

Qinghai Province, China



Tibetan, Muslim, Mongolian, Sichuan, and Han Chinese Cultures All in One

Presentation by Paul Pacter

www.PaulVisits.com

China has 34 provincial level subdivisions:

- 23 provinces (if Taiwan is included)
 - 4 very big municipalities with equal status to provinces
Beijing, Chongqing, Shanghai, Tianjin
 - 5 autonomous regions
Guangxi, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Tibet and Xinjiang.
 - 2 special administrative regions
HK and Macao
- QINGHAI is one of the provinces.**

Provinces of China



Qinghai Province.

Old name (still often used): Kokonor.

Terms used to describe Qinghai:

- Remote.
- Sparsely populated.
- “China’s Siberia” due to many prison camps and nuclear dumping grounds.
- Majestic.
- Barren.

Capital: Xining.

Qinghai – land area:

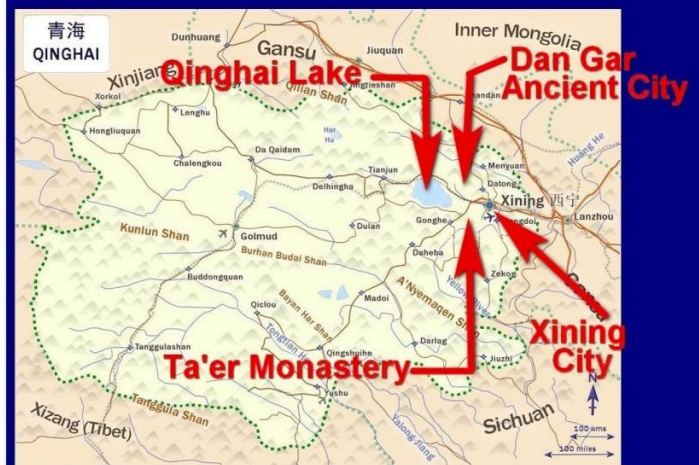
- China’s largest province (though several autonomous regions are larger)
- 280,000 sq miles
- Larger than any country in the EU!

Comparisons:

- Florida land area: 66,000 sq miles
- Entire USA land area: 3,796,000 sq miles

Most land is mountainous or high plateaus

- Average elevation 9,900 feet



Qinghai Population

- Only 5,900,000 people
- Lowest pop. of any China province

Comparisons:

- China population: 1.3 billion
- US: 330 million
- Florida: 23 million

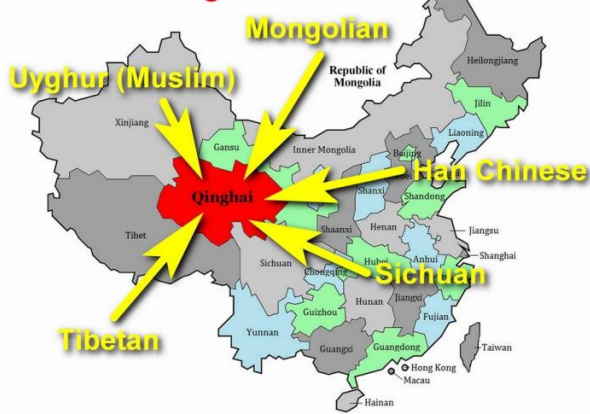
Sparseness of population second only to Tibet.

Qinghai ethnic groups:

37 recognized ethnic groups among Qinghai's population of 5.6 million:

- Han Chinese 54%
- Tibetan 21%
- Hui (Muslim) 16%
- Tu (Monguor) 4%
- Mongol 2%
- Salar 2%
- Others 1%

Influences on Qinghai Culture



Qinghai Economy

**Per capita
GDP 2024:**

Qinghai: US\$9,347.

Beijing: \$32,038.

Shanghai: \$30,486.

USA: \$85,810.

**Total
GDP 2024:**

Qinghai: \$55 billion.
(2nd lowest of all provinces).

China: \$18.7 trillion.

USA: \$29.2 trillion.

Florida: \$1.7 trillion.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Chinese_provincial-level_divisions_by_GDP_per_capita

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Chinese_provincial-level_divisions_by_GDP

Religion in Qinghai

- Buddhism (both Chinese and Tibetan styles) - 82%
- Islam - 17%
- Christianity - 1%

We will visit Chinese Buddhist, Tibetan Buddhist, Muslim, and Christian houses of worship today.

Xining Capital of Qinghai Province

Xining

- Capital of Qinghai Province
- Population: 1.7 million
- Altitude: 7,464 feet
- On Silk Road
- Commercial and religious hub for 2000 years
- Cold semi-arid climate
- 2,676 hours bright sunshine a year
(if divide by 8 hours then 335 days)

Dongguan Mosque

Main prayer hall holds 3,000.

But Friday lunchtime often 50,000 praying in courtyard and nearby streets.

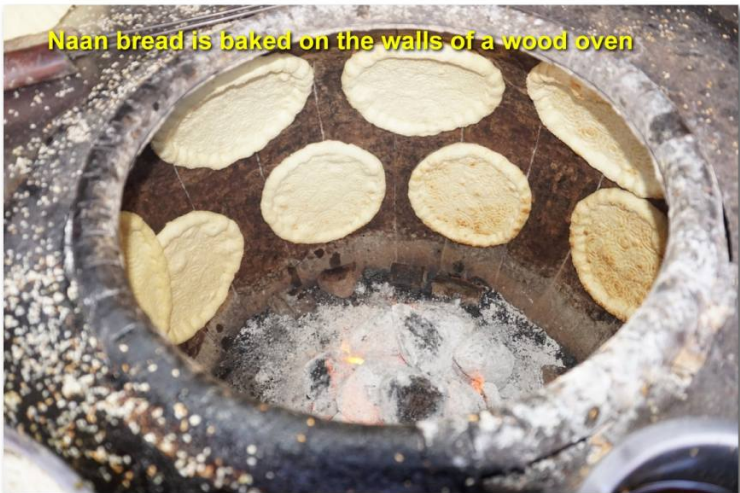
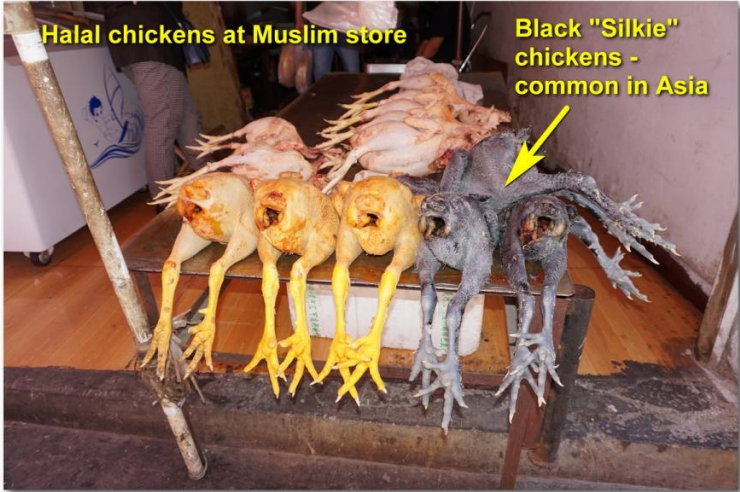


Part of Dongguan Mosque, Xining.



Fried dough snacks at shop in Muslim neighbourhood near Dongguan Mosque





Sunflowers for sale in Xining - 12 to 18 inches diameter!



Yak Butter on sale in Xining
Twice the fat content of cow's milk
Used in tea, mixed with barley as snack

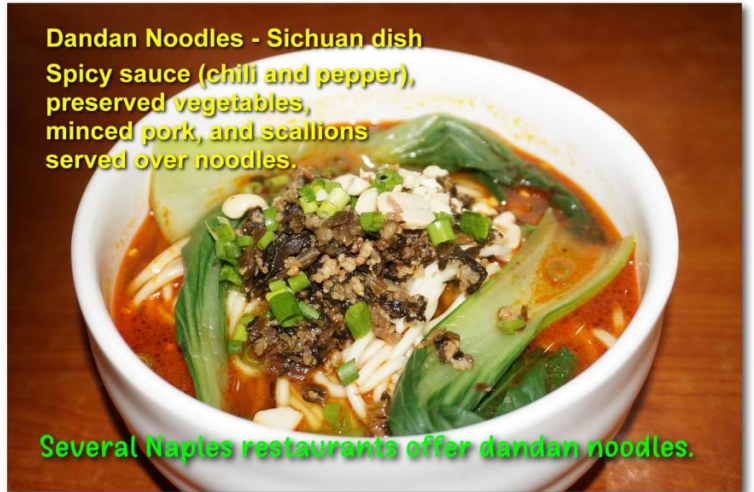


Sheep tripe and chickens

She is browning the chickens with a blowtorch



Dandan Noodles - Sichuan dish
Spicy sauce (chili and pepper),
preserved vegetables,
minced pork, and scallions
served over noodles.



Several Naples restaurants offer dandan noodles.

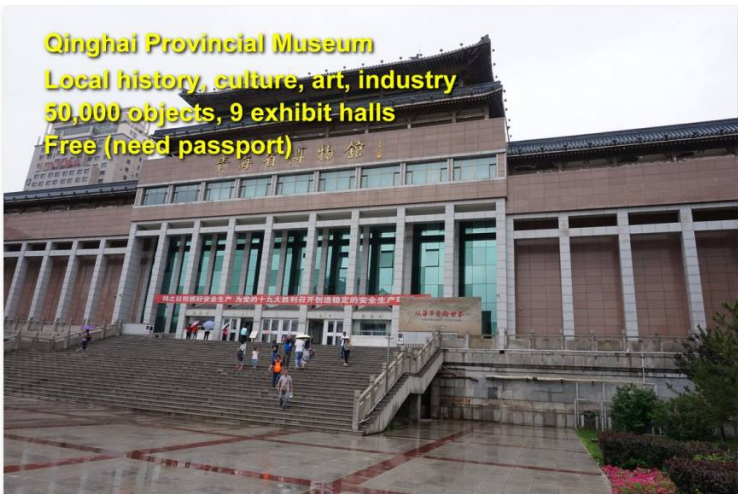
Sichuan chicken with chillies and mushrooms



Ribs with soya beans and chillies
in casserole



Qinghai Provincial Museum
Local history, culture, art, industry
50,000 objects, 9 exhibit halls
Free (need passport)



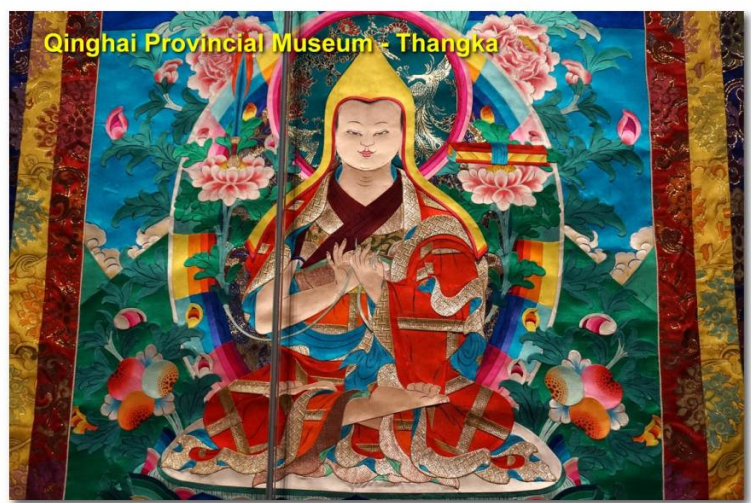
Like many Chinese museums,
begins with some political indoctrination



Wonderful collection of Tibetan Buddhist Thangkas
Paintings on cloth (cotton or silk)
Religious teachings



Qinghai Provincial Museum - Thangka



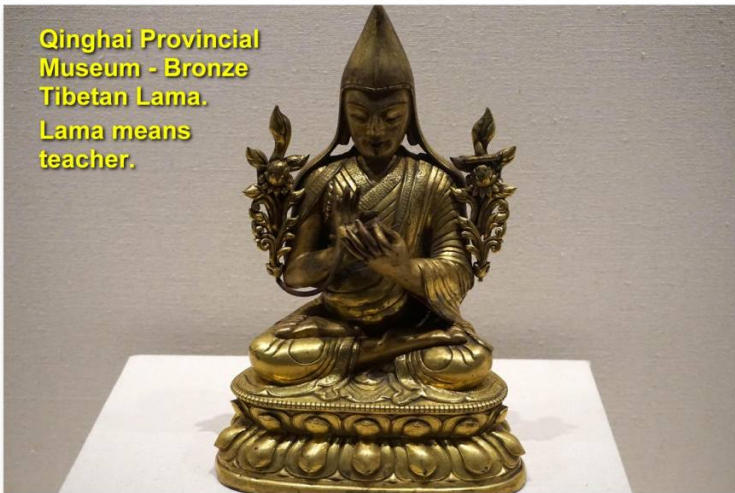
A few of the thangkas at Qinghai Provincial Museum



Large collection of
bronzes, porcelains,
paintings, etc.
Many signs have
English descriptions.



Qinghai Provincial
Museum - Bronze
Tibetan Lama.
Lama means
teacher.



A large exhibition devoted to the Silk Road



A lot of pottery 3,000 to 5,000 years old.
This one is estimated to be 5,000 years old.



Qinghai
Provincial
Museum





KFC has over 11,000 stores in China.
McDonald's has over 7,000.

Dessert
Station

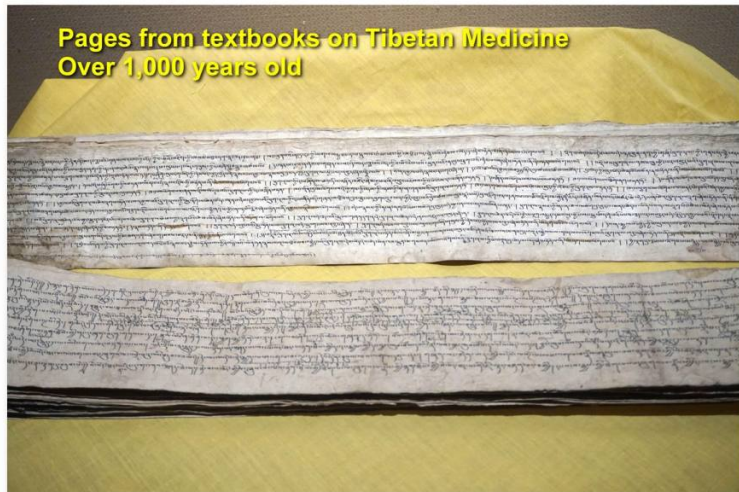


Xining shopfront
Translation of Chinese characters:
"Hundred Benefit"



Tibetan Medicine Museum - Xining
Also called Museum of Tibetan Culture

Designed like a Tibetan temple



Pages from textbooks on Tibetan Medicine
Over 1,000 years old



Tibetan Medical Museum - Surgeon's case



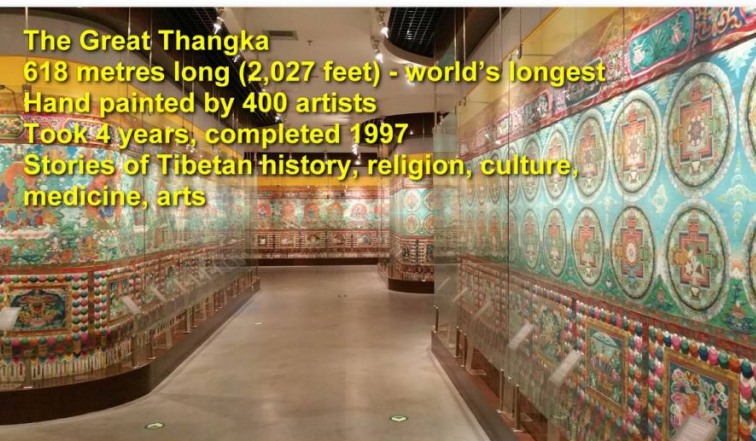
Tibetan Medical Museum - old medical drawings



Photos of hospitals of Tibetan medicine in China



Tibetan Medical Museum has hundreds of thangkas
with instructions on Tibetan medical theory and practice



The Great Thangka
618 metres long (2,027 feet) - world's longest
Hand painted by 400 artists
Took 4 years, completed 1997
Stories of Tibetan history; religion, culture,
medicine, arts

The Great Thangka on display in Korea 2001

2001年《彩绘大观》第二次在韩国釜山的展厅



Detail from The Great Thangka
Tibetan Medical Museum



Tibetan Medical Museum - The Great Thangka



Immaculate Conception RC Church
Near entrance to Beishan Xi - North Temple



Immaculate Conception RC Church - Xining



North Mountain Temple
Also called Bei [north] Shan [mountain] temple
Also called Tulou Temple



Beishan Temple is 5 miles from Xining city center
It is Taoist

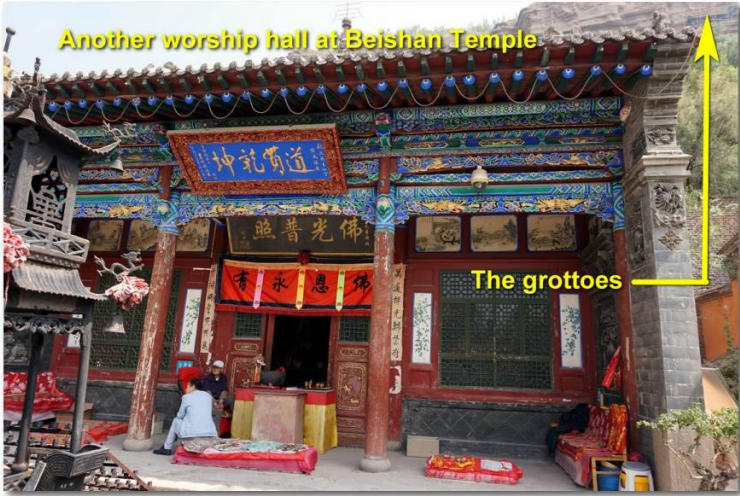
Temple Gate
Guardian
holding a
thunderbolt



One of the halls at Beishan Temple

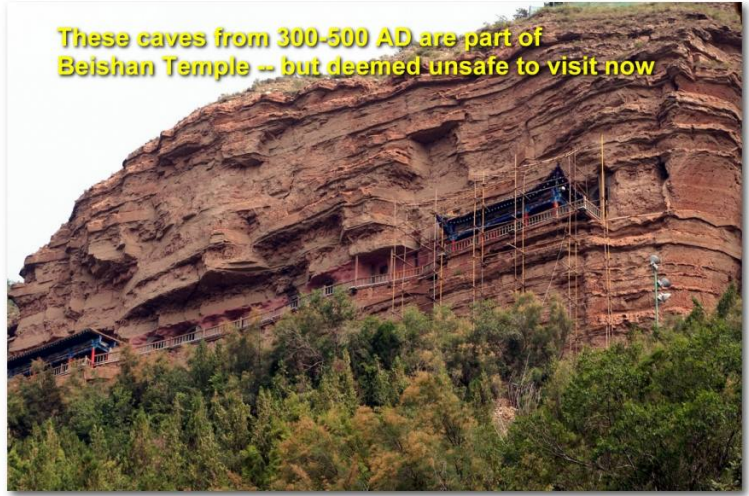


Taoist priest - dozing



Another worship hall at Beishan Temple

The grottoes



These caves from 300-500 AD are part of Beishan Temple -- but deemed unsafe to visit now



Do not climb these steps.
The caves are not safe.
There are 99 caves with frescoes.

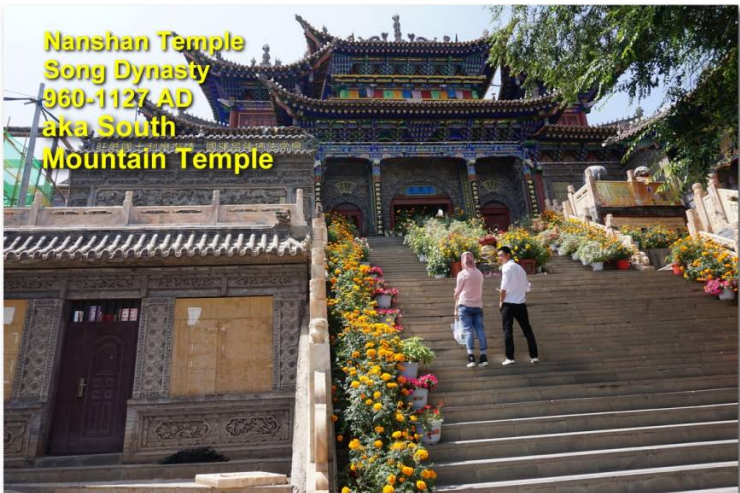
山洪、泥石流灾害易发区域
请勿从此登山！
灾害类型：山洪、泥石流、滑坡

防汛警示

朝阳街道办事处应急值班电话：0971-5113139
区防汛指挥部值班电话：0971-5131555
朝阳街道办事处



Beishan Temple
North Mountain Temple
Xining



Nanshan Temple
Song Dynasty
960-1127 AD
aka South
Mountain Temple



Nanshan Temple - Xining

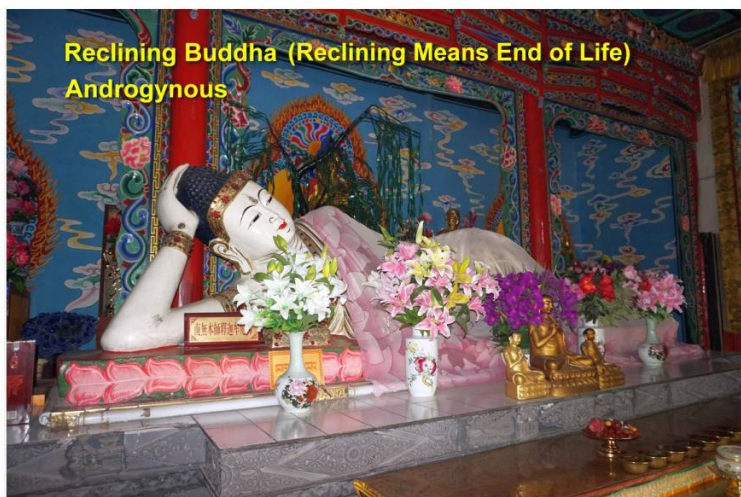
Statue of Guanyin
Goddess of Mercy



Guanyin - Goddess of Mercy
Notice multiple arms to help people



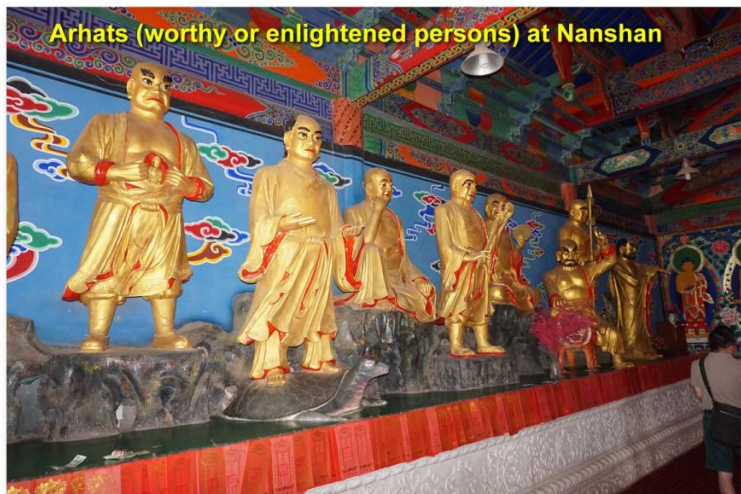
God of the Earth
Di Jiong Huang



Reclining Buddha (Reclining Means End of Life)
Androgynous



Great views of Xining city from Nanshan Temple



Arhats (worthy or enlightened persons) at Nanshan



Shakyamuni Buddha - the Great Buddha
Lived approximately
500 BC to 400 BC.
Buddhism was
founded on
his teachings.
Also called
Gautama Buddha.



Downtown Xining - old part of the city
Mojia Street - these shops sell Buddhist supplies



Tibetan Buddhist worship items



Mojia Street area has many traditional
restaurants and shops and underground markets



Shop selling dried seafood and fruits

and dried
yak meat



Fresh made noodles
Soft, not dried



No refrigeration -- despite 80° F temperatures
(same in Hong Kong markets)



Fresh-made
Tibetan yoghurt

and dried
yak meat



Mazhong Restaurant on Mojia Street
Sort of a giant Tibetan food court



You buy a prepaid "credit card" and
then go around and choose your food.
They refund unused amounts.



Lamb skewers (kebabs)

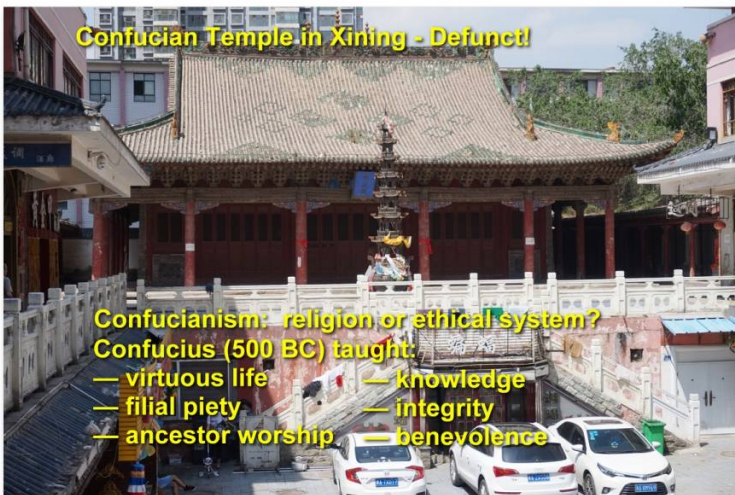


Fried potato bread with chili

Sesame Balls



Qinghai is famous for Muslim beef noodles
We "blind-picked" this place





Shuijing Lane Market
Elderly demonstrating for "consumer rights"



Tibetan and Buddhist Art Shop

I couldn't resist!
Asking price ¥280
My first offer ¥200
Shopkeeper said "OK"
My offer of ¥200 was probably too high!
¥200 = US\$29



My purchase



Shuijing Lane Market
Non-Halal butcher

Pig trotters



Shuijing Lane Market

Black
Wolfberries

Walnuts

Wolfberries

Raisins

Price is per catty (Chinese unit of weight). But:
In Hong Kong 1 catty = 605 grams
In Japan, Taiwan 1 catty = 600 grams
In China 1 catty = 500 grams



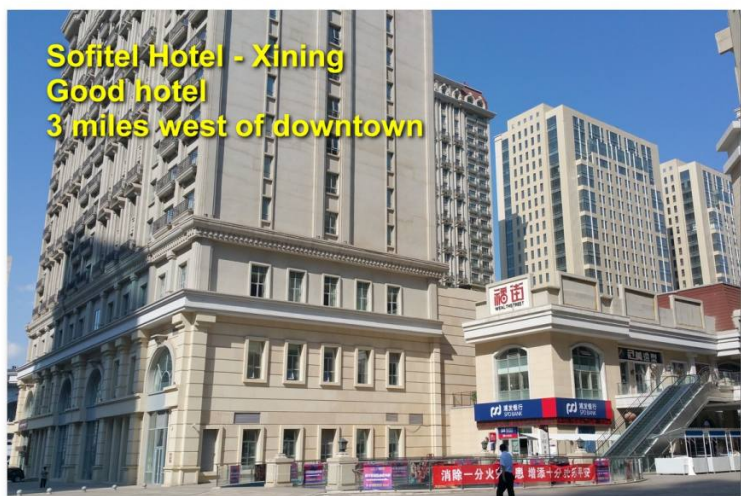
Potato bread with chili



The time has come for me to ask...
Does anyone know what these are?



Prawns (shrimps)
Not sure where these come
from since Qinghai is
way inland and remote





Foot massage about US\$25 for 80 minutes
Actually includes back, neck, arms, legs
as well as feet.
Tips refused!



Soaking



Hot ginger on my knees
(no idea what it does)



Foot cupping
Hot glass cups

My friend tried full body cupping. Wikipedia:

Proponents: Therapy for “fevers, low back pain, poor appetite, indigestion, high blood pressure, acne, atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, anemia, stroke rehabilitation, nasal congestion, infertility, and menstrual period cramping”.

Con: “There is no conclusive evidence supporting the claimed health benefits of cupping. Critics have characterized the practice as quackery.”

Risks? “Generally not harmful for most people.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cupping_therapy



Banging legs with rubber hammers
Circulation



Tofu with a few chilies



Muslim Restaurant

Yak broth

Yak meat

Sliced noodle and fungus soup



Muslim Restaurant - Chicken with dough dumplings



Muslim Restaurant - Lamb skewers (kebabs)
Seasoned with cumin and pepper



Robot waitress in a restaurant

Notice Tibetan custom
of sitting on couches
rather than chairs.



Hualian Supermarket - Xining



Hualian Supermarket, Xining - Dried Yak Meat
300g for ¥62.50, which is US\$14 per pound



Hualian Supermarket - Xining



Barley Flour
10kg = 22 pounds

Wheat Flour

Hualian Supermarket - Xining



Whole Rabbit

Hualian Supermarket - Tibetans are big dairy eaters
Unlike Han Chinese people

This whole side is yoghurt

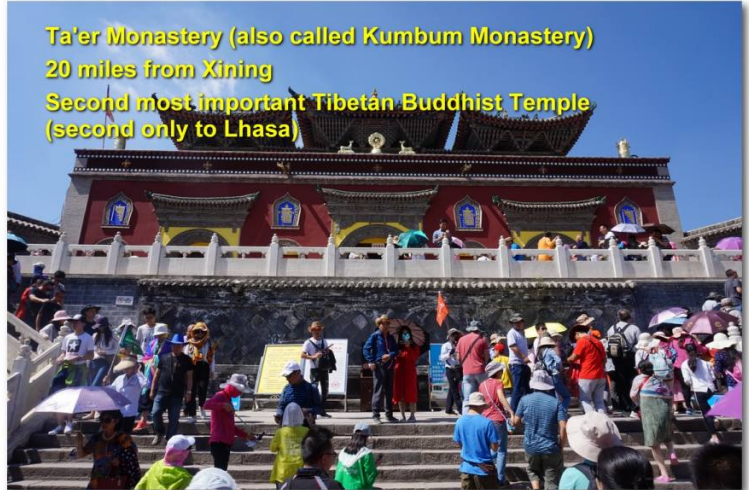


Hualian Supermarket - Durians (Fruit)
Pleasantly sweet fragrance?
Disgustingly unpleasant odor?



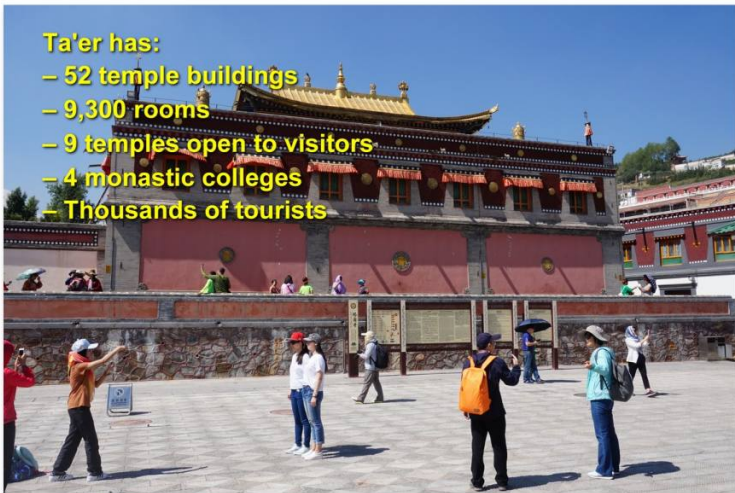
Ta'er Monastery also known as Kumbum Monastery

Ta'er Monastery (also called Kumbum Monastery)
20 miles from Xining
Second most important Tibetan Buddhist Temple
(second only to Lhasa)



Ta'er has:

- 52 temple buildings
- 9,300 rooms
- 9 temples open to visitors
- 4 monastic colleges
- Thousands of tourists



Tibetan Style Temple

- Rectangular
- Flat roof
- Gold roof, often metal
- Many windows - let in sunlight
- Faces south - let in sunlight



Chinese Style Temple

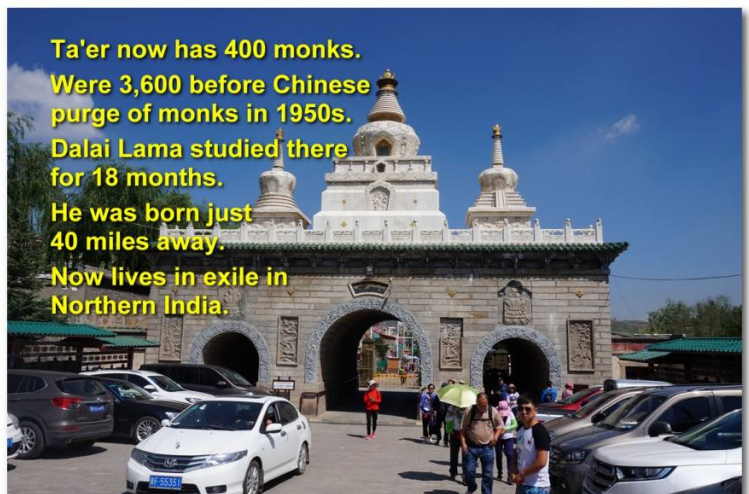
- Square
- Gabled roof, never flat
- Sweeping curvature at corners of roof
- Tile roof
- No windows
- Back faces higher land

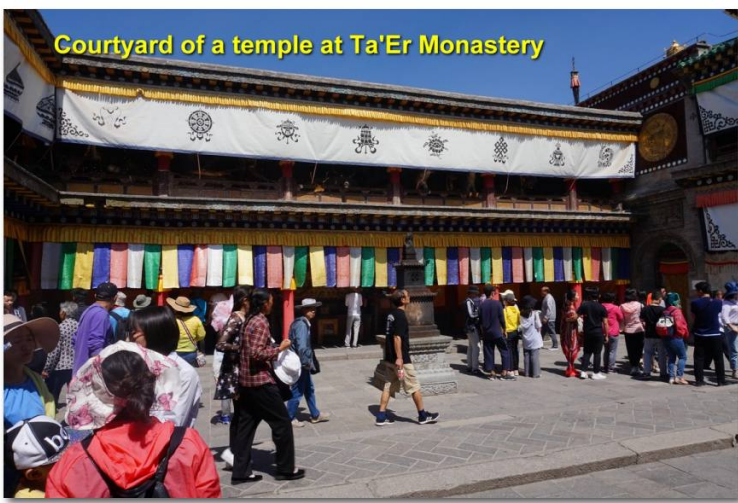


Stupas at Ta'er Temple
Contain ashes of famous monks

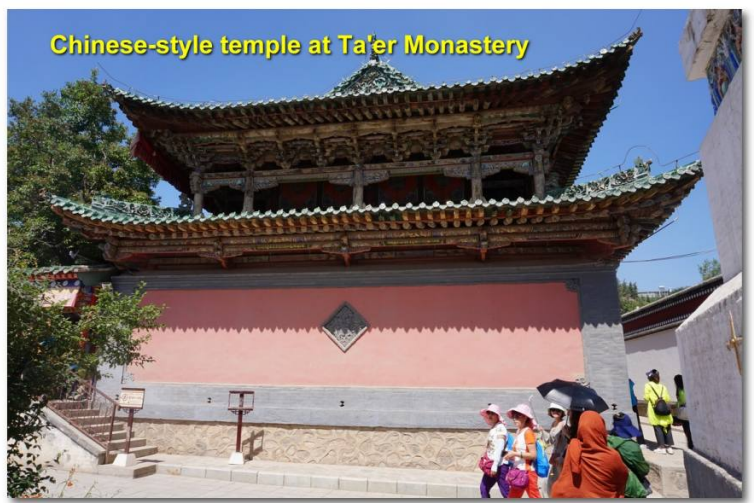


Ta'er now has 400 monks.
Were 3,600 before Chinese
purge of monks in 1950s.
Dalai Lama studied there
for 18 months.
He was born just
40 miles away.
Now lives in exile in
Northern India.





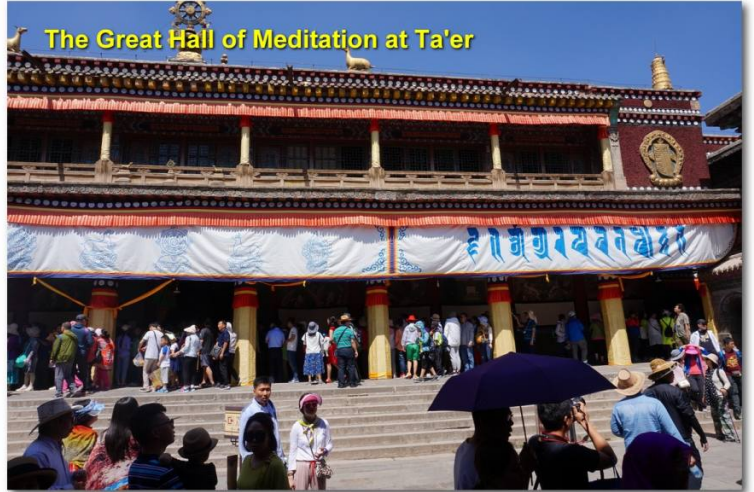
Courtyard of a temple at Ta'er Monastery



Chinese-style temple at Ta'er Monastery



Tibetan-style temple at Ta'er Monastery



The Great Hall of Meditation at Ta'er



Ta'er (Kumbum) Monastery is a major pilgrimage site



Prayer mats inside the Great Hall of Meditation



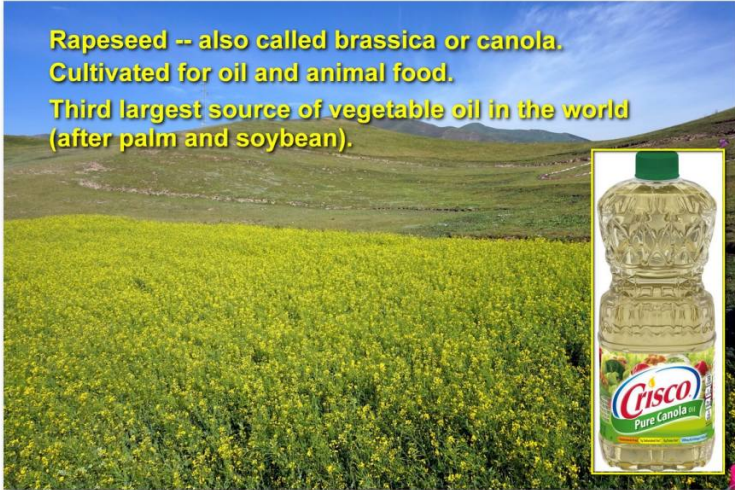
Inside the Great Hall of Mediation at Ta'er (Kumbum)
Many sacred scriptures, carvings, sculptures, thangkass, etc



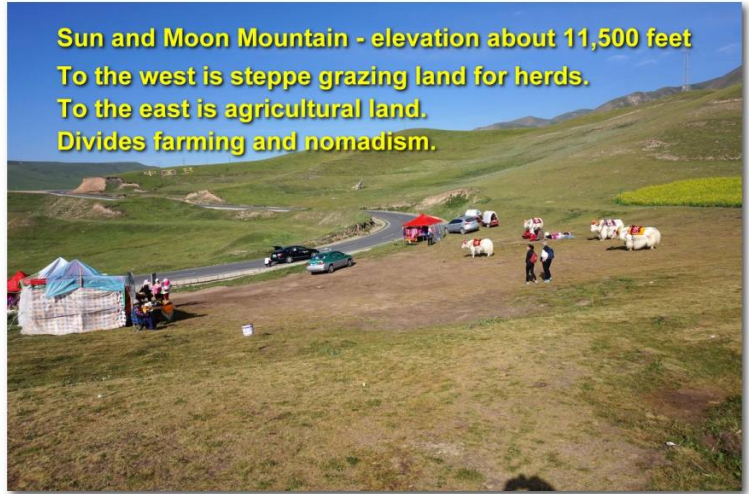
Watermelons are very cheap in China - maybe US\$1. Huge sunflowers sold everywhere in Qinghai. ← Ta'er

Qinghai Lake Sun and Moon Mountain and Dan Gar Ancient City

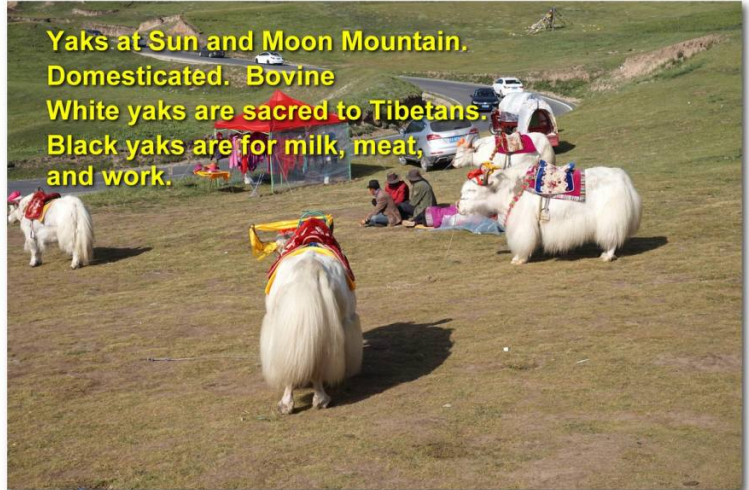
Rapeseed -- also called brassica or canola.
Cultivated for oil and animal food.
Third largest source of vegetable oil in the world
(after palm and soybean).



Sun and Moon Mountain - elevation about 11,500 feet
To the west is steppe grazing land for herds.
To the east is agricultural land.
Divides farming and nomadism.



Yaks at Sun and Moon Mountain.
Domesticated. Bovine
White yaks are sacred to Tibetans.
Black yaks are for milk, meat,
and work.



White yak proudly displayed by its owner.



Tibetan Buddhist flags and prayer wheels
on Sun and Moon Mountain



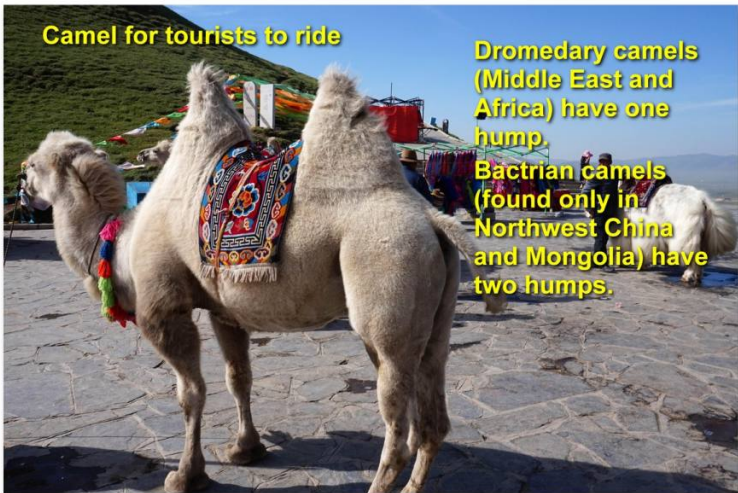
Hard to see in the photo, but each flag has
Buddhist scripture written on it.

Tibetan Buddhist flags with scriptures



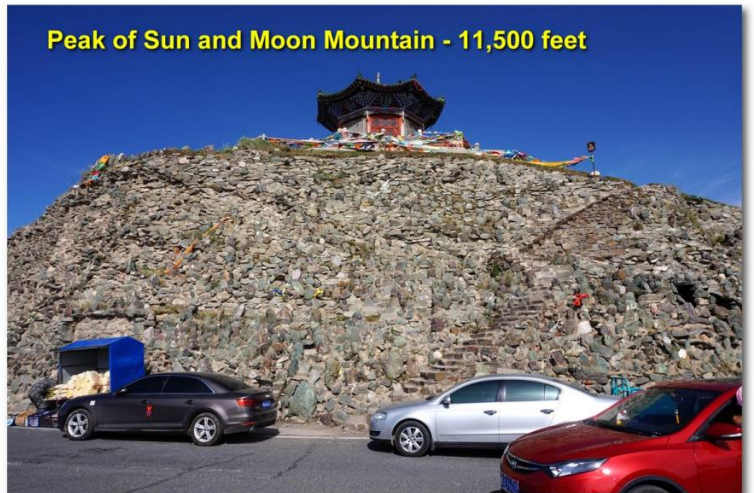


Museum of Tibetan Culture at Sun and Moon Mountain



Camel for tourists to ride

Dromedary camels (Middle East and Africa) have one hump.
Bactrian camels (found only in Northwest China and Mongolia) have two humps.



Peak of Sun and Moon Mountain - 11,500 feet

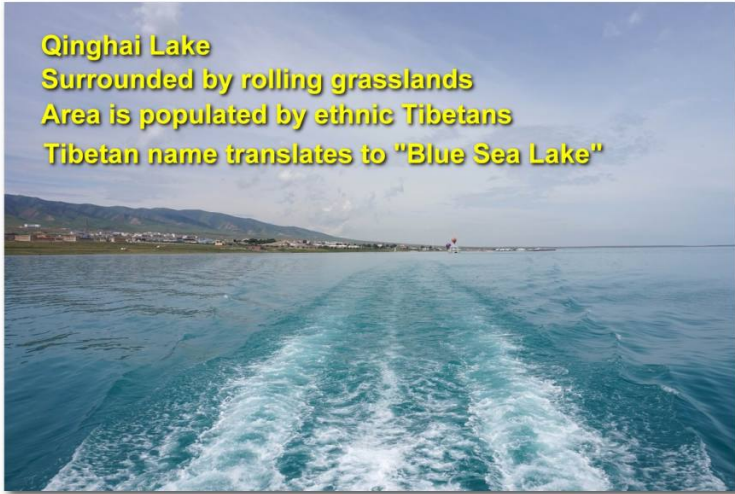


Descending Sun and Moon Mountain



Qinghai Lake - largest lake in China
Salt water
Surface 1,700 sq miles – about the size of Delaware
Sacred to Tibetan Buddhists

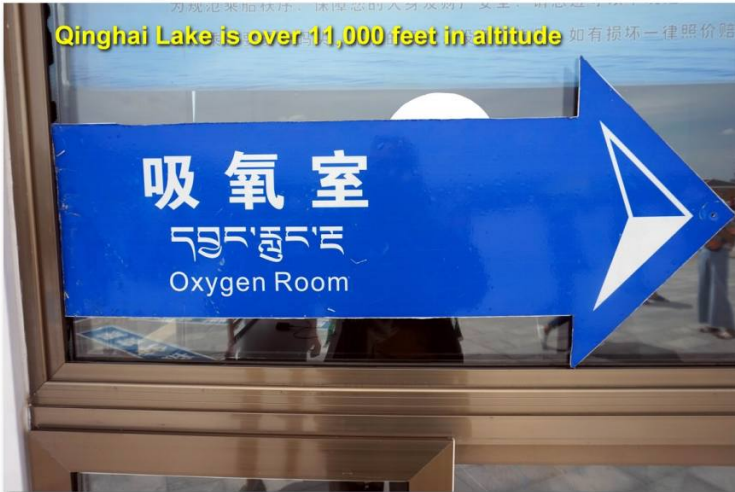
Qinghai Lake
Surrounded by rolling grasslands
Area is populated by ethnic Tibetans
Tibetan name translates to "Blue Sea Lake"



Tourist boat on Qinghai Lake



Qinghai Lake is over 11,000 feet in altitude 如有损坏一律照价赔



Rapeseed field

Sign says "Memories of Qinghai Lake"



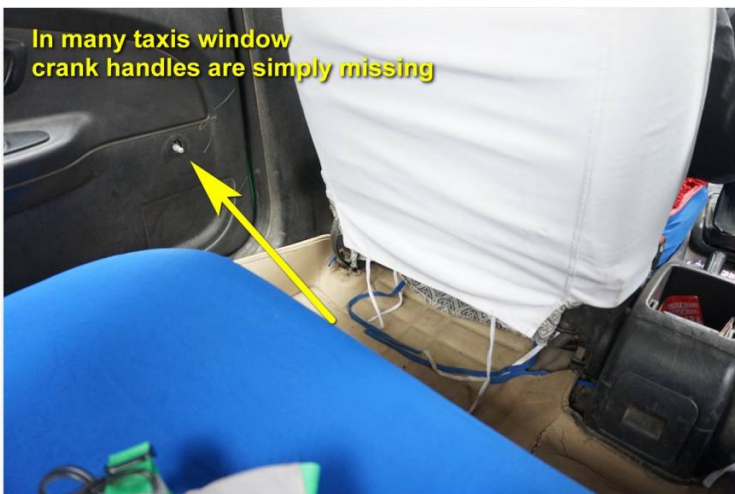
Driving in China! Drivers create 3 lanes out of 1.
At about 50 mph.



Most taxis have slip-covers on the seats.
Completely blocking the rear seat belts!

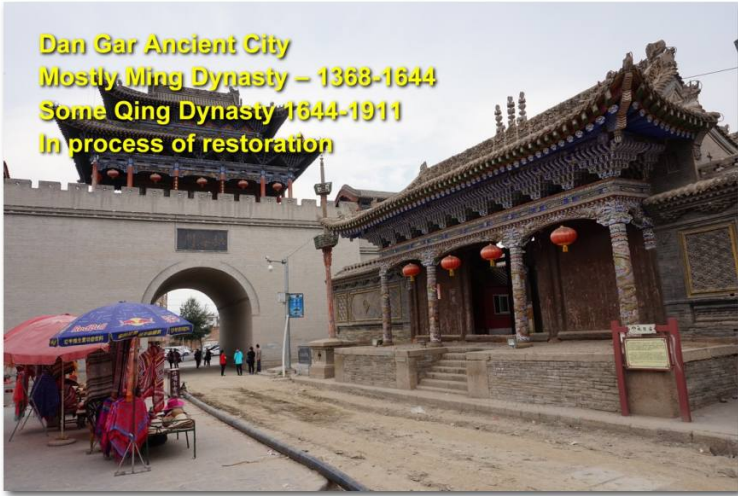


In many taxis window
crank handles are simply missing

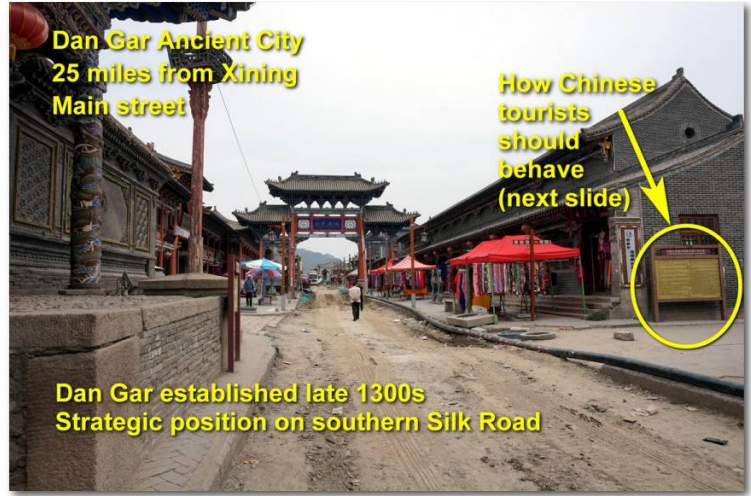


Yak herd near the road





Dan Gar Ancient City
Mostly Ming Dynasty – 1368-1644
Some Qing Dynasty 1644-1911
In process of restoration



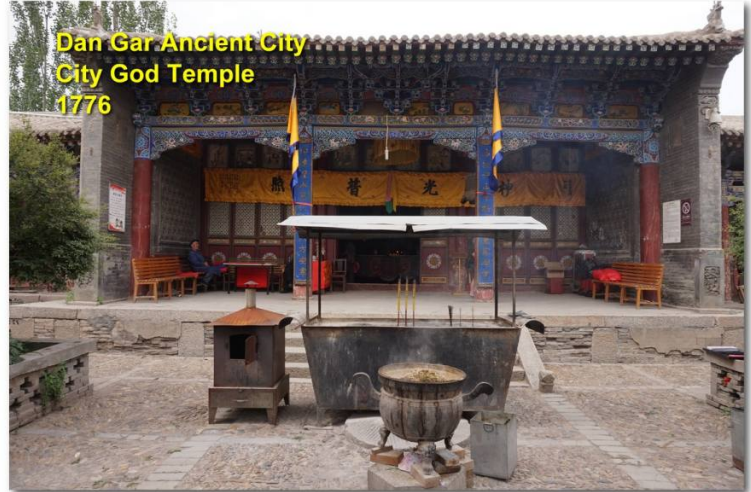
Dan Gar Ancient City
25 miles from Xining
Main street

How Chinese tourists should behave (next slide)

Dan Gar established late 1300s
Strategic position on southern Silk Road



Entrance gate to Chenghuang Temple
Also called City God Temple
Built 1776 (early Qing)



Dan Gar Ancient City
City God Temple
1776



City God Temple Altar - Dan Gar



Murals at Chenghuang Temple (City God Temple)
Dan Gar Ancient City



Chenghuang Temple (City God Temple)
Dan Gar Ancient City - 1776



中国公民国内旅游文明行为公约
Tourism Etiquette Rules for Chinese Citizens Traveling at Home

- Don't spit
- Don't litter
- Smoke only in designated areas
- No cutting in line
- Don't pick flowers or fruits
- No carving or graffiti
- Don't climb on relics
- Don't steal public property
- Don't sneeze in the face of others
- Show courtesy
- Say no to feudal superstitious activities
- Say no to pornography, gambling, drugs

The cultivation of a congenial and harmonious travel environment benefits every tourist. It is our bounden duty to be a tourist with refined manners. So please observe the following tourism etiquette rules.

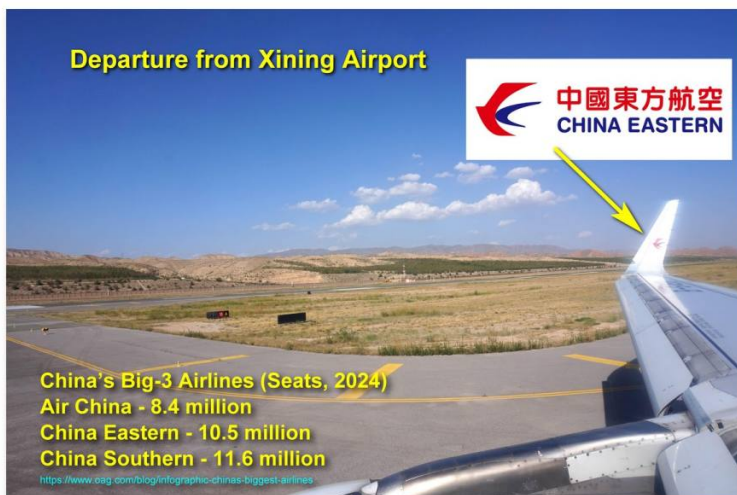
1. Keep the environment clean and tidy. Don't spit about or spit out chewing gum. Don't drop litter. Don't smoke except in designated areas.
2. Observe public order. Don't yell or shout out loud. Always join a public queue for good order. Don't walk abreast on a sidewalk. Don't talk loudly in public.
3. Preserve the ecological environment. Stay off public lawns, and refrain from picking flowers or fruits. Don't chase, catch, or throw stones at animals or feed them irresponsibly.
4. Protect historical sites and cultural relics. Don't inscribe anything or scrawl graffiti on them. Don't touch or climb on top of ancient relics, and heed the restrictions when taking photos with them.
5. Be careful with the use of public facilities. Don't smear or break objects in hotel rooms. Don't vandalize or damage public facilities. Don't attempt to make off with public belongings. Conserve water and electricity by using them efficiently. And don't waste food.
6. Be respectful to the people around you. Don't try to snap photos pictures with foreign friends without their permission. Don't sneeze into the face of others. Don't occupy public facilities for too long. Return the work of service staff. And respect the local religious customs.
7. Show courtesy to others. Be dressed appropriately. Don't go harlequin in public places. Be considerate towards the aged, the infirm, the sick and the disabled and give priority to them. Be chivalrous to the female by following the rule "lady first". Never use vulgar language.
8. Take part in healthy entertainments. Say no to feudal superstitious activities. Stay away from pornography, gambling and drugs.

THE CENTRAL CONTENTS NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Sometimes you have a choice



Departure from Xining Airport



China's Big-3 Airlines (Seats, 2024)

Air China - 8.4 million

China Eastern - 10.5 million

China Southern - 11.6 million

<https://www.esg.com/blog/infographic-chinas-biggest-airlines>

Qinghai Mountains



Qinghai and Xining

The End

Thanks for coming!

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