

MORE THAN A HOME

# Travel Guide for China





# KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Culture

Festivals

Cuisine

Best time

Experience

Souvenirs

Travel Tips

# CULTURE

Tracing back thousands of years, the Chinese culture is one of the oldest in the world. Today there live about 1.4 billion people in China and their traditions can vary considerably by geography and ethnicity. The largest ethnic group are the Han Chinese with about 900 million people. Other groups include the Tibetans, the Mongols, the Manchus and the Naxi. Many of the ethnic groups have maintained their own distinct festivals and customs



# FESTIVALS

These traditional festivals will really introduce you to life in China. There are annual events like Chinese New Year, the Lantern Festival, the Qingming (Tomb Sweeping) Festival, Double Seven Festival, and the Winter Solstice.





## CHINESE NEW YEAR

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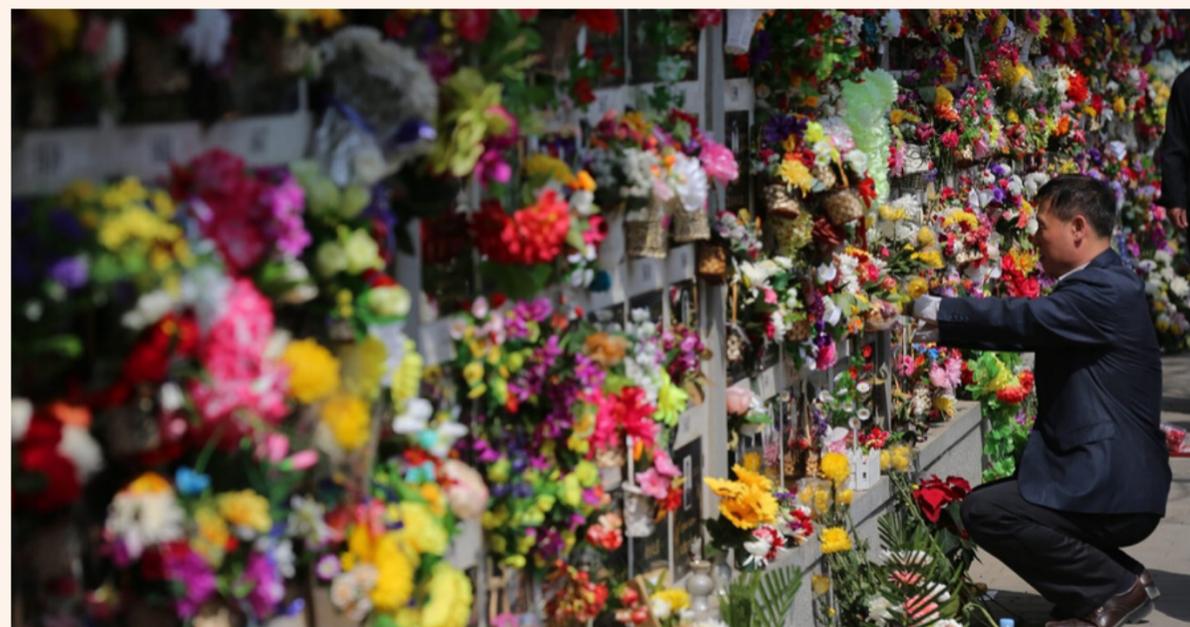
Chinese New Year, also called Spring Festival, marks the beginning of the Lunar New Year and is the largest and most important festival in China. The 15-day long festival falls between mid-January and mid-February and ends with the Lantern Festival. It is the time for family get-togethers, delicious food, dragon dances and firecrackers.



## THE LANTERN FESTIVAL

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The traditional Lantern Festival, or Yuan Xiao Festival, falls on the 15th day of the first lunar month and marks the end of the Chinese Spring Festival. People from all over the world come to witness the amazing designs and colors of the lanterns floating into the night sky. Another important tradition is to eat Yuanxiao (or Tangyuan), which are small dumpling balls made of glutinous rice flour.



## QINGMING FESTIVAL

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Qingming Festival, also known as Tomb Sweeping Day, is the time when Chinese people bring sacrifices to offer their ancestors and sweep the tombs of loved ones, who have departed from this world. Many Chinese also have a picnic and enjoy the picturesque scenery of spring.



## DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

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Duanwu Festival, or Dragon Boat Festival, falls on the fifth day of the fifth Chinese lunar month. This ancient Chinese festival attracts millions of people, who celebrate by gathering together to take part or watch the dragon boat races. Another important part is eating Zong Zi, which is the glutinous rice wrapped in reed leaves. Definitely a must try.



## MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL

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Mid-Autumn Festival is a traditional Chinese holiday that originates from the worship of the moon. It falls on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month and symbolizes harvest and family reunion. Traditionally, family members will get together and enjoy the full moon, which is an auspicious symbol of harmony and luck, and eat delicious mooncakes.



## NATIONAL DAY OF CHINA

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The National Day celebrates the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. As one of the most important festivals in China, it is celebrated throughout mainland China, Macau and Hong Kong. Every year on October 1st, the Government organizes a number of different activities, such as concerts and fireworks. Many people will go traveling since it's also the first day of a 7-day long national holiday.

# CUISINE

There are many styles of cooking in China, but Chinese chefs have identified eight culinary traditions as the best. These have set the course of how Chinese cook food, and are looked to as models. Each of these schools has a distinct style and different strengths.





## CANTONESE CUISINE

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Sweeter, favoring braising and stewing, adding various mild sauces.



## SICHUAN CUISINE

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Spicy and bold, often mouth-numbing, using lots of chili, garlic, ginger, and peanuts.



## JIANGSU CUISINE

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Fresh, moderately salty and sweet, precise cooking techniques, favoring seafood, soups and artistic, colorful presentation.



## ZHEJIANG CUISINE

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Mellow, using fresh seafood, freshwater fish, and bamboo shoots, and a wide variety of cooking methods.



## MIN CUISINE

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Lighter, with a mild sweet and sour taste, using ingredients from the sea and the mountains.



## HUNAN CUISINE

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Quite spicy, with a hot and sour taste, favoring sautéing, stir-frying, steaming and smoking.



## ANHUI CUISINE

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Uses many wild plants and animals as ingredients, favoring stewing and more oil.



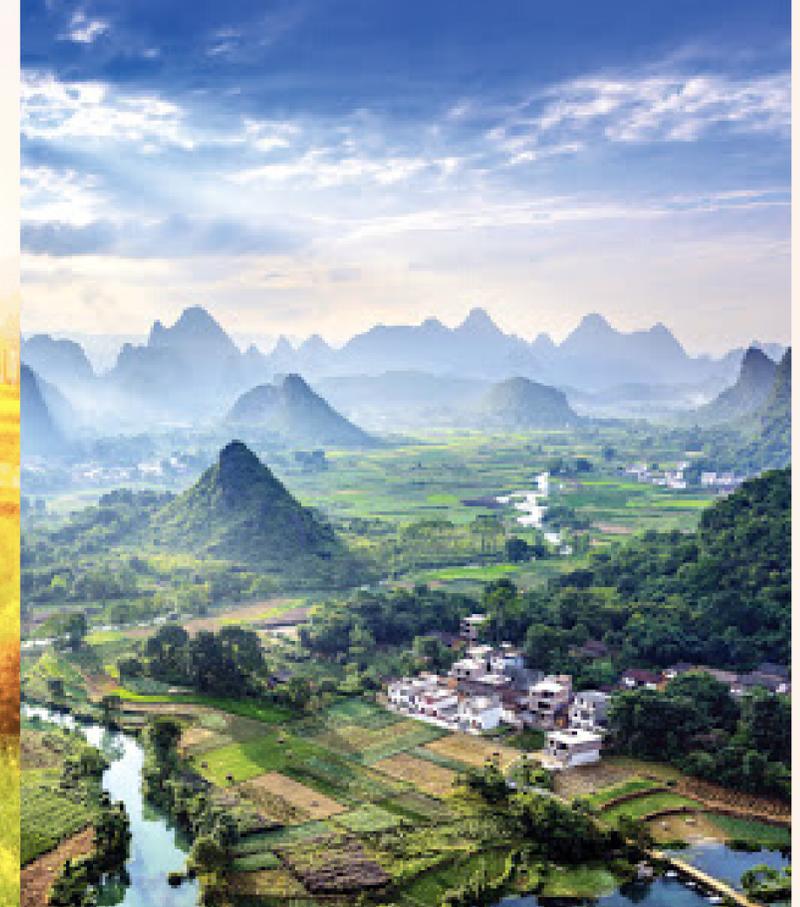
## SHANDONG CUISINE

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Salty and crispy, favoring braising and seafood

# BEST TIME

Deciding on the best time to visit China is a harder task to tackle, since China is such a huge country with diverse climates. The rule of thumb, in general, is that spring and autumn are the best times to visit China. Any time from March to May and from September to early November are the best moments to plan a great trip.



|   |   |               |
|---|---|---------------|
|     | <b>BEIJING</b><br>May Jun, Sept Oct       | 3 - 5<br>DAYS |
|    | <b>CHENGDU</b><br>All year round          | 3 - 5<br>DAYS |
|    | <b>TIBET</b><br>Apr, May, or Sept         | 5 - 7<br>DAYS |
|    | <b>GUANGZHOU</b><br>later Oct - Mid Dec   | 3<br>DAYS     |
|    | <b>ZHANGYE</b><br>Jun-Sept                | 2 - 3<br>DAYS |
|   | <b>WUYUAN</b><br>Mar-Apr&Sept-Nov         | 2<br>DAYS     |
|  | <b>JIUZHAIYOU</b><br>Sept-Nov             | 2 - 3<br>DAYS |
|  | <b>MT. HUA</b><br>Apr-Oct                 | 2<br>DAYS     |
|  | <b>YELLOW MOUNTAINS</b><br>All year round | 2 - 3<br>DAYS |
|  | <b>ZHANGJIAJIE</b><br>Apr- Jun & Sept-Oct | 2 - 3<br>DAYS |

|   |  |               |
|---|--|---------------|
|     | <b>XI'AN</b><br>Spring                     | 3 - 5<br>DAYS |
|    | <b>LUOYANG</b><br>Spring & Autumn          | 2 - 3<br>DAYS |
|    | <b>SHANGHAI</b><br>All year round          | 3 - 5<br>DAYS |
|    | <b>HUNAN</b><br>Apr- Jun & Sept-Oct        | 3<br>DAYS     |
|    | <b>QINGHAI LAKE</b><br>Apr-Oct             | 1 - 2<br>DAYS |
|   | <b>DAOCHENG</b><br>Sept-Nov                | 2 - 3<br>DAYS |
|  | <b>YUNNAN</b><br>All year round            | 5 - 7<br>DAYS |
|  | <b>HUKOU WATERFALL</b><br>Apr-May&Sept-Nov | 1<br>DAYS     |
|  | <b>MT. WUYI</b><br>Jun-Oct                 | 2<br>DAYS     |
|  | <b>LI RIVER</b><br>All year round          | 2 - 3<br>DAYS |

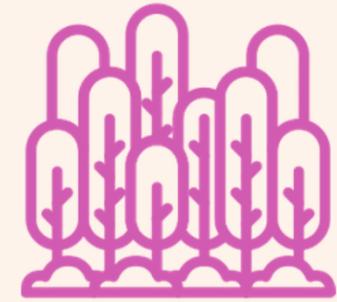
|   |                         |   |                 |
|---|-------------------------|---|-----------------|
|  | History & Culture Lover |  | Foodie          |
|  | Nature Lover            |  | Adventure Lover |

# EXPERIENCE

China offers thriving metropolises like Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong as well as an idyllic countryside with mountains, valleys, rivers, and plains. There is an abundance of great food, welcoming people and diverse landscapes. China is an extraordinary destination, full of geographic and cultural contrasts, delightful surprises and bucket list-worthy places.



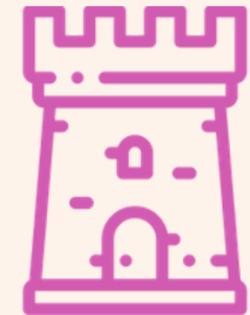
Culture



Nature



Religion



History



Beach

# HISTORY



## BEIJING

Marvel at ageless Beijing, the economic, cultural and political hub of China. Get lost while walking through the astounding Forbidden city, an imperial palace turned into one of the world's best museums. A little more outside of the city, you will appreciate every minute spent in the remarkable panorama of the Great Wall of China.



## XIAN

Before Beijing became China's capital city, many imperial families ruled from Xi'an, the center of China. Xi'an was not only the starting point of the glorified Silk Road, but also home to the first Emperor of unified China - Qin Shi Huang. Look for traces of history and catch a glimpse of the incredible Terracotta Warriors.

# NATURE



## GUILIN

Guilin is a postcard perfect city, world-famous for its unrivalled karst landscape, magnificent mountains, idyllic rivers and majestic rice terraces. While in Yangshuo, hike marvelous Moon mountain, take a bamboo-raft ride or cycle through the remarkable hilly landscape in order to receive the most iconic perspective.



## HANGZHOU

One hour outside of Shanghai, you can take pleasure in the enchanting natural scenery and the rich cultural heritage of Hangzhou 杭州. This ancient city is not only known as luxurious 'Silk city', but also, as the birthplace of Dragon Well (or Longjing) tea, the best green tea in China. Take a bike ride around the renowned West lake panoramas and stop by the surrounding temples, pavilions and gardens. Sounds calming, am I right?

# NATURE



## SUZHOU

High culture and elegance come to your mind when you hear the city of Suzhou. The “Venice of China” is filled with romantic canals, thousand-year old temples and UNESCO-recognized gardens. Delve into the ancient techniques and fine craftsmanship of Suzhou’s most famous export, the extravagant silk.



## LUOYANG

Located in west Henan Province, Luoyang is in the middle reaches of the Yellow River and encircled by mountains and plains. Full of rich and fascinating culture, this was the capital city for 13 dynasties and the origin of Taoism. Explore the first Buddhist Temple or enjoy the modern Peony Festival.



## QINGHAI

The province name derives from the large saltwater lake - Qinghai Hu or ‘Blue Lake’. Rural Qinghai is off-the-beaten-track and therefore extraordinary authentic. There are monasteries galore, yaks scattered across the hills and nomads camped out across high-altitude grasslands.

# CULTURE



## YUNNAN

Yunnan is not only home to some of the best views mother nature has to offer, but also inhabits 26 different ethnic groups, making it the most culturally diverse province in China. While strolling through the historical old town of Lijiang city, take a moment to admire the extraordinary way the people embrace this mixture of several cultural traditions.



## TIBET

Tibet, the "roof of the world", known for its breathtaking high peaks and fascinating Dalai Lama culture, remains one of the most enchanting places on earth. Wander high passes with colorful prayer flags dancing in the wind, lose yourself in views illuminated with spectacular mountain light and experience true spirituality in one of the remote Buddhist monasteries.

# CULTURE



## INNER MONGOLIA

This region of China is a real travel gem for those who desire an authentic experience.

Shortly after the city limits, a fabulous vastness unfolds with herds of wild horses and wild camels crossing the street. Discover the fascinating Guangzong Temple or the Alxa Desert Geopark.



## FUJIAN

Fujian, located on the coast of the East China Sea, is an attractive coastal province with a long seafaring history. The sophisticated port city of Xiamen, the legendary Wuyi Mountain and of course, the unique Tǔlóu, a traditional Hakka people residence, are just three of many highlights in Fujian.

# CULTURE



## GUIZHOU

Guizhou is a multi-minority province in Southwest China known for its marvelous karst landscapes, and unsophisticated ethnic customs. Admire the colorful festivals and handicrafts of the 48 different minorities and enjoy the abundance of amazing and unique natural scenery, like the Huangguoshu Waterfall.



## XINJIANG

Xinjiang has beautiful scenery with many inland rivers, mountain lakes and thermal springs. It's not only the biggest province in China, but also the driest, hottest and coldest place at the same time. Hike up a mountain to have an incredible view of the diverse surroundings that range from bare deserts over wide grasslands to lush forests.



## SICHUAN

Sichuan's name translates as "four rivers," referring to the Jialing, Jinsha, Min and Tuo, which run through the geographically diverse province. The region is well known for their spicy cuisine called "mala" and their precious Giant Panda Sanctuaries. Sichuan represents awe-inspiring nature, sacred mountains and a traditional countryside with ancient villages and cliffs of carved Buddhas.

# COSMOPOLITAN CITIES



## SHANGHAI

China's largest and most cosmopolitan city offers the past, the present, and the future all at once. Enjoy the perfect blend of Chinese traditions and Western customs endowed with a unique glamour. Live life to the fullest in the exciting nightlife, the artsy neighborhoods or along the famous Shanghai Bund.



## HONG KONG

The tempting neighborhoods and islands that make up Hong Kong are a feast for the senses and want to be explored. Over 70% of Hong Kong's territory is made up of mountains and parks, some of which have geological wonders. You can escape the city using one of the world's best local transportation systems and stroll through a Song Dynasty village for a day, hike on beaches or visit an abandoned island.



## MACAU

Although the archipelago is familiar to most only as a gambling metropolis, Macau impresses with much more and offers numerous cultural and historical sights. The historic center of Macau is one of China's most significant World Heritage Sites and the ruins of St. Paul's Cathedral are a memory of the city's rich past.

# MOUNTAIN



## YELLOW MOUNTAIN

Huángshān 黄山, engl. Yellow mountain, is characterized by the four wonders, namely, odd-shaped pines, grotesque rock formation, seas of clouds and crystal-clear hot springs. Watching the sun rise over fairyland-like Huangshan national park, makes you understand why this scenery inspired so many classical Chinese ink paintings and modern photography. What's holding you back?



## ZHANGJIAJIE

Zhangjiajie National Forest Park is the nature-made masterpiece, which inspired various elements in the legendary movie "Avatar". Zhangjiajie's highest mountain, 天门山 Tiānmén Shān, provides fascinating adventures including naturally formed 'Tianmen Cave', nerve-racking Glass skywalks, the world's longest cable car ride and an impeccable view of the 'Heaven's Gate'.

# MOUNTAIN



## SANQING MOUNTAIN

Mount Sanqing represents a spectacular treasure for geologists, a stunning array of natural beauty for photographers and an important spiritual center for Taoism. The name originates from its three peaks Yujing, Yuhua and Yuxu, which symbolize the "Three Qing in Taoism".



## WUGONG MOUNTAIN

Wugong Mountains (武功山) are a beautiful Mountain range in Jiangxi Province. Surrounded by grasslands, bamboo forest and blue skies this hike will be memorable.

# MOUNTAIN



## WUYI MOUNTAIN

The Wuyi Mountains belong to the most magnificent and idyllic places in China. The scenery is filled with deep canyons, high waterfalls, incredible caves and numerous temples and monasteries. Have you ever been on the inside of a waterfall?



## CHANGBAI MOUNTAIN

Changbai Mountain, a dormant volcano on the border between China and North Korea, is a panorama out of this world. The most beautiful part is undoubtedly Tianchi, or Heavenly lake, a crystal blue water lake with melted snow as its source, surrounded by everchanging verdant fields and forests.



## MOGANSHAN

Mogan Mountain, also called the “Hamptons of China”, is exactly the peaceful getaway, we all deserve. This mountain area has everything that calms your mind. Discover bamboo forests, visit little peaceful villages, kayak the sky-blue reservoirs and enjoy the breath-taking mountain views.

## Beach



### SANYA

Sanya, crowned as the “Hawaii of China”, is known for white sand beaches, crystal clear water and endless blue skies. Diving for coral reefs, zip-lining through the rainforest and hiking to the volcano crater are just a few of the activities this tropical paradise has to offer.

## WINTER WONDERLAND



### HARBIN

Home to the enchanting “Ice and Snow festival”, Harbin fascinates every year millions of people with creatively lighted, intricately carved and record-breaking snow sculptures. The ice city of china is also famous for the magnificent St. Sophia Church, the Yabuli Ski Resort and the Siberian Tiger Park.

# SOUVENIRS

We all want our travel memories to remain fresh forever. But if only memories were left alone. It is human nature to possess material belonging as a reminder of their cherished memories. Whether you splurge on your travels, buy a cheap souvenir, pick a free memento or just take lots of photos, there is always something to look back to after your return.

Chinese Tea



Chinese Calligraphy



Silk



Traditional Chinese Medicine

Chinese mask

# TRAVEL TIPS

- Bring your own toilet paper for public restrooms.
- China is one of the safest countries in the world for female travelers, solo travelers and families.
- Get a backstreet breakfast for a true local experience
- Knowing Mandarin is not a necessity but it helps a lot. Be Prepared for Menus in Chinese Characters.
- A basic dictionary, like pleco, can be a lifesaver during communication problems.
- Customize your gifts. China is the land of possibilities. If you can dream it, someone can make it.
- Outside the main cities, the locals are not used to seeing Westerners. People might stare or take photo of you. Don't take it personally.
- Drink only bottled water and boiled tea!
- Use the highspeed trains (高铁 gāo tiě). The modern trains are a fast and convenient way of travelling through china
- Avoid planning your trip during Chinese holidays (such as golden week, from Oct. 1st to 7th).
- Avoid planning your trip during Chinese summer vacation falls from July to August.
- Take precautions when traveling at high altitudes in destinations like, • Tibet, Daocheng, Jiuzhaigou, and Yunnan.
- Please apply and obtain the Tibet travel permit before your arrival at Tibet.
- Please be respectful of all the local traditions and customs, just as locals do.
- In almost every public rest room in China, you are most likely to find squat toilets, which is easy to use unlike the western toilets.
- Remember to carry a small pack of tissues or your own toilet paper with you, as most often, you won't be provided with toilet paper at public toilets.



# Explore the colours of life!



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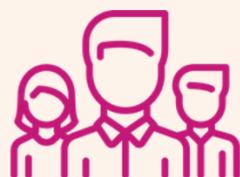
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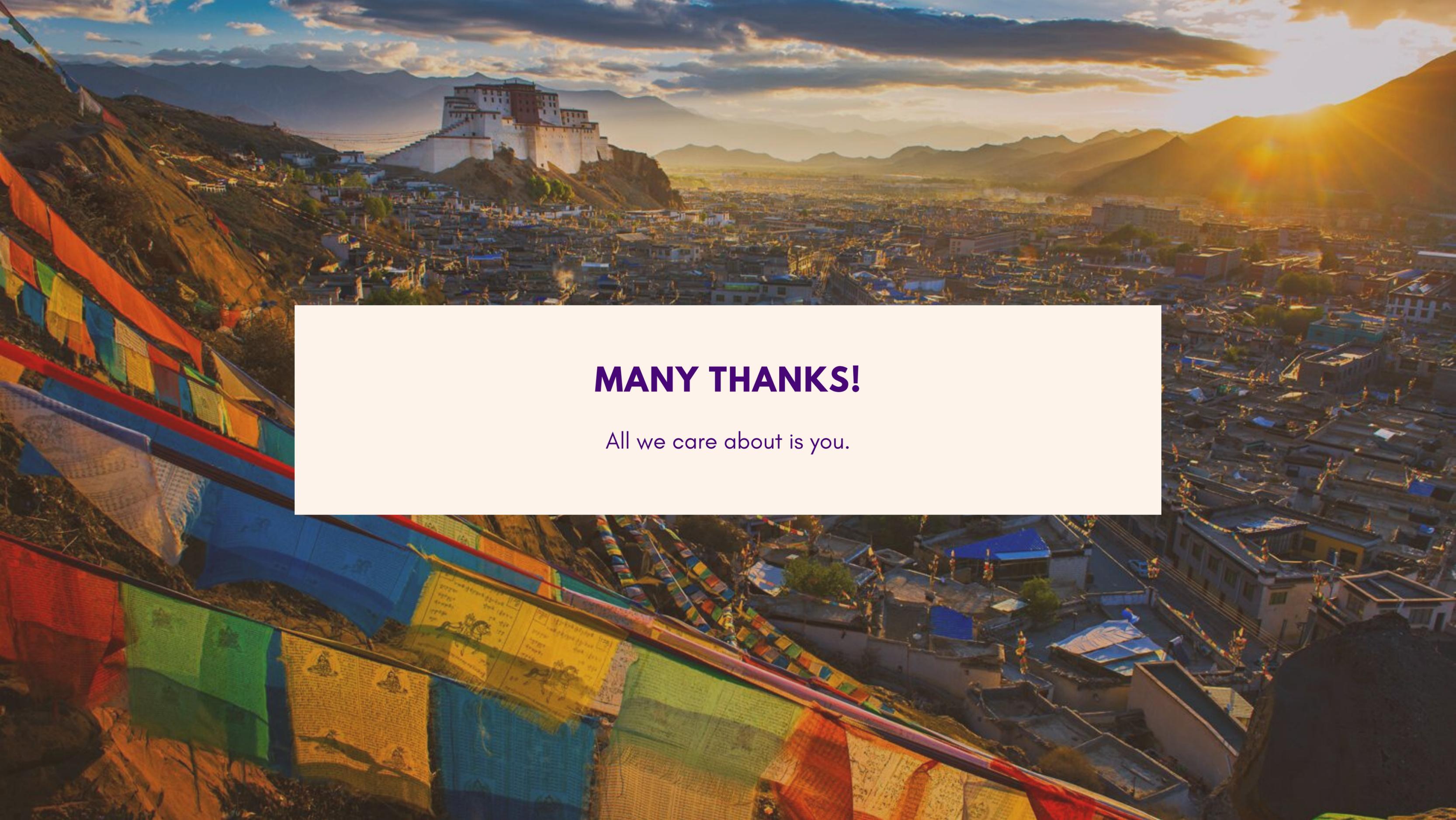
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