

Picture Book Series of the Scenic Spots in China



漓江

From Guilin
to Yangshuo

From Guilin to Yangshuo

A Trip Along the Scenic Lijiang River



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CONTENTS

1. Guilin	4
A City with Green Hills Inside and Outside	9
Pinnacles Popping Up from the Ground	14
Fantastic Caves	32
Steles and Cliff Inscriptions	42
2. The Lijiang River	62
A Boat Ride down the Lijiang River	62
The River, Hills and Caves	69
The Horses on Mural Hill	78
Xingping, with Its Fine Landscapes	100
3. Yangshuo	114
People Inhabit Green Lotus Peak	114
Picturesque Peaks and Valleys	124
The Trace of Immortals in the Peaks	129
Banyan Trees, Ancient Ferry and Moon Hill	140

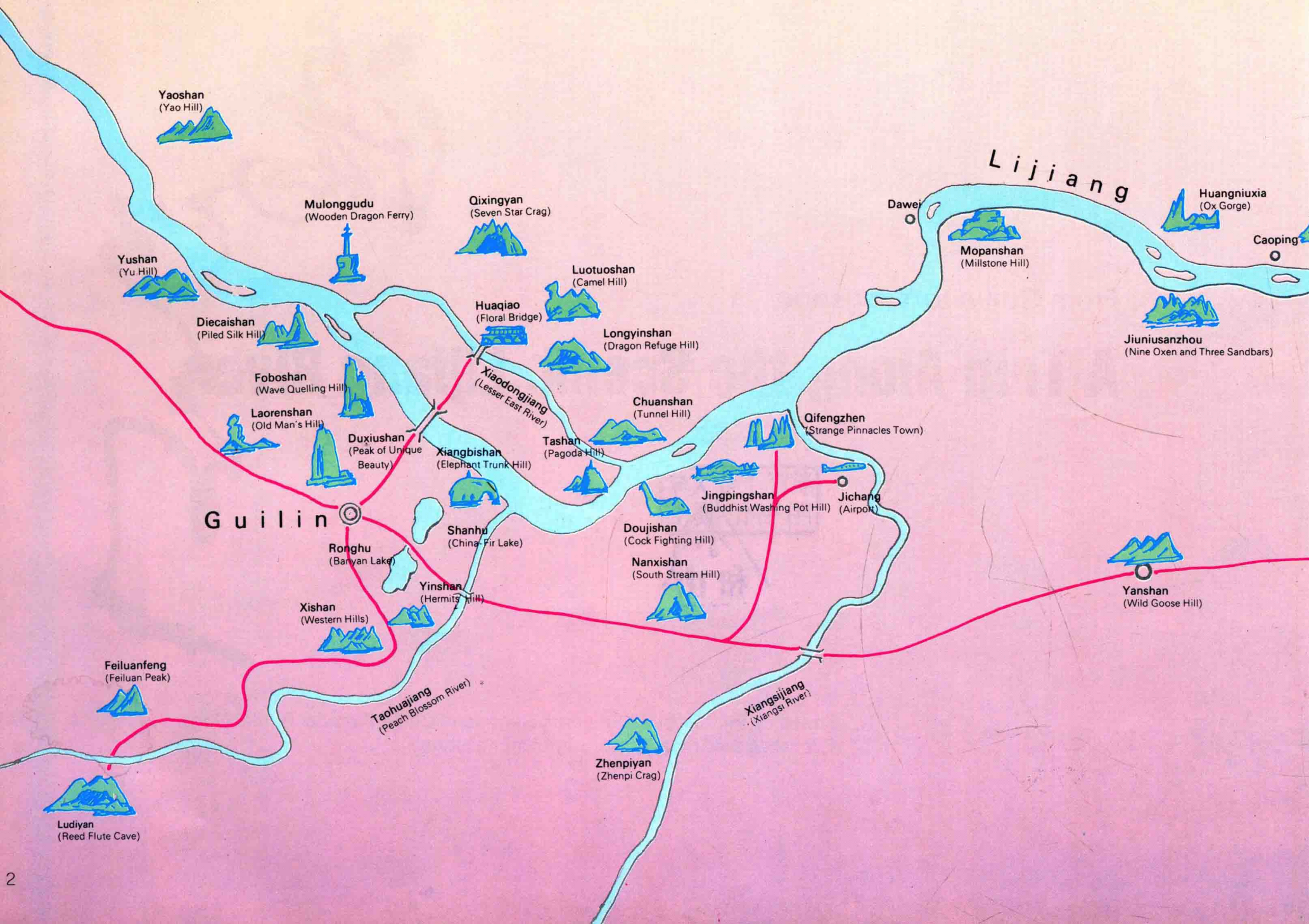


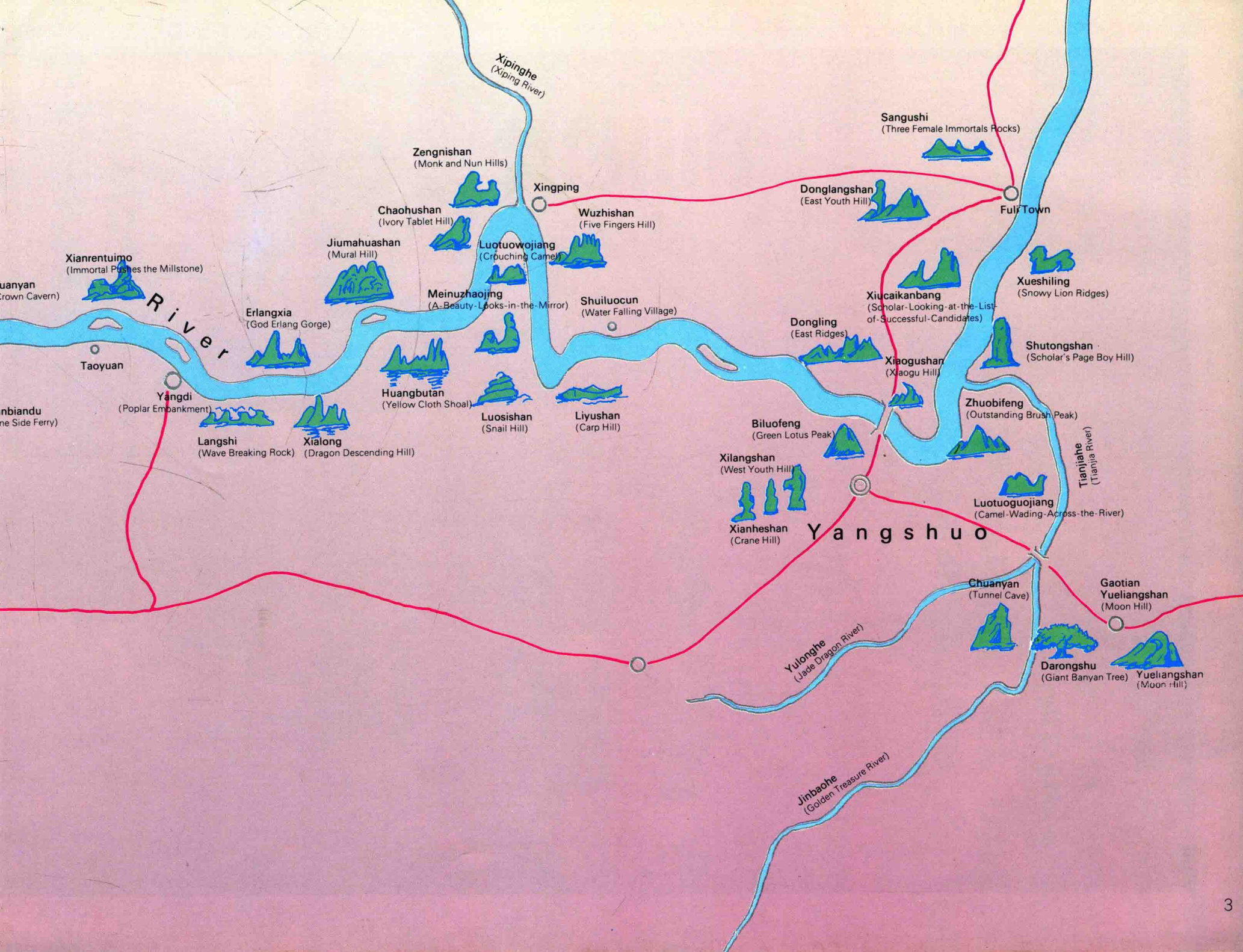
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Scenic Spots Along the Lijiang River Between Guilin and Yangshuo





uanyan
(Crown Cavern)

Xianrentuimo
(Immortal Pushes the Millstone)

Taoyuan

Yangdi
(Poplar Embankment)

Langshi
(Wave Breaking Rock)

Xialong
(Dragon Descending Hill)

Erlangxia
(God Erlang Gorge)

Yanbian
(Side Ferry)

Xipinghe
(Xiping River)

Zengnishan
(Monk and Nun Hills)

Chaohushan
(Ivory Tablet Hill)

Jiumahuashan
(Mural Hill)

Luotuowojiang
(Crouching Camel)

Meinuzhaojing
(A Beauty Looks in the Mirror)

Shuilocun
(Water Falling Village)

Huangbutan
(Yellow Cloth Shoal)

Luoshishan
(Snail Hill)

Liyushan
(Carp Hill)

Wuzhishan
(Five Fingers Hill)

Sangushi
(Three Female Immortals Rocks)

Donglangshan
(East Youth Hill)

Fuli Town

Xueshiling
(Snowy Lion Ridges)

Shutongshan
(Scholar's Page Boy Hill)

Zhuobifeng
(Outstanding Brush Peak)

Luotuoguojiang
(Camel-Wading-Across-the-River)

Yueliangshan
(Moon Hill)

Darongshu
(Giant Banyan Tree)

Chuanyan
(Tunnel Cave)

Gaotian Yueliangshan
(Moon Hill)

Xiukaikanbang
(Scholar-Looking-at-the-List-of-Successful-Candidates)

Xiaogushan
(Xiaogu Hill)

Dongling
(East Ridges)

Bilufeng
(Green Lotus Peak)

Xilangshan
(West Youth Hill)

Xianheshan
(Crane Hill)

Yulonghe
(Jade Dragon River)

Jinbahe
(Golden Treasure River)

Yangshuo

桂林

GUILIN



Text by Yu Guokun

A 50-kilometer boat ride from Guilin down the Lijiang River to Yangshuo is an unusual experience for anyone. It is like sailing down a scroll on which is painted a traditional Chinese landscape. If the trip is compared to an enchanting sonata, then Guilin, the starting point of the trip, with green hills towering singly inside and outside of the city, is the exposition. The development is the Lijiang, with myriads of hills and peaks that seem to jut straight out of its banks. Yangshuo, which is called "the world of green lotus buds and jade bamboo shoots," is the destination of the trip or the tailpiece of the sonata, in which the musical theme is restated. The Lijiang, together with Guilin and Yangshuo, presents an unusually beautiful picture of green hills, weird peaks, fantastic caves and green waters, all arranged harmoniously by nature.

The area along the Lijiang between Guilin and

Yangshuo is celebrated not only for its natural sights but also for its cultural relics. Apart from prehistoric sites and ancient landscaped gardens, it boasts a wealth of legends, poems, paintings and stone carvings left behind by visitors over the centuries. They record the history of the area and reflect the esthetic standards of the people.

Well, now let us start from Guilin and take an excursion down the river.

1. Guilin, a world-famous tourist resort, is a city rich in history and culture. Since ancient times, its breath-taking scenery has captivated people's imaginations.

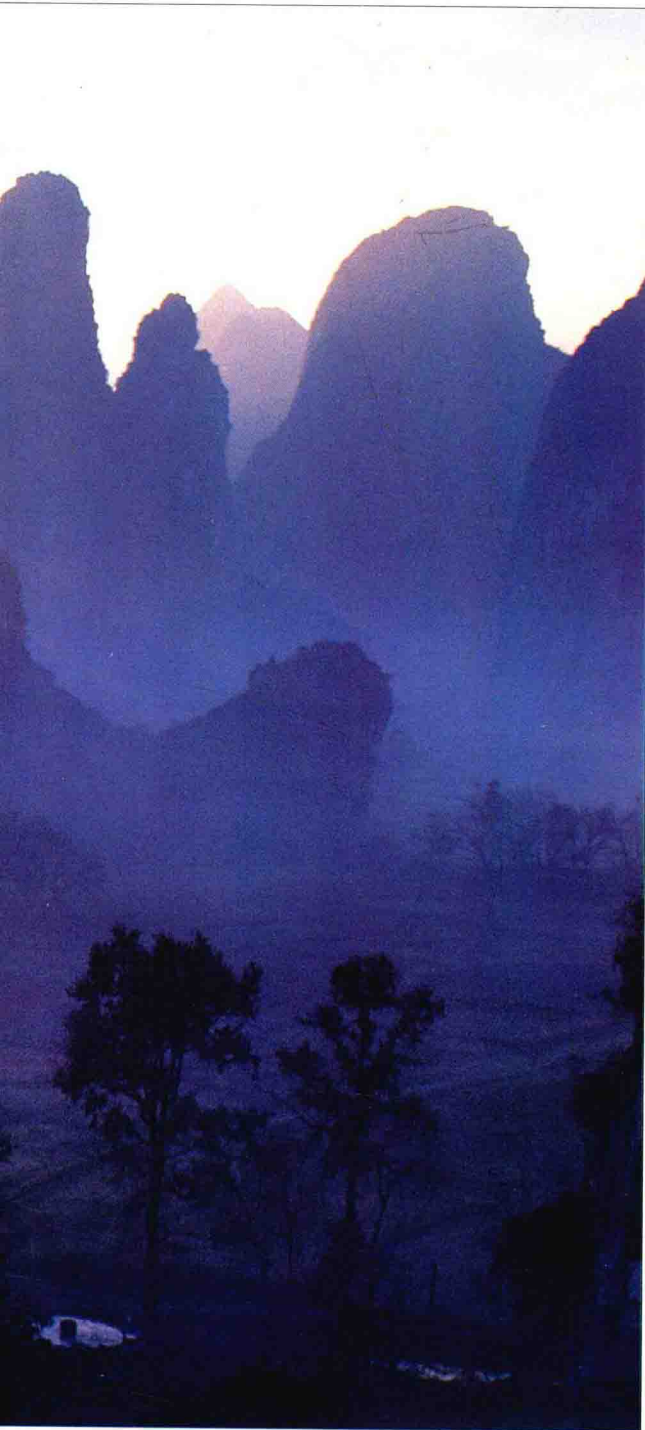












A City with Green Hills Inside and Outside

With majestic hills, weirdly-shaped caverns and clear streams, the unique landscape of Guilin looks like a highly exaggerated landscape painting in traditional Chinese style. Before science could explain its uniqueness, Chinese legend had this to say of it: "Guilin was part of the sea. After he unified China, the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty (221–206 B. C.) wanted to extend his empire by filling up the sea. He got a magic whip from a god and used it to drive all the hills from north to south for the purpose. The Dragon King of the sea, fearing that he would soon lose his habitat, sent his third daughter to defraud the emperor of his whip when he arrived in Guilin with the hills. The princess did the trick. Hence the concentration of hills of all odd shapes in Guilin."

In fact, the Guilin area was a sea bed 230 million years ago. Through crustal movement, it thrust up and became land that has a thick layer of limestone. Fossils, including those of spirifers and coral insects, obtained by geologists from Laoren (Old Man) Hill, Guniu (Bull) Hill and Heishan (Black) Hill prove that the expanse of land marked by hills and bizarre-shaped caverns scattered between Guilin and Yangshuo is formed by numerous calcium-rich remains of marine life and by carbonate sediment.

The Guilin area is karst country and has a layer of limestone several thousand meters deep. It owes its unique landscape entirely to the workings of nature. Limestone is quite hard, but it dissolves easily in water, especially in acidic water. Rain-water, which percolates along cracks and fissures, dissolves the limestone and carries it away in solution. The hills, depressions, caves and underground streams in the area were all formed by nature through millions of years of water erosion.

According to archaeological finds, the Guilin area was first settled in the later part of the Old Stone Age, 30,000 years ago. The earliest known settlement was established in Baoji (Treasure Accumulation) Cave on Baoji Hill in the city of

Guilin. During the early part of the New Stone Age, 10,000 years ago, another settlement appeared. It was located in Zengpi Cave, on the city's southern outskirts. Both caves have yielded large quantities of stone implements and animal bones. In addition, more than 30 well-preserved human skeletons and some pottery shards have been discovered in Zengpi Cave.

Guilin has a long history, dating back to 111 B. C., when Emperor Wu Di of the Han Dynasty established a county seat in the area. It was called Shi'an. During the Tang Dynasty (618–907) when a city wall and moat were built to enclose the city, the urban area of Guilin was expanded to include Duxiu (Unique Beauty) Peak. During the Song Dynasty (960–1279), Guilin was expanded time and again, and more peaks and hills were brought within the city precincts. They included Diecai (Piled Silk) Hill, Treasure Accumulation Hill, Yingwu (Parrot) Hill and Tiefeng (Iron Sealed) Hill. As a result, Guilin became a city surrounded by waterways and has green hills both inside and

2. Guilin's Western Hills are composed of four peaks. Houses are scattered in the valleys between them. The Western Hills look best in the glory of sunset and are one of the eight most popular scenic spots in Guilin. They attract large numbers of tourists and Buddhist pilgrims because of their Tang Dynasty Buddhist stone sculptures and their magnificent Song Dynasty Buddhist temples. (see picture on pages 8 and 9)
3. Strange Pinnacles Town at dawn. The town is located on the northern bank of the Lijiang, in the southern suburbs of Guilin.
4. Guilin's history stretches back to 111 B.C., when Emperor Wu Di of the Han Dynasty established Shi'an County in the area. Piled Silk Hill's Bright Moon Peak provides a panoramic view of the city, with its weird-shaped hills and the beautiful Lijiang River. (see picture on the next page)





outside. The city walls constructed during the past ages all followed the topography – most stood along steep peaks overlooking the Lijiang. They were built with locally available stone blocks instead of bricks. The city wall and the southern and eastern city gates built during the Song Dynasty still stand intact. During the past 2,000 years, Guilin's status has changed many times. First it was a county. Then it was made a sub-prefecture, a prefecture and, finally, the provincial capital of Guangxi. In 1940, it became a municipality under the administration of Guangxi. However, Guilin has always been the political, economic and cultural center of Guangxi and a city of regional military importance.

5. China-Fir Lake is so named because in ancient times China firs grew in profusion on its shores. The lake is bordered by the Lijiang on the east and Elephant Trunk Hill on the south. In the middle of the lake is an islet on which there are mushroom-like structures. China-Fir and Banyan lakes are like two bright pearls studding the city of Guilin.

6. Banyan Lake takes its name from the 1,000-year-old banyan tree on its bank. Before Ming times, both Banyan and China-Fir lakes were part of the southern moat of Guilin. As the city expanded southward, the moat became the two independent yet connected lakes that exist today. There is a tiny island in the middle of Banyan Lake. On the island are elegant pavilions connected to the lakeside by a zigzag bridge. Banyan Lake has become one of the most frequented parks in Guilin.



