



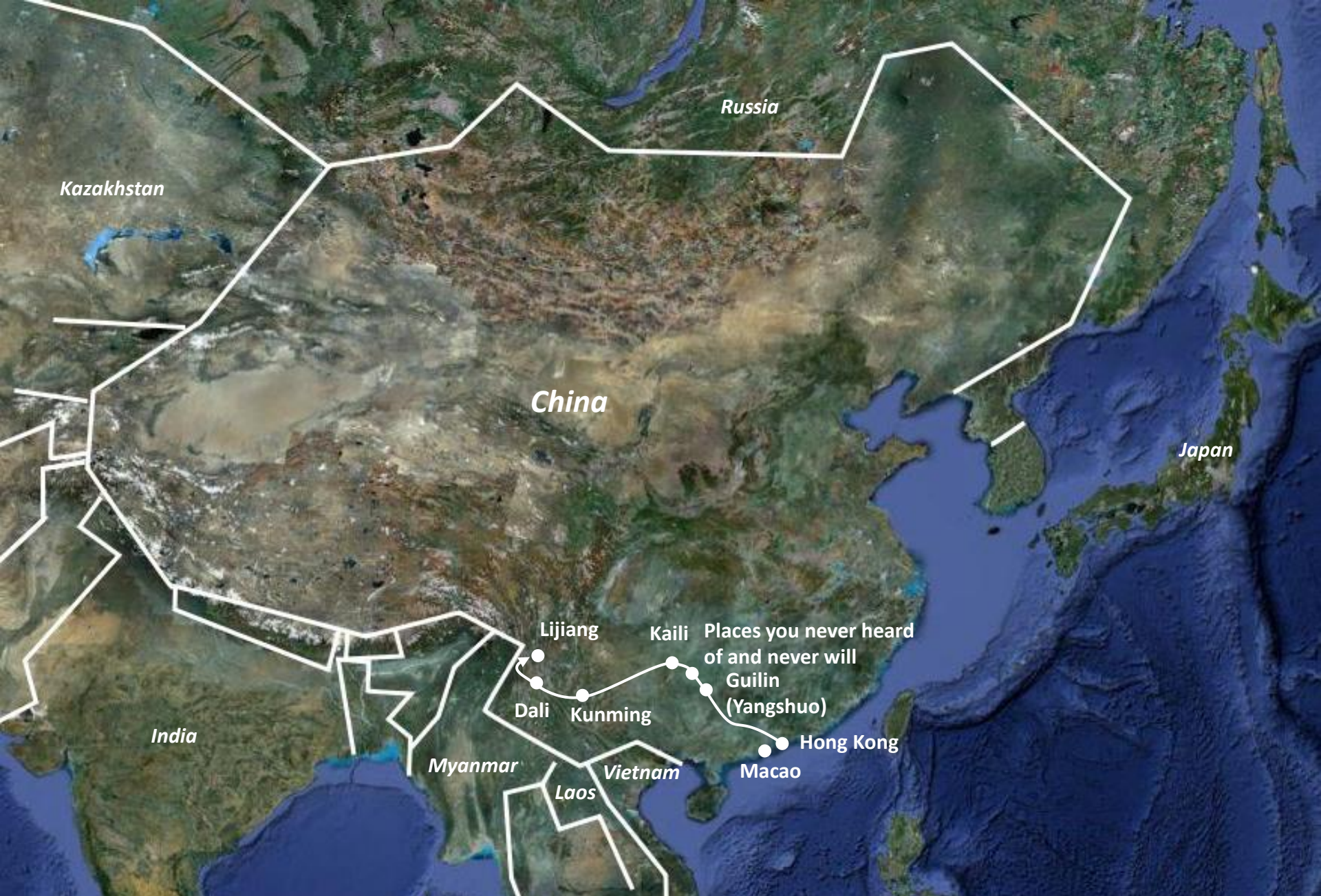
文獻名邦

大觀

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For once it was easy to choose which place I wanted to visit next:
After having read so much about China, I wanted to see it with my own eyes



And this was my plan: Starting off in Hong Kong and making my way west, as far as I would get. And yes, China is quite big. In 2 ½ weeks, I could just see one corner of the country



Hong Kong – big, rich and busy.
The moment I arrived the city made it clear to me: Here in China you are only one in 1.3 billion



Luckily I had a good guide: Khun Peter, my uncle who worked (and enjoyed) Hong Kong for 7 years back in the 80s. And he still knew where to go for the best wining & dining



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For your safety - and the safety of other passengers don't rush into the train, or block train doors as they're closing

Entering or exiting from the train after the started to close is an offence under MTR B

Maximum penalty \$2,000

請勿攀爬
免生意外

For your safety please do not climb

扶手帶已噴上
殺菌劑
並定時加強消毒

Anti-bacterial coating applied to handrail with addition disinfection regularly carried out

Animals, birds and poultry are not allowed in stations or trains.

Flammable & Dangerous Goods are prohibited

Stay Alert-Watch out!

Collect new MTR Safety booklet from any Customer Service Centre

When using the escalator - don't stand close to the edge

Help each other prevent crime

Touting, hawking, begging or any unauthorized commercial activities are not allowed in the station

Don't spread germs - spit only into a tissue then put it into a rubbish bin.



Hong Kong is a great city for sure – but man, are they control freaks over there.
A small collection of the signs in the subway



After Hong Kong I thought I have to go for the “real” China, so I boarded a train north. I had a much better journey than I expected. But why does every Chinese snore?



Yangshuo, close to Guilin. Marvelous karst peaks and picturesque rivers ...



... colorful fields ...



... rural life ...



... and great food.



At least if you like combs and feet in your chicken soup



Making friends was easy. Maybe it was because for most of these guys I was the first non-Chinese they had dinner with



The good news: There is plenty of food for everyone



The (depending on the view) bad news: Pretty much everything is tough manual labor



Village life around Yangshuo ...





(To our surprise, the cat was still alive)









You see, I could have easily spent another few days in Yangshuo.
But there was so much more to see ...



... so I moved on to the Dragon's Backbone Rice Terraces, only to realized that the Lonely Planet (the guidebook) was completely wrong: No rice left at this time of the year, only fog and rain



So I moved west to lovely and peaceful Chengyang ...



... with its famous Wind and Rain Bridge
(no single nail used, they claim)







I stopped for the night in Congjiang. A place with no single bar and the only thing you can do at night is gambling (didn't dare to take a closer picture as gambling is forbidden in China)



At least, street food was great and cheap (as always)



Next, I had a look around Basha ...



... whose local show I liked ...



... just as the local men's hairstyle.
They offered me to have a haircut as well ...



... but I politely declined.





Moving on, the road was not in best condition
(but usually much better than you would expect)



Zhaoxing was the last place on my village hopping trip.
A small lovely wooden village ...



... where the children peacefully play ...



... the old women cook ...



... and the men and the young gamble
(it seems to be the same all over China)



After 36 hours on buses and trains I arrived in Dali ...



... a nicely renovated city ...



... with (once more) delicious food ...



... although a bit kitschy ...



... and all you can do is shopping. But as I learned, food, shopping and kitsch combined together make a perfect holiday destination for Chinese tourists (and >95% of tourists here are Chinese)



What I also learnt: Chinese like to cook in groups (and on the streets) ...



... and when it's about food, they are not afraid of making their fingers dirty





Next was Lijiang, a city with a charming old town where you can easily get lost ...



... but you find little gems like this three staged pool:



From the first pool people take their drinking water ...



... the water then flows in the second pool, where it is used for washing vegetables ...



... and preparing fish and meat ...



... while the last pool is used for washing clothes.



Lijiang is indeed a nice place. But in the end, the Chinese just come here for shopping.
All day ...



... and all night long.





No, this is not Switzerland, but north Yunnan, not far away of the border to Tibet.
Here I went hiking in the Tiger Leaping Gorge



The height difference between the peaks and the Yangtze river is about 3900 meters.
Making the Tiger Leaping Gorge the deepest gorge in the world



Do you spot the ladder on the left and the people on the right?
It was much fun, especially because I suffer from severe fear of heights



My trip was almost over: I flew to Shenzhen,
the world's capital for fake hand bags and fake watches



I also bought some fake products, but most importantly, I got a real Chinese haircut



A ferry ride across the Pearl River delta lies Macau, a former Portuguese colony.
It would be a lovely place ...



... if the only reason people (meaning: Chinese) coming here wasn't gambling:
You are just looking at the largest casino in the world, the Venetian Macao



It was a very interesting but also rather strange and sad experience: Nobody seemed to really have fun, and at 4 a.m. the tables were still as full as a few hours before. Addiction anybody?



After a few rounds of loosing, I was lucky enough to win all my chips back. So I said “adeus” and spent my last hours in China hunting for sights, not for fortune



As you could see, I had 2½ great weeks in China. I was surprised by how advanced the cities are and how underdeveloped the country side is. People are nicer and more civilized than what you are told in the west. Furthermore, food is good and travelling quite cheap and easy. So my advice to you: Go there and see it with your own eyes!