

# Qinghai Province, China



Presentation by Paul Pacter

[www.PaulVisits.com](http://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:

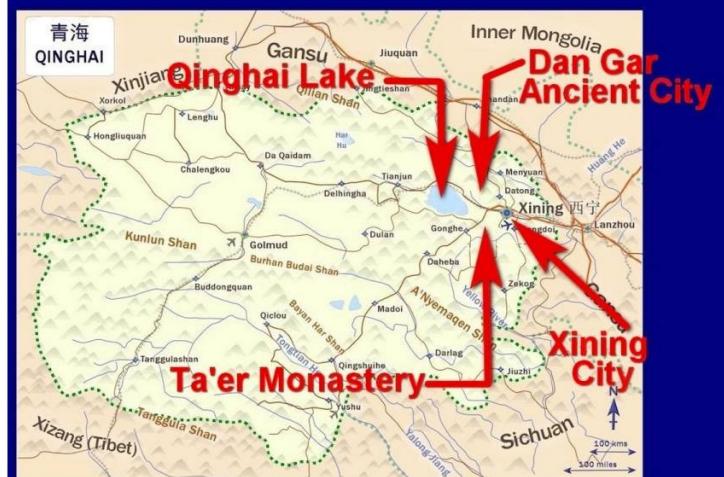
- China’s largest province (though several autonomous regions are larger)
- 280,000 sq miles
- Larger than any country in the EU!

### 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: 1.4 billion
- US: 340 million
- Florida: 23 million

Sparseness of population second only to Tibet.

### Qinghai Ethnic Groups

#### 2010 Census Data

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

#### 2020 Census Data

- Han Chinese 51%
- Minorities 49%

% Han Chinese declined 2010-2020.

2010: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qinghai/Ethnicity>

2020: <https://www.chinatime.com/reporting-opinion/viewpoint/how-much-does-beijing-control-ethnic-makeup-of-tibet>

## Influences on Qinghai Culture



## Qinghai Economy

Per capita GDP 2024:

Qinghai: US\$9,347.

Beijing: \$32,038.

Shanghai: \$30,486.

[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_per_capita)

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](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
- Population: 1.7 mil
- 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)

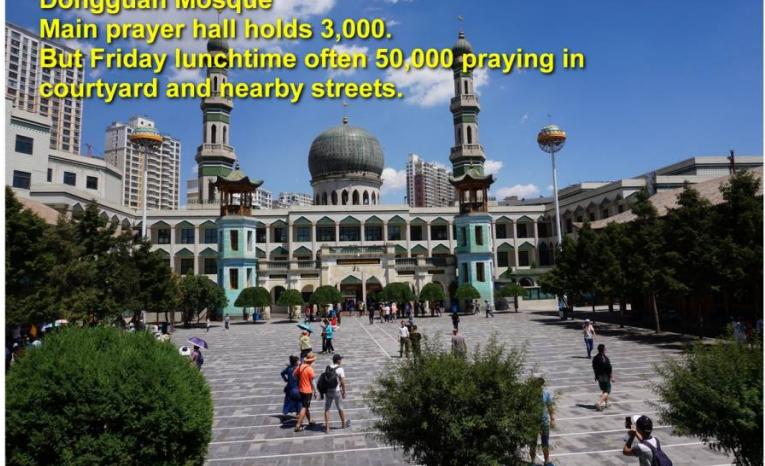


## Xining Capital of Qinghai Province

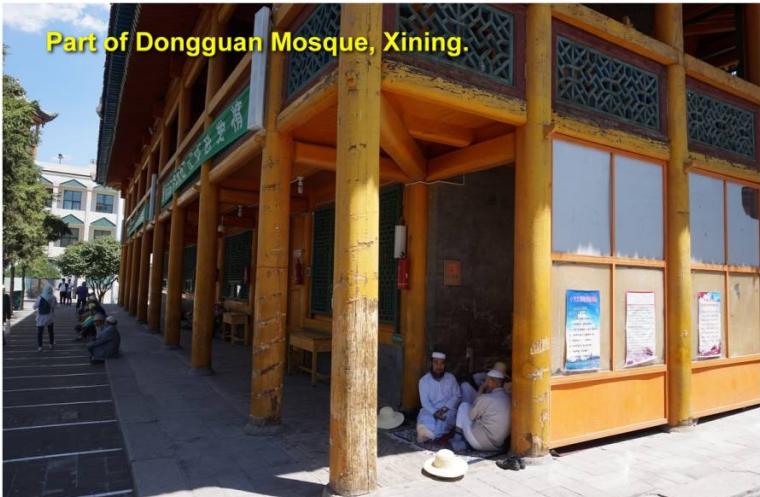
### Dongguan Mosque

Main prayer hall holds 3,000.

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

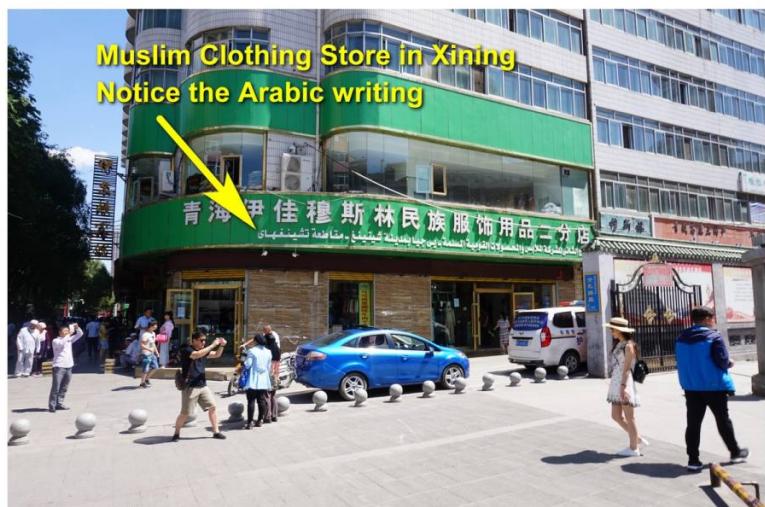
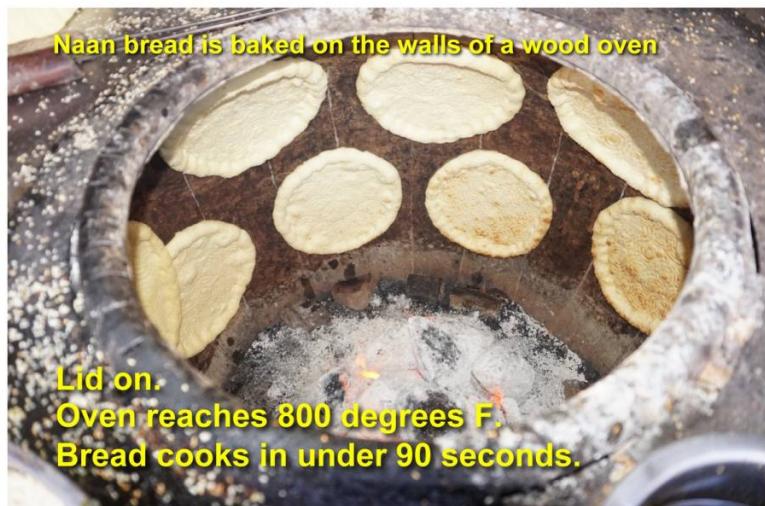
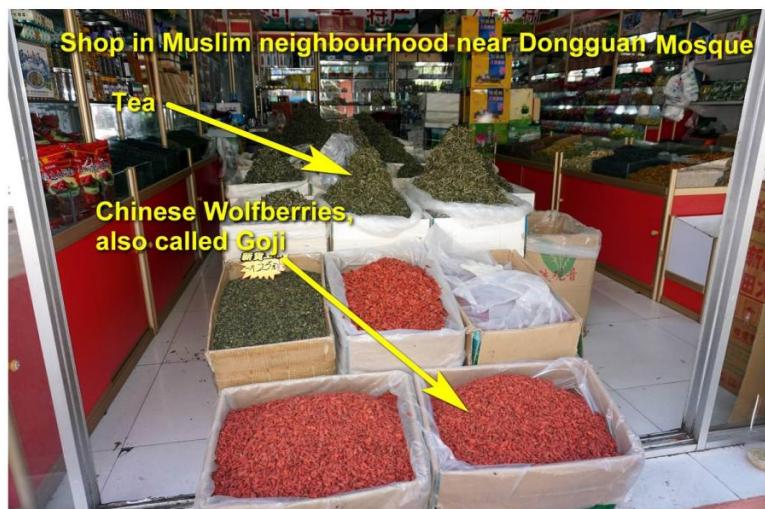


Part of Dongguan Mosque, Xining.



Fried dough snacks at shop in Muslim neighbourhood near Dongguan Mosque





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



Sheep tripe and chickens

She is browning the chickens with a blowtorch



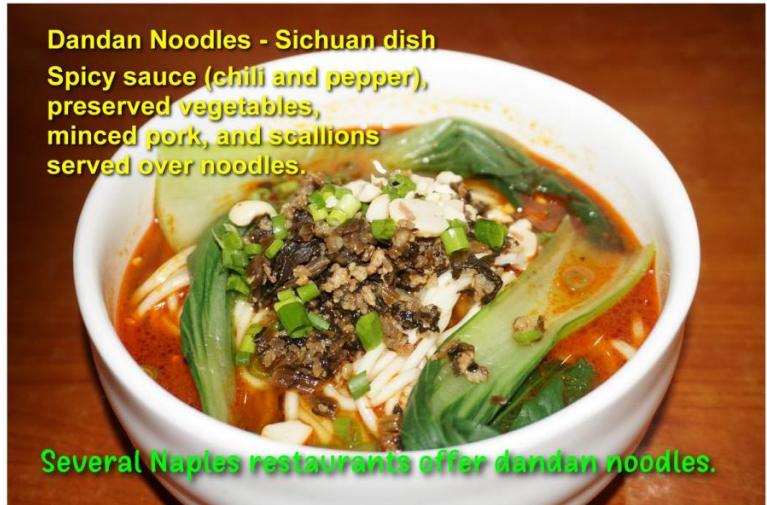
Yak Butter on sale in Xining  
Twice the fat content of cow's milk  
Used in tea, mixed with barley as snack



Sign says "pure honey"

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

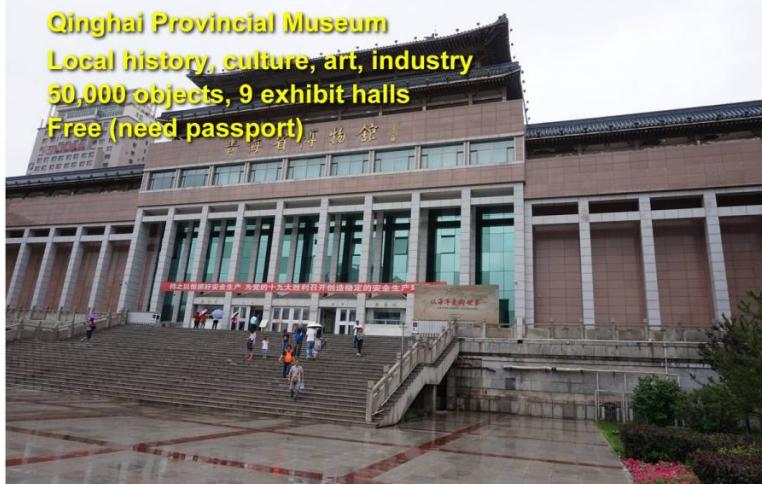


Ribs with soya beans and chillies  
in casserole

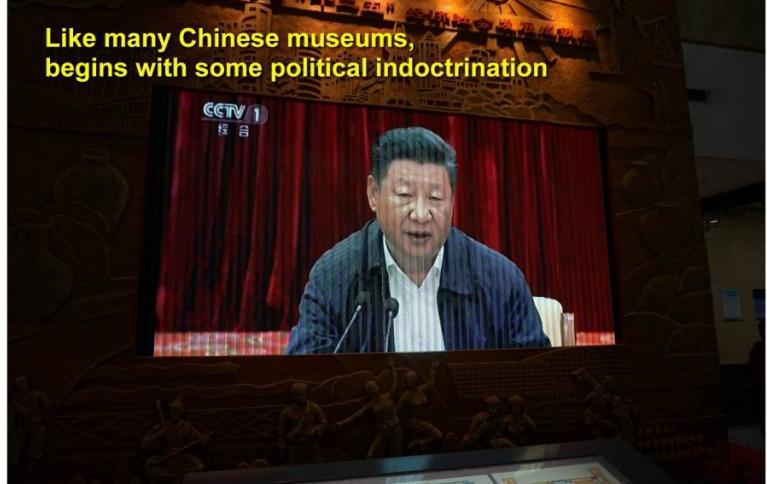


Qinghai Provincial Museum

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  
17th to 19th centuries



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

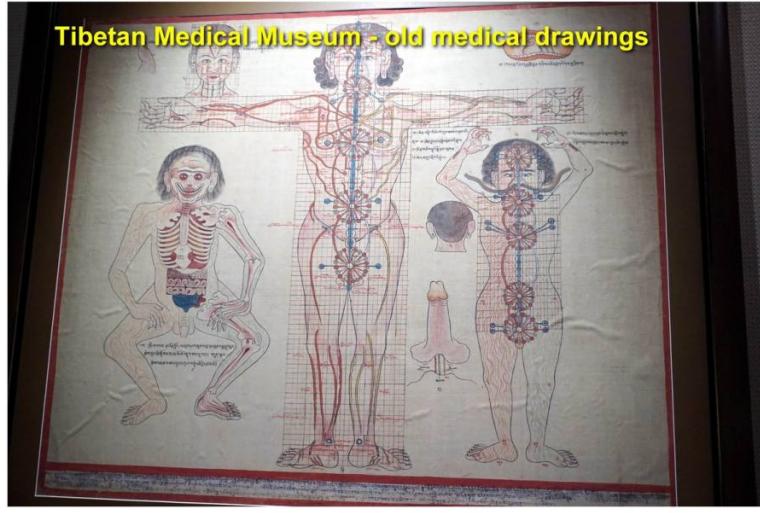
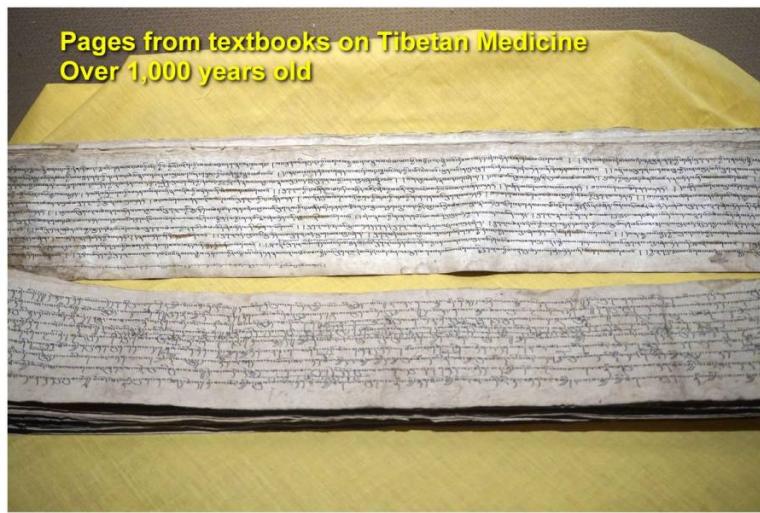


A lot of pottery 3,000 to 5,000 years old.  
This one is estimated to be 5,000 years old.



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





Tibetan Medical Museum thangka  
Late 17th c



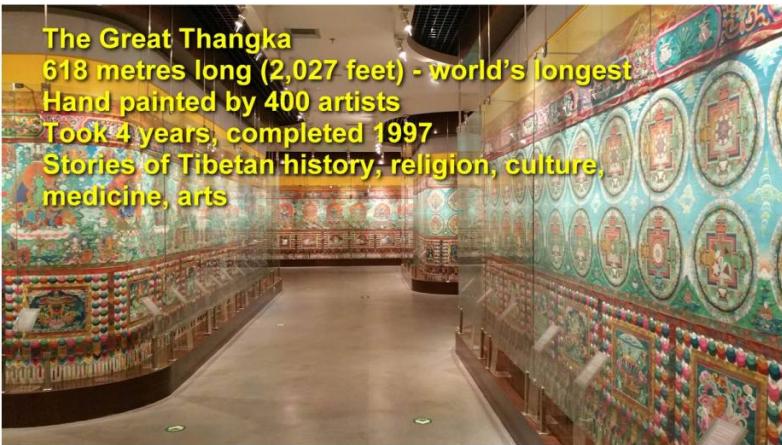
Tibet Medical Museum  
Thangka about Urinalysis



Tibetan Medical Museum  
Exhibit about the  
Tibetan calendar



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



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

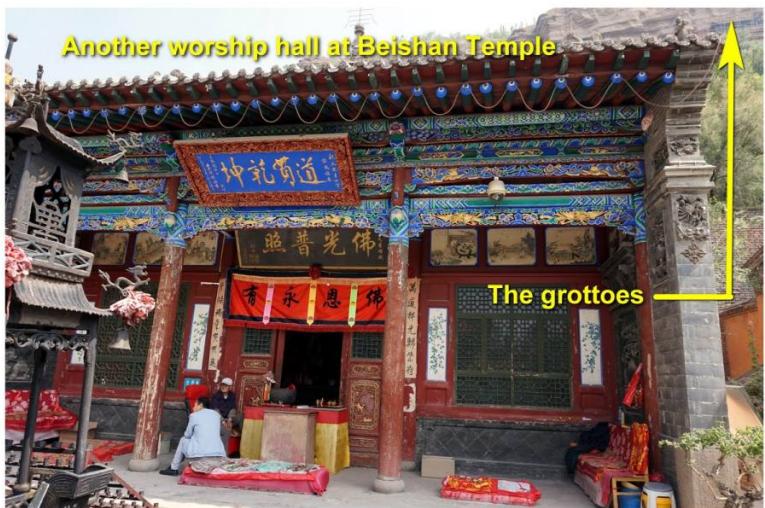
One of the halls at Beishan Temple



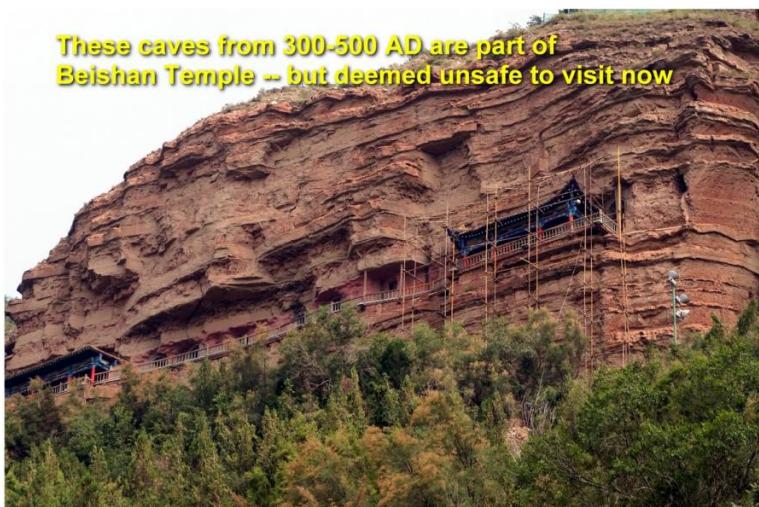
Taoist priest - dozing



Another worship hall at Beishan Temple



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

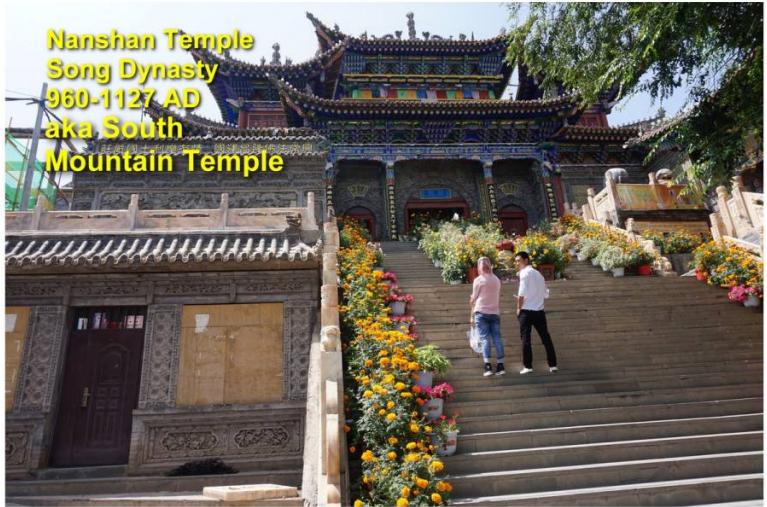
区防汛指挥部值班电话: 0971-5131555

朝阳街道办事处

Beishan Temple  
North Mountain Temple  
Xining



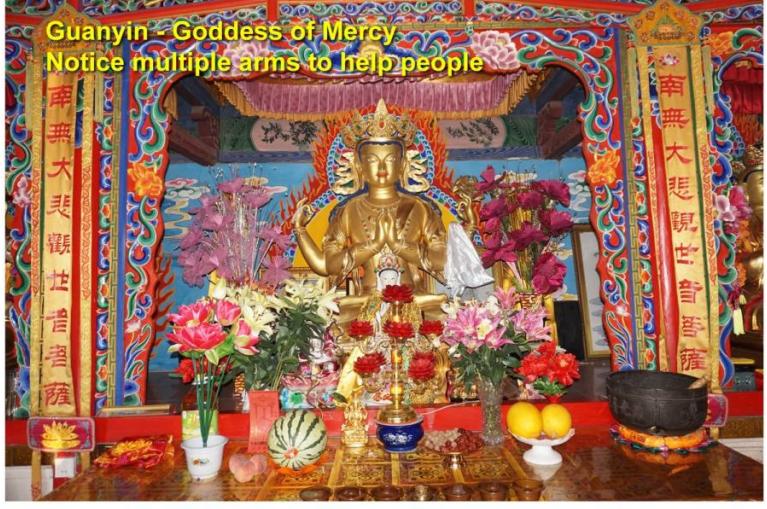
Nanshan Temple  
Song Dynasty  
960-1127 AD  
aka South  
Mountain Temple



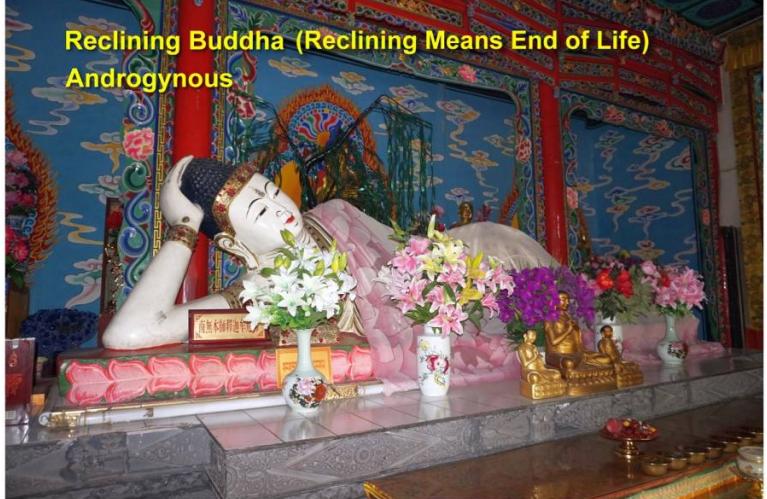
Nanshan Temple - Xining



Guanyin - Goddess of Mercy  
Notice multiple arms to help people



Reclining Buddha (Reclining Means End of Life)  
Androgynous

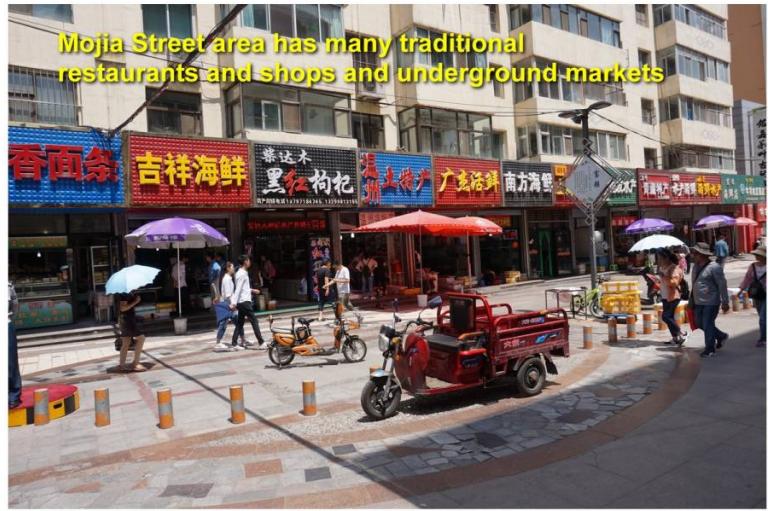


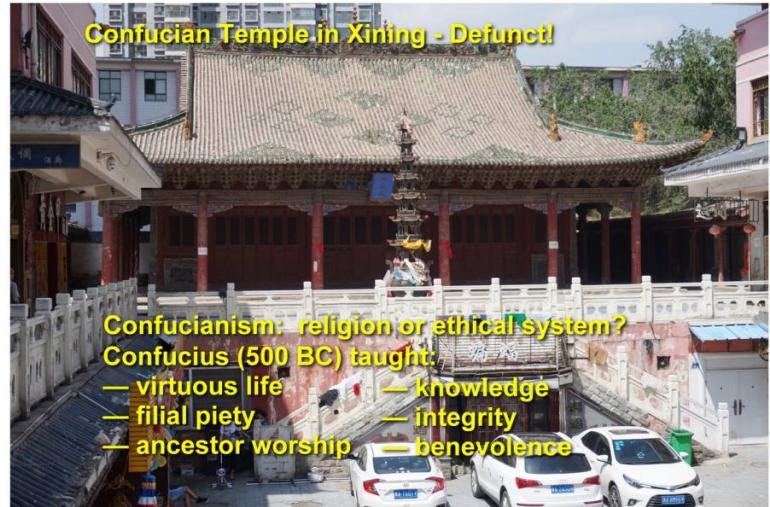
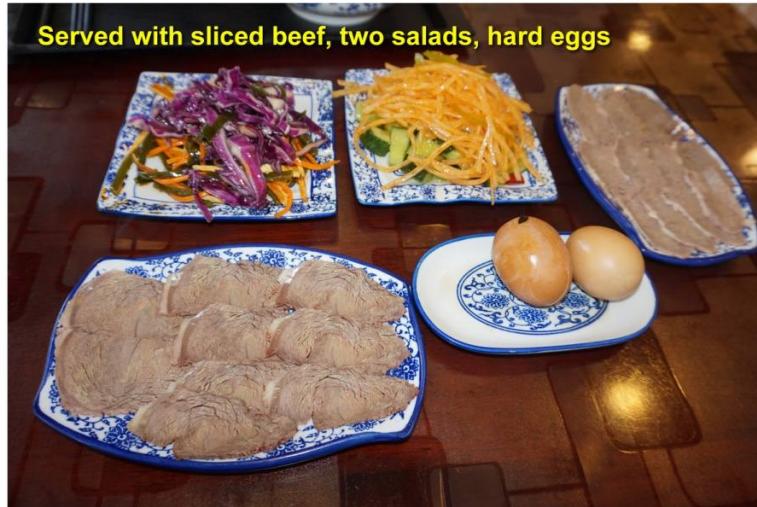
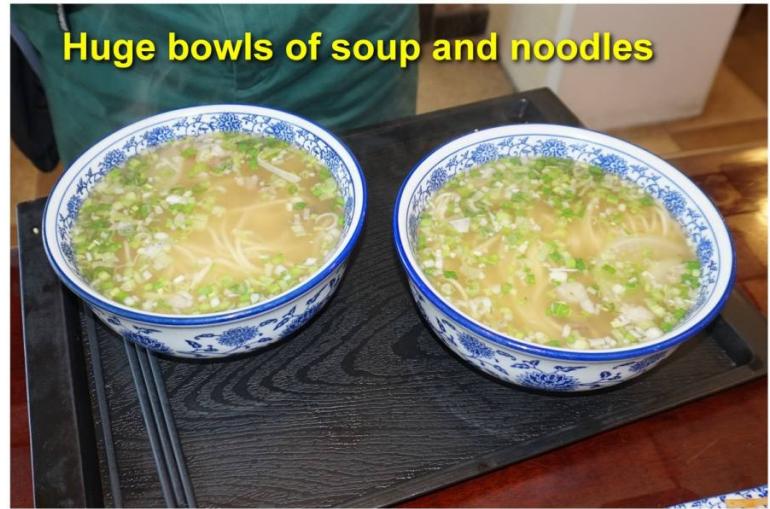
Great views of Xining city from Nanshan Temple



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







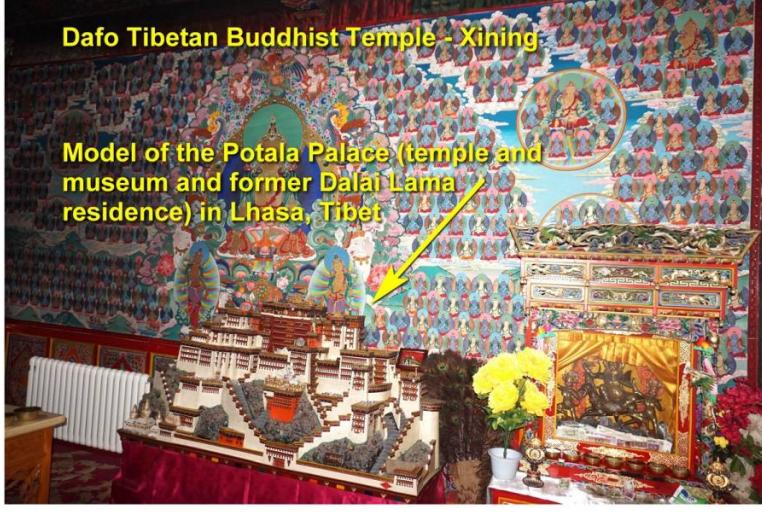
**Dafo Tibetan Buddhist Temple  
Xining**



**Dafo Temple - Xining**



**Dafo Tibetan Buddhist Temple - Xining**



**Shuijing Lane Market  
Elderly demonstrating for "consumer rights"**



**Tibetan and Buddhist Art Shop**



**My purchase**



**Shuijing Lane Market  
Non-Halal butcher**



**Shuijing Lane Market**







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

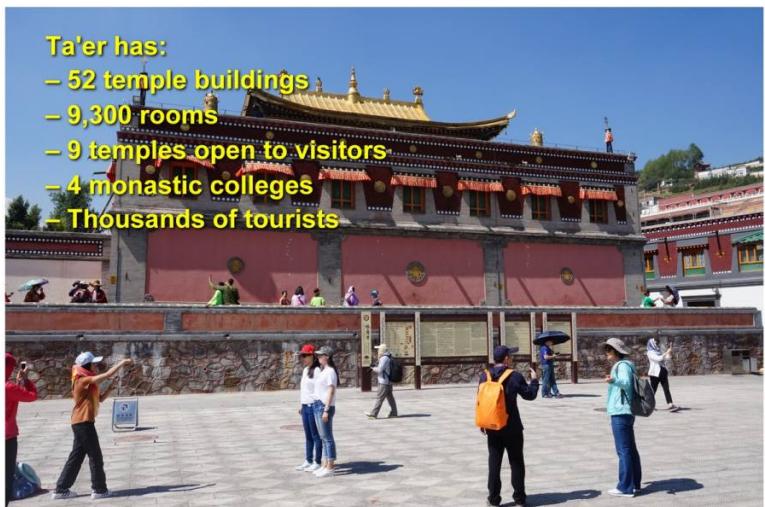
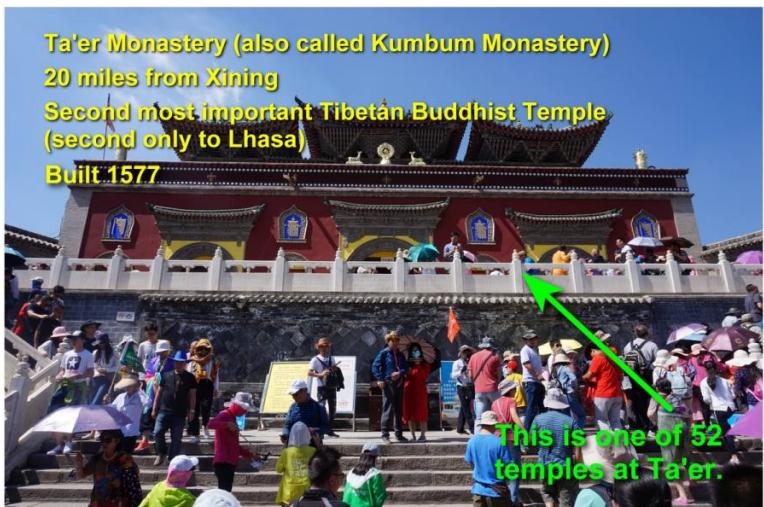
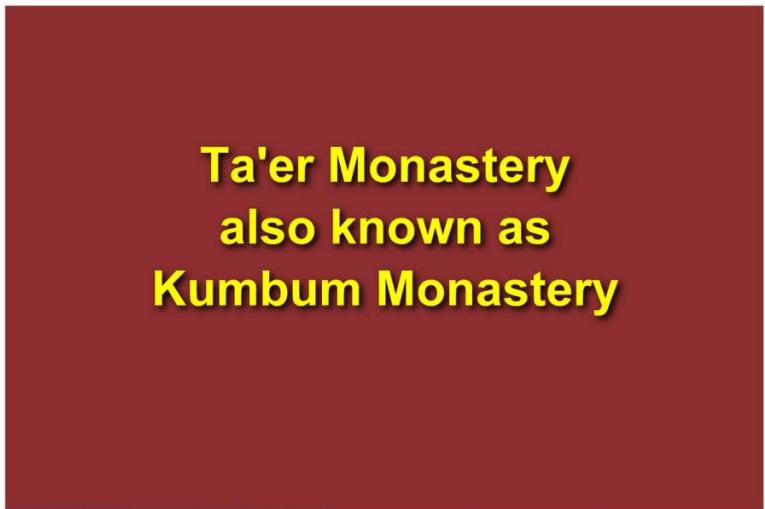
Notice Tibetan custom  
of sitting on couches  
rather than chairs.

Track



Hualian Supermarket - Xining





## 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



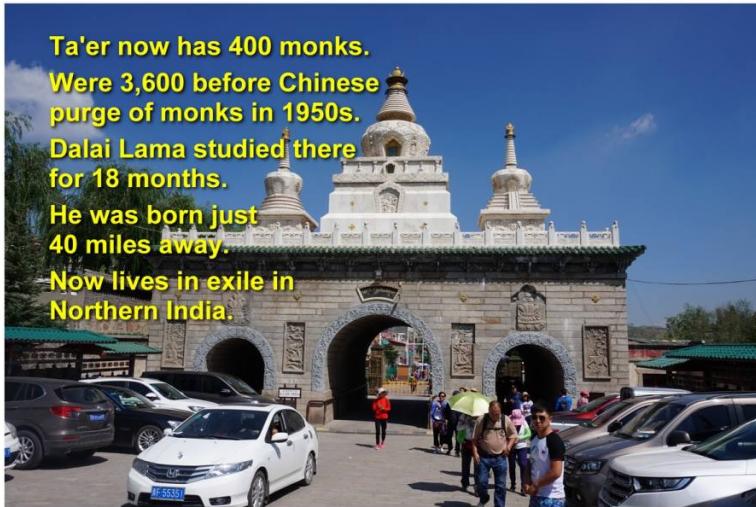
Ta'er now has 400 monks.

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.

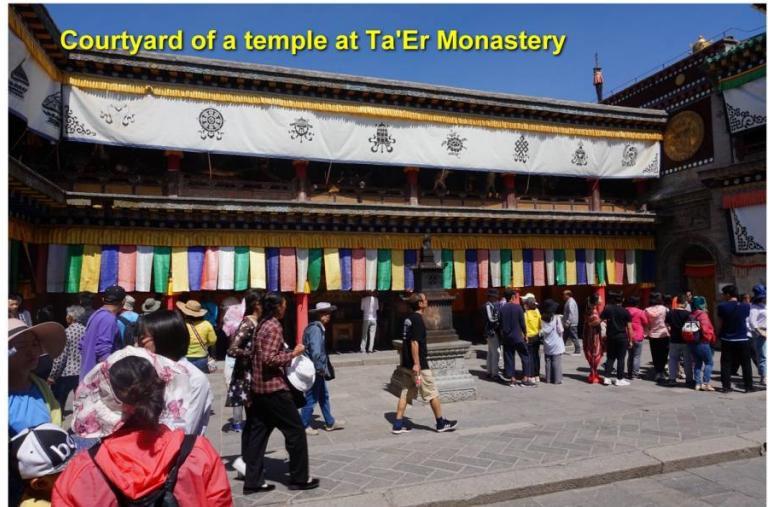


## Stupas at Ta'er Temple

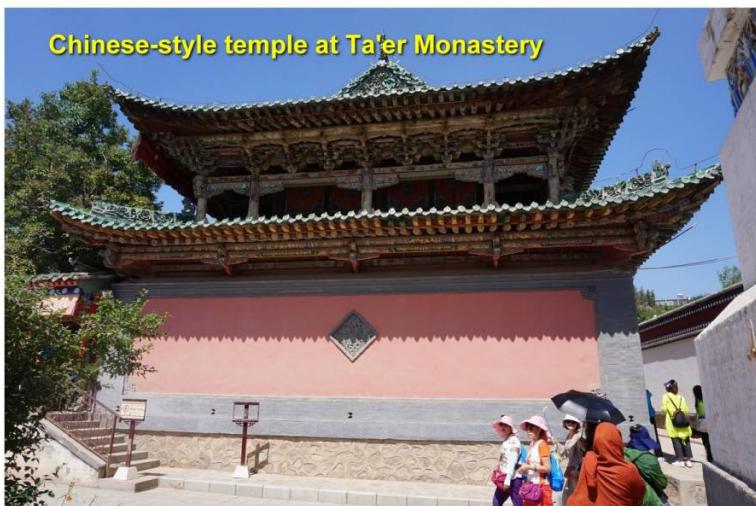
Contain ashes of famous monks



## Courtyard of a temple at Ta'Er Monastery



## Chinese-style temple at Ta'er Monastery

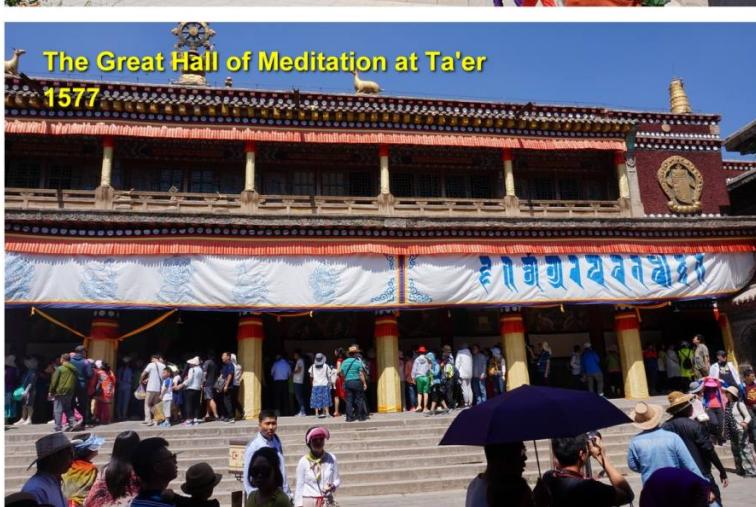


## Tibetan-style temple at Ta'er Monastery

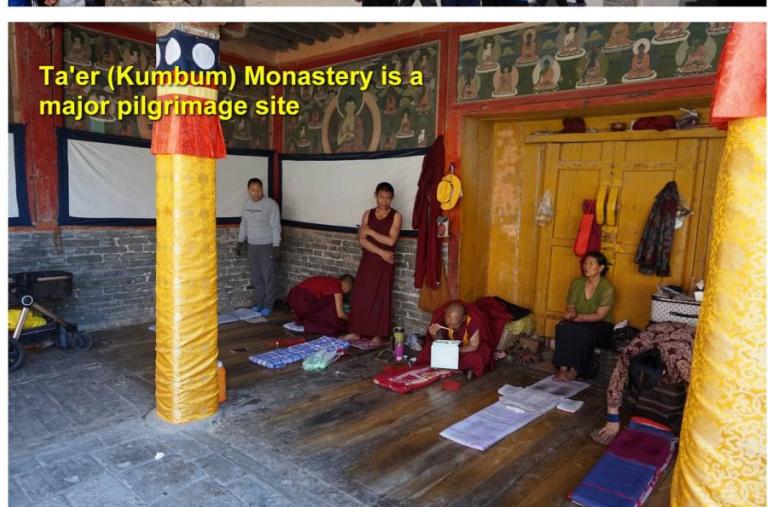


## The Great Hall of Meditation at Ta'er

1577



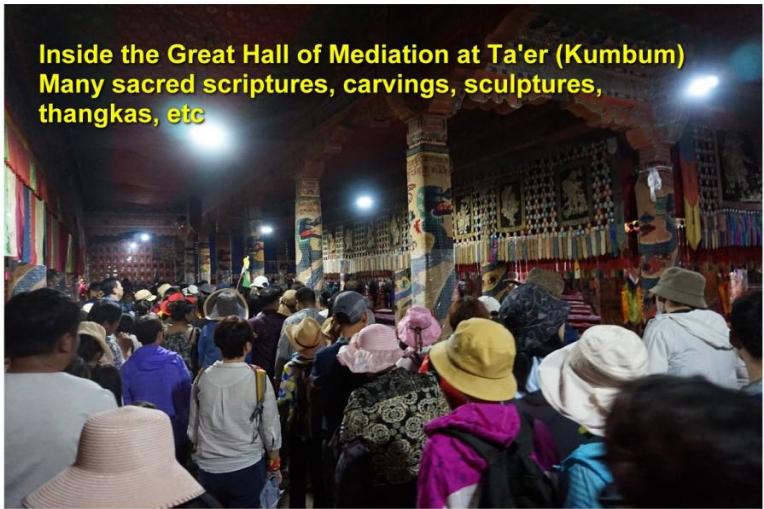
Ta'er (Kumbum) Monastery is a major pilgrimage site



Prayer mats inside the Great Hall of Meditation



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

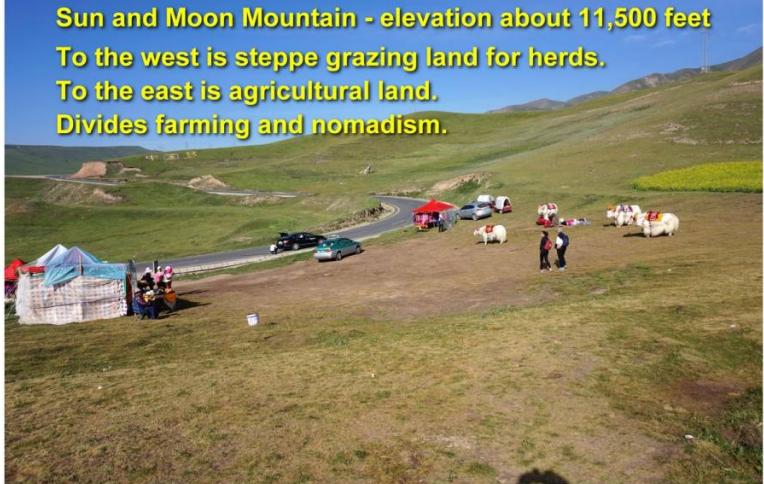


Watermelons are very cheap in China - maybe US\$1. Huge sunflowers sold everywhere in Qinghai.

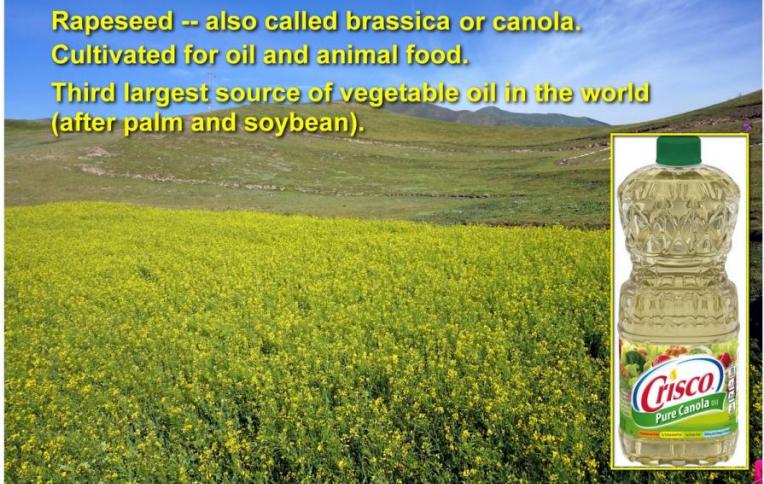


## Qinghai Lake Sun and Moon Mountain and Dan Gar Ancient City

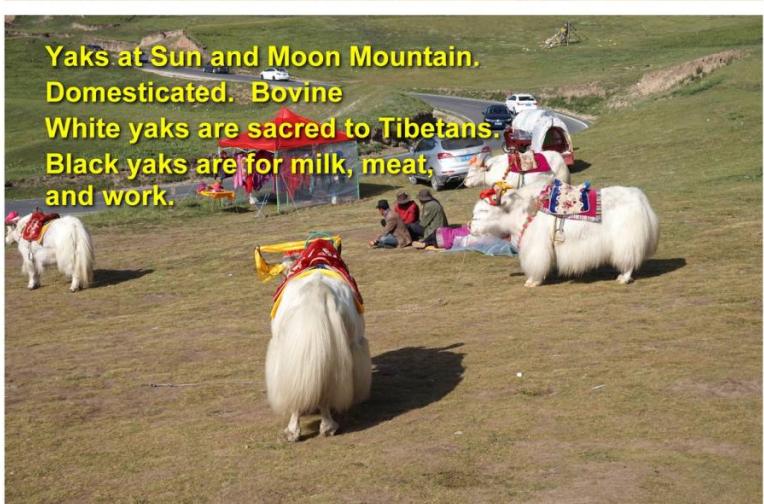
Sun and Moon Mountain - elevation about 11,500 feet  
To the west is steppe grazing land for herds.  
To the east is agricultural land.  
Divides farming and nomadism.



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).



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



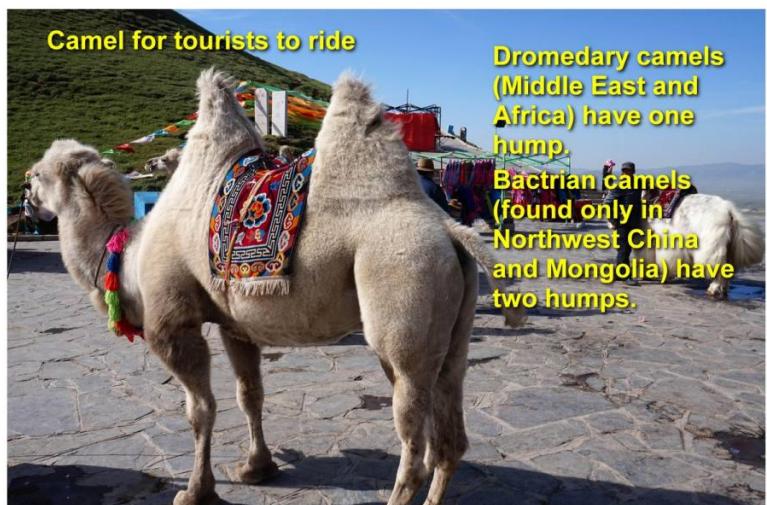
Museum of Tibetan Culture at Sun and Moon Mountain



Prayer Wheels



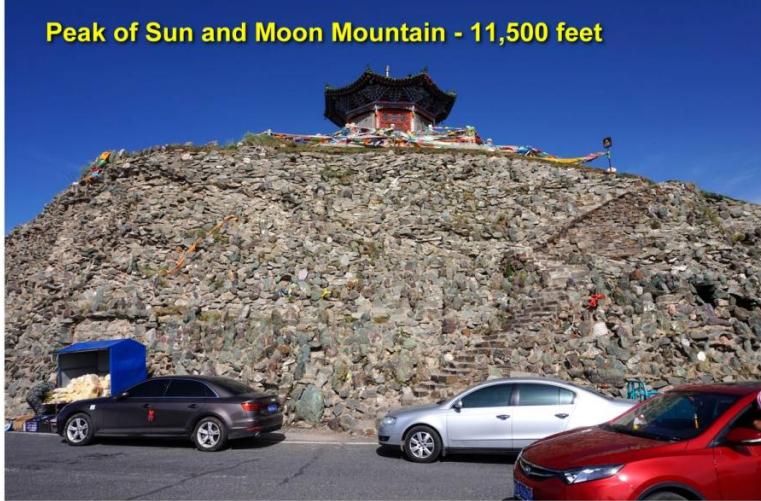
Camel for tourists to ride



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



Qinghai Lake - largest lake in China

Salt water

Surface 1,700 sq miles – about the size of Delaware

Sacred to Tibetan Buddhists

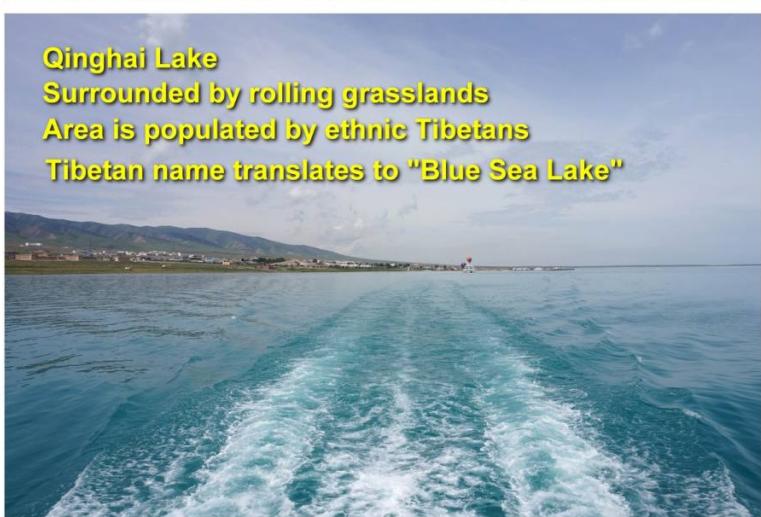


Qinghai Lake

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



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!



## Yak herd near the road



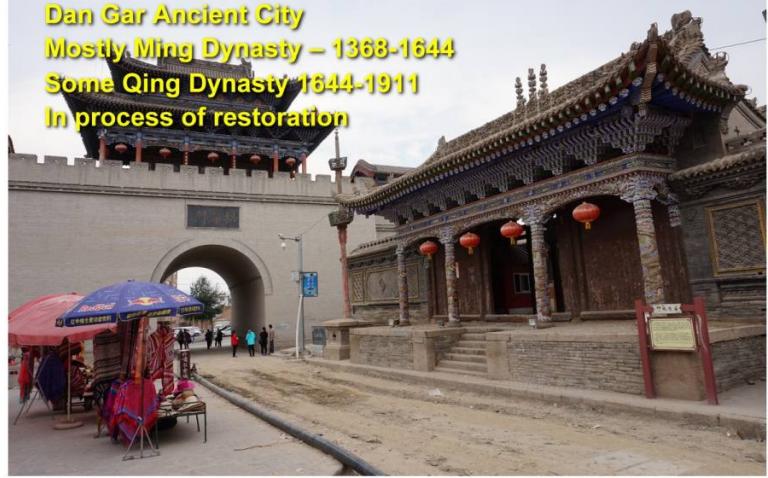
Dan Gar Ancient City  
25 miles from Xining  
Main street



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

How Chinese tourists  
should  
behave  
(next slide)

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



## 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

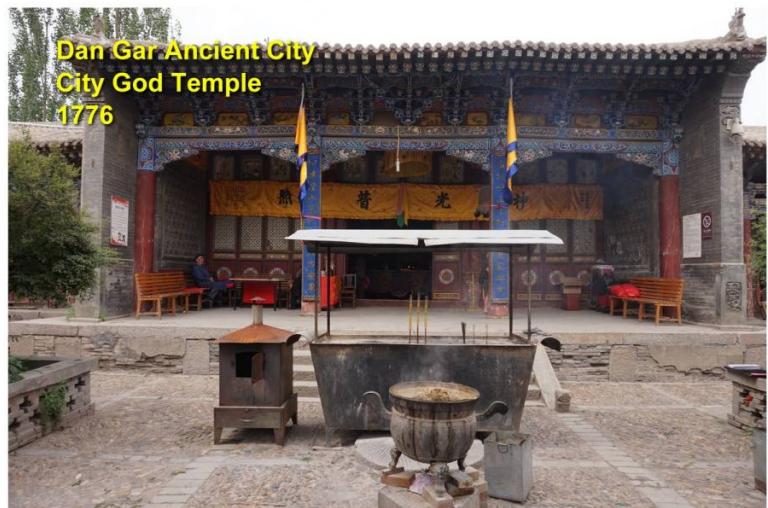
The cultivation of a congenial and harmonious travel environment benefits every tourist. It is our honor to be a tourist with refined manners. So please observe the following tourism etiquette rules.  
1.Keep the environment clean and tidy. Don't spit about or spit out chewing gum. Don't drop litter. Don't smoke except in designated areas.  
2.Observe public order. Don't yell or shout about. 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 laws, 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 feed the remains when taking photos with them.  
5.Respect local customs and traditions. Don't damage 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.Respect others. Do not speak about others behind their backs. Don't make loud noise or laugh in public. Don't take photographs into the face of others. Don't occupy public facilities for too long. Esteem the work of service staff. And respect the local religious customs.  
7.Show courtesy to others. Do not dress and act freely. Don't go barefooted in public. Be considerate towards the elderly and infirm, the sick and the disabled, and give priority to them. Be kind 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

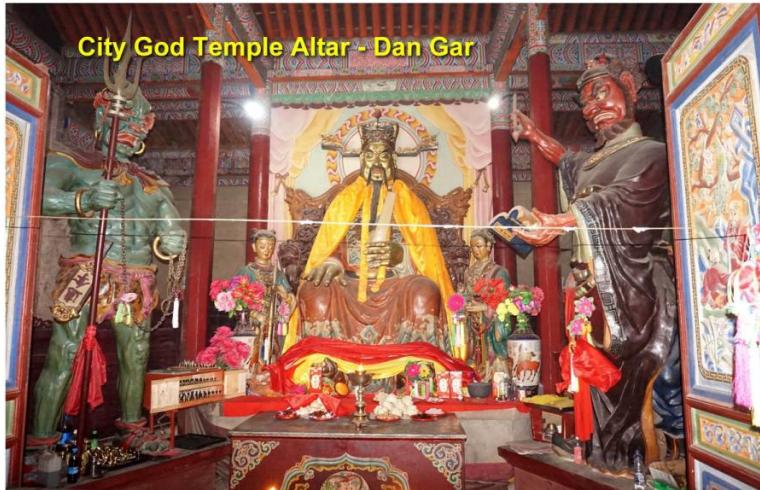
Entrance gate to Chenghuang Temple  
Also called City God Temple  
Built 1776 (early Qing)



Dan Gar Ancient City  
City God Temple  
1776



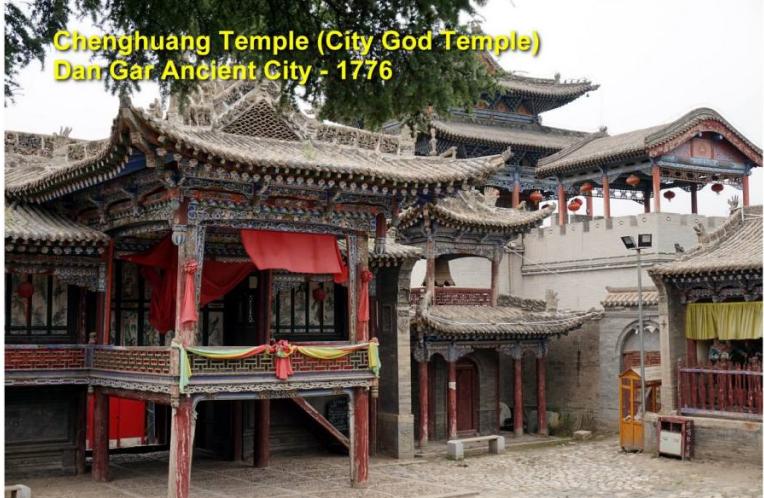
City God Temple Altar - Dan Gar



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



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



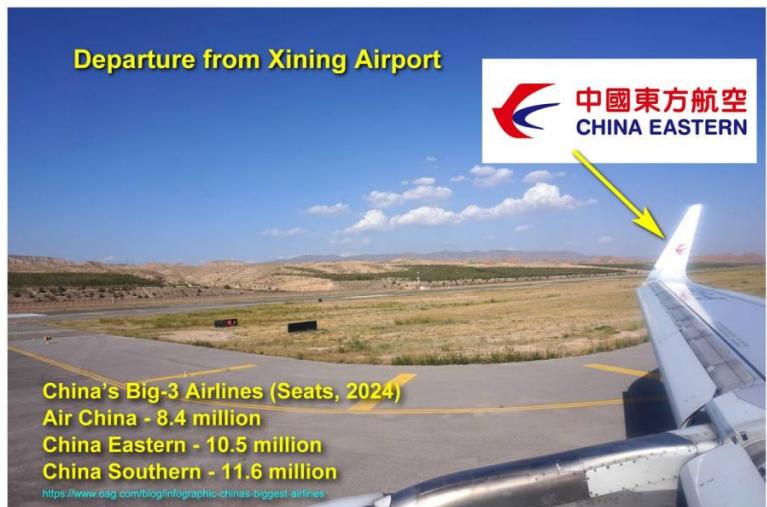
Sometimes you have a choice



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.oag.com/blog/infographic-chinas-biggest-airlines>



Qinghai Mountains



Qinghai and Xining  
The End  
Thanks for coming!

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