

Press Release

Go off the Beaten Path along China's Ancient Silk Routes

-Launch of new UK flight makes China a destination to watch in 2016-



China, March 2016: Adding to the recent increased flight capacity to Beijing from Birmingham with Hainan Airlines; this summer will see the airline adding new routes from Manchester. Proving that China is becoming a 'must-visit' destination for curious travellers, China's world-famous Silk Road was named a 'destination to watch' in the ABTA Travel Trends report 2016* whilst historian Michael Wood has delved into the fascinating traditions, history and culture of the country in his recent BBC documentary, 'The Story of China'.

According to the 2016 ABTA report, savvy travellers who have already visited Beijing, Shanghai, the Great Wall, Terracotta Army and the pandas of Chengdu, are predicted to follow in the footsteps of Italian explorer Marco Polo along the fabled Silk Road in 2016, showing an increased interest in the fascinating silk history of the country. The Silk Road traditionally refers to the overland trade route that stretches from what is now Xi'an to Kashgar in western China and its lesser known sister, the Ancient Southern Silk Road, which starts from Burma, crosses Lijiang and Tibet, culminating in Iran. These silk routes were so revered due to the fact that China was the first country in the world to breed silkworms and produce the magnificent fabric of silk, a material that fascinated European nobilities in the late 13th century and was even said to be coveted by the Egyptian queen, Cleopatra.

Located along the Ancient Southern Silk Road in Yunnan province, **Banyan Tree Lijiang** welcomes guests into an ethereal land of cobblestones and quaint bridges over flowing canals. The resort offers a range of accommodation options from oriental garden suites; and sumptuous pool villas; to spacious two-bedroom duplexes with views of the mountain. In reverence to the mystical surroundings under the majestic Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, Banyan Tree Lijiang was constructed with locally-sourced materials; its design inspired by the architecture of local Naxi people.

Offering a tranquil sanctuary to relax along China's ancient silk route, the award-winning Banyan Tree Spa Lijiang offers treatments such as *The Yunnan Bounty* which introduces local, natural produce such as pearl barley scrub and green tea tonic mist into its therapies.

Paying tribute to the ancient Silk Road, Banyan Tree Lijiang is the perfect place to learn about the history of silk in its local villages. Baisha village, close to the hotel, is one of the only places in the world which retains the tradition of Naxi silk embroidery, a treasure which, according to folklore, makes the entire country more rich and powerful. Guests are welcome to spend an afternoon in a traditional workshop trying their hand at this ancient art for themselves. Traditionally a girl's ability to run a household was judged on the quality of her silk embroidery pieces, many of which take several weeks to complete. Guests can also marvel at the examples of local silk embroidery on the walls of their private villas back at Banyan Tree Lijiang.

Ideal for both luxury travellers and history buffs, a stay at Banyan Tree Lijiang combines opulent accommodation with spectacular landscapes and a true pride in the area's heritage.

Book Banyan Tree Lijiang's **Sense of Romance** package and enjoy attractive inclusions such as a couples' spa treatment, a spa workshop and healthy set dinners. Terms and conditions apply.

For more information, visit www.banyantree.com/en/cn-china-lijiang.

For reservations and enquiries, please contact Banyan Tree Lijiang at lijiang@banyantree.com, call +86 888 533 1111.

* ABTA Travel Trends 2016

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About Banyan Tree Lijiang

Located in the heart of Southwestern China, Banyan Tree Lijiang is 15 minutes away from the UNESCO-designated World Heritage Site historical town of Dayan and 40 minutes from Lijiang Airport. Modelled after a traditional Chinese village, the resort offers a combination of 125 stunning villas and suites with breath-taking views of the legendary Jade Dragon Snow Mountain and architecture inspired by the local Naxi culture.

About Banyan Tree

Banyan Tree offers a Sanctuary for the Senses to rejuvenate the mind, body and soul in awe-inspiring locations around the globe. Rediscover the romance of travel as you journey to iconic destinations where authentic, memorable experiences await. www.banyantree.com

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