

## Guizhou



**Guizhou** Province, with its capital **Guiyang**, is located in the southwest China mainland. It adjoins **Sichuan** Province to the north, **Yunnan** Province to the west, **Guangxi** Province to the south and **Hunan** Province to the east. Guizhou covers an area of over 176,000 square kilometers (about 67,958 square miles) with a total population of more than 35,245,000.

### When to go

Guizhou has a subtropical humid climate. There are few seasonal changes. The weather is frequently cloudy and rainy all year. The temperature is also moderate, not too cold in the winter, or hot in the summer. Annual rainfall in Guizhou Province averages nearly 1000-1300 millimeters and annual temperature averages 15°C around.

### What to see

Guizhou Province is unfamiliar to many travelers and tourists. However, the peculiar natural scenery, remarkable national customs, brilliant history, culture and the pleasant climate condition form a unique, aboriginal, unsophisticated and mysterious landscape which is attracting more and more tourists, both domestic and international. Maolan Karst Forest Natural Conservation, which contains mountains, water, forests and caves, all in the same location, is breathtaking. Huangguoshu Waterfall is the biggest in China and among the world's famous waterfalls. Dragon Palace, which is located nearly twenty miles southwest of Anshun City, is a splendid underground Karst type cave. It looks like a fairy tale crystal palace. A boat-ride will take you to see the magnificent views in the caves, and you will feel like you are in a fairyland. Zhijin Cave Scenic Spot is another highlight. It is famous for its massive, scale, stalagmites, stone pillars and stone pagodas in unbelievable heights and numbers. There are over forty kinds of Karst precipitation formations in the cave. The Zhijin Cave is known as "the Museum of Karst Formation". Hongfeng (Red Maple) Lake scenic spot, thirty-three kilometers from Guiyang city, is also worth a visit. It has over 100

islands within the clear blue water lake. The karst land formations, fascinating water and hills, as well as the spectacular caves make this area a state ranked key scenic location.

More than 15 minority ethnic groups settled in Guizhou and most of the amazing scenic areas are located in these settled minority areas. In addition to enjoying the scenery, visitors can discover the rich and varied folk customs and cultures of the different minority ethnic groups of the region. Numerous festivals throughout the year, strong but simple and unsophisticated customs, architectures with unique style and the exotic and colorful costumes, will make tourists feel everything is new and fresh.

Guizhou Province is a fascinating area that can be explored on foot and by basic transport.

### **Huangguoshu Waterfalls Cluster**



Huangguoshu is the best known of some 18 in a cluster of waterfalls. Its flow is seasonally adjusted. A reservoir behind the waterfall holds back some of the water. Doupotang Waterfall, one kilometer (less than one mile) up the river to Huangguoshu Waterfall, at 105 meters (344 feet) across is the widest. It is 21 meters (69 feet) high. Other waterfalls like LuosiTan Waterfall, Silver-Chain Waterfall and Dishuitan Waterfall all have their distinct features.

**Water-Curtain Cave:** The Water-Curtain Cave dissects Huangguoshu and provides visitors view ports on the waterfall. The total length of the cave is 134 meters (440 feet), including windows and halls. A road on the mountainside leads into the Water-Curtain Cave, where the waterfall can be heard, watched and touched. On a sunny day, a rainbow arches over the falls.

**Rhinoceros Pool (Xi Niu Tan):** Eleven meters (36 feet) deep, the pool is Rhinoceros shaped and stays submerged year round. Standing inside Water-Viewing Pavilion (Wang shui Ting) beside the Rhinoceros Pool to enjoy the flowing-down of the Huangguoshu Waterfall, you may feel bunches of pearls and silver chains are falling upon you. What a grand and peculiarly attractive scene!

### **Wuyang River Scenic Area**



Flowing through the Miaoling Mountains, the charming and lively Wuyang River runs 95 kilometers (about 59 miles) from Huangping to Zhenyuan, finally into Yuanjiang River in Hunan Province. Its scenic spots in Zhenyuan, Shibing and Huangping, three counties of Kaili, combine beautifully to form the National Wuyang Scenic Area. Famous for its beautiful landscape, historic sites and dense minority ethnic customs, Wuyang River Scenic Area, covering 625 square kilometers (about

241 square miles), is geographically divided into Upper (Shang) Wuyang between Huangping and Shibing and Down (Xia) Wuyang from Shibing to Zhenyuan. Within these two sections, the most sightworthy and impressive scenery could be enjoyed in Zhenyuan Ancient Town.

Whether you walk along or take a cruise on the Wuyang River, it will bring you one surprise after another. Grottoes, gorges, perilous peaks and crystal-like waters present a wonderful picture before you, as if you were entering a wonderland.

## Zhenyuan



Located on eastern part of Guizhou Province, Zhenyuan has long been an ancient town of the Miao people. Its long history endows the town with many rich and generous cultural relics, making it much like a historic garden. The town covers only an area of 3.1 square kilometers (about 1.2 square miles) but greets you with more than 160 scenic spots including caves, palaces, pavilions, temples and rivers with their unique architecture, exquisite engravings and marvelous natural landscape. Among them are the famous Wuyang River Scenic Area and elegant ancient complex in the the Black Dragon Cave (Qinglong Cave) - beckoning sights not to be missed by any visitor to eastern Guizhou.

Located at the edge of Yunnan-Guizhou plateau, Zhenyuan is sheltered by the mountains. It is a land-and-water transportation center since early times. In 202 BC, the town became a county instituted by Han Gaozu, Emperor Liu Bang, and then in 1956 - the capital of southeast Guizhou Autonomous Prefecture. Cut through by the Wuyang River, the town is divided into two parts: south 'Wei City' and north 'Fu City', which forms a water town. Hence it is well-reputed as the 'Oriental Venice'.

As an historic cultural city, Zhenyuan is rich in tourist resources. With sub-tropical humid climate, annual temperature in Zhenyuan averages 16.4 degree with four distinct seasons. It is therefore an ideal tourist destination all year round.

The Dragon Boat Festival, held on May 25th of every year, is the most ceremonious celebration in Zhenyuan.

### The Black Dragon Cave (Qinglong Cave)



The Black Dragon Cave is in fact an ancient temple complex located on Zhonghe Mountain to the east of Zhenyuan Ancient Town and covers an area of some 21,000 square meters (approximately

226,050 square feet), and is the centerpiece of the all ancient monuments in Zhenyuan. The the Black Dragon Cave Temple as it is also known includes single and multi-storied pavilions, temples, shrines, palaces and so on. Surviving a couple of wars, the Black Dragon Cave was built during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and its current shape is the result of several renovations.

With many separate buildings, the Black Dragon Cave encompasses Zhusheng Qiao (Zhusheng Bridge), Zhongyuan Temple, Ziyang Shuyuan (academy of classical learning), Yuhuang Ge (Jade Emperor Pavilion), Longevity Palace, Xianglu Yan. Among the ancient complexes of Zhenyuan, the Black Dragon Cave though very close to the town has retained its natural flavor.

All of the buildings there were constructed in accordance with the natural features of Zhonghe Mountain which is precipitous. The architectural sculptures and adornments there are simple and unsophisticated and yet quietly elegant, and are quite unlike those of other temples which are ornately decorated. The way in which these Confucianist, Taoist and Buddhist temples are arranged together embodies the combination of Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism in a way. One renowned architect once remarked that the Black Dragon Cave won the upper hand over the famous Hanging Monastery in Shanxi Province in terms of architectural art.

Against the green backdrop, the Black Dragon Cave seems to cling to the mountainside in an orderly tiered way due to the precipitous cliff, which makes it blend the characteristics of a garden with the style of a temple.

In 1988, the Black Dragon Cave was listed as a key cultural relic under state protection.

Maling River Canyon Scenic Spot is a state-level scenic spot. It is located at the juncture of Yunnan, Guangxi and Guizhou Provinces in Xingyi City of Guizhou Province, about 334 kilometers (around 208 miles) southwest of Guiyang, the capital city. Maling River Canyon Scenic Spot is a display of karst features with multiple stratifications and categories. It is famous for its deep rift, waterfalls and calcium tapestries.

### **Maling River Canyon**



Maling River Canyon is a long, deep rift cut by the surging Maling River and the groundwater. It has a length of about 74.8 kilometers (around 46.5 miles) and an average depth of 200-400 meters (about 219-437 yards). The narrowest point of it is just 50 meters (about 55 yards) wide. Overlooking from above it looks just like a narrow crack while looking up from the bottom one can only see a strip of the sky. It is indeed a rare scene. It has been given the title of 'A Beautiful Scar of the Earth' by seasoned travelers.

It is said that the Maling River Canyon consists of around 100 waterfalls, each 100 meters (about 109 yards) high or more. The most beautiful waterfalls are the Pearl Waterfall and the Rainbow Waterfall. The Pearl Waterfall is a group of waterfalls dropping from a 100-meter (about 109 yards) high cliff. Droplets of these waterfalls splutter in all directions like abundant pearls in the air. The Rainbow Waterfall consists of eight waterfalls pouring down at the same time. As they arrive at the bottom, a mist of water rises and rainbows appear in the sunshine.

On the two faces of the canyon, there are miles of calcium sediments. Some calcium sediments are like hanging tapestries while some are like waterfalls. Local people call them calcium tapestries or calcium falls. These sediments vary in color and shape. Colorful and vivid pictures form on two sides. This natural gallery is too marvelous to imagine!

Tourists can either drift at the bottom of the canyon along the river or enjoy the scenery on foot along the man-made plank trail. Of course the canyon drift is much more exciting. Drifting at Maling River Canyon is more than exciting. It is thrilling! The river at this part is turbulent and narrow with several dangerous shoals. While drifting, tourists can appreciate waterfalls and calcium falls on the way.

Attention: the best time to drift along Maling River is from June to October. During this period, at the main spot one can take in sights of 13 waterfalls at one time.

## Qingyan Ancient Town



Qingyan Ancient Town, one of the most famous historical and cultural towns in Guizhou Province, lies in the southern suburb of Guiyang. As an ancient town, covering an area of 741 acres, Qingyan Town was originally built in 1378. Nowadays, because of its long history and strong cultural atmosphere, Qingyan Ancient Town has become an attractive destination for numerous domestic and foreign tourists.

Dating back to the beginning of the Ming Dynasty (1368--1644), Qingyan town was built for military reasons. Because of its geographical location, Zhu Yuanzhang, the first emperor of Ming Dynasty established it as a station for transferring military messages and to house a standing army. Through years of modification and repeated restoration, Qingyan Ancient Town has gradually become a distinctive ancient town with cultural features of Ming and Qing Dynasties (1644 - 1911). Although small in size, Qingyan Ancient Town has a well-planned architectural style, hundreds of sites of relics, and an influential local culture.

Due to the local geology, Qingyan Ancient Town was built completely of stone. Visitors can see spectacular city walls built right on the cliffs with vast rocks, which divided Qingyan into inner and outer towns. There are four gates in the wall facing north, south, east and west. Outside the four gates, there were originally eight stone tablets, which were considered the symbols of Qingyan Ancient Town. Of the eight, three remain with delicate sculptures on each surface. The most famous one is called Zhao Lunli Baisui (longevity) Fang.

Walking inside the inner town, visitors will surely marvel at the ancient architecture here. There are over 30 types including monasteries, temples, cabinets, caves, courtyards and palaces. All of them were delicately designed by the skillful architects of the Ming and Qing Dynasties. A number of exquisite articles, such as the stone sculptures of Ciyun Temple and wooden sculptures of Shoufo Temple are all worth a look. You can visit the ancient business streets to admire the elegant classical wooden houses. If you like, stop at one of those tea houses and have a taste of the famous local snacks, such as Qingyan tofu, rice tofu and rose sugar.

Religious culture here is also quite rich, including Buddhism, Taoism, Catholicism and Christianity. If you are interested in Buddhism, you can take this chance to learn the typical Buddhism culture here. Also, you will be impressed by patter of the Taoists. What's more, you will be surprised to find that so many residents here are Catholic and Christian, since the Catholicism was introduced here in 1851 by a French churchman and the Christianity was introduced to Qingyan Town nearly 70 years ago.

While traveling in Qingyan Ancient Town, visitors will hear many stories of historical figures that were born or lived here. The first Zhuang Yuan (winner of the national examination) of Guizhou Province during the Qing Dynasty was Mr. Zhao Yijiong who was born and brought up in Qingyan Town. Mr. Chang Pinggang, the General Secretary of Dr. Sun Yat-sen was a county fellow of Qingyan Town.

Qingyan Ancient Town is really a fantastic place for visitors to learn about Chinese ancient culture. Time permitting, it is worthwhile to stay in the town for one or two days. By doing so, you can grasp a better sense of the classical elegance of this unique ancient town in the early morning.

### Zhijin Cave Scenic Spot



is located in Zhijin County, Guizhou Province. The spot has four parts: Zhijin Old Town, Zhijin Cave, Jiehe Gorge and Hongjia Ferry among which the Zhijin Cave is the most attractive and famous.

Zhijin Cave is also called Daji Cave (Hit Rooster Cave). Historically, young Miao boys and girls often played shuttlecock here, hence the Daji Cave name. Its enormous area spans 307 square kilometers (about 118.5 square miles), with a length of 12.1 kilometers (about 7.52 miles) and a width of 175 meters (about 0.11 miles). Because of the huge bizarre stalactite in the Zhijin Cave, it is called the 'Museum of Karsts'. In this cave are more than forty kinds of karst formations, like those in caves in other parts of the world. The Zhijin Cave, which boasts many unique features, is called 'King of Caves'. For example, 350,000 square meters (about 3,767,491 square feet) of the cave have been explored. Halls in the cave are extremely long and wide. One seldom sees so many varieties and such high-grade karst accumulations, such as the rare curlstone (a kind of stone). The cave feels like a huge underground palace. Here a variety of stones and rock -- prehnite, bloodstone, and curlstone - have formed stalagmites, stone flowers, drums, pillars, and so on. Karst formations create different scenes such as the following:

#### Reception Hall (Yingbin Ting)

Owing to the sunshine from the mouth of this cave, moss grows in the hall. At the top of the hall is a circular ventilated opening through which sunshine penetrates to the bottom of the hall. Under the sunlight, remaining beads around the opening glisten tremulously like myriads of crystal coins falling from heaven.

#### Longevity Palace (Wanshou Gong)

At an early period in history enormous rocks collapsed from the summit and then accumulated into a mountain now called Mt. Longevity (Mt. Wanshou Shan). Later, karst accumulations covered the

mountain. Beside Mt. Longevity the crimson bloodstone glitters like a peacock spreading its tail to display his fine feathers.

After seeing the natural cave wonders, you can visit the local minority villages of Buyi, Miao and Yi ethnic minorities.

## Feiyun Cliff



Boasting a group of ancient structures that includes archways, pavilions, temple halls and corridors, Feiyun Cliff is a major ancient site of the Wuyang River Scenic Resort. It combines the marvelous natural scenery with exquisite buildings to form a truly fascinating and very highly rated place in south Guizhou.

Feiyun Cliff is located at the foot of Mount Dongpo, 12 kilometers (7 miles) east of Huangping. It was originally built in 1443 of the Ming Dynasty and then restored several times during the Qing Dynasty. Occupying an area of 2,000 square meters (2392 square yards), it is composed of three main buildings: Yuetan (Moon Pond) Temple, Yuetan Palace and Yangyun (Fostering Cloud) Pavilion, which encompass both the religious and the gardenesque architectural styles. When seen from afar, the grand and peculiar cliff is like flying clouds towering in mid air, which is how it got the name Feiyun (Flying Clouds) Cliff.

Feiyun Cliff is heavily wooded and its ancient buildings are harmoniously covered by the shade of the trees. Graceful natural and man-made scenery has made the cliff characterize a fine spring day all year round. So there is no doubt that it's a beckoning tourist destination. Strolling in the location of the Feiyun Cliff, one may feel as if you had entered a wonderland. Engraved archways have religious mystery and reveal advanced engraving art. Simply decorated pavilions sprinkle the courtyard and serve as a resting spot for people. Serene temple halls house Buddha statues in the middle, where you can smell the fragrance of the joss sticks from the distance. All of these sights and sounds, including picturesque cliff scenery, water chattering among the mountains and sounds of the birds in the woods, will wash away all your earthborn vexations and make you feel relaxed and comfortable. Numerous poets, scholars, officials and merchants visited Feiyun Cliff, because the ancient post road of the Ming and Qing Dynasties passed through here. The visitors left a great number of stone inscriptions over the years.

Wang Yangming, a scholar of the Ming Dynasty, said 'Mountains under the heaven compare their beauty in Yunnan and Guizhou while the Feiyun Cliff is the most impressive and representative among them.'

Annually, on the 8th day of the 4th lunar month, the ethnic minority people of neighboring areas gather at the Feiyun Cliff to hold their grand celebrations. During the celebrations, men play the Lusheng Pipe (a musical instrument made of bamboo), girls dance gracefully on large drums and some people burn joss sticks and pray to the God for blessings for their families. Other activities like horse racing and bullfighting are very popular too.

## Hongfu Temple



Hongfu Temple is in Qianling Park, which is situated in the northwest of Guiyang, Guizhou Province. About 1.5 kilometers (about 0.93 mile) from downtown area, and is considered to be the most famous Buddhist site in the province.

'Hongfu' is Chinese for 'good fortune', which is an apt name for the temple considering its history. It was in 1672 when Chisong, a monk during the Ming Dynasty founded the temple. It had very poor beginnings, being little more than a small hut, but Chisong was determined that it should become a revered shrine and through his persistence many local officials gave their support. In time the temple was to become the most important Buddhist temple in the area.

The temple complex is made up of a number of halls and the most important of these are the Daxiongbaodian Hall, the Kwan-yin Hall (the Guanyin Hall), and the Sutra Collection Pavilion. The architectural style is magnificent and venerable. Over the past 300 years the temple has undergone several rebuilds, repairs and enlargements and is now a very well preserved example of its kind. As the largest Buddhist temple in Guizhou Province it has been declared a key cultural relic and has been open to the public since 1983.

In recent years many prominent people have visited the temple and in accordance with Chinese tradition have left poetry in praise of the inspiring architecture and its setting. A stroll through the temple compound will enable you to enjoy its peaceful environment while reflecting upon its splendid past.

## Tian Long Ancient Town



A twenty-minute drive from Anshun will take you to the Tun Bu village. It is a very old and peculiar Han Chinese settlement existing in the southwest part of China. Here women wear Ming dynasty costumes and the houses, typically featuring Ming architectural styles, are frozen in time.

Historic records tell the story about the village. The imperial court of the Ming Dynasty had sent a garrison force to Anshun six hundred years ago. The garrison turned the neighborhood into farmland, grew crops, and build up villages for its own needs. The Tun Bu Village is the best among the well-kept settlements, where people have changed little in lifestyle.



The Tun Bu Village population is over 5000, or 1250 families. They have largely kept to themselves. They developed sophisticated stone masonry skills. You will find this all over the place: a unique stone culture. There is a 100-meter long business street -- the only market square where the trades congregate, and the practice continues to this day.

The people are hospitable and friendly to visitors. You may examine the women's clothing up close. The garments are usually long robes with loose sleeves. The cuffs are embroidered with laces. Some wear handkerchiefs over their heads, and some adorn themselves with silver hairpins. The villagers, at peace with nature, are devout worshippers of the supernatural. There are temples of various faiths: Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism. Tiantai Mountain features a temple complex at its summit. Spectacular Buddhist artifacts are everywhere to be seen among the marvels of nature.

Villagers sing folk songs in the evening to entertain their guests. Tourists are invited to visit village homes, where they may sample tea and local food.

## Miao Nationality



The Miao are one of the most ancient of China's nationalities, tracing their origins back more than 4,000 years. Prior to modernization of farming methods, they grew millet and buckwheat using the slash-and-burn methods. The Miao language has three main dialects, but there was no unified written script until 1956. Religions include nature and ancestor worship and Christianity.

Dispersed from southern China across northern Vietnam, Laos, and into Thailand, the Miao (also known as the Hmong), vary in dialect, styles of farming, and designation: Black, White, Red, blue, Flowery, and Cowrie Shell Miao among others. Forced southward by the Han, often despised and exploited, many settled in distant mountains, raising millet and buckwheat by slash-and-burn farming, their diet supplemented by domestic animals and hunting. Modernization, improved farming methods, organization of communes, and road building has been made difficult by the ragged terrain in which the Miao are scattered. The Miao are found in the Guizhou, Hainan, Hubei, Sichuan, Gansu, Guizhou, Qinghai, Hunan, Guangdong, and Yunnan Provinces and the Guangxi Autonomous Region. They are part of the Sino-Tibetan Miao-Yao ethno linguistic group.

About 195 km almost directly east of Guiyang in the town of Kaili. Kaili is a fairly uninspiring place but the area is host to a large number of minority festivals, over 130 annually. One of the largest is the Lusheng Festival, held from the 11th to the 18th of the first lunar month. The lusheng is a reed instrument used by the Miao people. Activities include playing the lusheng, dancing, drumming, bull fighting, and horse racing. Participants are said to number 30,000. The festival is held in Danxi. Other festivals are held midway in the 7th lunar month and in their New Year. Their New Year is celebrated in the first four days of the 10th lunar month by some 50,000 people.

About 752,000 Miao live in Yunnan Province scattered over eighty-seven counties. They are good at weaving, embroidery and Batik. Their excellent craftsmanship is well known.

### **Kaili Ethnic Minorities Museum**



In the museum there has a quite detailed introduction to human culture, geography, and the national minorities' customs of the southeastern areas of Guizhou Province. Some writing, pictures, and material objects are displayed here. Minority Customs hall and Dragon Boat hall are the main exhibits which are worth watching.

### **Suoga Changjiao Miao Minority village**



### **Qingman Miao Minority village**

