

# A Photographic Diary of our “2015 Southern China Expedition”

*March 2015*

by Yau-Sun Tong



Explore the world's origin of tea; take in the beauty of culture & nature along the Red-river through southern Yunnan to the wonder of health & longevity Bama region in GuangXi; contesting eastern Guangdong for Hakka culture & tasty cuisine; experience the mysteriously famous Fujian Tulou

# Preface

The following images within this “**Photo-diary**” were taken with a little pocket-sized **Leica D-Lux 5** 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.

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 it.

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 flew to *Pu'er of Yunnan* province, started the great experience of our *«March 2015 Southern 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 *Southern China's Yunnan, Guangxi, Guangdong and Fujian regions* 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 our journey of this over 16-day tour – another successful one of our ongoing specially arranged **Western China Cultural/Photographic Series Tours.**

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

# Itinerary sketch

(see itinerary indication **red line** on map)

March 06 - 23, 2015

A 18-day journey through:  
"Southern Yunnan - Bama region of Guangxi -  
Hakka region of Guangdong - Southwest Fujian"

**Along** our itinerary, attractive natural sceneries, minority cultures, multi-nationalities, styles of tasty foods... tons of experience, enjoyment & photographic opportunities not found elsewhere.

**Timing** selected is for the cultural activities during this Chinese New Year season, and the comfortable weather during that time of year In the itinerary.



see detailed "itinerary sectional map" on next page

《南方四省行》2015年3月“文化摄影访華考察团”摄影日志

## *Table of Contents*

The following point-and-shoot snapshots are chronologically classified into the following categories:

- *Brief into* (3)
- *Itinerary map* (4)
- *Shanghai arrival* (6)
- *Yunnan* (7 - 42)
- *Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region* (43 - 71)
- *Guangdong's eastern region* (72 - 84)
- *Fujian Yongding Tulou area* (85 - 98 )
- *Guangdong Chao-shan Hakka region* (99 - 123)
- *Epilog* (124)

*Enjoy...*

## *Shanghai Arrival*

入境上海

A view near our Shanghai hotel... the next morning we flew to China's far flung Pu'er city in southwest YunNan province...

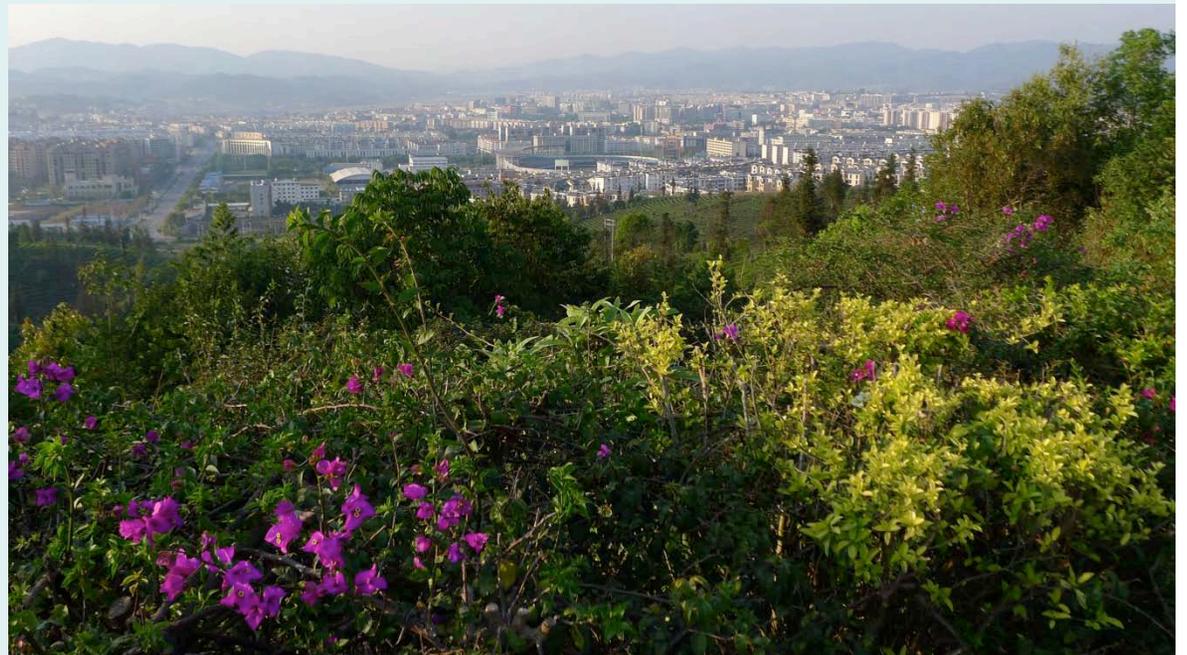


*Arrive Pu'er* 飛抵普洱





Pu'er is known to be the birth place of tea, and tea plantations could be seen everywhere... our meals are also deliciously fresh and healthy...





雲南普洱 - 世界茶葉之源

Those study history of tea knows tea is originate from China and right from Pu'er.

From here it goes to around the world...



With climate in Yunnan there are so many fresh fruits and vegetables year around...

The same day arrived Pu'er we've already started our tea tasting and research and buying good Pu'er teas!



Our elaborate & comfortable  
hotel in Pu'er...

And the meals are  
fantastically torturing ☺  
*(in fact daily  
through out our  
whole itinerary)*



A tealeaf-picker working in the tea-mountain...



On route traveling along the countryside, a lot could be seen...





By the tea-fields...



This minority nationality tea-girl showed us around some beautiful tea plantations and relics with worthy cultural and historical information...



The fresh green in sunlight is a strong contrast to where we just came from couple days ago that harsh bitter white cold of record breaking winter season in eastern N. America...

The minority singing & dancing...



The refreshingly healthy Pu'er tea sampling...



Local kids...



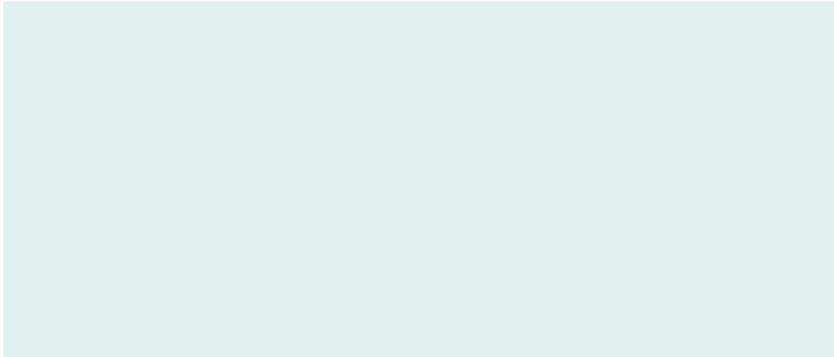
A freshly prepared lunch... with nutritional punching wild vegetable....



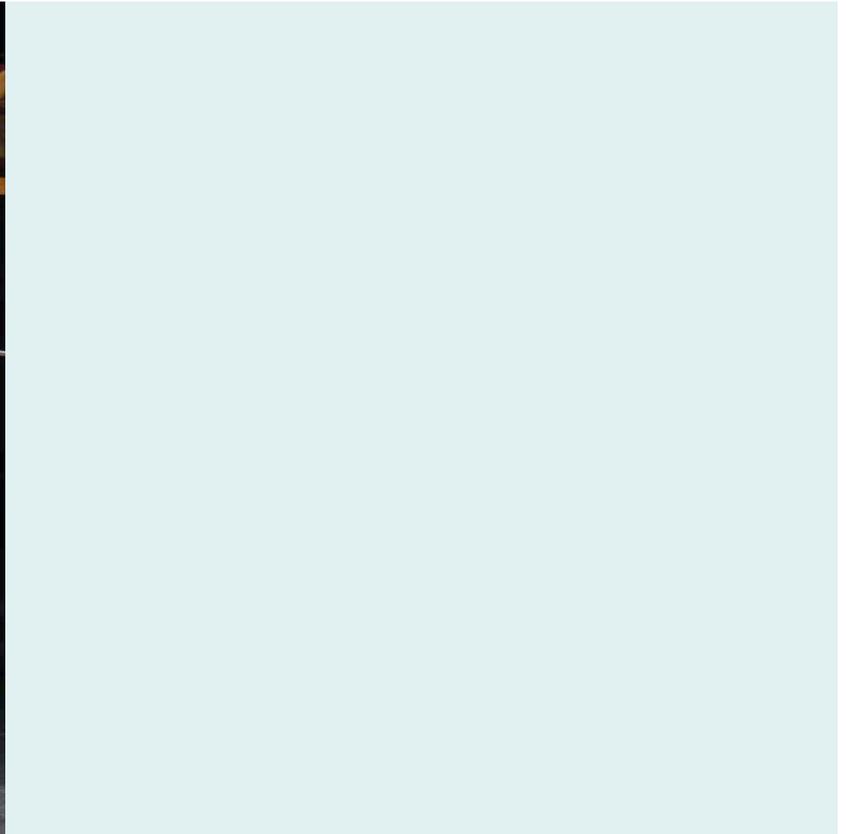
Along our way...



The tranquility of countryside without the noisy touristic things...



Village visits...



Friendly locals always ready to invite us  
to their homes...

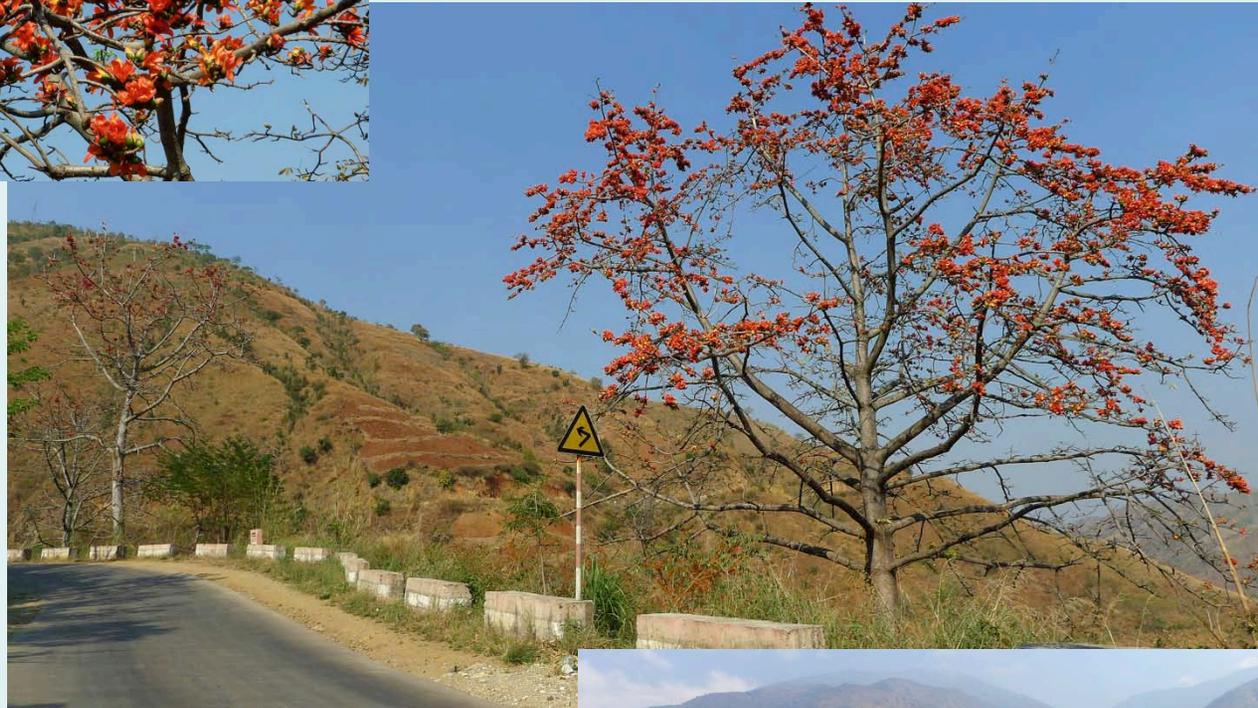




The high mountain sugarcane  
plantation workers...

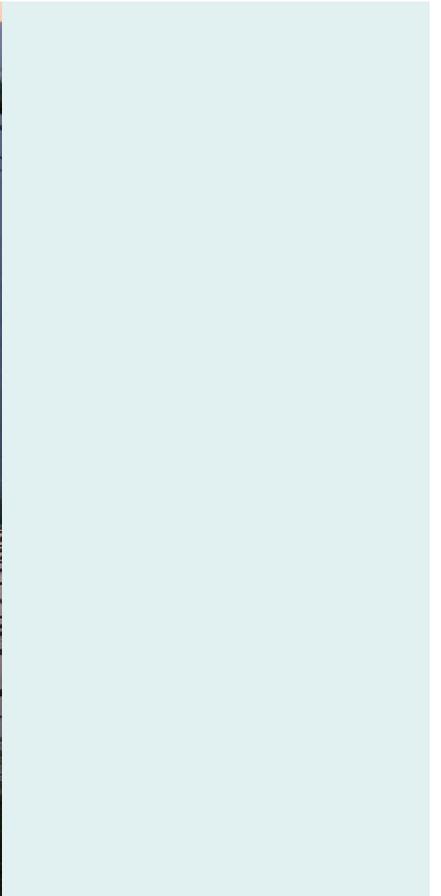


March is definitely the kapok blooming season...





Yunnan's Red-river county is known for the rice-terraces too...



雲南紅河梯田





Local family event,  
foods are necessary...



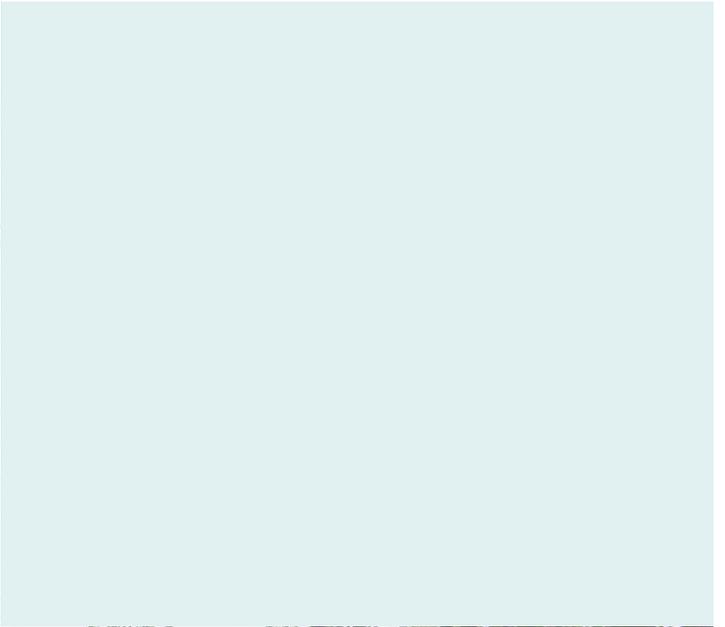
Local market...



抵達建水古城



In Jianshui township, there are many worthy historic relics and structures...



In this clan house garden, families descended from the same family name of “Zhang” having their annual gathering...





A locally famous historic structure...



Our 4.5-star hotel in Jianshui is not shabby at all. Particularly when comes to the culinary providing... we had great treats...





A wonderfully relaxing evening after a happy day of traveling enjoyment...



This ancient fountain well has a long history and high esteem in Jianshui, still attracts townsmen to gather its water daily...

And the local tofu workshops use only water from this well, the quality & flavor is great...



“滇南第一井”



The old part of Jianshui town is interestingly timeless...









Yes, he pointed out that the Confucius Temple is out there... “建水文廟”

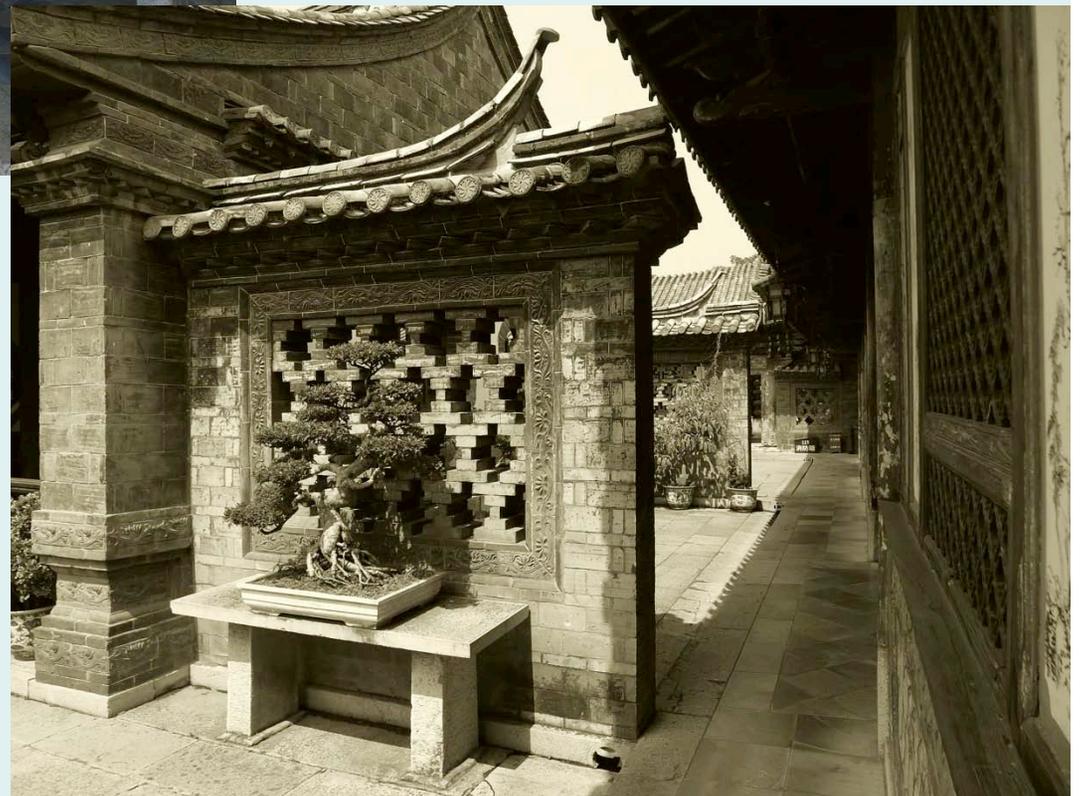
Beautifully built in 1285 and well preserved, this compound is a worthy place to visit and marvel...







Another architectural artistic marvel in Jianshui is this “Zhu family garden”...  
“朱家花園”





Inside the “Zhu family garden”...



雲南文山地區

Further eastwards in Yunnan, we entered the Wenshan Miao minority prefecture area...



Encountered a village wedding event...



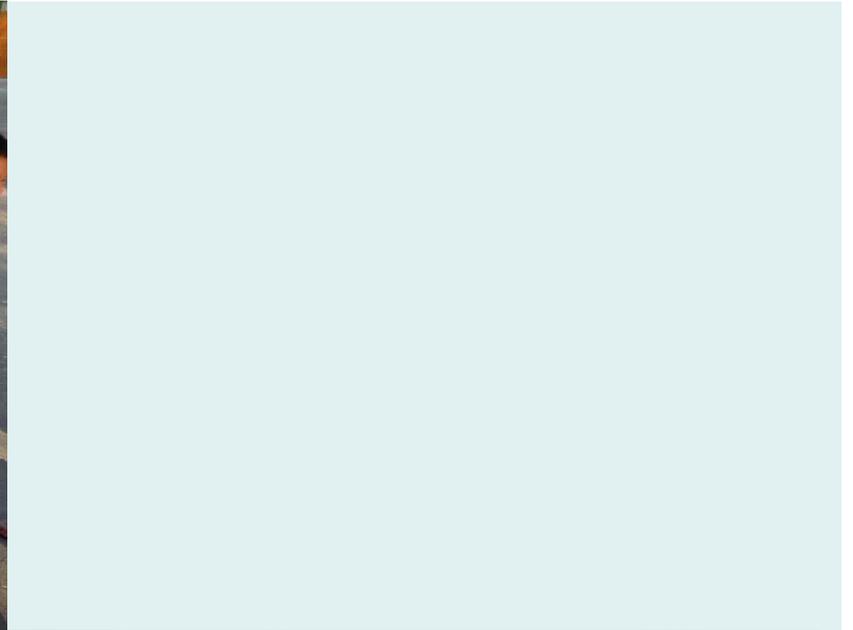


The hosts warmly invited us to join  
Their celebration for the bride & groom...



Arrived the town of Guangnan in the very southeastern Yunnan.





The town's No 1. primary school students were just off school...  
Our group had a very pleasant encounter and conversion with them, lots of fun...



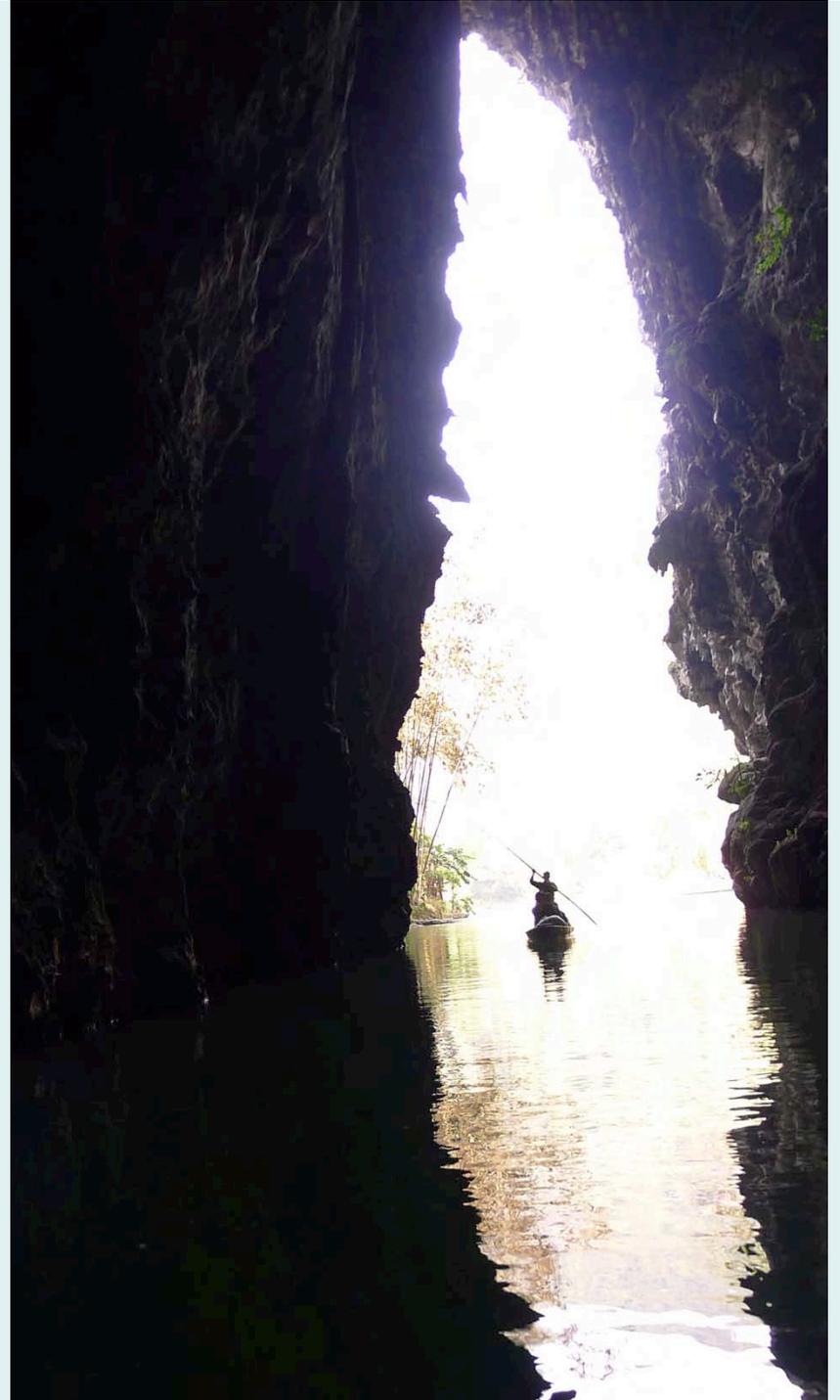
Supper was again wholesomely nutritious, fresh, and tasty...



A roadside livestock market...



Entering the “Bamei village” by way of water...





Around Bamei village...

Our lunch in the village is not bad at all...



After a simple but wholesome breakfast in our hotel, today we would be on road towards Guangxi province.



Nearby the hotel, a group of locals are TaiChi...



Dinner was a real treat again...

## Into Guangxi

进入广西

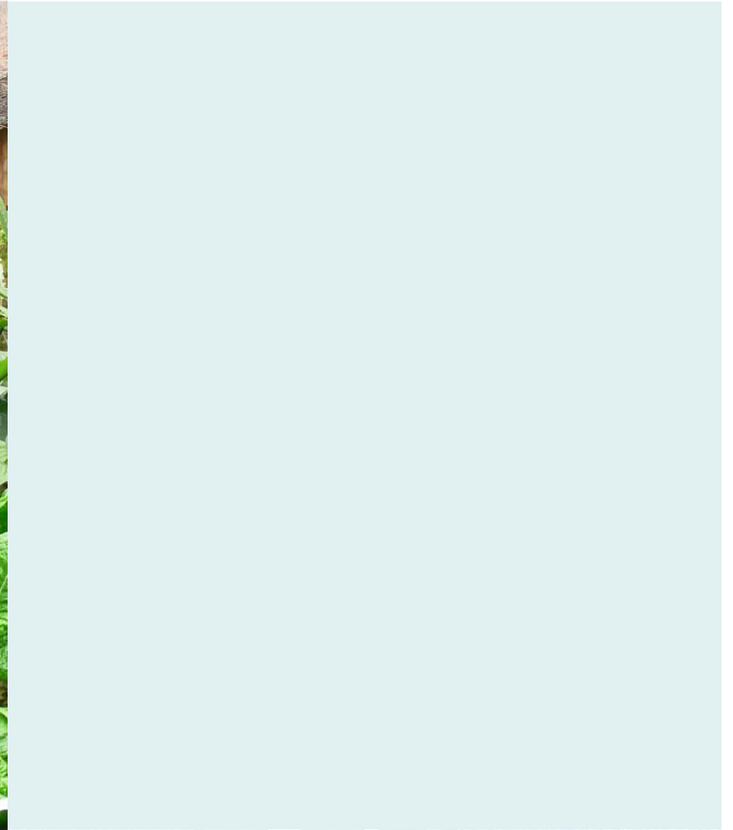
The “Black-clothed Zhuang” is a unique minority tribal amongst the minorities in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. keeping their traditions for centuries without changing even in the modern days, they are known to be the “living fossil” in cultures...

We are here to visit one of their villages...



Getting in the village is not easy, everyone has to drink the wine presented by those warm, hospitable black-clothed Zhuang villagers.





廣西那坡黑衣壯







Welcoming dancing by the villagers,  
and then we dance with them together,  
a great fun time...



Lunch in the village is healthy and tasty,  
you can't get much fresher than those  
just garden picked vegies...



Leaving the village also need to drink the farewell wine too... 😊  
a wonderful time we had in this Black-clothed Zhuang village



One of our intended goal is to visit the “Bama longevity region” in Guangxi... here we are... 廣西巴馬 - 長壽之鄉

Bama scenery...

廣西巴馬景致





Must be the foods, air, surrounding, magnetic field lifestyle etc... makes Bama region one of the few recognized top longevity areas in the world...





We also tasted many dishes that known to be consumed  
By those healthily long loving Bama people... ☺



上 图：广西省巴马县甲篆乡平安村巴盘长寿村社族人（从左到右）  
 黄梅坤（女）106岁、黄梅刚（女）102岁、黄梅甘（女）106岁、黄卜新（男）113岁、黄梅桃（女）101岁、黄梅松谋（女）108岁、黄梅文（女）104岁。  
 陈北摄于2011年5月8日



Above in this picture taken in 2011, the ages of those elders from left to right:  
 106, 102, 106, 113, 101, 108, 104... 長壽之鄉

Mr. 余 in our group pays greetings to this Bama gentleman, born in 1898  
 who has living and seen the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and now the 21<sup>st</sup> century...



Hey, we were taking in the foods the Bama people eat... ☺

Our supper of that day was also torturously good... 😊



Visiting historic relics of the super longevity stars from the region...



On route to Nanning - the capital city of Guangxi...





Our coach stopped halfway for a refreshing lunch...

Of course upon arrived Nanning,  
dinner was another real “torture”...☺





The after dinner strolling of the street Night scenes was interesting. there are so many people willingly participating the healthy activities, “street dance” is really a current “Chinese phenomenon” ...





The high-tech Chinese high speed train... We took this newly inaugurated super-speed-train from Nanning to Canton of Guangdong province - our next stop on the itinerary; a comfortable smooth ride...

## *Into Guangdong*

途經廣州去粵東

One of the things we did upon arrived Canton was a timely lunch to this historically famous restaurant - 蓮香樓, fantastic real Cantonese dishes...





And to a true Cantonese old spot – Lizhiwan 荔枝灣...





An authentic Cantonese folk favorite - Cantonese opera, an open stage in Lizhiwan...  
see video in action of this opera performance: <https://vimeo.com/137783540>

Night scenes next to the landmark bridge of Canton...





Early in the morning, not far from our hotel, the exercisers are already busy...





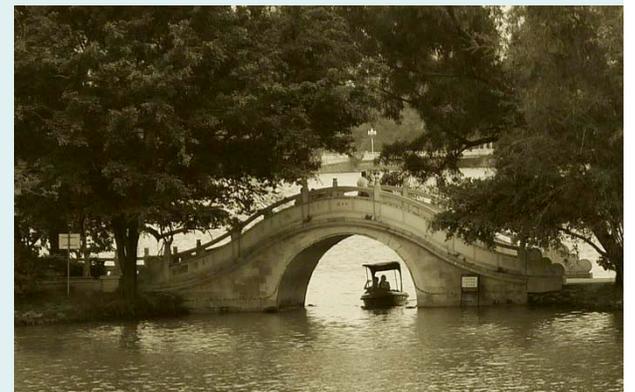
In the morning by coach we drove eastward to Huizhou city, known for its West-lake with the history of the famous historic figure, the literary giant - Su Dongpo

廣東惠州西湖



# 蘇東坡紀念館

The Su Dongpo museum by the Huizhou West-lake...



Our lunch in Huizhou? What could we say... one of the best in quality and taste during our journey! A real Hakka delicate flavor...

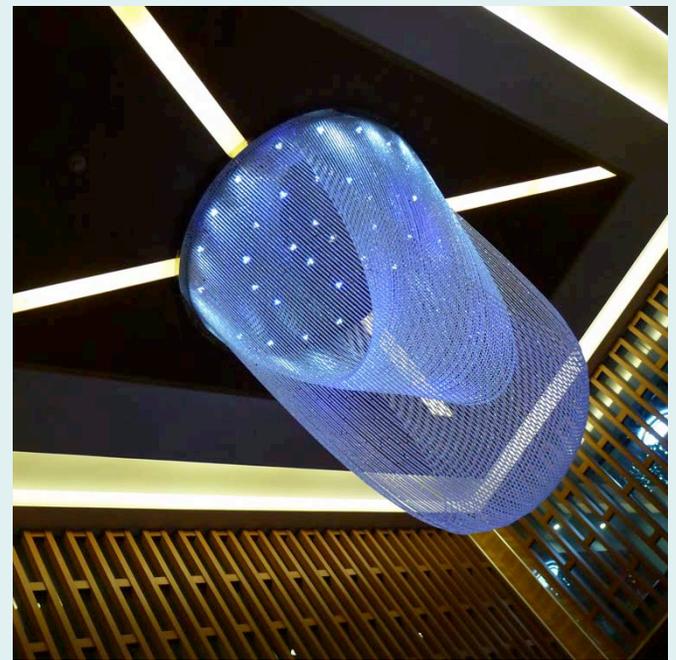


Stepping into the elevator...

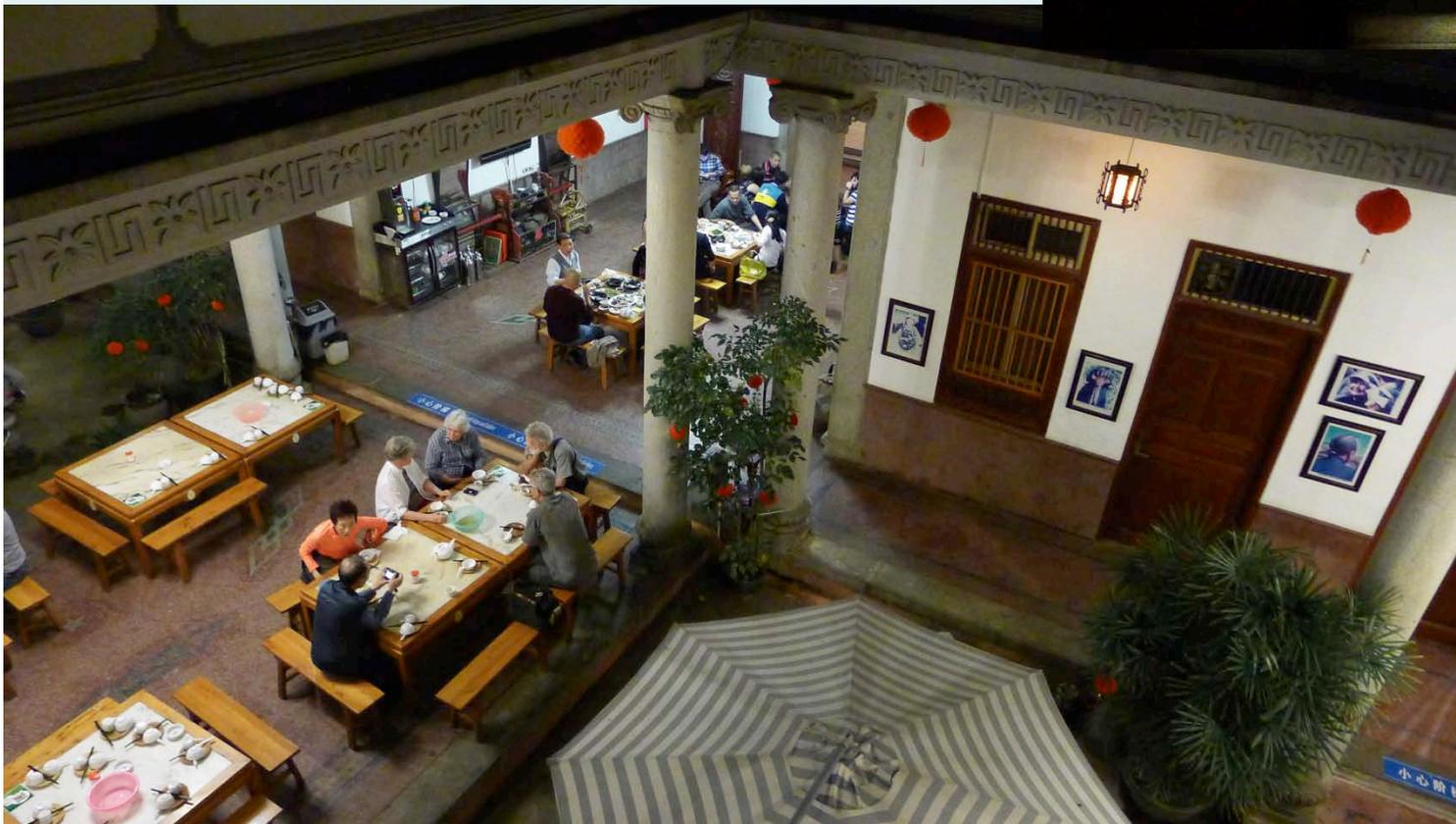


By dusk, we arrived our locally best hotel in Meizhou city...

Warm tone, beautifully made hardwood furniture, the hotel feels classically comfortable...



Dinner was set to a unique restaurant hidden away from the busy scene; an ancient style structure built in the 1930s, from style to cooking all uniquely Hakka flavor indeed. We enjoyed a great meal with total relaxation...





The next morning we set out towards the border with Fujian province – our fourth province in the itinerary. On route with leisure stopping by anything we were interested in ...



烏龍茶山



And an intended visit to the tea hills of the world renowned “Oolong tea”, lushly green, soothingly enjoying...

Oolong teas are produced in eastern Guangdong and western Fujian regions...

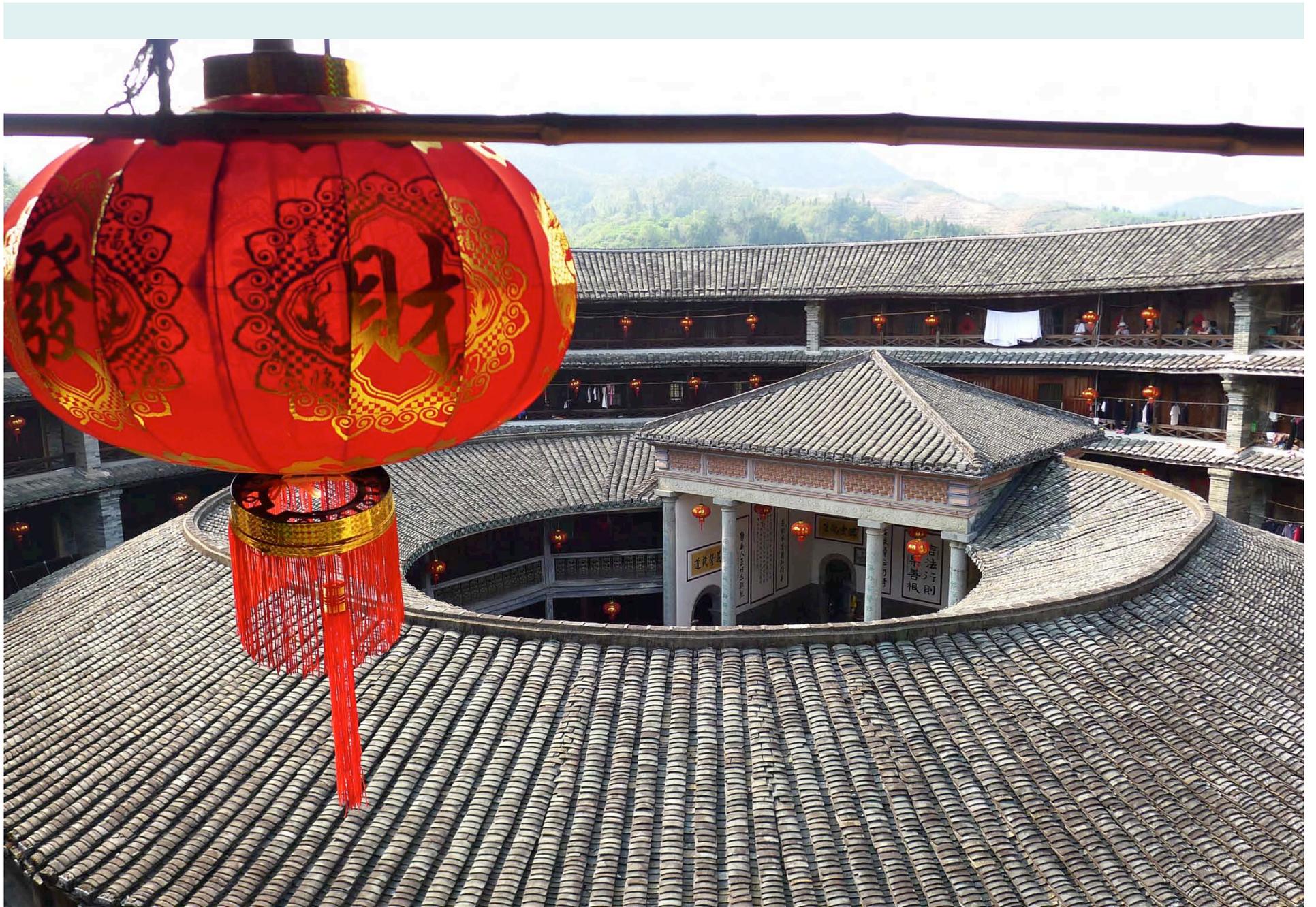
# *“Fujian Hakka Tulou” – UNESCO World Heritage Site*

福建永定土樓



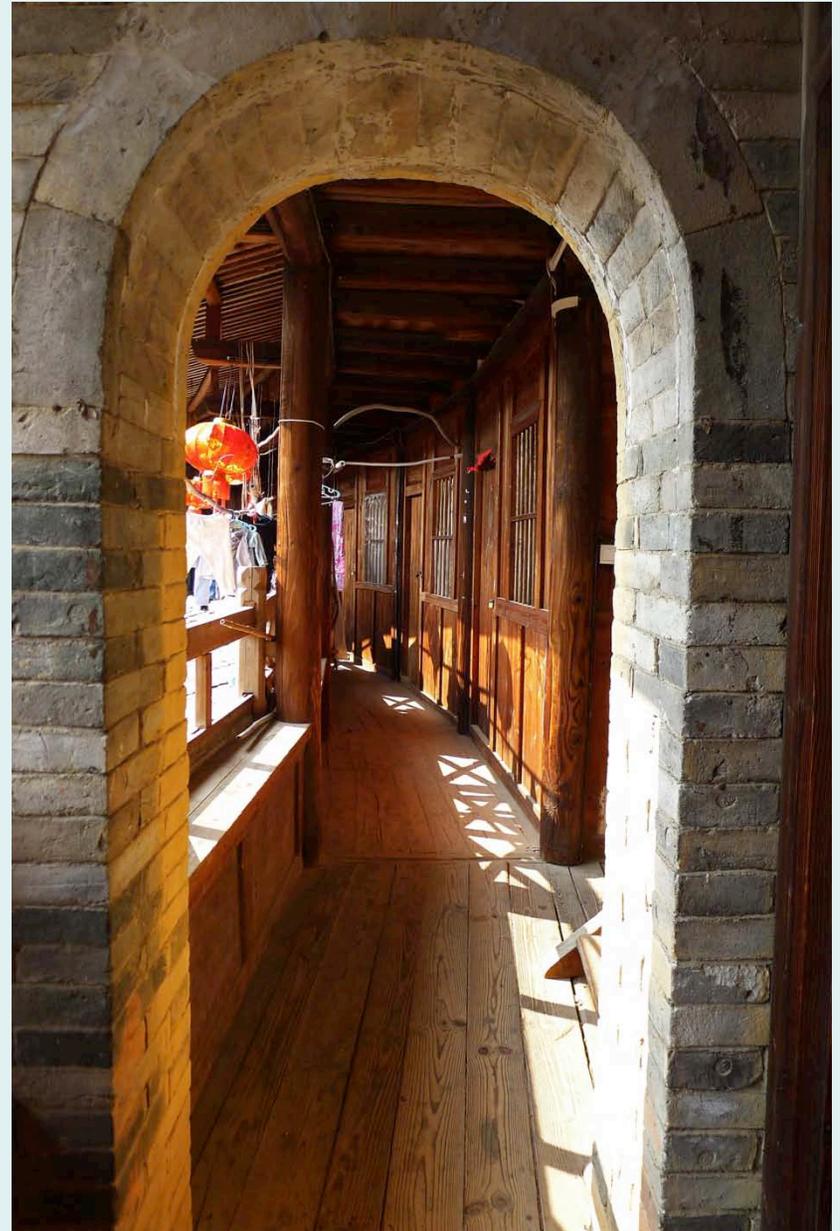


“Fujian Tulou” region is a World Heritage Site (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1113>),  
A unique style of communal structures built by the Hakka people with outstanding universal value...



A Hakka girl is rolling hand-made cigarettes inside this Tulou building...





“带经耕绿野，爱竹啸名园”

We were having tea tasting inside a Tulou with a Tulou resident...



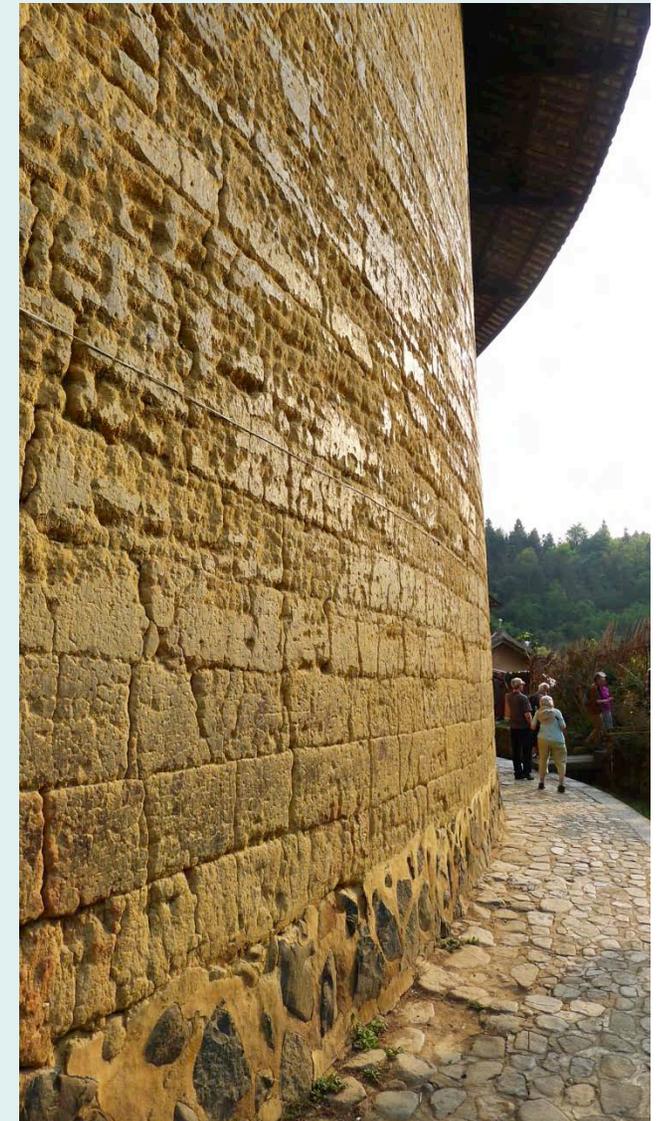




“Fujian *Tulou* is a property of 46 buildings constructed between the 15th and 20th centuries over 120 km in south-west of Fujian province, inland from the Taiwan Strait. Set amongst rice, tea and tobacco fields the Tulou are earthen houses. Several storeys high, they are built along an inward-looking, circular or square floor plan as housing for up to 800 people each. They were built for defence purposes around a central open courtyard with only one entrance and windows to the outside only above the first floor. Housing a whole clan, the houses functioned as village units and were known as “a little kingdom for the family” or “bustling small city.” They feature tall fortified mud walls capped by tiled roofs with wide over-hanging eaves. The most elaborate structures date back to the 17th and 18th centuries. The buildings were divided vertically between families with each disposing of two or three rooms on each floor. In contrast with their plain exterior, the inside of the tulou were built for comfort and were often highly decorated. They are inscribed as exceptional examples of a building tradition and function exemplifying a particular type of communal living and defensive organization, and, in terms of their harmonious relationship with their environment, an outstanding example of human settlement.”



© Yau-Sun Tong. All rights reserved 版权所有：湯友新

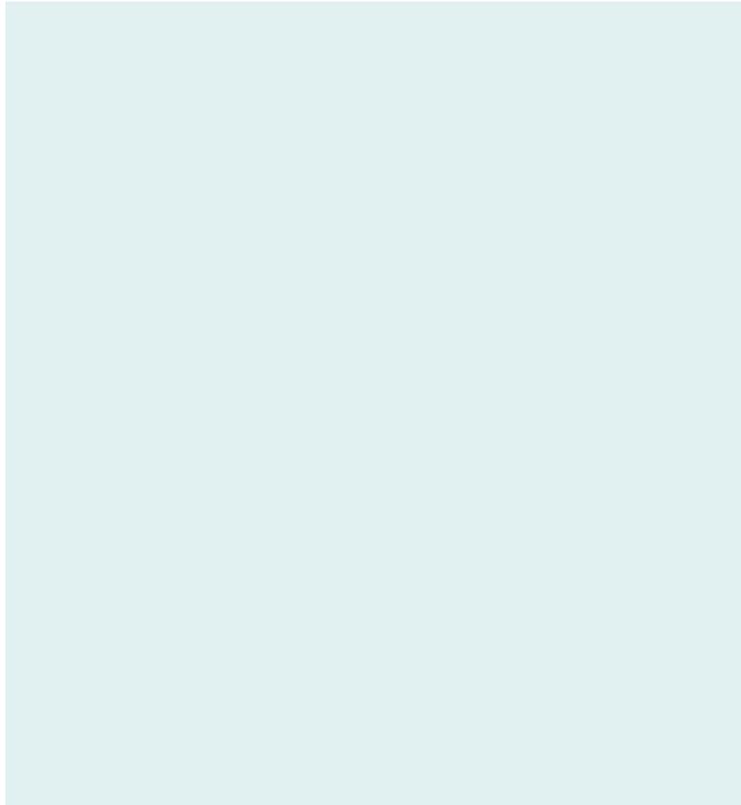


“The Fujian *Tulou* are the most representative and best preserved examples of the tulou of the mountainous regions of south-eastern China. The large, technically sophisticated and dramatic earthen defensive buildings, built between the 13th and 20th centuries, in their highly sensitive setting in fertile mountain valleys, are an extraordinary reflection of a communal response to settlement which has persisted over time. The tulou, and their extensive associated documentary archives, reflect the emergence, innovation, and development of an outstanding art of earthen building over seven centuries. The elaborate compartmentalised interiors, some with highly decorated surfaces, met both their communities’ physical and spiritual needs and reflect in an extraordinary way the development of a sophisticated society in a remote and potentially hostile environment. The relationship of the massive buildings to their landscape embodies both Feng Shui principles and ideas of landscape beauty and harmony.”









Our lunch inside a Tulou village, and the dinner in our hotel outside the villages were great...



Everyone in our group liked the experience of our visit to the Tulou area...

# ChaoShan region

潮汕地區

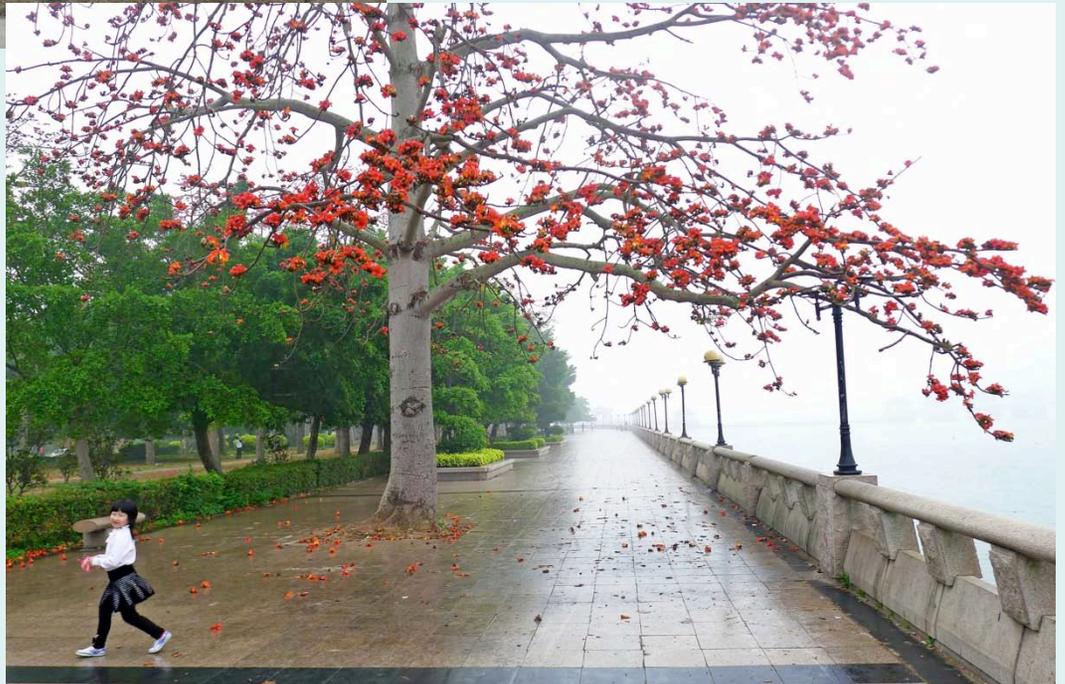


From Fujian we were back into Guangdong towards the ChaoShan Hakka area. An evening meal in a local Meixian restaurant, the owner's daughter pleasantly sang a song for us...





Chaozhou, a rainy day by the Hanjiang river side...





韓江霧雨





“潮州古城” Chaozhou’s ancient city wall...

潮州小吃



Our Chaozhou lunch was a tasty real local cuisine...



The Chaozhou old inner city area are full of interesting things... people come for the Chaozhou style of delicacies...



An ancient residency of a long past nobility... 老城區古宅第

“潮州開元寺” the locally famous Kaiyuan Temple built in 738...







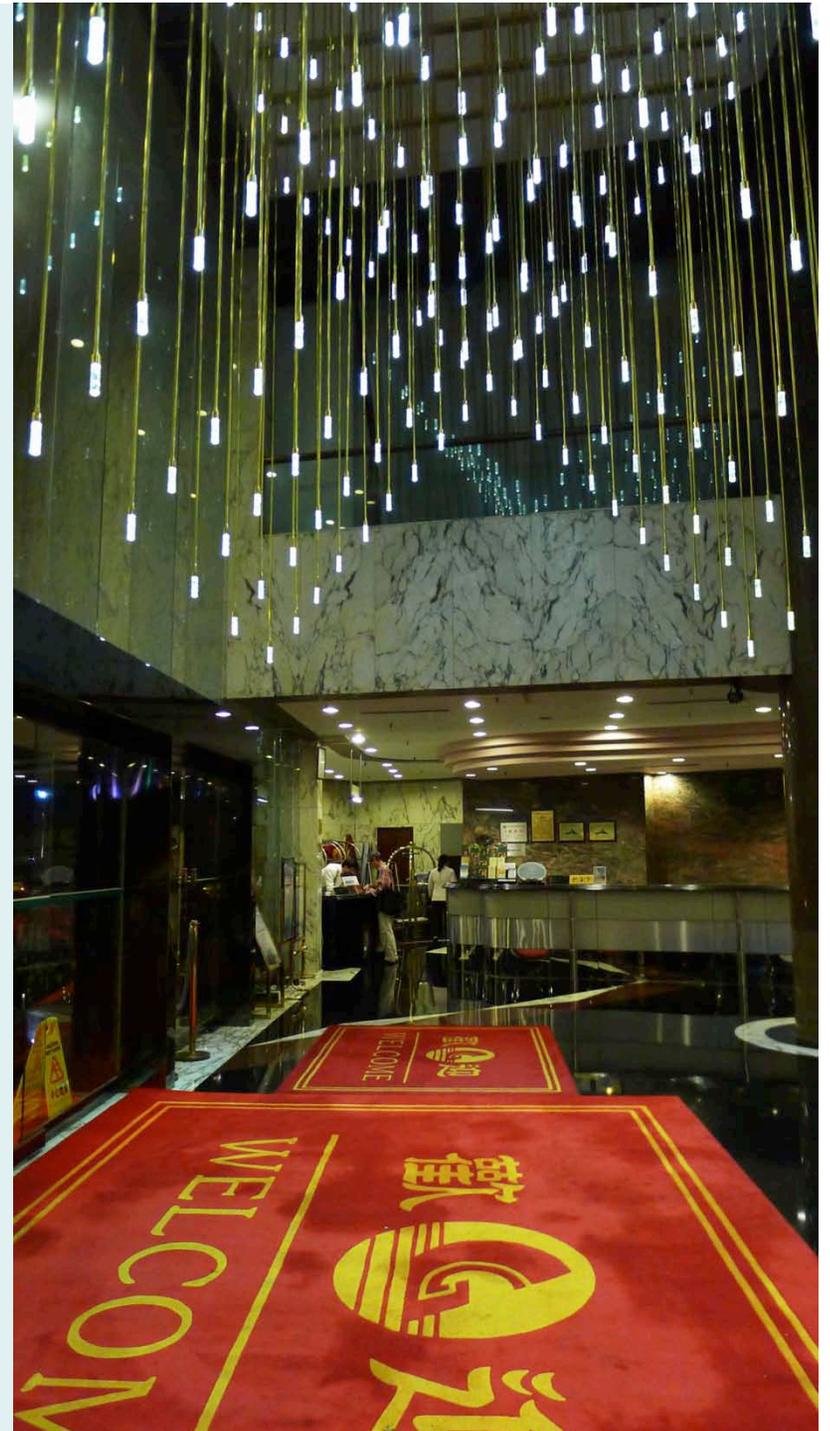
A black-clothed girl and  
the red kapok flowers...



Our 5-star hotel in Shantou city...



Part of our Hakka dinner dishes...





【陈慈羹故居】“Chen Cihong’s former residence” in Shantou was a real marvel to visit, started over a hundred-year ago by this successful businessman and his Chen’s family... with over 500 halls & rooms...







家訪居民



A very hospitable resident invited us to visit her residence which is in a part of the compound...





Our Chaozhou cuisine dinner was of course delicious...



And the restaurant has a sign says:  
It will only use of non GMO cooking oils,  
no MSG, no food coloring, high quality water  
purify equipment, high-tech waste separation  
disposal equipment for environment protection...



您的健康与城市的环境  
 我们需要做的没有最好  
**只有更好**

- 非转基因**  
大豆油

北国饭店所有菜品都选用非转基因大豆油烹饪。

---

- 使用进口**  
净水系统

北国每家分店都安装有进口净水设备，让每一位客人在这里都能喝到洁净的水。

---

- NO**  
不使用  
味精|香精|色素

北国的每一道菜都不使用味精、香精、色素。

---

- 油水分离**  
排污系统

每家分店都装有国内最先进的油水分离设备，让我们在享受美味的同时不给城市家园“添堵”。



A waterfront scene in this port city of Shantou... 汕頭港灣



in Shantou city square...



Life style in ChaoShan region is relaxing and non-in-a-hurry, spending time leisurely for a “Kungfu tea” is a norm for residents here...



Our group's "last supper" of our China journey was here in this elaborate Chaozhou cuisine restaurant, another real "torture"... ☺



all Chaozhou flavors...

our last torture...☺



正宗上海生煎包子、小餛飩



the next day... by plane from Shantou back to Shanghai for our home bound international flight, we could not help but to stop by a Shanghai street side eatery... for some delicious Shanghai “pan-fried dumplings” and “miniature wonton” – the real thing!

The servers are very curious of the arrival of foreigners and gave us the very warm welcome and helps in ordering the foods; all enjoyed the encounter...

Another true cultural experience...

# *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 "2015 March Southern China Expedition" ...

for Yau-Sun Tong's special "Western China Cultural/Photographic Series" expedition tours for Aug 2015 as well as for 2016

contact Yau-Sun for details:

tel: (902) 443-5500

e-mail: [taiji@chebucto.ca](mailto:taiji@chebucto.ca)

please visit news page:

<http://photoart.chebucto.org/photonews.html>

*Good-bye for now...*