city in China, Guilin has jurisdiction over five districts, 10 counties and two ethnic autonomous counties. It has a total area of 27,800 square kilometers, including 565 square kilometers of the city proper, and a population of over 4.9 million, including over 600,000 in the city proper. Known for its "verdant hills, limpid waters, mysterious caves and gorgeous rocks," Guilin has enjoyed the reputation of having the "most beautiful scenery on earth" since the Song Dynasty (960-1279). In 2003 the World Tourism Organization listed Guilin as one of the best tourist destinations in China, together with Beijing, Shanghai and Xi'an.

Located in the northeast of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Guilin boasts a pleasant subtropical monsoon climate, plentiful rainwater and abundant vegetations, as well as weird-shaped, isolated pinnacles that appear to have popped up from the ground, straight, high and elegant, and the picturesque scenic spots reflected in the mirror-like waters. Hence the uniqueness of Guilin's natural landscape is universally admitted.

Guilin has a time-honored history. As early as in the Old Stone Age, 30,000 years ago, human beings lived and multiplied on this land.

The palaeoanthropological site at Zengpiyan that records the life and cultural creations of our forefathers in the New Stone Age about 9,000 years ago is a key historical monument under state protection. Over 2,200 years ago in the reign of Emperor Qin Shihuang (the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty), the Ling Canal was built to transport the Qin troops to the south. As a famous water conservancy project in ancient China, the Ling Canal linked the Yangtze River system with the Pearl River system and promoted the economic and cultural exchanges between the area south of the Five Ridges (the area covering Guangdong and Guangxi) and Central China. After Emperor Qin Shihuang unified the area south of the Five Ridges, Guilin Prefecture was established, with the prefecture seat located in the center of Guangxi, and Guilin was under the jurisdiction of Guilin Prefecture.

Lijiang River



Guilin has enchanting scenery and a large number of historical sites. The main tourist attractions in the city proper include Elephant Trunk Hill, Folded Brocade Hill, Water Taming Hill, West Hill, Yinshan Hill, Yushan Hill, Chuanshan Hill, Nanxi Hill, Reed Flute Cave, Seven-Star Park, Solitary Beauty Peak, Prince City of the Ming Dynasty, Guihai Forest of Steles, Ronghu Lake, Shahu Lake, Guihu Lake, etc. Lijiang River originates from Cat Hill in Xing'an County of Guilin. Its section between Guilin and Yangshuo, 83 kilometers long, is flanked by a great number of fascinating scenic spots. A boat excursion down the Lijiang River is like sailing down a long scroll on which is painted a traditional Chinese landscape, and visitors can appreciate Vase Hill, Father and Son Rock, Millstone Hill, Crown Cave, Yang Causeway, Xingping, Nine-horse Mural Hill, Snail Hill, Green Lotus Peak, Shutong Hill and other scenic sights. Men of letters have written many poems and essays to speak highly of scenic Guilin since ancient times.

Guilin is also rich in historical remains and ethnic customs, with six key historical monuments under state protection, such as Ling Canal, Prince City of the Ming Dynasty, Guilin Stone Inscriptions, Former Residence of Li Zongren, etc., in addition to numerous key historical monuments under region and city protection. The wind-

and-rain bridge of the Dongs and the two-story buildings of the Zhuangs, with the upper story serving as the living quarters and the lower as stables and storerooms, show their unique ethnic features.

Guilin is home to multi ethnic groups. The ethnic minority groups here, such as the Dongs, Yaos, Huis, Miaos and Zhuangs, still keep their complete cultural traditions and celebrate their traditional festivals.

Transportation in Guilin is very convenient. The volume of passenger transport of the Guilin Liangjiang International Airport comes out in front of the cities in the mainland of China. Scheduled flights go from Guilin to all the country's major cities, Hong Kong SAR, Macao SAR, as well as to Fukuoka of Japan, Seoul of South Korea, Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia, Bangkok of Thailand, Singapore, and other countries and regions. Passenger trains run from Guilin to Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Guangzhou, Xi'an, Kunming and other cities regularly. High-class highways link Guilin with all the main cities in Guangxi, as well as with Guangdong and Hunan.

Guilin has over a hundred travel agencies and star-rated hotels, and many high-class tourism bus and ship companies to meet the needs of different tourists. In addition, Guilin has set up the tourism consulting service center and tourism complaint center to provide safe and considerate service to all tourists. The tourism complaint center serves 24 hours a day.

Long hair competition - a custom in Longsheng



Lijiang River at sunset

