

山光水色—九寨沟

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General Description

Mt. Emei (Emei Shan) is one of the most celebrated tourist attractions in China. "The State of Shu*abounds in fairyland mountains, but none can match Mt. Emei in beauty,"eulogized Li Bai (701-762), a great poet of the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

Mt. Emei, with an area of approximately 200 square kilometers, includes the First Emei (Da E), the Second Emei (Er E) and the Third Emei (San E).Tourists usually visit only the First Emei because it offers all the beauty of the whole mountain.

Emei means the eyebrow of a beauty. When viewed from afar, the First Emei and the Second Emei, facing each other, appear like the two delicate eyebrows, long, thin and extraordinarily beautiful.

People usually think that the Golden Summit (Jin Ding), 3,077 meters above sea level, is the highest peak. Actually the less famous Myriad Buddhas Peak (Wan Fo Ding), 3,099 meters above sea level, is the highest.

Mt. Emei lies between the Liangshan and Qionglai Mountains at the end of the Qionglai Mountain Range. It is a fault-block mountain with countless sheer precipices and steep cliffs. Constant erosion and weathering throughout millions of years have molded the mountain into a geological wonder.

Located in southwest China where the climate is temperate and rainfall abundant, Mt. Emei is covered with

* Present-day Sichuan Province

A distant view of misty Mt. Emei



vegetation all the year round. It is rich in rare plants and strange animals. The plants vary from elevation to elevation. Thus the green mountain appears to be rather miraculous to tourists, and particularly fascinating to botanists. Mt. Emei displays different sights in different seasons. In spring it looks like a beautiful rumpled brocade quilted with multicolored flowers. In summer it is shaded with dense growth and enveloped in mist and cloud. In autumn it is trimmed in a blaze of colors. In winter it is silvered with snow and frost. Sightseers are dazzled by its peculiar natural phenomena, such as spectacular sunrise, seas of clouds, and the Buddha's glory as seen from the Golden Summit.

Mt. Emei also teems with cultural relics. As early as the second century Taoists and Buddhists began to build temples and monasteries in the mountains. By the sixth century when Buddhism became more and more widespread in China, Mt. Emei became one of the four Buddhist sanctuaries and the sacred place where Samantabhadra, a disciple of Sakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism, preached the faith. After the fourteenth century when Buddhism flourished more monasteries were built. According to historical records, they numbered 151 at their height. Most of them were unfortunately ruined afterwards. But more than 20 still remain today and some have been restored to their original splendor since 1976. The mountain is an ideal place for sightseeing.

Cloud-kissing Mt. Emei, hundreds of miles
in circumference, is clad in mist.





Azalea Pool (Du Juan Chi) at the Golden Summit

Visitor's Itinerary

The peaks of Mt. Emei with their foothills intertwined rise one higher than another. Each scenic spot displays its own grand features. Therefore touring the mountain depends on what the sightseer is interested in and how long he wishes to stay.

Route One

1st day: Limpid Waters (Jin Shui) — Myriad Years Monastery (Wan Nian Si) — Elephant Wash-

Tourist Map of Mt. Emei

Mermaid Buddha Peak
Golden Summit
Lying in the Clouds Nunnery
Crown Peaks Terrace
Crossing Table Terrace
Thundering Cave on Terrace
White Cloud Monastery
Elephant Washing Pool
Sky-reclining Slope
Huayan Peak
Meeting Immortal Monastery
East Hall
Heart-reposing Place
Mermaid Years Monastery
White Dragon Cave
Limpid Waters
Elegant Sound Pavilion
Central Peak Monastery
A Strip of Heaven Clearade
Old Heart Monastery
Stone Peak
Thundering Monastery
Fine Wind Fountain
Crouching Tiger Monastery
Crying to the Country Monastery

2nd day: Elephant Washing Pool — Golden Summit
3rd day: Golden Summit — Nine Ancients Cavern
(Jiu Lao Dong)
4th day: Nine Ancients Cavern — Age-old Trees
Terrace (Hong Chun Ping) — Elegant Sound
Pavilion (Qing Yin Ge) — Fine Wine
Fountain (Yu Xie Qian) — Crouching Tiger
Monastery (Fu Hu Si) — Loyalty to the
Country Monastery (Bao Guo Si)

Route Two

1st day: Loyalty to the Country Monastery—Crouching Tiger Monastery—Thundering Monastery (Lei Yin Si) — Chunyang Hall (Chunyang Dian)—Elegant Sound Pavilion—Age-old Trees Terrace

2nd day: Age-old Trees Terrace — Nine Ancients Cavern—Elephant Washing Pool

3rd day: Elephant Washing Pool — Golden Summit

4th day: Golden Summit — Myriad Years Monastery

5th day: Myriad Years Monastery — Limpid Waters

Route Three

1st day: Loyalty to the Country Monastery — Twin Rivers' Mouth (Liang He Kuo) by bus

Twin Rivers' Mouth—Five Ridges (Wu Xian Gang) — Elegant Sound Pavilion — White

Dragon Cave (Bai Long Dong) — Myriad Years Monastery—Elephant Washing Pool

2nd day: Elephant Washing Pool — Golden Summit

3rd day: Golden Summit — Elephant Washing Pool—Meeting Immortal Monastery (Yu Xian Si)—Nine Ancients Cavern

4th day: Nine Ancients Cavern — Age-old Trees Terrace—A Strip of Heaven Cleavage (Yi Xian Tian) — Elegant Sound Pavilion — Central Peak Monastery (Zhong Feng Si) — Chunyang Hall

5th day: Chunyang Hall—Crouching Tiger Monastery —Loyalty to the Country Monastery

Route Four

1st day: Loyalty to the Country Monastery — Dragon Gate Cave (Long Men Dong)—Limpid Waters — Twin Wells (Shuang Shui Jing) by tourist coach

Twin Wells—Golden Summit

2nd day: Golden Summit—Elephant Washing Pool—Meeting Immortal Monastery—Fairy Peak Monastery (Xian Feng Si)

3rd day: Fairy Peak Monastery — Age-old Trees Terrace—Elegant Sound Pavilion

4th day: Elegant Sound
Pavilion— Central
Peak Monastery—
Fine Wine Fountain
—Thundering
Monastery—Crouching
Tiger Monastery—
Loyalty to the Country
Monastery

Route Five

1st day: Loyalty to the
Country Monastery—
Dragon Gate Cave
—Limpid waters—
Twin Wells by tourist
coach
Twin Wells—
Golden Summit

2nd day: Golden Summit—
Elephant Washing Pool—
Huayan Peak (Huayan
Ding)—First Hall (Chu
Dian)—Heart Reposing
Place (Xi Xing Shuo)—
Myriad Years Monastery

3rd day: Myriad Years
Monastery—Limpid
Waters

Sky-cleaving Slope



Distance Between Scenic Spots

Elegant Sound Pavilion—A Strip of Heaven Cleavage	1 km.
A Strip of Heaven Cleavage—Age-old Trees Terrace	5 km.
Age-old Trees Terrace—Tea Shop (Cha Peng Zhi)	10 km.
Tea Shop—Nine Ancients Cavern	5 km.
Meeting Immortal Monastery—Nine Ridges (Jiu Gang Zhi)	2.5 km.
Nine Ancients Cavern—Meeting Immortal Monastery	7.5 km.
Nine Ridges—Elephant Washing Pool	2.5 km.
Elephant Washing Pool—Thundering Caven Terrace (Lei Dong Ping)	7.5 km.
Jieyin Hall (Jie Yin Dian)—Crown Prince Terrace (Taizhi Ping)	3.5 km.
Thundering Cavern Terrace—Jieyin Hall	1.5 km.
Crown Prince Terrace—Golden Summit	2.5 km.
Golden Summit—Myriad Buddhas Peak	4 km.
Myriad Years Monastery—Limpid Waters	4 km.
Myriad Years Monastery—Black Dragon Pool (Hei Long Tan)	6 km.
Myriad Year Monastery—Heart Reposing Place	5 km.
Heart Reposing Place—First Hall	4 km.
First Hall—Huayan Peak	1.5 km.
Huayan Peak—Nine Ridges	1 km.
Emei Railway Station—Emei County Town	3.5 km.
Emei County Town—Limpid Waters	17 km.
Emei County Town—Loyalty to the Country Monastery	6.5 km.
Loyalty to the Country Monastery —Twin Wells	43.5 km.
Loyalty to the Country Monastery—Crouching Tiger Monastery	1 km.
Loyalty to the Country Monastery —Thundering Monastery	2.5 km.
Thundering Monastery—Huayan Monastery	1.5 km.
Huayan Monastery—Chunyang Hall	1 km.
Chunyang Hall—Wisdom Lamp Monastery (Hui Deng Si)	1 km.

Wisdom Lamp Monastery—Fine Wind Fountain

2.5 km.

Fine Wine Fountain—Central Peak Monastery 1 km.

Central Peak Monastery—Elegant Sound Pavilion

2.5 km.

Elegant Sound Pavilion—White Dragon Cave 1 km.

White Dragon Cave—Myriad Years Monastery 2 km.

Elegant Sound Pavilion—Ox Heart Monastery

(Niu Xing Si) 2 km.

Ox Heart Monastery—Buddhas Assembling

Monastery (Hui Fo Si) 3 km.

Buddha Assembling Monastery—Grand Terrace

(Da Ping) 2.5 km.

Grand Terrace—Age-old Trees Terrace 7.5 km.

Climate at Different Elevations

The climate at Mt. Emei is of three types: subtropical (at the elevation below 1,000 meters), temperate (at the elevation between 1,000 and 1,500 meters) and subtemperate (at the elevation above 1,500 meters). The following table shows the average monthly temperature (°C) at the Emei County Town and the Golden Summit.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Emei County Town	7.0	8.7	13.3	18.1	21.7	24.1	26.3	25.7	22.1	17.4	13.1	8.7
Golden Summit	-6.1	-4.9	-0.6	3.3	6.2	8.9	11.9	11.3	7.9	3.4	-0.8	-3.8

Golden Summit Meteorological Station



Loyalty to the Country Monastery

The Loyalty to the Country Monastery at the foot of Mt. Emei is the starting place for climbing the mountain. Built in the sixteenth century, it was enlarged and renovated in the seventeenth century. Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) gave the monastery its present name.

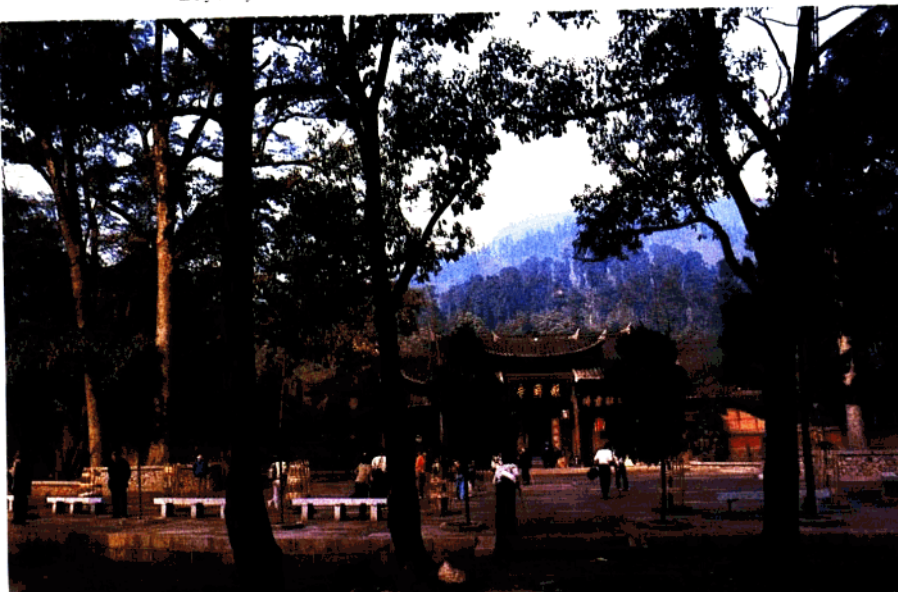
Constructed on the slope of the mountain, each section of the monastery rises higher than the previous one. Its four main halls, well shaded with verdant nanmu trees and cypresses, are surrounded by elegant flower gardens and pavilions where visitors can make preparations before the climb.

Below the Sutra Library (Zang Jing Lou) there is a lifelike porcelain image of Buddha made in 1415 which measures 3.4 meters in height.

The vicinity around the Loyalty to the Country Monastery abounds with more than 200 species of butterflies. Among them are the rare "withered-leaf" butterflies which look like withered leaves on branches and the fascinating multi-colored phoenix butterflies.

On display here are such cultural relics as Chinese paintings and calligraphy as well as a model of Mt. Emei.

Loyalty to the Country Monastery at the foot of Mt. Emei





Look! The butterfly is the very image of a withered leaf.



Many-tinted flowers in
the Loyalty to the
Country Monastery





Porcelain Buddhist image



Skanda





Pious pilgrims paying homage to Buddhist statues



Making walking-sticks for the tourists



A curious little tourist

Crouching Tiger Monastery

Turning right from the Loyalty to the Country Monastery, crossing the Tiger Brook Bridge (Hu Xi Qiao), the visitor can dimly see the Crouching Tiger Monastery enshrouded in the dense and towering nanmu trees.

This monastery, first built in the Song Dynasty (960-1279), was reduced to ashes at the end of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Reconstructed over a 20 year period during the reign of Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty, it took its name from the ridge behind which looks like a crouching tiger. The Chinese name Fu Hu Si can also be understood as the Tiger Taming Monastery because it was built, as the legend goes, to subdue marauding tigers in the densely wooded hills.

This quiet and beautiful monastery is set in thick forests, yet its roofs are always clean; not a fallen leaf can be found on them. So it is also called the Dustless Cloister (Li Guo Yuan). The three Chinese characters Li Guo Yuan engraved on a board at the monastery were written by Emperor Kangxi himself.

Behind the monastery rises the Lo Feng Peak. Every sunny day in spring and autumn this picturesque peak, girdled by clouds, enchants sightseers from afar. It is known as "fleecy clouds around Lo Feng Peak", one of the ten scenic wonders of Mt. Emei.

In the monastery stands a small but very artistic bronze pagoda cast in the sixteenth century. This seven-meter-high, fourteen-storied pagoda is engraved with 4,700 images of Buddha as well as the full text of the Huayan Scripture. Named the Huayan or Little Gold Pagoda, it is also known as the Saints Gathering Bronze Pagoda (Sheng Ji Tong Ta) because it was formerly housed in the Saints Gathering Monastery (Sheng Ji Si).

Climbing up from the Crouching Tiger Monastery and after passing through the Thundering Monastery, the Huayan Monastery and the Emerald Bamboo Bridge (Qing Zhu Qiao), the hiker comes to the Jade Maiden Pool (Yu Nu Chi). This limpid pool, though very small, never runs dry even in times of drought. Close by the pool towers a cloud-kissing peak called the Jade Maiden Peak (Yu Nu Feng). It is said that the fairy maidens on the peak often come down to wash their utensils in the pool.



Tiger Brook Bridge

On one side of the pool stands the Flying Dragon Nunnery (Fei Long An). Legend has it that in the Song Dynasty the prefect of Qiongzhou, Feng Ji, once lived here in a thatched hut as a hermit. He conned the Huayan Sripture so piously every day that he forgot to do anything

else. The fairy maidens on the peak, moved to compassion by his religious fervor, always brought him something to eat. One night, when the wind howled and the rain poured, the Dragon roared in the blinding rainstorm. After a deafening thunderclap, the Dragon flew away and Feng Ji disappeared. To commemorate this remarkable happening, the Flying Dragon Nunnery was built.

After passing the Jade Maiden Peak and Chunyang Hall and continuing to walk a few hundred meters, the hiker reaches the ruined Wisdom Lamp Monastery where he can get a panoramic view of the whole mountain including the Golden Summit.

Not far away from this place there is the Everlasting Security Bridge (Wan Ding Qiao). To its right stands a rock on which were carved the Chinese characters Da E (The First Emei), written by Lu Chunyang (798-?), who was said to be one of the Eight Immortals in Chinese myth. To its left is another rock formerly engraved with four big Chinese characters Yun Wai Liu Chun (Beyond clouds flows spring) written by Su Dongpo (1037-1101), the most versatile poet of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127). But the characters were unfortunately destroyed during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Below the rocks flows the Fine Wine Fountain. Its crystal-clear water is so sweet that tourists consider it refreshing to take a sip.

It is said that in the Sui Dynasty (581-618) Monk Zi Zhe, who was fond of drinking water from this spring, fell ill when he was at Jin Men in Hubei Province. He so much wanted a drink from the spring that the daughters of the Dragon King, out of sympathy for him, diverted the water to Jin Men. This unusual event is known as "Sacred water diverted to Chu." ("Chu" is another name for Hubei Province.)

About one quarter of a kilometer away from the spring there is a rock on which were engraved three big Chinese characters Ge Feng Tai (Phoenix Song Terrace) written by Wang Chi, an educational inspector of the Ming Dynasty during 1188-1505. Tradition says that in the State of Chu in the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.) there lived a man named Lu Tong. He refused to be an official