



International Special Interest Group Study Tour 2014
COOLER CHINA



Leader: Adam Nichols
Assistant Leader: Sarah Maude

Why?

Since the early GAISIG tours to China (the first being in 2000) to the “hot hits” of Beijing, Xian, Chengdu, Chongqing, Yangtze Gorges and Shanghai we have ventured deeper and further into China to extend our knowledge and understanding of this diverse and rapidly changing country. The North East is not only off the tourist trails, in terms of geographical knowledge (data, publications etc) it is little known, yet it has been and is in the process of again becoming a dynamic powerhouse of China’s growth and development. Among many other things of interest to Geographers, the North East offers:

- China’s “Detroit” building Volvos, VWs and London black cabs
- The most recently active volcanic region
- Borders with Russia and North Korea
- A great industrial *Re*-development challenge
- China’s lowest birth rate (6.68 / 1000 , half that of the UK)
- Film studios to rival Hollywood
- An aircraft industry about to take on Boeing and Airbus
- The fastest growing container port and popular coastal holiday resort
- China’s most productive oilfield
- Water resource management issues
- Some of the country’s worst pollution problems
- China’s **coolest** summer temperatures (adjusted to sea level!) Hence, “Cooler China”

Our Study Tour to this region is intended to meet the **objectives** shared by all our tours:

- To enable geographers to explore new locations, cultures and people that are relevant to their teaching in a safe and supportive environment and hence..
- To enable teachers to develop up to date resources that will enhance their geography teaching
- To increase the wealth of source material, teaching resources and ideas for pedagogy for the benefit of GA members as a whole and the wider geographical community
- To engage in experiential learning with like-minded geography colleagues, cross-phase and from different sectors of education.

- To broaden participants' global cultural awareness
- To share with and benefit from the expertise of members of the Tour, local guides and experts
- To provide invaluable professional development for Geography teachers to add to their CPD in a practical, enjoyable manner.
- To build and strengthen international relations between ourselves and Geography Educators in other countries.
- To gain insights into the education systems of other countries and the place of Geography and its pedagogies within those systems.
- To challenge stereotypes.
- To have a lot of fun while engaging in all of the above

Study tours are set up to stimulate and broaden the mind, to explore Geography way beyond the confines of the school curriculum through immersion in and exploration of difference. We do not aim to cocoon ourselves in our home comforts but to try and find out what others' are like and not complain when it isn't quite to our liking. All participants are expected to engage with events and environments, speakers and hosts, even if they can sometimes be a little tedious (especially if translations are required). Courtesy and punctuality is absolutely vital, especially on formal occasions. We will explain what this entails at the start of the tour. Participants should be attentive to guides, speakers and leaders. The great majority of those involved in planning, organising and delivering this study tour are giving their time and expertise voluntarily and deserve our respect and thanks. And on that subject, please be prepared to give a vote of thanks when asked.

Participants

Elizabeth	Bowskill	Langport, Somerset	
Imogen	Brewster	Maesteg, Bridgend	
Janice	Dickson	Edinburgh	Ian Dickson Travel Service
Sian	Eiles	London	
Louise	Gibbons	Pratts Bottom, Kent	
Nicola	Hawley	Rhos-on-sea, Colwyn Bay	
Brian	Kelleher	Augsburg, Germany	
Susan	Knight	Wells, Somerset	GA ISIG
Alick	Macleod	Caterham, Surrey	
Sarah	Maude	Little Crakehall, Bedale, N. Yorks	Assistant Leader
Joanne	Meredith	Alicante, Spain	
Simon	Newcomb	Colchester, Essex	
Christine Ruth	Newlands	Solihull, W. Mids.	
Thomas Adam	Nichols	Durham	GA ISIG, Leader
Ruth	Potts	Haslingden, Rossendale, Lancs.	
Catherine	Russell	Wheaton Aston, Stafford	
Jonathan	Taylor	Budapest, Hungary	
Heather	Trim	Farley Chamberlayne, Romsey, Hants.	
Suzanne Sue	Warn	Shawbury, Shrewsbury, Salop.	
Maureen	Weldon	Empingham, Rutland	
Dorothy	Whiteley	Renhold, Beds.	
Nola	Wilde	Bishopswood, Stafford	



North-Eastern China

Our route

GAISIG "COOLER CHINA" 2014 Provisional itinerary

	Travel & Accommodation	<i>Indicative programme</i>
Tues 29 July	Depart London Heathrow 10.20 Arrive Helsinki 15.15 Depart Helsinki 18.05	In flight
Wed 30 July	Arrive Beijing 06.55 Transfer to Ping An Fu Hotel Dongsishitao, Beijing	Imperial City / Tiananmen Sq.; DarshalanHutongs, possibly ShijiaHutong Museum. or for those who have seen the above: Area 789 artists quarter and Yonghegong Lama temple.
Thurs 31 July	Ping An Fu Hotel Dongsishitao, Beijing	Day excursion: Gt Wall (new section) and Yanqing UNESCO Geopark
Fri 1 Aug	Overnight train to Harbin T17 dep. 21.23	Institute of Geographical Sciences and Chinese National Geography offices; Meetings with: Prof. Liu Shenghe, expert in land use change and Beijing's growth plan Tom de Fonblanque, British Embassy, with responsibility for the North East. National Population and Family Planning Commission.
Sat 2 Aug	arr 08.26 Bremen Holiday Hotel, Harbin. Centrally located	Songhua and Nenjiang River basin management.(Professor Wan, the Dean of the School of Geog. Sciences, Harbin Normal Uni) Old Russian City guided tour Traditional Sauna/bath house/massage (Optional)
Sun 3 Aug	Bremen Holiday Hotel, Harbin	Daqing oilfield / Petroleum Institute Unit 731 Museum (not for the squeamish) / time to wander
Mon 4 Aug	Harbin to Changchun by rail G 354 dep. 08.49 arr. 09.51 Hotel Songyuan	Automotive industry (FAW) visit. Possibly other heavy industries Economic regeneration (mtg)- new industries
Tues 5 Aug	Evening flight to Changbaishan dep. 20.30 Hannashan Hot Spring Resort , Changbaishan	North East Normal University visit and presentation(s) A housing project Student guides
Wed 6 Aug	Hannashan Hot Spring Resort , Changbaishan	UNESCO volcanic landscape, full day excursion. Tourist honeypot. Management.
Thurs 7 Aug	Pm flight to Shenyang CZ6481 dep.14.50 arr. 15.50 Holiday Inn Express Shenyang Golden Corridor	Morning at ease. Eg. visit to town Japanese occupation museum 9-18
Fri 8 Aug	Holiday Inn Express Shenyang Golden Corridor	Manchu Imperial Palace. Possibly exploring foreign investment (British, esp.) in joint ventures
Sat 9 Aug	Shenyang to Dalian by road or rail	By train.

	t.b.c. Holiday Inn Express Dalian City Center	Dalian Port (in doubt)
Sun 10 Aug	Holiday Inn Express Dalian City Center	Tiger Beach area (coastal tourism). Lushun (Port Arthur area), historic city, nature reserve and forest park
Mon 11 Aug	Morning flight to give free afternoon in Beijing Ping An Fu Hotel Dongsishitao, Beijing	Travel Yangshuo market. Shopping for serious bargain-hunters. Beijing Duck Banquet last night celebration
Tues 12 Aug	Daytime flight Dep. Beijing 10.55 arrive Helsinki 14.25 Dep. Helsinki 16.00, arr. London Heathrow 17.10	

Please note the words “provisional” and “indicative” and be accommodating to changes that occur. It is *normal* for arrangements in China to be firmed up at the last minute and we do not have guarantees for several events/ meetings. Remember, we are ‘calling in’ a lot of favours from friends and geographical colleagues, some of whom we haven’t met. Some of our days are not at all certain even as we are about to depart.

MAKING SENSE OF WHAT WE FIND

We aim to travel as intelligent, curious, and partially informed (yet fully formed) Geographers. The purpose of the Briefings on such a wide range of topics is to give us all a good grounding in the Geography (in its broadest sense) of our destination. Most opportunities to gain information and understanding occur in meetings and guided visits and time is always limited. Asking questions *for* information *you already have* is extremely frustrating for the rest of the group, while *using it* as the basis for a more searching question is highly valuable. Read the briefings, please. We have a fantastic ‘library’, created by ourselves of which we can be proud.

Topic	Researcher
The automotive industry, with special ref to the NE	Alick Macleod
Managing freshwater resources, with special ref to the Songhua & Nenjiang basin	Joanne Meredith
China’s oil industry, with special ref to the NE fields	Brian Kelleher

China's coal industry, with special ref to the NE	Louise Gibbons
The changing nature of State Owned Enterprises	Kate Russell
The role of Joint Ventures in the economy	Kate Russell
China's changing movie industry	Liz Bowskill
Issues with China's food quality and standards	Nicola Hawley
Commercialisation in agriculture, rural settlement and quality of life (with ref to the NE where possible)	Maureen Weldon
Environmental issues, with particular ref to industrial pollution in the NE	Sian Eiles
An outline of the 20 th century Historical Geography of the North East	Susan Knight
The Economic Geography of the North East (broad bush)	Ruth Potts
Transport and communications developments in the N E	Nola Wilde
China's housing bubble: Boom and bust?	John Taylor
Port developments in Northern China	Imogen Brewster
China's raw materials problem and international trade	Simon Newcomb
A Geographer's guide to Heilongjiang Province inc. Harbin	Heather Trim
A Geographer's guide to Liaoning Province inc. Shenyang	Dorothy Whiteley
A Geographer's guide to Jilin Province inc. Changchun	Sue Warn
A Geographer's guide to Dalian	Ruth Newlands
Chinese statistics and sources: How reliable are they?	Sarah Maude
China's Administrative divisions	Sarah Maude
Historical time line for the N E	Sarah Maude
Ethnic Minorities with ref to the N E	Sarah Maude

Overseas Chinese and the diaspora	Sarah Maude
Population issues: One child policy update	Sarah Maude
Urbanisation	Sarah Maude
Rural – urban migration and migrant workers	Sarah Maude
Disparities in China	Sarah Maude
An outline of economic development since 'opening up'; 5 year plans and 3 strategies for developing the West, centre and N E	Sarah Maude
Revitalisation of the N E	Sarah Maude
The explosion in domestic tourism with ref to the N E inc.Changbaishan	Sarah Maude
The role of women in 21 st century China	Sarah Maude
Land Grabs	Sarah Maude

Thoughts on the conduct of a GA Study Tour

Based on a discussion paper by Chris Kington, Former President GA

Each year the GA's [International Working Group](#) organises an overseas Study Tour. The tour aims to introduce geographical educators to key aspects of the contemporary geography of the destination country. Photographs, resources and diaries from each tour are published on the GA website.

It is a holiday with a group of like-minded people with a common interest in the study of geography in its broadest sense. It is aimed supporting the professional development of practising teachers of geography, geography educators and active members of the GA in addition to having a great time.

Informed travel and visits which scratch a little deeper than a simple guided touristic holiday. Requires:

- some preparation (provision of reading lists, key articles etc beforehand);
- some space/time for group discussion and reflection during the visit;
- some form of record after the visit.

The group does not represent nor present itself as a delegation of the GA. However it does have a certain commitment to behaving as an informal grouping of GA members being mindful of the interests of our hosts and those we meet.

It is a voluntary grouping of geographers who have to make the most of local opportunities as they arise. The group does not always do activities together but each member is expected to follow and contribute to the programme and other collective activities.

Each member has a responsibility to ensure they contribute to the harmonious operation of the group and, if appropriate, suggest issues which need be raised. The leadership is entirely voluntary and is an integral part the group. The leader needs to be informed by and in touch with all the party to facilitate the programme and recreational activities.

The tours are organised under the auspices of the GA to benefit its members and the wider community of geography educators and in agreeing to participate members are also committing themselves to contribute to the generation of resources, articles, ideas for teaching, even, dare one say, A level examination questions.... The success of a tour may be judged by it's impact: What we now know and understand, and how do we share it to enhance teaching and learning? Participants should give some thought to

this during the tour. The possibilities are numerous. Participants have even been moved to express themselves in verse.

Sixteen months ago The GAISIG funded a visit to Conference by Wang Xiang Dong, an Associate Professor of Geography at Northeast Normal University, Changchun. In addition to conference he was hosted by ISIG members in London, Somerset, Durham and Cambridge. His visit was no accident, but our first step in devising the programme of this tour. His reflections on his experiences, synthesised by Chris Kington are poignant:

WHAT TO TAKE TO CHINA

Because we will be moving on frequently and you will have to carry our case(one, please) at times, don't take more than you personally can carry WITH EASE.

Passport, money, ticket .

Our accommodation will be mostly in Chinese-run hotels with all the usual services, including laundry facilities and bathroom where you can dry "smalls" (though with air conditioning things may take more than one night to dry).

There are likely to be restrictions on hand baggage on the plane, especially regarding liquids with anti-terrorist security levels being high now. We have never had any problems with security of cases but bring a lockable one. Squashy ones are sometimes an advantage for when we have limited stowage space. A "day bag"/ small rucksack will be useful. Some days we won't get back to the hotel between breakfast and after dinner.

Nowadays you can easily buy almost anything you may need in China...though getting to the right shop at the right time may be a problem.

Clothing

It tends to be hot and sticky in Beijing and other big cities but it will be more comfortable in the cooler north east. Natural fibres are more comfortable than synthetic, but take longer to dry. Be comfortable. The Chinese dress casually and so may we, but not scruffily or too revealingly, please.

We will probably have at least one formal "banquet" and numerous meetings when we need to dress respectably, our (male) hosts will wear shirt and tie, but we just need to

be respectably 'smart casual' (trousers rather than shorts). Jackets not required for men. You may dress up a bit for 'special' occasions if you wish. There may be mosquitos (non-malarial) in some areas so have something to cover up with in the evenings eg. a long sleeved shirt.

Shoes Take a comfortable pair of "walking" type sandals and / or trainers and one smarter pair for evening. Walking boots not required. Hotels provide slippers and tooth brushes of variable quality.

We hope to make use of spa / sauna facilities somewhere, and a holiday beach is in the programme, so bring a **swimming costume**.

Waterproof hat/ **umbrella or cheap plastic poncho** essential. Umbrellas are widely used to shade from the sun. You can buy such items there (Most are made in China anyway!). No need for a Goretex. Don't forget a **sun hat**.

Cameras Take enough SD card capacity for treble your usual per diem rate of travel photography! China is just so photogenic.

Electrics Voltage 220V AC 50Hz Usually 2 pin, but other types of sockets possible so take a multi-purpose adaptor. Computer connection (should you wish it) US RJ 11 Hotel rooms don't usually have hairdryers. You may wish to take a mini-travel kettle and tea/coffee for brewing up in your room.

Mobile phone It is worth checking with your service provider about ways to minimise charges from China. I once had a bill for £70 extra for a 3 week trip! iPad or similar useful but not essential. Hotels have 'business centres' but of variable functionality.

A note on connectivity: This can be very slow in hotels, sometimes only available in the lobby. Facebook, LinkedIn and other social media sites are not accessible and often Google too. Communicating constantly with home can be to the detriment of engagement with the tour and its participants, so if you are an instant communication junkie, please be ready to kick the habit and leave home behind. It's only for a fortnight!

Medical: sunscreen, moisturiser, insect repellent, remedy for colds/sore throats (sometimes brought on by fierce air con), upset tum stuff and rehydration powder (Dioralyte or the cheaper Boots version). Bad tums are not usually a problem. And your own prescription medication, of course.

Other useful bits...

- Money belt
- Passport, money, ticket
- Gifts you have acquired for 'thank you's
- Note pads for note taking at meetings and on tours.
- Tooth picks

- Loo paper (provided in hotels but not usually elsewhere)
- Wet wipes
- Supply of dried fruit / geobars and other treats for long journeys
- Pen knife (in suitcase, like scissors, when flying)
- A few plastic cups.
- Coffee is not always good. You might consider a pack or two of Nescafe 2 in1, or 3 in 1 if you have a sweet tooth.
- A bottle of your favourite duty free tippie for sharing in evening socialising (Adam likes Ballantines scotch, for instance). Hotels usually don't have bars for meeting in so we are likely to descend on someone's room!
- Washing kit (All hotels will supply towels, slippers and not so robust toothbrushes)
- Passport, money, ticket
- Spare batteries / chargers for electrical gear (camera, phone, tablet...
- Books to read on the plane and during the tour. But not many. You'll be in conversation most of the 'spare' time, promise. If not, a leader may well come and start one.
- Spirits/duty free (if you don't drink, please consider the weaknesses / needs of others. Someone else will buy it off you!)
- Passport, money, ticket
- sunglasses
- Binoculars for birding if interested (the leader is)
- Sweets for long journeys
- Travel wash
- Clock/alarm if not on your mobile.
- Passport, money, ticket
- Travel insurance

Money

You can buy RMB (Renminbi) at any foreign currency exchange here and it's worth exchanging some before you travel rather than queue up in a groggy state at Beijing airport for an ATM. Travellers cheques and Sterling cash can usually be exchanged at hotels. ATMs are widespread. Visa and Mastercards are widely accepted.

You won't require much cash other than for your own needs and souvenirs. Nearly all meals are paid for (see itinerary) beer is cheap, as are soft drinks and bottled water...except in hotel bars if there are any. There will be opportunities for shopping, but not the extent of disrupting the itinerary.

Tipping , if appropriate in restaurants (for eg) will not be your responsibility.

Taking photos

We hope everyone will contribute a few of their 'best' photos to be made available to teachers via the GA web site.

If you have a video camera, please bring it and use it but not to the detriment of your engagement with events. We would like to be able to put short clips onto the GA website after our return.

Some thoughts on taking photos

We are grateful to Mary Young, a past member of ISIG, for the information on which these notes are based.

Will your pictures represent an all-round view, or only the exceptional? Will they reinforce stereotypes? For example.....

Housing: Take pictures representing as many types as possible, modern and older. When taking pictures have in mind what your purpose is. It is possible to take both positive and negative photos of any place. There is nothing wrong with taking photos of poverty if your intention is to show poverty, but make sure that you also get shots that show wealth, or else you will be in danger of promoting or perpetuating one point of view.

People: Always try to obtain permission when taking pictures of people and ask their names so that these can be used in captions later. This is both respectful and can help to develop empathy from the viewer towards the person in the picture. As before, ensure you have pictures of all kinds of people; Think about people's dignity. Would you mind being pictured in a similar way to the way you are about to take the photo? This is particularly the case if you are going use the pictures for a publication.

Children: Not only are they usually enthusiastic about being photographed, they will often want to be photographed with you. The further we are away from the usual tourist haunts, the more this is so. Some may be fascinated by your blond or red hair, but not usually interested in old bald blokes.

On etiquette

Consider the others in the group when moving into position and lining up a shot. Your best position may spoil everyone else's, hence think before moving ahead of the group, especially where wildlife is concerned. You may be the only person to get the shot and the rest of the group will not like you for it! If access is restricted, take your shot quickly and *get out of the way!*

Adam Nichols

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