



LINDEN CENTRE

## Adventures in a Chinese Kitchen with Chef Janice Thomas March 13-25, 2013

*"Have you eaten yet?"* In China, this is one of the most common and respectful greetings. It reflects the country's long cultural connection with its diverse foods and preparation techniques. China's culinary history is one of the most venerable in the world. Where better to eat, drink and explore than in the elegance of a Dynastic courtyard in one of the world's oldest cultures.





“Adventures in a Chinese Kitchen” will encourage guests to boldly move beyond Calvin Trillin’s reticence and fear. It introduces the culinary traditions of Asia’s most diverse region- Yunnan Province. Yunnan is renowned for its rich ethnic cultures- over twenty-five tribal groups related to the Thais, Burmese, Tibetans, Hmong, Mongolians and Han Chinese. It is a melting pot of tastes and smells that shatters preconceived ideas that China is a large homogenous culture.

The foods of the region enchant guests with spices reminiscent of India and Sichuan, fresh fish and vegetables similar to Vietnam and Hong Kong, and soups and hot pots echoing the historic connection between the region and the Mongolian Steppes.



Your program will be enhanced with the expertise of Janice Thomas, owner of the Savory Spoon Cooking School and the Linden Centre’s own chef, Yang Dong Bin. Janice Thomas established the well-respected Savory Spoon Cooking School in Ellison Bay, Wisconsin in 2004, and is known for her personal approach to cooking and creating memories with every meal.

Janice is a member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals and Women Chefs of America. Janice has over 25 years of experience in the food industry and has taught cooking classes throughout the United States. Studies at the renowned Cordon Bleu in Paris and with notable chefs in Provence and

Mexico have enhanced her repertoire. She has lead culinary and cultural tours in China, Mexico, France and Italy with a strong emphasis on applied experiential travel.

Mr. Yang, formerly the head chef at the Kunming Hotel and teacher at Yunnan’s culinary school, has spent over 30 years as a chef in addition to 4 years at The Linden Centre and will be sharing many of his secret dishes with us.

The Linden Centre will have English speaking guides in addition to Jeanee and Brian Linden, who are both bilingual in Mandarin Chinese. They will also help lead the tour and provide cultural material both written and orally to make sure you have a personal and educational experience. The Lindens have been living in China since 1984. Their twenty-plus years of contacts will ensure that all participants see and experience aspects of China unknown to other visitors. For most of their previous guests, the experiences throughout these regions of China have been among the most memorable in their lives.

Come and enjoy an indigenous travel experience to one of the world's most storied cultures.



### **TRIP DETAILS: 13 Days, \$4995**

Fare includes all domestic travel, all accommodations, meals, workshop fee, and all activities and cultural services. International airfare is also included from Los Angeles International Airport to China and back.

### **PROPOSED ITINERARY March 13-25, 2013**

**March 13:** Leave LAX for overnight ride and cross International Date Line to arrive in Kunming.

**March 14: Arrival in Kunming** All guests will be picked up at the Kunming airport. We will check you into your hotel- the Green Lake Hotel, our 5 star hotel, located in the most elegant section of Kunming (population: 6 million). You will have time to freshen up before we meet in the hotel lobby at 5 pm. We will stroll along the picturesque Green Lake and have our welcome dinner within walking distance of the hotel in a beautiful old courtyard home. After dinner we will stroll through the Green Lake Park and enjoy the nightlife which is filled with the sounds and sights of the Kunming people dancing, singing and playing.

**March 15: Culinary School and Kunming** After a sumptuous breakfast buffet at the hotel, we will visit the Culinary Institute of Yunnan to meet with professors and students. We will spend the morning visiting the school and will have lunch at the Institute. In the afternoon, we will stop at the newly renovated Bird and Flower Market where we can see animals, local crafts and foodstuffs. The walk will be at least 1 mile at a leisurely pace. We will return to the hotel after our visit to freshen up. Dinner will be within walking distance of the hotel.





**March 16: To The Linden Centre** After breakfast, we will board our bus for a 5 hour drive through Yi tribal villages to arrive in the beautiful Dali Valley. After checking in at the Linden Centre, and a light lunch, we will take a short walking tour of old Xizhou. Around 5 pm, we will meet to have a wine tasting on the terrace to try some of the local Yunnan wines and have time to mingle and get to know one another better.

Each day we will describe the types of foods brought to our table and we will give you recipes that you can take home and try yourselves. If any guests want to participate or observe the preparation and cooking of the food in addition to our planned meetings, we will organize the number of people in the kitchen according to your desires.

**March 17: Xizhou Village** American and Chinese breakfasts will be served daily in the Linden Centre's main restaurant. All breakfasts will include Yunnan's indigenous coffees and teas. A morning lecture/power point presentation will discuss the region's growing season, the kinds of foods grown in the Dali valley (rice, beans, etc) and the archaeology of Chinese food which will be followed by a visit to Xizhou's morning market. Along the way, we will stop in the local rice noodle shop and see how they make "er kuai" or rice cakes and rice noodles. We will lead you through the stalls and introduce the incredible array of produce and foods available for purchase.

Then we will venture up to the square to try a taste of the famous "Xizhou Baba" or Xizhou Pizza. There are salty and sweet pizzas topped with savory pork or filled with rose petal jam. We will have lunch at the Centre featuring rice noodles on the menu. After lunch we will gather in the dining room to make our own rose petal jam, a local specialty, which you will get to take home in a jar as a special gift. Afterwards we will take you to some of the local antique and jade shops to see what treasures we can find and we'll top the day off visiting one of our favorite antique shops who also happens to be a great cook. She'll teach us the secrets of making delicious steamed Muslim buns and treat us to a multi-course packed dinner in her home.

**March 18: Monday Market** Today we will visit the largest regional market- Shaping. En route, we will stop at a local home to participate in the making of 'ru shan,' a distinctive cheese that is



produced in thin sheets. It is eaten deep fried and garnished with sugar or diced and placed into tonight's three course tea ceremony. We will tour the market with local Bai women who will introduce the large variety of foods and spices.

For lunch, we will stop at a local Bai restaurant featuring fresh local foods such as pine needles, local mushrooms and wind dried meats. It is even better when everything is accompanied with homemade plum wine.



After lunch, we will visit an old courtyard in the village of Zhoucheng to trace their renowned tie-dye process. Family guilds have been creating these woven treasures for centuries, and we observe the different stages of this creative tradition. The craftsmen believe that the indigo leaf, which produces the deep blues used in their textiles, is therapeutic, and textiles made from the dye retain the natural properties of the indigo leaf. We will also meander down old stone lanes and visit their famous Dragon Spring Temple and afternoon market - which is nestled beneath two massive, centuries-old Banyan trees. The traditional three course tea ceremony with a local Xizhou music and singing troupe will take place after dinner at the Centre.

**March 19: Herbal Remedies and Lake Er Hai** This morning we will bring in a Chinese medicine professor to discuss the special way Chinese pay attention to the hot and cold properties of food. This designation of “yin and yang” to a certain food is related to the seasons, your age and even gender. We will also introduce several Chinese herbs and give you samples of herb tea to take home. Today, we will also make our own local lunch taught by Jeanee in the Centre’s upstairs dining room. In the afternoon, we will take horse carts to the shore of Lake Erhai and head out on the lake with local fishermen and their cormorants.

We will watch the cormorants, all who have their necks slightly tied, as they dive for fish and return to place them on the boats. Tonight’s dinner will be of course, fish! We’ll taste how the locals like to eat their fish, stewed with lots of tongue numbing spices. But we’ll also revel in the chef’s delicious ‘red braised fish’ as another way to sample today’s fresh catch.

**March 20: Tea Plantation and Ancient Town of Dali** After breakfast we will drive 12 miles south to the ancient walled city of Dali to a tea plantation nestled in the Cang Mountains to see where they grow their own teas and sample this year’s tea crop. We will have a lecture on the history of tea while sipping Pu’er and Green teas.



Lunch will be eaten on the mountain in one of their quaint home-style restaurants. In the afternoon, we will descend in the old town of Dali. Dali was the capital of the Nanzhao and Dali Kingdoms which dated from roughly 700-1300 A.D. Marco Polo was sent to Dali by the Mongol ruler, Kublai Khan, to help negotiate a peace treaty between the Yuan Dynasty and the local Bai rulers. Dali has wonderful boutique shops, cafes, restaurants and traditional craftsmen. You will have free time to wander the streets to look in the shops, rest in a café and people watch or walk on the old wall. Dinner will be back the the Centre.

**March 21: Traditional Food and Snacks** Today we have the opportunity to see how a Chinese food staple is made—TOFU. We will have the chance to visit a home specializing in making tofu and learn the endless ways you can eat it. But first, in the morning, we will take a walking tour of Dali to find and taste all the local snacks that we love. You will also have a chance to freely shop on your own or to relax in a café. We’ll be at the Centre for dinner.



**March 22: Last Day at the Centre** We will be leaving the Centre the day after tomorrow, so you will have some free time this morning to make any visits you have may have missed. Your time in Xizhou would not be complete without paying a visit to our local village elder, Mr. Dong Cheng Han. We'll stop in his home to say hello and hear his story. In the late morning we gather to make a very communal dish traditionally eaten when families get together for special occasions—dumplings. We'll make different types of dumplings with sauces for our noontime meal.



After our lunch of dumplings, you will have free time for the rest of the afternoon. Take a bike and explore one of the villages, ride a horse cart to take photos of the landscape and lakeside, practice calligraphy in the library or bask in the sunshine on the rooftop terrace with a good book. Our last dinner at the Centre will be accompanied with other favorite dishes of the groups (along with a few surprises from Janice!).

**March 23: Lijiang-World Heritage Village** After an early breakfast, we will travel three hours north to the World Heritage Site- Lijiang. This charming old city is nestled in the shadows of the 18,000 foot high Jade Dragon Snow Mountain. We'll take a picnic lunch and stop along the way at a small lake near Lijiang to enjoy the cool mountain air and eat. After checking into our Lijiang hotel we will walk the old village and have a wonderful dinner before retiring for bed.





**March 24: Performance at the Jade Mountain and Old Town** After breakfast at the hotel, we will drive to the base of the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain to watch the “Lijiang Impressions” performance. With a cast of hundreds, the show is a resplendent homage to the spirit of the Jade mountain and the Naxi people. The show, created by three famous Chinese directors, including Zhang Yi Mo, who brought the world the dynamic 2008 opening Olympics in Beijing, is program is a true highlight. We will then spend the rest of the day in the Old Town where we will wander through Lijiang’s numerous lanes to find the market, shops and elegant cafes.

**March 25: Leaving Yunnan** On this day, our program ends. After breakfast, all guests will be driven to the Lijiang airport for your connecting flight through Kunming to your next destination.



## Summary

What - 13 day cultural excursion and culinary theme tour in Yunnan, China.

When –March 13-25, 2013

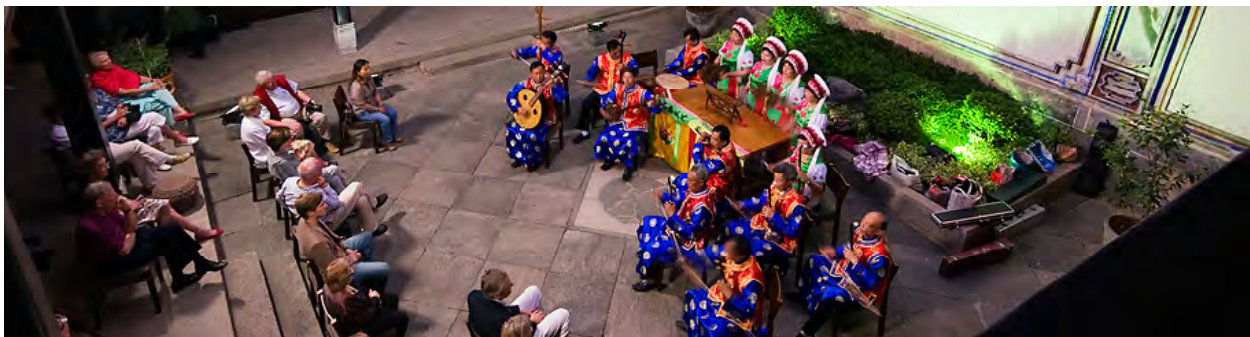
Cost---\$4,995 includes all domestic travel after arrival in Kunming, all accommodations, all meals (unless specified), and all activities and cultural services. Single supplement is an extra \$600. Round-trip, international airfare to Kunming from LAX is included. Price excluding international airfare is \$900 less the total program price. Medical evacuation insurance is provided with airfare. Trip insurance will be offered for purchase separately.

Group Size: This tour group is limited to 16 people to ensure that all participants receive more personal attention from the staff. Minimum group size is 10 people; we reserve the right to cancel any tour if the minimum size is not met. All rooms are non-smoking.

Not included: Guests are responsible for obtaining their own Chinese visa, costs related to alcohol, beverages not included in regular meals, laundry, personal items, souvenirs, long distance telephone calls or any travel taken outside stated itinerary. Airfare to and from LAX, trip interruption and cancellation is not included but can be purchased separately.

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How to reserve space for the tour: Contact us for Reservation Form and Contract or visit [www.linden-centre.com](http://www.linden-centre.com). Call and/or email us to reserve space and mail your forms and a check for \$500 or cc information.



The Linden Centre Tour Itinerary 2012 - 2013