

Blaze travels the final days of his China trip

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For the Desert Valley Times

China is often portrayed against the natural backdrop of majestic limestone peaks and beautiful landscapes. Fog or mist hover on the peaks, inviting the onlooker to imagine that heaven must be near. Amidst the hustle and bustle of modern China this sea of tranquility can be found along the Li River in Guilin. An understandably popular tourist spot, the journey to this tranquil site is a journey back in time.

Blaze found himself standing on a bridge overlooking the river as the population awoke and began the daily rituals of washing clothes, swimming, and fishing in the river which is life to them. Later it was time to board a small boat and travel down the Li River. Fishermen still use cormorants to help them catch fish. People live on the boats



Amanda LaTurner and Blaze looking at the Li River.

Submitted

they use for their livelihood. They are simple structures, which bob rhythmically in water. Located in the sub-tropics, Guilin enjoys mild winters and moderate summers, although the heat Blaze and his companions encountered

suggested an abnormal season.

The mountains and river present a surreal quality of wondrous beauty. All lines of vision encounter uneven peaks and ridges, sublime mountains, graceful waterfalls, mys-

terious caves, spectacular rock formations, and luscious green plains. No trip to China would be complete without taking in this unusual scenery. Blaze's favorite part was the many water buffalo that lined the river banks.

Hong Kong

Is there anyone who doesn't associate this city with intrigue, mystery, and money? Ending their journey in this enthralling Mecca, Blaze and the Bowler Bighorns spent a short time in Hong Kong before returning to Bunkerville.

It is hard to explain and understand exactly what Hong Kong's status is today. Although a part of China, the city has its own currency. Conspicuously absent on it is the face of Mao. Visas are required to journey between Hong Kong and mainland China, even for Chinese

MORE PHOTOS

See more photos of the trip on page 39.

citizens. For those on the mainland, the visas are not easy to acquire. More English is spoken here, but it's obvious that the bilingual designation isn't exactly accurate. Blaze and his friends found the city to be clean, confusing, and kind. Folks on the street and in the markets had the same hospitable manners as those in China proper. There was a sort of superior air which could be felt, as though this was the best of China.

Overwhelming might be the best description of this city which is constantly growing in spite of limited land mass. The 1997 agreement between China and Hong Kong gave them 50 years to resolve any differences. It will be fascinating to see what becomes of both by that time! With heavy hooves, Blaze and the Bighorns boarded the plane home, grateful to Joe Xu and China Plus for a wonderful trip.

Coming home with them was a new appreciation for all that America offers her citizens and a respect for the Chinese people and their aspirations for peace, friendship, and prosperity. Blaze learned that a million, or a billion, people can live in a country, but it is the one-on-one contact which leaves imprints on the heart. Peace might come if we could all learn that our world is populated by the family of humanity - and bighorn sheep!

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