

Leg 3 Day 12 – Yongren to Hekou



Converting last night's hotel on wheels back to cars, our 5am alarm saw us heading for Yuming for breakfast. Fuelled & ready to go, the highway offered a quick passage to the “stone forest” area.. An impressive lunar landscape of volcanic rock eroded over millions of years to create bizarre standing stones peppered with the odd tree. Yunnan is the most varied province in China, with terrain ranging from tropical rainforests to snow-capped Tibetan peaks. It is also the 6th largest province and home to a third of all China's ethnic minorities & over half of all of China's plants and animal species. Like much of the expressway network in China the section we really needed was incomplete and soon disappeared into the now all too familiar pot-hole ridden dirt roads. Picking our way through villages we noticed the landscape changing with ever increasing unfamiliar plants like banana, mango, passion fruit and strange spruce

like trees. Not to be forgotten the humble sweetcorn was cultivated in every available spare patch of land (a common theme from our first day in China) Passing Mengzi and entering the mountains towards Vietnam we were astounded by the scenery. Fantastic views from 3500m but with no road barriers and a sheer drop of 1000m or more, hairpin bends were negotiated with caution. With the light fading and the border in sight we were too late to leave China today. One more night in China.

