China Travel Destination - Xishuangbanna by Minds Abroad

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Xishuangbanna is Chinaâ€™s tropical haven and has been under every touristâ€™s radar from the earlies times. It also has a very prominent ethnic presence. It is situated in the southwest of the Yunnan Province, bordering on Laos to the east and Myanmar to the west. In the local Dai language, Xishuangbanna is transliterated as Sipsongpanna. Literally translated, Sipsong means "twelve", and panna refers to "thousand rice fields". So Sipsongpanna all together means "twelve thousand rice fields". The Dai Minority is the biggest ethnic group of this region and accounts for almost 35% of the entire population of Xishuangbanna . A beautiful place like this obviously features in a lot of China tour itineraries.

Xishuangbannaâ€™s unique location puts it at a much lower altitude than the other regions in Yunnan and this is also the reason for its tropical climate. It is favorable for any traveler to visit this place anytime during the year. Xishuangbanna does not have four distinct seasons and its climate is broadly divided into two categories: dry season and rainy season. The warmth and the frequent rainy spells are responsible for the abundance of tropical animals and plants giving the place the coveted status of â€œTropical Fauna & Flora Kingdomâ€™â€™.

The whole of Xishuangbanna is fraught with temples and pagodas that make for perfect sightseeing all over the place. The three main administrative cities are Jinghong, Menghai and Mengla. Jinghong is the capital city of Xishuangbanna and used to be the historic capital of the bygone Tai kingdom. Menghai is the main place which produces "Pu-erh Tea and has been one of the first regions to have produced tea. Mengla, which is at the southernmost part of Yunnan shares borders with both Myanmar and Laos.

There are many tourist spots in Xishuangbanna which people visit; the most popular ones are the Ganlanba Dai Region, Menglun Tropical Botanical Garden, Manting Park, Manfeilong White Stupa , Jingzhen Octagonal Pavilion and Wild Elephant Valley amongst others.

A lot of festivals play an important cultural part in Xishuangbanna. The most important festival here is the Water-splashing Festival which is synonymous with the New Year celebration of the Dai people. The duration of this festival is three days from April 13th to 15th every year. The celebration consists of dancing, singing, exciting dragon boat races, firing of bamboo rockets etc. Also, as the name suggests, on the last day there is a lot of water splashing with barrels, water guns, basins and also fire hydrants. The significance of the water splashing is to wash off each otherâ€™s impurities and start afresh. Some other prominent festivals are the San Gan Bi Mai Festival and Temaoke Festival which are celebrated by different ethnic groups of the area.

As is clearly seen, Xishuangbanna is a beautiful tropical location which also is a recurrent tourist spot in many China travel plans. Whether one is a student enrolled in study abroad programs or is an avid tourist, Xishuangbanna is a destination that should not be ignored.

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