

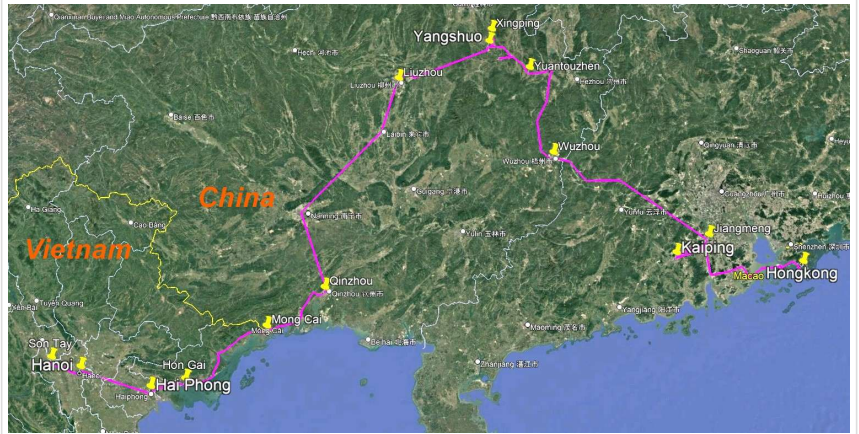
2025

Ipsach – Vietnam - China - Hongkong
26th October to 15th December

Backpacking Hanoi to Hongkong:
24 days, approx 1800km

Staying in Hongkong - 24 days
1 week with Patrick and Laetitia

Annexes: other Events 2025



Itinerary (Google Earth) : Start: Hanoi End in Hongkong

1. Background

Last time in Australia, 2024/25 during our visit to Fremantle, Laetitia expressed the wish to visit Momo's home-town (Hongkong) again since she had forgotten most of her children's souvenirs of her last visit in 2014! Peggy agreed that we could try to meet each other in Autumn 2025 even though our last visit was quite recent in 2023. In May we already booked our BA-flights to Hongkong for October!. Well...then Peggy had the idea for us to fly to Hanoi first and do some Backpacking to Hongkong. Although, due to my age, I felt very reluctant, we booked flights from Hongkong to Hanoi at End of August by Hongkong Express.

2. Plans and Strategy

As usual, we made just a rough plan to remain flexible and able to make last minute decisions if necessary or any other reasons, like new info, weather or health (see below). Our only fixed points this time were Hanoi and to revisit the area of Yangshuo/Xingping at the Lijiang River in Guilin Area. I was a bit nostalgic about, because we visited Guilin in 1979 on a package tour from Hongkong also taking us to Changsha. We had this early opportunity at the time because I was assigned to give a 8-weeks course to our T200 customer Cable & Wireless in Hongkong. We were the 4th small group only of that travel agency to take advantage of Deng Xiao Ping's 4 Modernisations annouced in late 1978!

3. Results

In the end we had a very satisfactory trip even so we had an initial handicap and we also chose to drop the excursions from Hanoi to the mountain areas due to inadequate weather conditions.

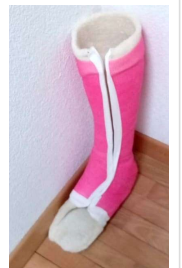
4. 'Last Minute' Problem with my left foot!

A few days before departure I suddenly contracted a very painful inflammation of my upper left heel. It was the spot where the Achilles Tendon is attached to the heel. Very, very touch-sensitive when pressing it and a virtual blockage of the foot, making walking impossible. I needed a walking stick to just hobble around. Everybody, including my GP, wanted me to cancel the trip for the benefit of physio-therapy or at least abandon the backpacking mode. On 24th October, 2 days before departure I managed to see a specialist. **I asked her to fix me to travel in any way possible!**

And she did it! Anti-inflammatory painkillers, a heel support sole of 5mm, a boot to immobilise my foot at night and a certificate for assistance (that helped to boost my spirits at the start)!

Certificate

This is to certify that Mr. Jeannerat Francis, 22.01.2945 requires assistance when traveling by air. In particular, the use of a wheelchair at the airport as well as during boarding and deboarding is necessary due to his/her medical condition.
We kindly ask the airline to provide the appropriate support and assistance.



Find Space in Backpack!

2 days later we left as planned! How it went in detail, is described in the diary!

Thanks to Ms Dr. Sabra Germann of Orthomed we lived a great story with a good end!



Massage/Bandage

On 24th October I got the go ahead!

- Wheelchairs in 4 Airports from Basel to Hanoi!
- Slow start in Hanoi with 3 km in 4h30, then daily increase of distance.
- Reasonable fitness by 2nd November in Son Tay
- 13 November the foot could be considered as healed since I managed to climb Mt Lao Zhai (Guilin Region/China) 338m / 1159 stone steps! **3 weeks!**



1st mountain walk: Mt Lao Zhai

5. Weather, Season

It seems that we still caught the end of a late Typhoon which made us drop the plans to visit the mountainous areas in the Hinterland of North-Vietnam. We visited Halong Bay instead and that was nice too!

6. Many Thanks

To **Andrew** to offer us to stay in his comfortable apartment at Fortress Hill in Hongkong where we felt like 'home'. It was not only very comfortable but the location was also very attractive and convenient in many ways:

- shops and restaurants nearby
 - easy access to Hkg Harbour shore promenade from Kennedy Town to Shau Kei Wan (1 km still missing)
 - transportation by tram, bus, ferry and MTR (we never used the underground)
 - Causeway Bay, Wanchai, Central at walking distance and starting point to many nice walks up the hills.
- Of course we also enjoyed Andrew's company and his lovely dog's, Noble, too!

To **Peggy**: As usually Peggy looked for my well being during the whole trip and also got transports, hotel rooms, foods and made sure that clothes were in good order. This time she even had to massage my left leg before bandaging my boot tight every night before going to bed for more than 3 weeks!

6. Epilog

We both considered that given the circumstances, my heel problems and my age limitation, the trip was a full success with regard to places seen, the exciting food and the weather with tolerable conditions most of the time.

But: Was this our last Backpacking-Trip? (a repeated question) Che serà serà

Diary

I have tried to reconstitute the story mostly from my poor memory, based on sparse notes, our pictures and using info from the Internet.

Part 1 - Hanoi and Son Tay

Part 2 - Haiphong, Halong Bay to Mong Cai (at China Border)

Part 3 - To Xing Ping along Li Jiang (Guilin Area)

Part 4 - Yangshuo along Li Jiang, then to Hongkong

Part 5 - Hongkong

Annexes - Other Trips 2025

- **1: Australia - Malaysia - Thailand:** January & February, see separate Trip Report
- **2: France Summer - 2 weeks Caddy 'Loire+', then 7 weeks Holiday in Ste Marie**
- **3: France Autumn - 5 days Caddy 'Rhone & Midi', then 4 weeks holiday in Ste Marie**

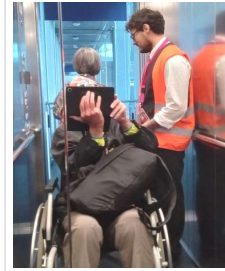
Part 1 - Hanoi and Son Tay

Remark: the clock of my Sony Camera in Vietnam (+5) was 1h ahead, still on Hongkong Time (+6)!

Sun 26.10 **Ipsach** 7.04 train/bus to **Basel Airport** dep. 11.20 - arr 12.00 London dep. 17.55 flight to **Hongkong**

Surprisingly good sleep with my 'boot' on. Got up at 4.30 to catch the train to Basel Airport at 7am (change in Biel and Basel SBB). Easy check-in and with the certificate for assistance I sat soon in a wheelchair being pushed in no time through security, immigration to the departure gate.....departure: on BA 11.20

Arr London Heathrow at 12.00. Assistance collected me at the plane. In the transit zone Peggy takes over. Very long wait for departure to HK 17.55. Apart from sharing 2 bitters with Peggy I have no fun and cannot actively pass time and I feel cold....and uncomfortable.



To gate (mirror in lift)



Long wait, consol'n w. Bitter

Assistance was present at the gate and made sure that I am boarding ok!

Mon. 27.10 arr **Hongkong** 14.00 Side trip (Bus) to **Causeway Bay** (Hongkong) Night at **Hongkong Airport**

We arrived at HK-Airport at 14.00 (45' early). Again Assistance waited, this time even with a speedy **electric Twin-Wheel Chair** also offering a seat to Peggy, brushing through Airport at 10kmph. It took us 2' at immigration for residents (with Peggy). At the customs we were left to ourselves and passed the exit on foot (me limping)!

Rocky waited already and we had a short while together before Peggy went to recharge our Octopus cards (prepaid Transportation Cards) before we boarded our slow E11A bus to Tin Hou Temple terminal near Andrew's home. (I had borrowed Rolf's card).

We had planned to drop some luggage at Andrew's place, items we did not need for backpacking. So we bought some take away rice boxes on the way to Andrew. Eating and repacking then at 10pm we took the E11A bus back to the airport.

At midnight we looked for the check-in gates to Hanoi. As we were allowed to, we already checked in for tomorrow. Peggy asked for assistance again and they organised a wheelchair service for 6am.

Now we had to look for somewhere to 'sleep'. Started rest at 0.30 am. Just seats so no proper sleeping, just dozing here and there.

Tue 28.10 **Hongkong** dep. 07.40 HK-Express direct flight 2h20 arr **Hanoi** 09.00 (time zone +5/ clock -1)

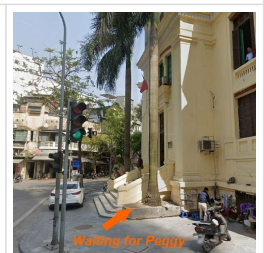
At 4.30 Peggy went to look for the 'Terminal 2' mentioned by Rocky and came back decided move there as she had discovered a hot water dispenser for soup noodles and coffee. (The terminal will officially open at March 2026).

At 6am we arrived at the crowded check-in area and started waiting for the wheel chair service...when it still did not arrive by 6.20 Peggy started to push the staff....they tried hard but we still had to wait and worry for a long time.... but then the wheel chair arrived and the lady did really push very fast. We just made it on time...the engines just started when we took our seats 4e/f and we started at 7.40 sharp on-time.

Smooth flight! We arrived at Hanoi at 9am (clock -1).

Assistance again and even got through immigration within 1' each (no visa required). Peggy then looked for a bus while I waited on a bench. She came back a few minutes later. A bit of limping to the bus which then started right away.

We got off the bus at Old Quarters at 10am and while I sat on a small wall (resting my foot) at Lo Su/HangTre intersection (pic from Street View), Peggy set off to look for a room. After 1h, I started wondering, then I became concerned, as I was sure that she did no more remember the way to get back! After 12am I became desperate and there was really nothing I could doand did not even dare to look for a WC.



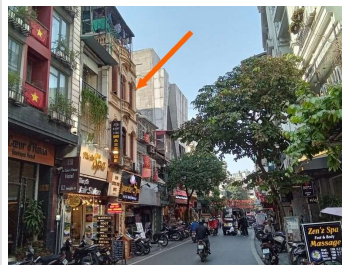
Waiting desperately

Suddenly a tricycle turned up and Peggy got off....no blaming, we were just relieved after the terrible tension. Apparently all hotels Peggy checked were fully booked and then she took a tricycle to come back and could no more remember the way but the tricycle driver also did not follow Peggy's instruction.

It was now 1pm and the tricycle driver told us to join him again to a low price hotel in the best position in the Old Quarters not far from Lake Kiem.

We checked-in before 2pm (huge bed but no window). Later the aircond leaked and we had to move 1 floor up (with window). After settling we went out for a lovely noodle soup and then crossed the road for a draft Hanoi beer. Back to the hotel for some rest. At 6pm we went out for a small (600m) and very slow limping turn to the small Lake Kiem with romantic lighting. Then slendared around the busy streets buying a baguette to have with a quiet beer in our room.

Good shower, Peggy massaging me and bandaging the boot tightly before bed...



Our Central Park Hotel



1st Viet Noodle Soup

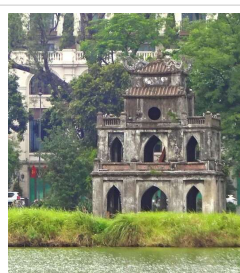
Wed 29.10 **Hanoi** **Sightseeing** (around Hoan Kiem Lake) **Hanoi** main walk 3km

After a long and good sleep we got up at 8.30 and Peggy went out to buy Yau Dza Guai (a bit overnight texture;-) for breakfast in the room. We then took our time to set up a tentative sightseeing loop around Lake Hoan Kiem, not to exceed 3km and to remain flexible regarding things to see and distance.

That's what we did: We started at 12.00 to walk around the lake clockwise along the very nice promenade, looking over to Turtle Tower Island. Then extending the loop to pass the Opera, the Woman Museum, the Hoar Lo Prison (during the Vietnam War the G. I.s called it Hilton). Beside the prison we made a pause for a noodle soup before visiting the St Joseph Cathedral.



Lake Hoan Kiem



Thap Rua / Turtle Tower



The Opera



The Prison



St. Joseph Cathedral

On the way back we passed 2 Chinese Temples Chua Ba Da and Dinh Nam Huong before returning to our Hotel via a detour ...

The tour (12.00 -16.30) took 4h30 for 3km (limping, standing, resting)!

At 17.30pm Peggy went out to look for dinner and came back with nems, brochettes, fried pigeons and 5 tins of cold beer!

Then went for a digestion stroll of about 1h, just enjoying the busy evening atmosphere of the Old Quarters!

Now, at 22.45 and finishing writing diary, we are going to bed after Peggy has massaged my leg and fixed my boot tightly.



Dinh Nam Huong



Picnic at Room

Thu 30.10 **Hanoi** **Sightseeing** (over Red River Railway Bridge) (rain patches) **Hanoi** main walk 9km

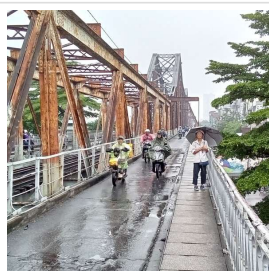
Breakfast at room with Yau Dza Guai (fresh). The overnight boot has helped me to recover the left foot and so we left at 11.30 for an even longer tour!

Peggy had 2 targets for today: walk on the 1.7 km railway bridge over the Red River to Gia Long Station and back! She wanted to inquire about a possible train trip to Yen Bai* in the mountains and witness some traditional culture!

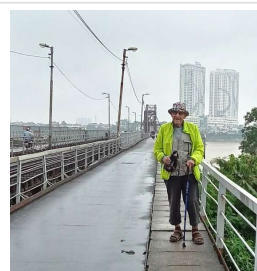
Well then! Walk through Old Quarters to Long Bien Station (1km) to the bridge where the walking lane beside the train track starts. The initial rain stopped soon and so we could enjoy the views over the river all the way. On the other side, at Gia Lam it was still another 2 km to the Station.



To Long Bien Station



Start walking on Bridge



Long way to go!



Big Red River



On the other side!

Here we did not follow the railway track and turned into town thus having the opportunity to enjoy the best noodle soup I ever had!
 This time we walked back to the bridge beside the railway track and then across. On the way to the hotel we bought wonderful sticky rice at the night market. Back to the hotel at 5pm.
 This time I went with to buy brochettes, beer and great saho fan (forgot to take picture unfortunately!).



Best Noodle Soup!



Near Station



Way back



The dessert...

WOW! Today we had done 9km between 11.30 and 17.00, we were 5h30 on the way (with few stops 1.5h) Bed at 9pm. Switch-off at 10pm. I was very tired but my foot was not worse in spite of 9km limping.
 PS we tried to book one more night... nothing free, so we still have tomorrow only!

*Regarding trains to Yen Bai: I only found the comment in my notes 'No Way'. I cannot recall the reason, but I suppose that it was the time schedule not fitting our way to travel. Ma foi! We will still see many nice and interesting things to come!

Fri 31.10.	Hanoi	Sightseeing (Ho Chi Ming Mausoleum) (rainy afternoon)	Hanoi	main walk 7km
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Peggy got out early to bring back Cheung Fan for breakfast with our usual coffee from Mercadona.
 As this was the last day we planned to make a rather big loop..... we'll see!
 First walking to Hanoi Railway Station before taking the direction towards the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum passing the Literature Temple and its park, the Lenin Statue the Flag Tower and the Citadel.



Old Quarters



Main Railway Line



Literature Temple



Lenin



Flag Tower



Citadel

After the Mausoleum we visited the 1-Pillar Pagoda and its Temple and on the way back we unintentionally dropped onto this Railtrack through a crowded track-side.....



Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum



1-Pillar Pagoda Tpl



1-Pillar Pagoda



Main Railway Track



Express Train passing

Eventually we got back to our hotel at 4pm and after an apéro we went out (200m) for a great noodle soup again!!
 Bed at 9pm. Switch off at 10pm. I was very tired but my foot was not worse in spite of 7km of still laborious limping.
 It rained especially in the afternoon and we got wet and a bit cold!

After yesterday's long tour I managed again to keep my standard!
 Today we had done 7km between 10.00 and 16.00, 6 hours on the way (discounting 2h for several stops)



Tidbits for Apéro



Dinner near Hotel

Sat 01.11.	Hanoi	Bus to Son Tay (soggy day)	Son Tai	2 Buses (35km): 2.5h
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Due to bad weather forecast (typhoons nearby) we finally dropped the idea of extended trips to the countryside. So we just visited Son Tai, a small town recommended by our friend Andrew, to stay 2 nights. Peggy went to the reception to get information regarding buses to get there and the boy printed out a schedule with 2 bus rides from the internet.

Breakfast in the room: Sticky Rice in banana leaf... then, at 10am took Bus 32 to My Dinh (1h) and at 11am Bus 157 (1.5h) to Son Tay (near Citadel Park) 1.5h. Then walked to find a Hotel in Son Tai Town 1h (2km). At 13.30 we checked into the modest Than Hoai Hotel (entrance through garage) for 2 nights. At 14.00 we went out to buy a snack 'n beer before, at 3pm, resting in the room.



Sticky Rice Breakfast



2nd Bus to Son Tai



Walk to Hotel

At 18.00 we got out for dinner...found an interesting stall in the market hall across the road! We served ourselves a huge dish with a big portion of white rice self-topped 'a gogo' from a variety of buffet plates etc... (no beer and forgot pictures..... hmm) For some reason a cook gave me a big crispy bun...which we took home for tomorrow's breakfast.



Had a good afternoon's rest today:-)

Sun 02.11. **Son Tay** **Sightseeing** (patches of rain) **Son Tay** main walk 10 km / 1 bus

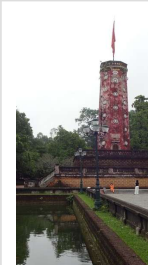
Coffee with bun/biscuit...on the way to the historical Citadel Park we had Cheung Fan, before visiting the interesting Park with several attractions. Then we continued to and along the Red River, passing under the big bridge on the way to Dong Sang...



Cheung Fan



Citadel Park



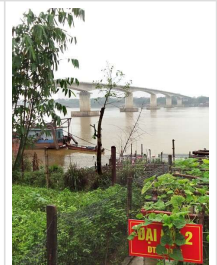
Citadel Tower



.....Palace....



.....Park Gate



Red River Bridge

.... a small historical town with a City Gate near the Chia Mia Pagoda/Temple. Then through old quarters (nice walk / thatched roofs) and back via Đền Phủ Thờ Temple wall pics outside) It was now 4pm and we had done 10km already!



Gate into Dong Sang



Chia Mia ...



Pagoda & Temple



Near Den Phu Tho T.



Market Take Away


For me no way to walk another 7km (3h) on main road. So we took the 118 bus (2*20k) to hotel (under heavy rain!). Then Peggy went to market for picnic in the room. Same stall as last night! We enjoyed it again and now with beer!

So far so good! Slow start but soon I was mobile enough, for us to enjoy sightseeing and Peggy did very well with food shopping for meals at hotel rooms when I was tired and then eating quietly, concentrating on enjoying the meals!

Part 2 - Haiphong, Halong Bay, to China Border

Mon 03.11.	Son Tay	Bus to Hanoi, Train to Haiphong (dribbling, then raining)	Haiphong	2 Buses: 35km Train:100km / 2.5h	
<p>We got up early and at 8.15 started walking 2km to the Son Tay bus terminal. Bus 157 to my Dinh left at 9.30 and arr on time for Bus 34 again via Opera arriving at Long Bien Railway Station at around 12.00. Bought Train tickets to Haiphong for train departing at 15.35. Plenty of time to look for lunch!</p>					
		Yummy Lunch	Dong Suan Market	Train to Haiphong	Train crossing Red River

So we walked 400m to the huge Dong Suan Market Hall and had yummy noodle soups nearby. We watched the train arriving at 15.25 and it left at 15.35 on time! Comfortable ride arriving at Haiphong at 18.20. (20' late!). It was already getting dark and I started to be stressed about finding a room but after looking at 2 hotels near the station, we settled for 2days at Hotel Do Dong. Not perfect but quite ok. Then Peggy went out for take away and then we enjoyed the baguette and the Cheung Fan and Saho Fan and the beer. We finished eating after 9pm. Later had coffee/tea & bikkies. Now 11pm, time for bed after massage & boot fixing beforehand.

Tue 04.11.	Haiphong	Sightseeing (fair)	Haiphong	main walk: 10km
				
Roof View Railway Station Mural / Opera Haiphong Cath. Çam River Bridge Çam Bridge GE Tam Bac Canal				

Peggy got us a rich baguette for breakfast in the room. At 11pm before starting our sightseeing tour we went to the roof to enjoy a 360° round view! Then started the tour first visiting the old Railway Station (1901), then passing-by the Opera House (1904-12) and the Haiphong Cathedral (Tòa Giám Mục). Next we continued to the Hoang Van Thu Bridge over the Cam River from where we saw the huge Binh Hanging Bridge in the distance. Then we followed the Tam Bac Street along the Canal.

						
G. Lê Chân A main Track Du Hang Temple Pho Chieu... Pagoda Chua Hang Kenh Temple						

In a small street, we had a rice dish** from a Chinese speaking Cantonese, telling Peggy a lot about living around here including some of their history..... Eventually we reached the square with the impressive General Lê Chân Statue. Next we visited the Du Hang Temple and a little further the impressive Pho Chieu Pagoda on the side of a small lake, Ho Ong Bao. By now we had done 7km and it was 16.30, time to return via the Chua Hang Kenh Temple. We reached the hotel after 18.00! We had again done 10km of a marvellous stroll through Vietnamese pulsating streets! Then Peggy bought beer and picnic again for room dinner...it was good but I forgot what it was.... Peggy did again her daily massage / bandaging my left leg (up to the knee) before bed at 9.30pm.

from GE



Wed 05.11.	Haiphong	Van to Hon Gai (Halong Bay) (mostly dry when walking.	Hon Gai	Van 50km /1.5h
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We got up at 6am. Soon Peggy brought a rich baguette up! We left at 7.45 to move on! Walked 4.5 km over a Rail/Road bridge over the Tam Bac Canal (pic) to the Thượng Lý Bus Terminal arr at 9.00. Looked for a bus to Halong Bay (our wish Hon Gai) it was 10am ... Bus at 2pm... We agreed to take that bus but did not buy ticket yet and walked out for a turn where a van driver asked us to go to Mong Cai at China Border... We asked him if he would drop us at Hon Gai, to which which he agreed....what time? In 10'..... (the dialogue went by his translation app). Very well WC then go!



The ride was very attractive and entertaining as it is with minivans. We even got off at a better place than I had planned. It was about 1pm. Looking for a room was rather quick...Peggy settled the deal at the 3rd Hotel for 2 nights. The Hung Vuong Hotel was a quite new, simple hotel in a small quiet side street and the room had a proper window....to the upper street behind the hotel. Then went out for a short turn and had a bowl of yummy soup noodles.....then trying to reach the seashore we bumped into a nice temple then crossed an attractive market. Enjoyed the 'Halong View' for a while then on the way back passing the market again



Yummy!



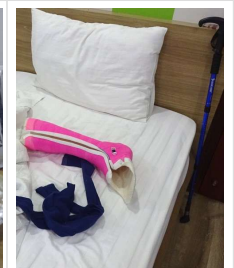
Market



View from Promenade



Brochettes, Rice



Waiting to mount!

..... Peggy could not refuse to buy brochettes for room dinner. A stop at Winmart for beers and then back home 16.30. Taking it easy we finished at 6pm

Then we rested.....TV, diary, mails,..until coffee and bedtime. (Peggy sound asleep at 19.30). I'll try to finish some messages and read the end of Gatsby.....

Thu 06.11. **Hon Gai** **Sightseeing** (afternoon sunny 24°) **Hon Gai** Main Walk: 9km

Just coffee with bikkies at 8amthen left at 8.45 to walk to the sea promenade in front of the market. We then slendered almost to the Halong bridge along the promenade for 3km, enjoying the unique hilly scenery before turning up to the Hill at 10.45 h. This was my first uphill walk, a bit laborious for my stiff foot but feasible! Great!



Hon Gai Promenade



End Promenade (Sun Wheel, Cable Car, Susp. Bridge)



Wheel&Cable Car

It took us a long time to find the way (passing through a hill-side café) at 11.20 to reach the road leading up to the Sun Wheel / and the Cable Car Station.



.... enjoying walking up!



Chùa Bảo Hải Linh Thông.....



... Temple



Temple Terrace

The main target which we reached at around 12.15 was the Chùa Bảo Hải Linh Thông Temple on the very top of the hill dominating Hon Gai from the inland side. We stayed on top for almost 1h looking at the 360 views and the various temple sites.



Bridge to Halong-Side



Memorial



Resting...



Hotel on left



Simple



few Dishes

We then walked back slightly different ways and at the bottom we returned directly to the hotel after buying a few beers at the Winmart at 2pm. Then went out for a bite and had fried rice with pork and vegetables near the hotel. At 17.00 we walked to the shore again to enjoy the evening scene with sunset at 18.00 and then passed the market to get goodies back to the room (baguette, brochettes as yesterday and 2 kinds of fish balls).



Bye Bye Hon Gai - next will be the Guilin Hills!

.....
Fri 07.11. Hon Gai Van to Mong Cai (overcast , rare patches of rain) Mong Cai Van: 140 km



Hong Cai



Cua Ong beside...



.....Bien Dong River and Cau Van Don Bridge



Phuong Dong B'ch



Fake Temple

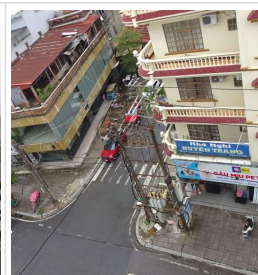
Got up at 7am, standard breakfast, packing. Left hotel at 9am and walked to bus stop and just when arriving, hopped on a minivan leaving at 9.30 with destination Mong Cai (190km). I was allowed to sit beside driver. Driving mostly on country roads, except for a 15km section of CT6 Express Way, as near as possible along the coast through some beach resorts and we enjoyed the whole ride.



Hong Van GrHotel/Casino



Ka Long Bridge & River



Hotel Room View



Vietnam Border Terminal



Walk around Mong Cai

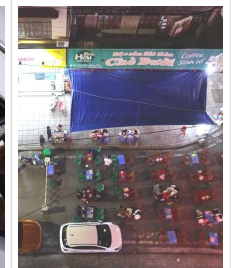
We were unloaded outside Mong Cai at 12.30 at a big bus terminal near the Hong Van Casino/Hotel and had a pleasant 1km walk over the Ca Long Bridge and soon, at 13.30, we found a good room on 6th floor at Minh Dang hotel. Peggy immediately started her laundry and then we went for a turn to the border terminal (we had lovely Pho /Soup on the way).

Then made another turn to get back to hotel buying Hanoi beer in Winmart.

After a rest we went out again for take-away food from a buffet.....



From Take Away Buffet



Late night view!

..... 2 fully loaded portions of everything, where 1 portion would have been enough for both of us! We started eating at 6pm ...in the end we could not finish all and left some for breakfast. At 8.30pm Peggy went down for a last little turn around the block to digest.

Tomorrow: Move to China

.....

Part 3 - To China to enjoy Guilin Area on Way to Hongkong

Note: GE maps in China are displaced approx-400m to the East and 150m to South against the satellite background. (it is even variable according to regions, as explained in Google). Street View is not available and a lot of useful information is no more up-to-date! At least my Sony Camera clock is set to China Time!

Sat 08.11.	Mong Cai	Cross Border to China (at Dongxing) (Hkg-Time again +6)	Qinzhou	Bus 100km /2h
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We got up at 6.30 and finished the leftovers from last night, then packing.



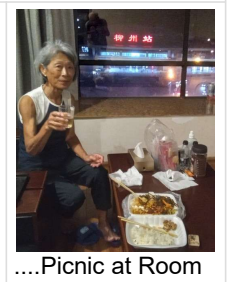
We left the hotel at 9.30 and got smoothly through Vietnam Customs by 10am, then crossing the river to the China Border and it was also easy to pass immigration into China (Peggy speaks the language). In Dongxing it was not easy to find the bus terminal but Peggy could ask people..... Our bus to Qinzhou left at 13.10. On the way we crossed the Fangcheng River and Fangcheng City (400'000 people & many hi-rises settlements).

<p>Hotel Lobby</p>	<p>We arrived at Qinzhou bus terminal near Jalan Jiang bridge - Then 2km walk to find a hotel at 16.30: Lanhai Yang Business Hotel, still far out of town.</p> <p>At 6pm we went out across the road to a buffet restaurant and had had various dishes. Pork with green beans etc. A good meal again! It rained strongly while we were eating but 30' later it had stopped.</p> <p>Now I am still writing diary at 20.00</p>	<p>Buffet Restaurant</p>
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Sun 09.11.	Qinzhou	Hi-Speed train to Liuzhou (via Nanning) (Dry, 28°)	Liuzhou	HSpTrain: 350km/2h15 Walk to Station: 8.5km
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We left the hotel at 9.30, and walked 8.5km to East Railway Station and arr 13.00. Tired! It was for me a very long walk, limping non-stop. We had literally crossed the whole city from southwest to north-east. 3.5 h for 8.5km, 2.5 km/h (with few short stops)
Peggy got 'no-seat'-tickets to Liuzhou (350km/365Y) at 15.30. On the train it was then not too difficult to get seats, as the Chinese still have some respect for the elderly! We arrived at Liuzhou 17.45. We found a nice room on 12th floor opposite the railway station at 18.30, probably the Jintai Hotel. We then went out to buy take-away from a buffet restaurant since we had a nice room with a comfortable sofa, a table and nice view. At the end we took it easy and now at 22.50 I stop writing. Re-boot and sleep!



Mon 10.11.	Liuzhou	Bus 1 to Yangshuo , bus 2 to Xingping (fair)	Xingping	Bus1:180km/3h, Bus 2:26km/50'
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Note: Peggy had Xingping fixed in mind for a walk along the Li-Jiang River to the 9-Horse Mountain. Got up at 6.30 with coffee and bikkies. We left the Hotel at 8.45 and went to Commercial Bank for cash: Visa debit. Reached bus terminal nearby at 9.30 and at 10.00 the Bus to Yangshuo started. We arrived at 13.15 and (after WC) hopped on the bus to Xingping starting at 13.30. Very efficient.
Arrived at Xingping 14.20. 5' later we walked through the old town to the ferry peer to find a room for 3 nights. It did not take long and Peggy had the choice of 2 modest hotels. We took the room at the Meisu Hotel (beside the old Li Jiang Hotel). Later we realised that ur room had a Chinese 'no-seat toilet' and complained....few minutes later they brought up a plastic standing seat - perfect!



Liuzhou Room View

Bus to Yangshuo

Cable Car Yangshuo

Bus on Yangshuo Bridge

Yangshuo Bridge 2007 to Pingle



Xingping Old Town



Our Hotel on the right

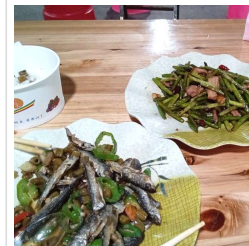


360° View from our Hotel Rooftop: Here to Li Jiang River

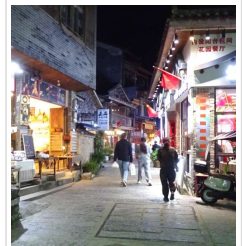
Another lady guest (on the hotel pic) living on 6th floor recommended that we visit the roof terrace which indeed has a splendid round view. Later that lady (from Foshan, speaking Cantonese) walked us to show a good place for dinner and in the end she takes us to the market where Peggy and I settle for a choice of nice 2 dishes: friture with bitter cucumber, leek with pork, rice and cold beer. We got back to the room at 18.50 (dark).



Dinner at the Market



Fish & Pork w. Veggies



Old Town by Night

(We had an earlier mail from Andrew who had visited Xingping some years ago, quote: 'there is a small basic hotel built at the foot of the 老寨山 (Lao Zhai Mt.) and you can climb up to the top!' Question: With my foot? Mhhh.....

Tue 11.11. **Xingping** Walk to **9-Horses Mountain - 九马画山** **Xingping** Main Walk 12km /



Start Walk to 9-Horses Mt.



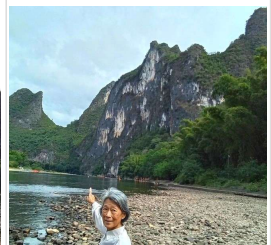
20-Yuan Picture Mt.



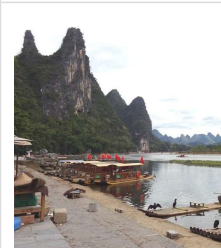
Along the



.... Li Jiang to....



... 9-Horses Mountain



Walking back.

Peggy got up 6.30 for Tai Chi and after a cup of tea she went out to buy Yau Dza Guay, a meet bun and some bread for the river walk. We left the hotel at 9.30 for a long walk along the Li Jiang to the 9 horses Mountain, a main attraction on Li Jiang Cruises. 6.5km to walk one-way. First we walked 3km along the road, then turned into a footpath following the river. We arrived at the 9-Horses Mountain Parking at 12.30 and sat down for a little lunch break (our bread). We walked back the same way but managed to avoid the road for 1km further. **Note:** I had made 80 photos of this walk.....



9-Horses Mountain (Ge)

Got back to the hotel around 15.00, then had an apéro with fried fish brochettes and later had noodles at the market.

My foot considered healed!

We had done 13km at normal walking speed today. 5h30 on the way with many stops to see things, of course. My foot did no longer limit my distance, from now on, I am limited mainly by my age condition. While I still felt a slight limping, it was no more perceptible for others (see video)! The foot was still a bit stiff and weak but I considered the healing process definitely on the good way after 3 weeks and was now prepared for new challenges.



Apéro & Fish Brochettes

Wed 12.11. **Xingping** Walk to **Yucun (Fishing Village)** **Xingping** Main walk: 11km+



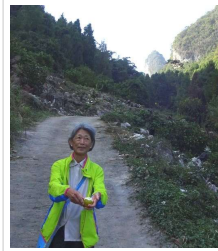
Early Morning on Rooftop



Coffee with View



Free Mandarins....



...walking...

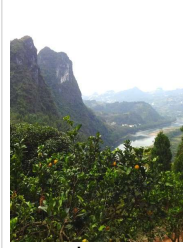


...over a ...



.....pass....

Got up at 6.30.....photos at sunrise on rooftop then breakfast.
 At 9am we started the walk over a pass to Yucun, a fishing village at 5km along the Li Jiang. The 1st km was flat then we walked into unknown as Google did no show this trail. The mountain path went over a pass between all these hills. It was sometimes very steep and a bit difficult for my stiff foot, but a very nice walk with view, nature and fruit (pomelo, oranges, mandarins à volonté).
 Finally we reached Yucun and got stunned by a big surprise....



...down....



(Pomelo)



...to Yucun.



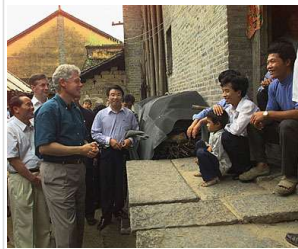
In this Room....



...a few Pictures...



...with Clinton



Google about Clinton's....



... Visit to Yucun & on a....



..Local's Phone!

Yucun is a tiny fishing village without any restaurants but in 1998 it became famous for US-President Clinton's accompanied visit (of course by boat on the Li Jian River)!
 In the middle of the tiny village there was a small crude hall which Peggy discovered, where a few framed pictures showing Clinton's visit were hanging on a wall! We had not known about that at all and it was by pure coincidence we found out! Later, at the village square, I was resting on a bench, when a local sat down beside me and showed me a picture of Clinton on his phone which he himself had taken during the visit (same blue shirt)!
 We started our return walk at 12.30 and were back at 15.00. Peggy helped me over the difficult spots downwards.

While I rested in the room Peggy made a turn in town to look for a good place to have dinner. She came back at 5pm and suggested a beef hotpot at the market at the same place we ate 2 days ago.
 It was a very good hotpot, a bit surprising that 'beef' basically meant a mix of any parts of beef, which made it more interesting. Got back to hotel at 19.30.



Yucun's Ferry Jetty



Self-picked!



Hot-Pot at Market

PS Ever since we arrived, the girlish small woman, also staying at the hotel, kept chatting us up. She was very kind but just too invasive. She claimed to be a Doctor from Foshan and spoke Cantonese and insisted to get in touch with Patrick regarding 'sustainable development' (potential business).



Map from Hotel Lobby in Yangshuo

A: Xingping - 兴坪

B: 9 Horses Mountain - 九马画山

C: Yucun Fishing Village - 渔村.... from Google quote: *One of the most breathtaking hikes you can take in Xingping is to Yucun (渔村).*

D: Lao Zhai Mountain - 老寨山

E: 20 Yuan Picture Mountain

Note: Tomorrow we will move to Yangshuo, but we cannot refuse the idea walking up to the **Lao Zhai Mountain** beforehand in the morning! This will be a **big challenge for me and my foot!**

Thu 13.11.	Xingping	Climb Lao Zhai Mountain 老寨山, Bus to Yangshuo (via Fuli) (nice weather)	Yangshuo	Main walk: Mountain 2 Buses: 17+8 km
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Got up at 7am. Slowly packing and getting ready to start our mountain walk to **Lao Zhai Mountain** towering in front of our hotel. There was no pondering! Let's Go!

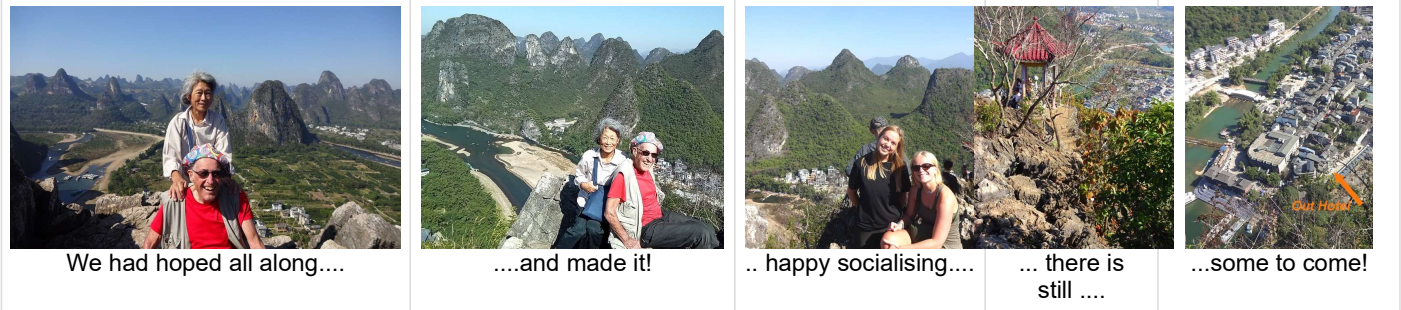
Overview of Lao Zhai Mountain

Laozhai Mountain is in Xingping Town of Guilin has an altitude of 338 meters, 1159 stone steps lead to the top of the mountain, where you can have a birds eye view of the whole scenery at the foot of mountain. It is also the best place for you to take panoramic photos of Lijiang River and Xingping Town. It is said that Laozhai Mountain until one Japanese person came here and climbed the mountain.

Warning: 1159 stone steps for 338m and only for fit people. 老寨山 (Laozhai Mt.)



Beautiful weather but I still had a bit of Muskelkater from yesterday! It was a good walk on a steep and rather difficult path with irregular stone steps making it a hard exercise. The last portion was just climbing over big boulders. But the weather was perfect with regard to temperature and the spectacular view the whole way. The view on top was a dream. There were quite many walkers, mostly much younger than us young! Many of them gave us big prise for being brave at our age! We had done it in 1h30!



We stayed at the top for over half an hour but there was still the descent to be thought of! That was really a challenge for me, since I have lost my sense of balance for a long time already, but now I also had to be careful not to make false steps with my foot still fragile! Peggy was very good and and we held each others' hands securing each other. Down took a bit longer than up, 1h45, but we got to the hotel at 1pm 'saint et sauff'!

Note: I had walked with my old open sandals, oh-oh!!!



Went to the hotel to pick up the backpacks and say bye-bye to people, then walk to the bus terminal. The bus to Yangshuo left at 2pm.....but as Peggy wanted to visit the ancient little town Fuli, we hopped off 30' later, 8km before Yangshuo. It was a pleasant walk through and around Fuli (I still managed!). Close to the river we caught up with a French group and had a few chats with them. While walking back to the main road we looked for a hotel but in the end decided to hop on a shuttle to Yangshuo as there would be more going on. For sure!

We were dropped-off after crossing the bridge and the tunnel at 17.15 and then walked towards the touristic West Street but half way we found a good hotel with the most comfortable bed of the trip so far.

At 7pm we went out for a bite and found a simple place offering excellent fried rice with your choice of goodies. For me: perfect today!

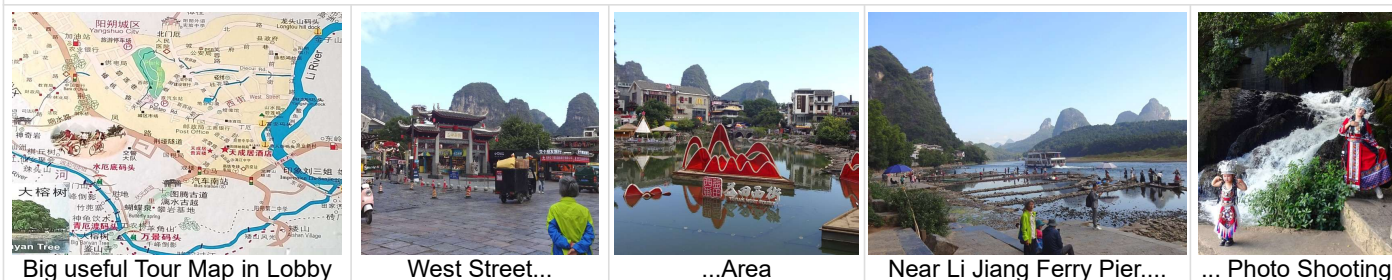


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Part 4 - Visit Yangshuo, then move to Hongkong

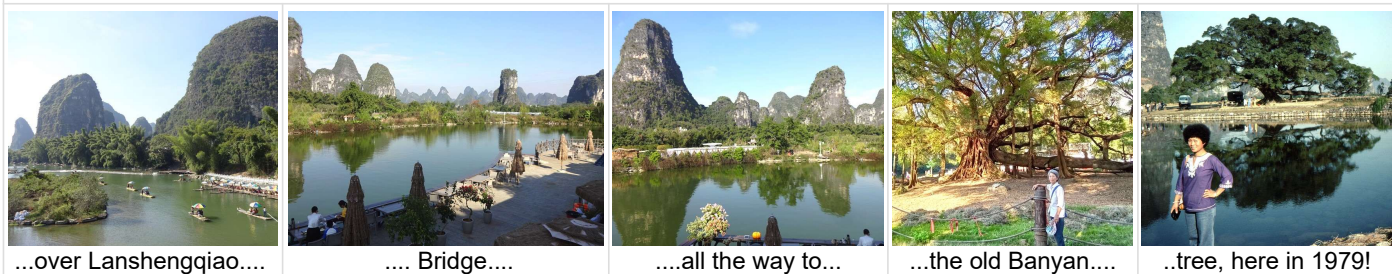
Fri 14.11.	Yangshuo	Walk to Lijiang Bridge and Banyan Tree (nice weather)	Yangshuo	Main Walk:17km
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We took it easy and Peggy went out to get something for breakfast (yau dza guai). We left after 9am and walked to the West Street, which is the touristic centre of Yangshuo. There we rejoined the Lijiang at the 'Ferry Port' and continue along the river eventually passing under the Li Jiang Bridge (we had seen it in 1979), Peggy having expressed the wish to walk along the Yulong side-river to visit the old Banyan Tree (we had seen in 1979).



I knew that this would be a very long turn but I went along with the plan. But first we settled for a noodle soup after the bridge, then continuing our long walk through the country side surrounded by dozens of hills passing by and giving us company. A highlight was the crossing of the Lanshengqiao Bridge (览胜桥). Basically we followed more or less the Yulong River until we reached the target with the Banyan Tree.

Finally at 15.30 we reached the Darongshu Scenic Area (大榕树景区) with the 1500 year old Banyan Tree which we had already visited in 1979. It was an extremely hard walk for me but I just refused to take a tuk-tuk for the last 5km through the tight hill-cordon back to the main square.....



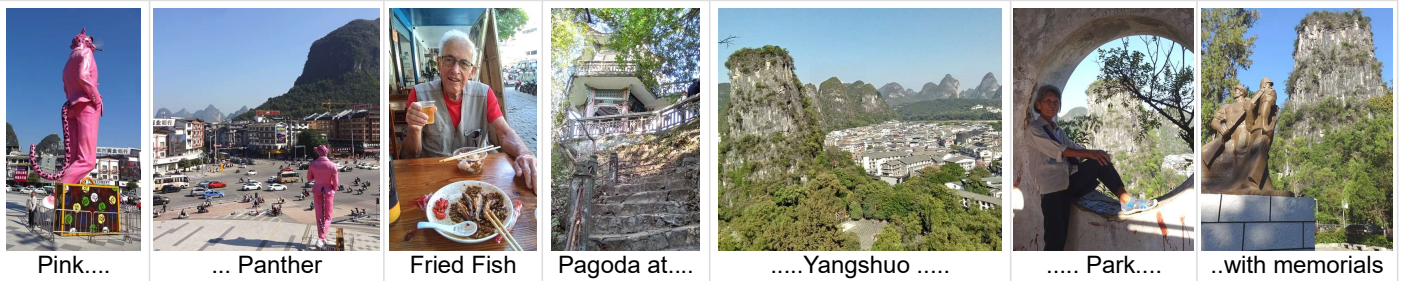
... and the hotel which we reached at 17.40. At a small supermarket we bought two 1l tins of beer (kinds of white and dark beers). Peggy then went to the close-by market for picnic and came back with roast duck, dumplings and a huge veggie-bun I was too tired to really enjoy the duck! In fact, I was even shivering. Lights off at 23.00!



NOTE: We had walked 17km today and that after walking to my limits for the last 4 days! Although I was dead tired my foot had not been hurting at any time! **Now I could consider with certainty that my Foot was cured!**

Sat 15.11.	Yangshuo	Visit West Street ⁺ (nice weather)	Yangshuo	Walk: 6km
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Got up at 7.30. Peggy went out for buns. We took it easy and left the hotel at 10am with the first aim to find the bus station for tomorrow's buses to either Pingle or Wuzhou. On the way we passed the Theatrical Stage Compound with the huge Pink Panther figure before heading for the North Station which we reached at 11.30. No buses to neither Pingle nor Wuzhou from this station....'just wait on the roadside and wait for bus passing to Pingle' they said.



Pink....

... Panther

Fried Fish

Pagoda at....

.....Yangshuo

..... Park....

..with memorials

So we decided to have a bite near West Street where we had seen a nice fried fish plate. It was now 12.45. We then continued to the West Street Area and approaching the Yangshuo Park we saw a Pagoda welcoming us to climb to the top of a small hill with a very nice view.

After a turn in the park, Peggy bought 1 Catty dried local noodles for taking home. Then we just walked to the Li Jiang again to say bye!

Now we started to return to the hotel. On the way we bought some traditional beer before going to the room for apéro at 16.45. Later we went to the market to buy dinner picnic...



1 kg Noodles



West Street again



Li Jiang bye



Dried Shrimps

....but then Peggy first bought 200g of tiny dried shrimps to take home for fried rice....later we got roast duck, veggie roll again, BBQed pork and a potato cake for me. Of course we also got a second litre can of traditional dark beer (discounted to 7Y)... Switch light off 22.30.



11 dark beer

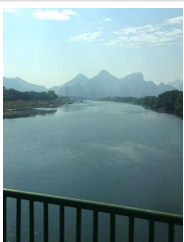
Note: Tomorrow we will start our last section leading us to Hongkong. We both had expressed the wish to go to Kaiping to see the weird tower-buildings characteristic for this region. We soon found out that there is no straight forward way to **Kaiping** and it took us 4 days for 700km (500km shortest by car) to get there that's what backpacking is about **enjoy!**

The Li Jiang (Li River)

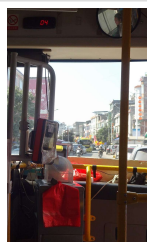
Leaving Yangshuo we will also leave the **Li Jiang**, which after flowing through Guilin City, the Guilin Hills and Yangshuo, will join 2 other rivers a few km before Pingle and continue as **Gui Jiang** to Wuzhou, where it joins the **Xi Jiang**, which in turn continues to Guangzhou, where together with a few other rivers forms the famous **Pearl River!** In the past it was possible to travel from Yangshuo to Guangzhou by ferry but the service was stopped years ago!

Sun 16.11 **Yangshuo** 2 Buses to **Pingle**, Bus to **Yuantouzhen** (nice weather) **Yuantouzhen** 3 Buses:120 km

We got up 7.30 and Peggy went out for Yau Dza Guai and a bun. After packing we moved to the nearest road-side bus stop to wait for a bus to Pingle, which took a while. Nice drive along Gongcheng River upwards (on S302) when, at Ertangzhen (43km), long before Pingle, they asked us to change bus at a small bus station.



Gongcheng Riv.



Bus to Pingle



Pingle Gui River



Pingle Town....



Walk over Gongcheng R.

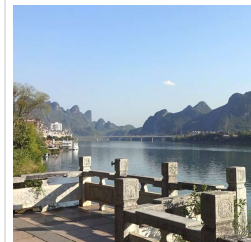


to Bus Terminal

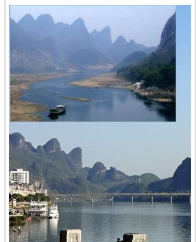


Back to Pingle

We had 2 options: wait for a bus to Wuzhou... no precise time and so we insisted to go on to Pingle and they put us on a shuttle free of charge and we arrived at Pingle (25km) at 12.05. Now we realised that we were far from the bus terminal we had in mind from 2007 and also shown in Google Maps and so we made a little sight seeing detour through town to the river bend. As we approached the bus terminal we realised that this new settlement of high rises beside was nearly dead. And so was the huge bus station with just one lady at the lonely ticket counter with neither passenger nor buses around. We had to return to town to the place we had arrived.



Pingle Gui River....



...2025 / 2007

I tend to agree with Peggy who claims that the big Bus Terminal and the new High Rise Settlement have been victims of the slump in tourism and business by the COVID pandemic and had not yet recovered.

The best we could do now at 16.00, seemed to take a small bus to a small town, Yuantouzhen, at 50km in direction of Wuzhou.
 We arrived at Yuantouzhen at 17.30. It was late by now and so we had to stay for the night. Peggy found a reasonable guest-house (天香国旅店) with a beer shop next-door and a good simple restaurant just across the street.



Yantouzhen



Choice.....



....eat....



...simple good

Mon 17.11. Yuantouzhen 2 Buses to **Wuzhou** via Zhongshan (overcast) Wuzhou 2 Buses: 200km

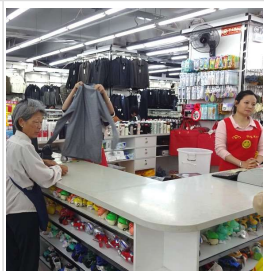
As usually Peggy went out to get some yau dza guai for breakfast with coffee. Then we went to the hotel roof-top to enjoy the view down into the streets and to the surrounding mountains.



Yantouzhen Hotel



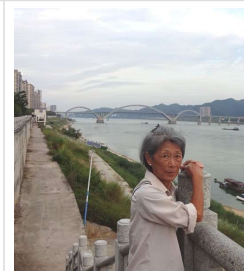
Zhongshan Bus Stop



Zhongshan Dept. Store



Bus to Wuzhou



Wuzhou Promenade



Gui Riv to Xi Riv.

Then walked to the bus stop along the main road. There was a bus waiting for the city of Zhongshan at 40km which was ok as it left us both options to Wuzhou or Hezhou open.

When we arrived at Zhongshan Peggy saw a bus to Wuzhou ready to go in a bit over 1h. We put the backpacks on our seats and went out for little turn in town and Peggy bought me a sweater in a department store. In the meantime they had replaced the bus by a van....and moved our backpacks. We still left on time before 12.00.

After a pleasant drive at first accompanied by Guilin Hills we joined a few portions of Motorways but it was still a nice and smooth drive. We arrived before 3pm at a bus terminal and there was still no bus service shown for Kaiping. At least there was a bus to Luoding going approx. in the right direction...step by step and see tomorrow.

Now we looked for a place to sleep near the bus station and Peggy found this little OYO hotel with a very small room but ok! As we were at short walking distance from a big river, we started walking in that direction.

We could not refuse a little beer on the way to the river before enjoying strolling 2.5km along the promenade of the big Xun Jiang as far as the Dragon Bridge, which we crossed half way for the view down stream.

At that time I did not realize that the next confluent river, 2km further on the left side, is the Gui River which, together with the bigger Xun Jiang, forms the Xi Jiang continuing to Guangzhou... otherwise we might have carried on to the red/blue hanging bridge....(and take shuttle 46 back). Instead we decided to walk back the inside-way through town. Almost back to the hotel we went to have lovely dinner just opposite of where we had the beer earlier on. One could select a choice of already dressed yummy looking dishes. I had pork ribs, bath choy, soup, Peggy had pork aubergines, egg minced pork, choux chinois. Rice a gogo. 12Y each. Of course we shared.



Rich & Yummy Buffet

Tue 18.11. **Wuzhou** 2 Buses to **Jiangmen** via **Luoding** (overcast, little rain) **Jiangmen** 2 Buses: 320km

After a hard-bed-sleep we got up at 6.30 to catch the 8.40 bus to Luoding (140km). Of course had breakfast as always with coffee (thanks to water boiler) and then Peggy did packing before starting.



A small hard Bed...



...Boiler, Plugs..



..Shower



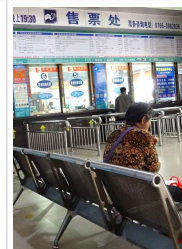
Front Seats!



Crossing Gui Jiang!



Crossing Xi Jiang



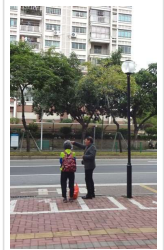
Luoding Bus Stn

The bus left at 9.00. We got the front seats behind the driver and so we could enjoy over 3h of slow drive on normal roads first along the Xi Jiang then through hilly landscapes and after 140km we ended up in Luoding at 12.30.

Now I expected to find out about how to continue to Kaiping but there was still no direct way. All roads lead to Guangzhou. In the end we chose the quick bus to Jiangmen (near Guangzhou) which was just about to leave at 13.05 and after a smooth 170km highway drive were dropped off at 15.40 in an industrial area, way out of town. Contrary to recommendations there was in no way a bus connection here to Kaiping. We were lost.....Then someone told Peggy that the city-bus 6 would take us to a bus stop for buses to Kaiping. Nice shuttle ride through all streets of Jiangmen for an hour -- I did not understand where we were meant go and expected to end up at a bus terminal which never turned up.



To Jiangmen



Peggy asks

Eventually at 5pm we got off in some town centre. No bus terminal, no-one knowing about bus to Kaiping...and I was shivering. We walked a bit around to see where we are and we only saw top range hotels. Then we noticed a street cabin with some youngsters on internet and asked one of them to find a reasonable hotel. He came up suggesting a reasonable hotel at 3km to be reached by bus 35 with 7 stops to go.... After 2 or 3 stops Peggy saw an 'our style guest-house ' and we hopped off!

It took a while but after a few attempts it worked out. It was 6pm. One problem: If Peggy paid the room with cash we would not have enough cash for dinner...

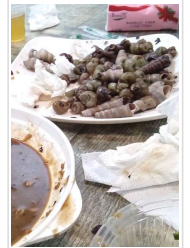
This time I insisted to pay with the Alipay App and without my knowledge the 2 ladies settled for a deal with a fictive bill which arranged for us to have the room with the receptionist returning some cash to Peggy!

Clever and now I could even afford a beer with dinner. I felt like eating lite and we settled for 2 dishes of noodles (fried / saho fan) and 1 litre tin of old craft beer at 6.90Y. Then suddenly Peggy saw this dish of snails and we couldn't resist. Yummy and now I had to go to get another tin of old craft.... We sat there from 7 till 8.30pm.

Back to room then shower etc then it was suddenly 23.00.



... yummy Noodles & Snails



.....all gone!

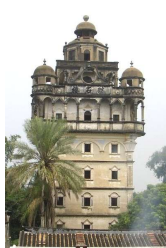
Wed 19.11.

Jiangmen

Bus to **Kaiping** (overcast, cold 12°, wind)
Visit Chikan Diaolous (walk): 1h30.

Kaiping

Bus to Kaiping: 75km
Shuttle to Chikan: 15*2 km



Diaolou - Wiki

Introduction - The Diaolous: We had known about strange tower buildings in the Kaiping area and wanted to see them on the way back to Guangzhou. These Diaolous (UNESCO) have been built in the 1920/30s by returning Chinese immigrants from USA. We just picked the area of Chikan at arrival in Kaiping seeing a shuttle about to leave.

Got up at 7am, then Bikkies and coffee for breakfast. We left at 9.30am after disposal of my foot plaster, hurra! We chose to walk and reached the Danzao Bus Station at 10.45. The bus to Kaiping was due at 12.00.

Easy drive, half on Motorway, and arrived at Kaiping Terminal at 13.15.



Bus to Kaiping

We picked shuttle 606 to Chikan at 13.35 and after a nice drive along the Tan Jiang we reached a big visitor parking at 14.30. Oh oh, a tourist trap: The Chikan Movie & TV City (pay entrance fee). **Not our taste!**



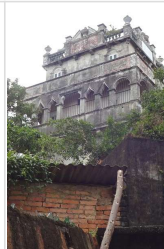
Chikan Parking, see



...Diaolou



Walk our Way...



...with...



....many....



.... Diaolous...



.....to ...



... see ...



...by ourselves



Castle beside River/Bus stop

As we had had noticed a few Diaolous earlier from the bus at walking distance, we decided just to make a turn around the area in spite of a strong cold wind and discovered a number of Diaolous within satisfying 1.5 hours!

Our walk ended beside the river at a bus stop near a strange old style castle. After a couple of minutes we then hopped on a just passing 606-shuttle taking us back to Kaiping Bus Terminal, arriving at 16.45.

Peggy then found a simple room near the bus station.

And now we realised that we had not eaten since this morning's bikkies and so we rushed immediately towards town for having simple dinner, since Peggy had only 52 yuan left after paying 40Y for the room (with hard bed:-)

It was enough for an excellent meal: A ceramic pot of rice, topped with slices of eel (17Y), Ngau Lam (beef belly) in Noodle Soup (8Y), a dish with 10 Wontons (5Y) and a bowl of boiled vegetables (0Y) and I almost forgot: 2x600ml Pearl River Beer (2*3.5Y). Total: 37Y

..... 15Y left for tomorrow, the last day in China!

Back to the hotel at 8pm. Now stop writing 22.30. To bed without my leg's plaster!



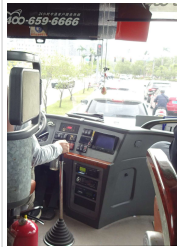
Hungry Dinner

Thu 20.11. **Kaiping** Bus to **Macao**, 2 Buses to **Hongkong** (overcast, cold) **Hongkong** 3 Buses: ≈ 200km

New Morning Exercise: **Cash Stretching at 7.30!** Peggy went out to buy breakfast with 15 Yuan (≈ 2E) in the pocket! She came back with a big portion of Saho Noodles in Sagex Box(6Y), 1 Yau Dza Bun (1Y) and for on the way, 2 Man Tau (1Y). We then had a lot of time and 7Y to spend: a packet of bikkies (6Y) and 2 sweets for 1Y in a small shop



Pic at Bus Stop



Bus to Zhuhai



Doumen Bridge



Gong Bei Port to....



...Macao



Portas do Cerco



Shuttle Stop

Then Peggy got bus tickets to Zhuhai 拱北口岸 (Gong Bei Port exit to Macao) and I paid with Alipay easily!!

The comfortable bus left at 11.20 and after a smooth and entertaining non-stop drive (150km) arrived at the Macau Entrance Port (Gong Bei) before 13.30.

The Formalities out of China and into Macao were passed without hiccups and then we had to walk out to the streets to get the local 101x shuttle to the Macao-exit to Hongkong, which we found in the narrow Ave. A. T. Barbosa.



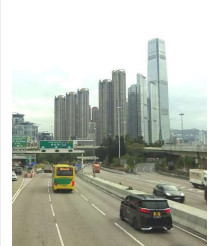
Zuhai Bridge....



After HK Immigration

The shuttle left at 14.15 and after passing the Macao-exit, we caught a bus for impressive crossing over the long (55km) Zhuhai Bridge to Hongkong's Immigration Platform near the Airport at 14.40! That was easy!

After smooth Hongkong immigration, we boarded a local bus (15.45) to the nearby Tungchung Cable Car Station to catch our favourite E11 Bus to the Tin Hau Temple Terminal near Fortress Hill on Hongkong side where we arrived at 17.30.



Kowloon to HK



Wanchai

On the short way to Andrew's apartment we went shopping for Peggy to prepare Dinner and arrived at 18.15. in Andrew's apartment on 26th floor!

After some primary actions for settling into our room, Peggy then prepared Dinner: First Dumplings, then bitter cucumber (Fu Gua) with BBQ-ed pork she had bought. Of course with Beer from Wellcome.

.....then Peggy performed a never ending series of chores....to settle properly (it is 10pm and still going on).

Epilogue: We both had arrived very tired and were looking forward for a few relaxing weeks in Hongkong without the pressure of daily searching for moving, eating and staying. But we were definitely happy, satisfied and proud to have done it again.....

and Our Way!

.....
Part 5 - Hongkong

My Intention was: To write a chronological **narrative**....I thought! Then I got carried away and **relived my notes!**

Thu 20.11. Reminder: We had arrived at Hongkong last evening from Kaiping in China by Bus - 200km
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....walking the short way to Andrew's apartment, we went shopping for Dinner and arrived at 18.15. in Andrew's apartment on 26th floor!
 After some primary actions for settling into our room, Peggy then prepared Dinner: First dumplings, then bitter cucumber (Fu Gua) with BBQ-ed pork she had bought. The Beer was from next-door Wellcome supermarket.
after dinner Peggy undertook a never ending series of chores....to settle properly (it is 10pm and still going on).

..... and now: Enjoy Hongkong as always!



Fri. 21.11.	Walk to Wanchai for various.... (made no pictures)	some sun 18-22°
-------------	---	-----------------

We left at 11am to walk along Harbour Promenade to Wanchai to the computer center, for Peggy to get an idea for a new smart phone and for us both to have a real **wonton soup** at our favourite place.
 Also walked back enjoying the nostalgic turn. Were back home at 4pm for apéro and wondered about not getting any sign from Andrew and so, at 18.30, we went to buy a rice box for dining at home and we enjoyed the meal.
 Now is 21.05 and still no news from Andrew....so we went to bed.....
 before falling asleep, **Andrew arrived** and some time later we were all 3 boozing his 2 lovely white wines!
 We went to bed late. **Good start**

Sat. 22.11.	Walk to Shau Kei Wan . Back by Tram	beautiful Autumn weather
-------------	--	--------------------------

Got up early at 7.30 while Andrew was already walking Noble. Then socialised for a while until Andrew left!

It was 10am, high time to move to my favourite breakfast at my favourite place: Yau dza guai, Fried soya noodles and Cheung Fan...yummy! For me a reason by itself to visit Hongkong!
 Then at 11.30 we walked along the shore to Shau Kei Wa (1 stretch of promenade is still under construction) via Sai Wan Ho. Clearest weather with view to Kowloon-side and we enjoyed the walk over the generous promenade!
 At 13.30 we took the tram back to Fortress Hill.
 In the evening we had a rice box again: 2 tasty Tau Fu (Tofu) dishes and rice.

Yummy Breakfast
View to Ocean Term.

Sun. 23.11.	Big walking turn: Star Ferry, Tsimshatsui, East Kowloon, Wanchai/Lockhart Market	Sunny & hazy
-------------	---	--------------

We got up at 7.30 and after Andrew came back with Noble we chatted until 10am (also with Noble:-).

Then we walked along the harbour shore to Central Pier to take the Star Ferry to Tsim Sha Tsui at 12.30.
 We continued on the promenade to East Kowloon and the crossed Nathan Road to pass in front of the Peninsula Hotel to take the Wanchai Ferry back to Wanchai where we had a meal at the nostalgic Lockhart Market at 14.30.









Wanchai Convention Centre
Central Pier
Peninsula
Wanchai Ferry

The Singapore-Style Noodles (a HK-speciality) and Saho Noodles with beef were a real treat!
 We got back home via Victoria Park some time after 4pm.
 The rest of the day we were hanging around at home. Andrew had gone back to Macao, where he works.

Mon. 24.11	To Sham Shui Po to buy Glasses, meet Rocky to buy Phone for Peggy and have Dinner!	nice, 27°
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Note: Evelyne had found a due dentist bill in my letter box. She scanned it and sent the copy by mail. I opened the mail on my tab, then took a picture of the QR-code with my Sony camera and from its monitor I scanned the QR-code with my UBS-App on my Tab.
It worked!
 We left home around 10.30 by 112 bus to Mongkok and walked around ending up at Sham Shui Po near the optician. But first we looked for lunch and at Sham Shui Po Market we really enjoyed a huge portion of Yuk Si Chow Mein (Pork fried Noodles).

QR-Bill from Dentist
Yuk Si Chow Mein
Sham Shui Po Market

Got to optician at 14.30 and stayed until 16.00, when Rocky turned up to take us to Apliu Street to help Peggy buy a new phone. In the end she chose a Motorola 5G for 950 HK\$.
The shop keeper set up the basics ... fine. Unfortunately he did not switch the Android Menu back to English when he finished, which later at home caused me silly problems to set up the rest of the apps and handling functions.

We then walked to a restaurant, specializing on roast pork (once in a while they carried a whole roasted pig on the skewer through the restaurant).

We had a pot of roast pork with fried Tau Fu and Bak Choi, a dish of Choi Sam and a portion of Singapore style noodles with plenty of beer. I filled my stomach as Peggy and Rocky were so busy talking that they hardly ate.
Then 112 bus (sitting in front on top deck of course) back home through nightly lights.

Bed time 10pm

....
Tue. 25.11 Setting-up Peggy's new **Motorola Phone** / Walk long stairs to **Braemer Hill Road** (no pics) nice, 25°

Got up at 7.30 and after coffee I tried to set up Google and WhatsApp but as the Menu was set to Chinese I tried first to change to English. Unfortunately the Chinese menu structure did not correspond with the English one on my Samsung and I did not manage. So we called Rocky and they 2 tried for over an hour in a futile exercise which frustrated all three of us. In the end we managed (there were a few strange settings...)

Later I installed WhatsApp but it did not want to function properly...I suspect that I missed out some recovery functions. Trying this and that I managed to get back Peggy's most important WhatsApp partners.

Meanwhile at 11.30 we walked to and through the North Point Market for lunch. From many choices we went for a yummy rice box to take home.. It was about 1pm. At 14.30 we went for a walk up the long stairs to Braemer Hill Road and then down straight to King's Road and strolling back home. At 6pm Peggy started cooking: dumplings, fish cake and long beans. Finished with bikkies and coffee at 8pm then TV/diary (on Notepad with 2 clumsy shaking fingers)

Bed at 10pm.

....
Wed. 26.11 **Yam Cha with Stemson** in Tsuen Wan / Evening: **Fire Catastrophy in Tai Po on TV** nice with 24°

Got up 7.30. I left alone at 9.30 to buy a Yau Dza Guai at my preferred place. Taking it home I did then not really find it better than elsewhere.... Ambiance?

We left at 10.30 am to take 930x bus (near Central Library) via the West Harbour Tunnel to Tsuen Wan and arrived at 12.15 (traffic jam) at Riviera Gardens where Evi lived in 2003.

Then we enjoyed walking along the whole Tsuen Wan Promenade until we turned to the Niña Towers to start the elevated walkway all the way to the MTR Tsuen Wan Station to meet Stemson at 2pm for Yam Cha. I enjoyed the Dim Sum and especially the chicken feet (no pic).



West Harbour Tun.



Tsuen Wan Bay Promenade



Elevated Walk Ways



Egg Tart Dessert

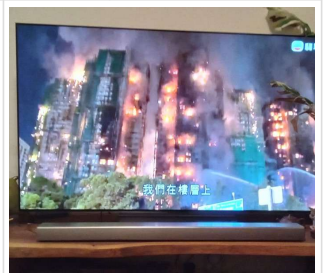
Then Stemson took us back on the walkway to a café in Niña Tower Mall to have a coffee and egg tarts. After 5pm we took the 930x back home. Nice sceneries all the way with twilight turning to dark at Wanchai and lights reflecting in the bus windows.



Bus at Wanchai

Getting home, Peggy turned the TV on and got right into the reports on the raging fire in Tai Po. The Dominating subject for the next 24h and was reported World-wide!

The fire killed 148 people!



Live on TV - Tai Po Fire

....
Thu. 27.11 Hanging around in **Tsim Sha Tsui** until joining **Peggy's Class Meeting** at 6pm Fair at 23°

Easy morning at home till 11am. Then walked once more along the harbour to Star Ferry to Tsim Sha Tsui and walked all the way through the old Ocean Terminal shopping mall. At the end we went to the roof-top with 360° view. Then all along Canton road to reach Temple Street. Eventually we had a dish of Chow Mein and a Yau Dza Guai.



View to old Ocean Terminal



View on Roof of....



...old Ocean Terminal

Then we went on to Women and Flower Streets but in the end we were still too early for the class meeting...so we sat down at a small football ground in Mongkok for 1h just opposite the restaurant....



Waiting...



Initial lovely Soup....



...and Goose



....all there



...already finishing!

When we arrived at the restaurant the 'Class Leader' was already there and then the class mates kept dropping in until Toni, last, arrived at 18.30 just on time. We were 14 and a bit crammed around the round table for 12. We had 9 courses coming in quick succession: light soup, roast goose, noodles, sea cucumber, abalone, crunchy crab balls, prawns, fish, mushroomand at the end huge buns with lotus cream. Some took out their Doggie bag;-) **At 20.30 (2h) it all was over...bye-bye and back home at 10pm with bus 112 . It was fun I ate - they talked!**

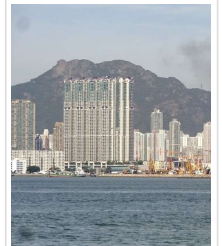
Fri. 28.11 Easy Day just walking to the **Victoria Harbour 'Tower' and North Point Ferry** Nice 23°

No plans for today! Had breakfast and lunch (finish last night's buns) at home. At 11.00 we moved out and walked to the Victoria Harbour 'Tower' and then followed the harbout promenade to the North Point Ferry. Again most beautiful view in any direction.

On the way back Peggy passed Wellcome to get Udong noodles and veggies for dinner with the 'take-aways' from last night's banquet. We enjoyed the simple quiet meal at home.



Victoria Harbour Tower



Lion Rock

Sat. 29.11 **Harbour walk+ to Sai Wan / Evening: Andrew's Home-Party** fair 23°

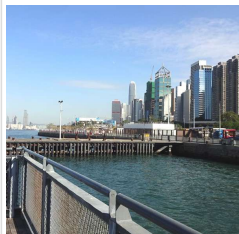
Peggy wished to walk to Whitty Street (Sai Wan) to see if we can meet her 'Piano Cousin'. We left at 10am to walk via the shore to the Wanchai Market to have our Wonton Noodles. Then back to the shore passing Central Pier and Macao Ferry Station to Sai Wan enjoying the view again from other angles. We found the cousin's apartment at Whitty Street easily but she was absent. So Peggy left a note. It was 3pm. Time for a beer from 7/11 to drink while resting at the shore enjoying the view.



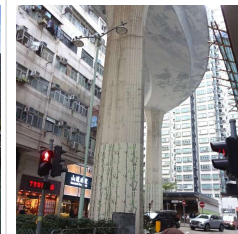
Wonton Soup



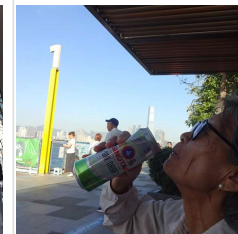
Macao Ferry



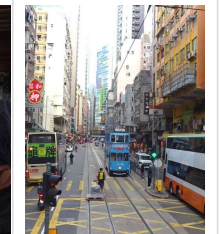
Sai Wan Water Front



Flyover to Pok Fu Lam Rd



Sai Wan Water Front



Tram at Sai Wan



Party Tram

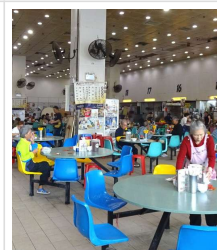
Then took the Ting Ting at 4pm and enjoyed the slow ride on top deck all the way home to Fortress Hill, where we arrived at 5pm. Just on time to be ready to join Andrew's home-party, starting at 6pm with Jenny, Zoe, Cathy, Rita, Winnie & Ken. Conversation was mostly in Chinese but they also spoke English with me. Food and even more drinks until the party finally ended at 1am, when the last guest, Rita, left. I had spent a very enjoyable evening (no pics unfortunately)! Many thanks to Andrew!

Sun. 30.11 **Bus to Sham Shui Po to get our Glasses and pass Tonkin Street** Light overcast 23°

After some socialising with Andrew we left at 10am to take bus 112 (leaving just opposite side on Kings Road) to Sham Shui Po (arr 11am) to collect our glasses. My glasses were ready but not Peggy's So at 11.40 we went for yummy Yuk Si Chow Mein (pork fried noodles) at the nearby Sham Shui Po Market again. Peggy then also bought a box of Char Siu (BBQ-Pork) for dinner at home.



Sham Shui Po



..... Market....



...Yuk Si Chow Mein



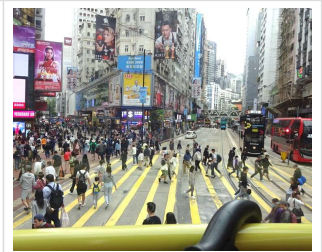
New Hi Rise....



....old Tonkin Mansion

Then we walked to Tonkin Street to look at the new high-rise having replaced Peggy's family's home of the 70s to 90s. Impressive! We then walked a bit around to find the 112 bus stop and hopped on at 13.20.

We reached North Point Market at 14.15 and after shopping some veggies for dinner with the Char Siu and Udong noodles we got back home at around 3pm. Peggy turned out a lovely dinner as usual!



Yee Wu Street Causeway B

Mon. 01.12

Day-Trip to **Shenzhen (China)** with Rocky and Stemson

Overcast, little sun 26°

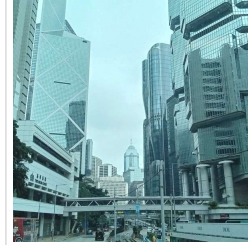
Objective: Meet Rocky and Stemson in Tuen Moon at 10am to visit Shenzhen.

Peggy got up at 6.30 and we left at 8 to make sure....but the first bus 962x (at Central Library) only leaves at 9.15. and it did.

It passed the West Harbour Tunnel at 9.40 and then non-stop to Tuen Mun arriving 10.05! Rocky and Stemson where there already.

Walking 15' to the Border Bus and then, after crossing to China over Shenzhen Bay Bridge, we reached the Border Terminal at 11.20.

Quick and easy immigration, still no Visa required!



Passing Hk Central



At China Immigration



Shenzhen Bay Park



Seg Plaza, Huaqiang Bei

Then we took the MTR to Shenzhen Bay Park (arr 12.00) as Rocky had to do some admin with a hospital nearby while we, with Stemson) strolled on the nice Promenade with view over Deep Bay until about 13.00.

Then took MTR to the Shenzhen (electronic) City Centre. Time for a light meal in the basement of a mall, followed by a coffee americano before diving into the huge electronics shopping area, an electronics world with endless corridors of shops, selling everything concerning IT. (Tall Building: Seg Plaza, 292m)



1 of many



.....Electronics Centers



Excellent Jiu Chou



....Meal and happy Feelings



Meilin Food Centre

At 17.15 we walked to a 'homely' Jiu Chau restaurant to have big meal (details see pics) with plenty of beer. In the end I was full to burst and we left around 19.45 for Rocky to buy some food home in a huge sophisticated supermarket, the Meilin Food Centre (on pic just one stall).

Time to go home! At 20.25: take MTR to border. After border at 21.40: Bus to Tuen Mun, at 22.05: Bus 962x to Causeway Bay, at 22.55: Walk home, arr home 23.30.

It was a good day! I could relax in the care of Rocky!

But it was a long day for elderly people!

(8.30 - 23.30 = 15 hours)



View from Lok Ma Chau over China Border to Shenzhen -1979!

Historical

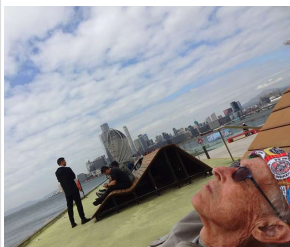
I could not refuse to add my old photo from my first visit to Lok Ma Chau in 1971! There was no Shenzhen and the name only popped-up when Deng Xiao Ping in 1978 declared his 4 modernisations, with Shenzhen being named 1 of 4 special development zones, enabling foreign investments and also tourism with foreigners!

Tue. 02.12

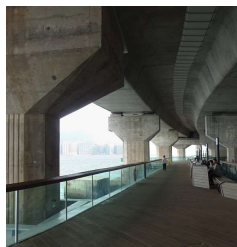
No Program today, just a bit walking and me looking at some neighbourhood.

Fair at 25°

Resting/hanging around until we left at 11am for a turn to Causeway Bay Park then along the shore promenade to North Point Market to buy Ngau Lei So and some other bun for lunch at home.



Testing Sun Bench



To North Point Market

Hanging around again but at 15.00 I left for a small turn via Fortress Hill Road and Tin Hau Temple Road to find out, which of the buildings seen from behind is the one we stay at.....then I returned home at 16.30.



Andrew's Apartm't

Now was time to go out to get a rice box for dinner. Tonight: snails(over 30 small snails ..good and chewy), beans with minced pork and a few pieces of Char Siu (still very good) from Sunday.

Wed.03.12

Peggy's appointment at Dentist, otherwise no program

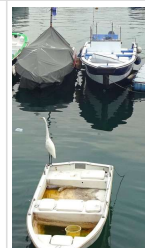
Fair 23°

Peggy had an appointment at 10am at the dentist for checking/cleaning (paid by HK-Gvt) We left at 11.00 to have Chow Mein and glutinous rice with peas purée and then walked along the shore and via Victoria Park across to Windsor Shopping Center to check if the Dim Sum restaurant we knew was still ok, for just in case.....

We then crossed the road to the big Wellcome Supermarket for a little shopping, before getting back home at 15.15.

Feeling bored at 4pm I went out again for a short 1h turn....

Peggy managed to turn out a fine dinner at 6pm. Fine noodles with rests from dinner in Shenzhen and the last pieces of Char Siu from Sham Shui Po.



Egret (Reiher)



View Kings Rd

Thu.04.12

Peggy's Birthday and last day before Patrick's and Laetitia's Arrivals

Overcast & windy, then sun

Morning-walk at 10am to Tin Hau Temple then to North Point Market for Chow Mein and Ngau Lei So. We then continued along the harbour towards Siu Sai Wan to take ferry to Congcong's graveyard, but it was very hazy and windy so we turned back to King's Road at Health Street and walked back home, buying beer and dried fish skin on way for apéro.

At 2.15pm I decided to make an other exploration turn. I walked up straight to Tin Hau Temple Road and followed it to the very end where Google shows a path over stairs (Pak Fuk Road Stairways) down to Kings Road.

But there was just a dead end and no sign of such path. The stairs 50m before were not shown to lead anywhere. I still tried and the GPS dot went into the empty but after a while it converged with the Pak Fuk Stairs and all was fine. Eventually I reached King's Road at the Health Street intersection (2nd time today).

Now walking home quickly, it took me 30', arriving at 4pm hopefully on time!



Dead End...



..perhaps...



...promising..



....looks ok...

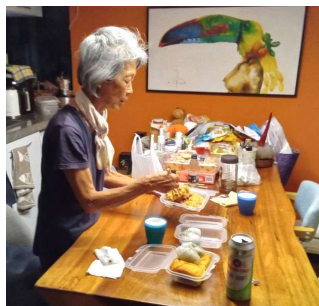


...winning!

4.30pm: Evelyne called for Peggy's Birthday!

6pm: Peggy decided to go to North Point Market again to buy take away dinner preferably Dim Sums or else a Rice Box again.

Well then... it was Peggy's Birthday!



6.30pm: It was Dim Sum and Rice!

*Happy Birthday
dear Peggy!*

Fri. 05.12

Padi & Laeti arrived in the Morning! A late Birthday Present for Peggy!

Fair 23°

Got up at 5.15 to catch E11 bus at 6.20 to the airport.

The flight from Perth was scheduled to arrive at 8.05. Long wait until finally, at 8.45

..... we could hug each other **WELCOME!**

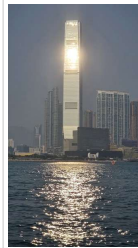
We took the slow E11 bus on upper deck and after a long spectacular sightseeing drive to Tin Hau Temple Terminal we walked 10' to their Hotel iClub at Fortress Hill at around 11pm (Room to be ready after 2pm only).



Laeti discovers Yau Dza Guai



1st Harbour Front Walk



Kowloon



1st Tram Ride Yee Wu S.



Rice Boxes for tired People

Time to go for noodles etc. at the North Point Market and then go for a first experience walk along the waterfront. First walk to Central Piers and as they wished, we continued all the way to Whitty Street to take the Ting Ting back on the slow but very enjoyable ride on top deck. Then they went to their hotel to settle, while Peggy and I went for rice boxes for all 4 to have dinner at Andrew's place, since they were very tired by now! Later I took them down to their hotel at only 10' walking distance.

Sat. 06.12 Meeting 103 years old Auntie Ah Yi and other things until ending up at Lockhart Market

Fair 23°

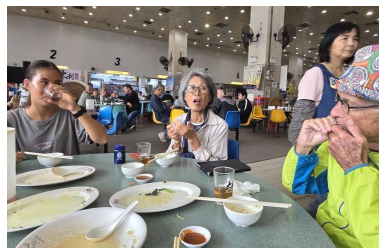
We met each other at the Lobby at 9am. We sat down at the hotel terrace for coffee and buns. Then took bus 112 to Sham Shui Po to get glasses for Padi and on to Sham Shui Po Market to have noodle festival. But the main objective was to visit Ah Yi in her home. At 103 she is still fully alert and aware and talks with very assertive voice.



Hotel Terrace



Yuk Si Chau Mein...



...at Sham Shui Po Market



Old Auntie Ah Yi was very happy...



...to meet us!

Later walked to Fa Yuen Street (Fashion) before boarding the 112 again and getting off at Wanchai to join Rocky and Stemson for dinner at Lockhart Market. In the end with Ting Ting again to go home.



Ah Yi 1972



Fa Yuen S.



Ready...



Fried Pork, Tripes



..... fried Noodles etc



.... Wine, Beer and Happiness!

Sun. 07.12 Wonton Soup, walk up to Peak and down and then posh Restaurant at Cheung Wan

Fair & hazy 23°



Freshly made



WW-2 Bunkers

Laeti and Padi left at 10am to a fitness studio at Wanchai iClub Hotel in Wanchai to keep on training for her rowing competitions. So we walked to join them to have Wonton Soup at Wanchai Market. Then took Ting Ting to Central Market to take escalators up to Conduit Road. Walked up to Peak on Hatton Road via Pinewood Battery (from WW2) and then continued along the panoramic(!!!) Lugard Rd to the Peak Tram Station. Then walked down the steep Old Peak Road and deserved a Hoogarden at Windham Street and dinner at the posh restaurant Lin Heung Lau (蓮香樓) at Wellington Street.



The most exciting City View on Earth!



Hoegaarden...



...at Corner Bar



Delicious Dinner at...



..Lin Heung Lau

Ting Ting to calm down till home....arrived at 10pm.... good night!

Mon. 08.12 **Ferry to Cheung Chau (Island), Walking (8km) & Dining!** Sunny & clear

Cheung Chau Island had been my favourite Excursion place ever since 1971. I had taken my new girl-friend Peggy to Cheung Chau in 1972 for her first visit....and ever since she likes it too! Sometimes we talk about a vacation there! Each time we visit Hongkong we also spend a day or even 2 in Cheung Chau!

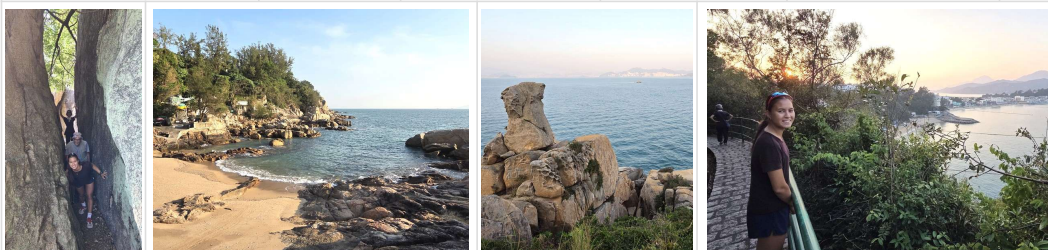
Today first thing was to take Ting Ting to Central Pier to board the slow ferry at 12.00 for a nice sailing to Cheung Chau! Then it was time for a lovely breakfast before an extended walk around 2/3 of the Island.

Itinerary: Sai Wan, Tin Hau Temple, Cheung Po Tsai (pirate's cave), Reclining Rock, Pak Tso Wan, Cemetery, Tin Fuk Pavilion, Nam Tam Wan (Tin Hau Temple), Jade Seal Rock where the scenic Mini Great Wall starts which takes you back to the beach-side of town.

We ended up as usual on a seafood restaurant terrace near the Pak Tai Temple at the end of the promenade and had an excellent meal again as usual.

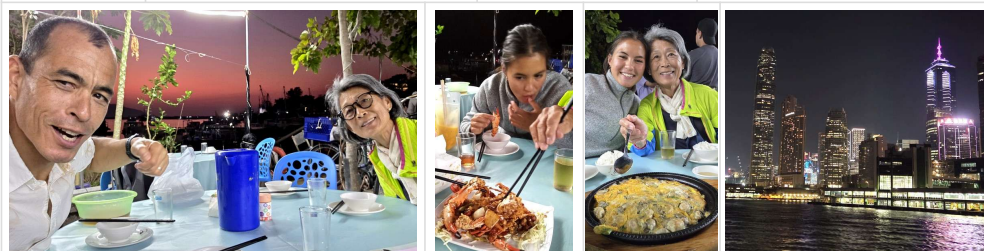


Statue Square with... ...X-Mas On Ferry to... ...Cheung Chau Breakfast beside.. ... Boat Harbour Po Tsai Cave



...nearby Nam Tam Wan at Tin Hau T. Jade Seal Rock Mini Great Wall near Town

In romantic dusk beside the harbour we ended up as usual at a seafood restaurant terrace near the Pak Tai Temple at the end of the promenade and had an excellent meal again as usual.....Crab Pincers, Egg with Mussels



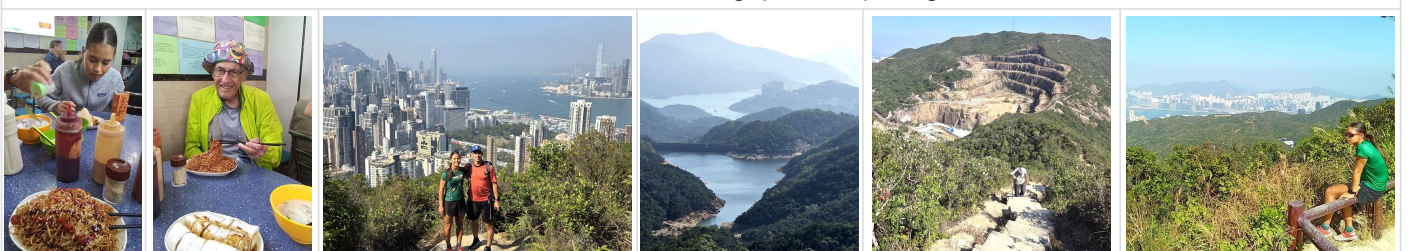
Beautiful Atmosphere for a nice Meal Crab Pincers Mussels Hongkong by Night

The night ferry was again a spectacle with the view to Hongkong by night arr. at 9.30!
Then relaxing Ting Ting home as usual. 10.30pm

Tue. 09.12 **Wilson Trail to Stanley**, starting at North Point / Braemer Hill via Jardine's Look Out etc Sunny & clear

09.15 Breakfast together at our favourite noodle place: Sticky Rice with Bean Paste, Chow Mein, Yau Dja Guai in Cheung Fan.

10am started walking to Stanley at 1st to Braemer Hill Road and then continued walking on trails passing beside the Braemer Hill Peak (some splendid views over Hongkong). Then down to a large mining compound (EOD Depot) and then following the Wilson Trail with ascent to Jardine's Lookout followed by descent to Tai Tam Reservoir Road and then up long exhausting stairs to Violet Hill Peak (Padi helped me a bit). Steep and long descent to the Long Bridge. I was now dead tired (15.00) and also Peggy opted for the easy escape route to Repulse Bay. In the end I still opted for going on via the Twin Peaks with long very steep stairs, stretches of rubble path and a interminable descent to Stanley Gap Road (indicator: 2km, 1h45). I feared that it will be 2h of torture....and it was... and I had to grip Padi's pulling hand most of the time!



Yummy... Breakfast Sir Cecile's Ride Look Out View to Tai Tam R. Wilson Trailvia Jardine's Look Out



.... Look Out

Getting to Stanley....

..side with long Descent (Stairs)

Chill-out with Beer

Laeti - Romantic Chill-out

We arrived at the Wilson Trail's end at Stanley Gap Road at 5pm. Then still decided to take the awful shortcut down to the sea promenade in Stanley, which took another 30'. Beer on a bench! Laeti beside the water (no beer) and watching night fall over the bay. After 6pm we walked through the deserted famous Stanley Market Street to the bus stop. Night bus ride passing Repulse Bay and all of Tai Hang Road with night view over Hongkong to North Point. Peggy bought 3 rice boxes to take home as both of us were very tired... Padi was very disappointed that we did not eat out. Sorry for that! We had walked almost 15km with many ups (my breath) and downs(Peggy's knees).....!

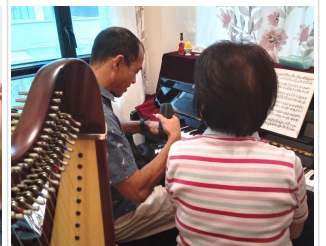
Wed.10.12 **Dim Sum and Piano Session with Piano Cousin**, Shopping turn in Tsim Sha Tsui Overcast, dry 23°

11am we took the Ting Ting to Sai Wan/Whitty Street to go for Yam Cha with Piano Cousin (Piano Teacher).

First we went to eat at a nice Restaurant, but for me the Dim Sum was a bit too 'fine' for my taste. In particular I was disappointed with the Fong Dzau (chicken feet) which were cooked in a pot instead of steamed and they lacked of the typical garlic scents of the steamed version. Later, at 2pm we went to cousin's home and had a good hour with her piano being played with various skills in the back room. Patrick and the piano teacher mostly playing Duo, 1 hand each;-). Piano Cousin still appears very sparkling at 69.



At Piano Cousins Home....



... nice to hear them playing

After 3pm we left and walked to the Star Ferry to make a shopping turn for Laeti in the former Ocean Terminal and the Ocean Centre. There was a lot of X-Mas decoration already... Of course we had in mind from the start to continue and end up at Temple Street for an 'atmospheric' delicious dinner. We started at 7.30 and enjoyed until after 9pm. At the end Patrick even had a little surprise for me... In the end we had to wait a long while for Padi who was sounding out pots for pure sounds, supposedly being healthy (he did not find what he was looking for).



At P.-Cousin



Star Ferry



Ocean Center



Temple Street



Looking forward



WOW!!!.....



..... Flachmann



Restaurant outside!

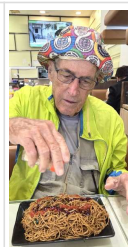
We got to the 112 bus stop after 10pm for a strait night ride on to deck back home.

Thu.11.12 **Lion Rock** Sunny, Haze 25°

We met at 10.15 to take 106 bus to Wong Tai Sin to climb the Lion Rock.



There we go!



Dopamine



Tin Hau Temple Entrance...



.....inside Temple Court.....



Pig Year

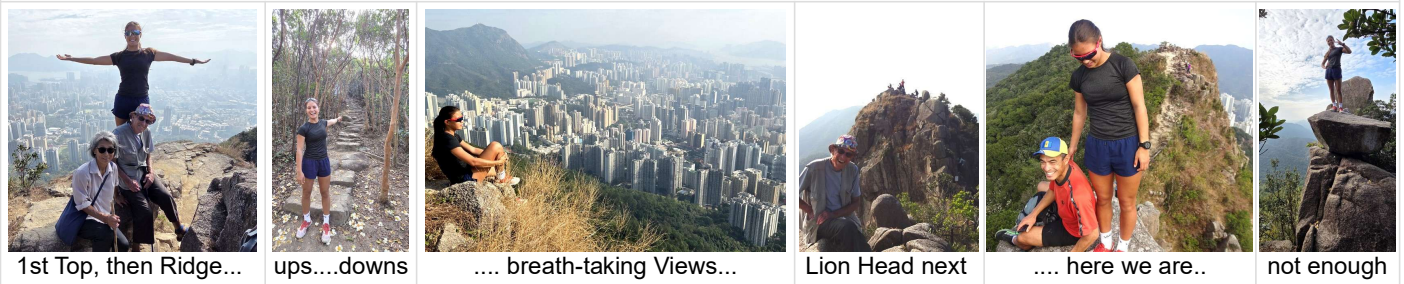


Horse Y.



Monkey Y.

First had noodles etc breakfast before visiting the famous Wong Tai Sin Temple. At 12.30 we started the walk up to the Lion Rock (495m). It was very hard for me again at times. But I managed to get up slowly by 14.45 while the young ones waited on the top for an interminable time while enjoying the views. I even did a bit of climbing over the ridge to the Lion's Head. After 3pm we started the very long descent on the West side. Almost at the bottom we had fun with a few monkeys (they seem to have even more fun with us (16.15).



1st Top, then Ridge... ups....downs breath-taking Views... Lion Head next here we are.. not enough



The Lion's Face Reunificat'n Pav. Monkey Greeting Showing off

On the way down we passed the Reunification Pavillion with many monkeys around. At the bottom, we still had to walk back to Wong Tai Sin (17.00) to take the bus back to North Point. We took 106P and did not realise that the P goes to Siu Sai Wan bypassing Fortress Hill and got out at Quarry Bay at 6pm. So we had dinner there then we walked back home.

.....
Fri. 12.12 Yam Cha with Auntie Ah Yi Fair, 24°

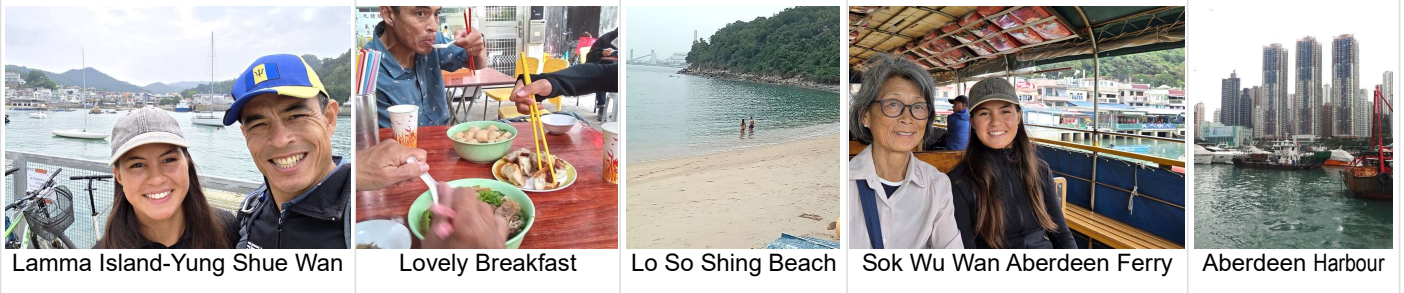
10.15 we took 112 bus to the glasses shop at Sham Shui Po, before collecting Auntie to go to a restaurant at Shek Kip Mei, close to her home, for an excellent Yam Cha with Rocky, Stemson, Dora until after 2pm.



Walked to Tonkin Street to start our tour with the new building on the site of the old Tonkin Mansion, Peggy's old home (3pm), then King Edwards with small shopping tour (for Laeti) and a beer (for me) with Rocky close to Mongkok (6pm). Finally we took Bus 112 at Nathan Road back home to have a bite for dinner, Peggy warmed Dumplings from Wellcome, before Andrew's return from Macau. Then we had Andrew's champagne, whisky and rum + Padi's rum until after 2am. Hmmm....(no pics...pitty!)

.....
Sat. 13.12 Lamma Island and Farewell Evening with Family (we leave tomorrow) Fair, gradually cooler

Got up at 8am with light hangover but still determined to visit Lamma Island. Met Padi and Laeti at 10am to take Ting Ting to Lamma Ferry which promptly left at 11am to Yung Shue Wan. Started to walk to Sok Kwu Wan across the island but soon stopping-by a small restaurant for a noodle soup and light other dishes. Nice walk with ups and downs and before arriving made a little diversion to Lo So Shing Beach for Padi and Laeti to swim a few strokes. Eventually we reached Sok Wu Wan and the Ferry to Aberdeen and after while of waiting we left at 15.40.... and after a short stopover at Mo Tat Pier arrived at Aberdeen at 16.30.



Lamma Island-Yung Shue Wan Lovely Breakfast Lo So Shing Beach Sok Wu Wan Aberdeen Ferry Aberdeen Harbour

Took the 970x bus to Sham Shui Po taking Pok Fu Lam Road and passing Pok Fu Lam Village and YY-Mansion (my home 1972) and the ominous Flyover leading to the West-Harbour Tunnel at Sai Wan.
 We arrived at Sham Shui Po at 17.30, time to stroll around before the family farewell dinner at 18.30 at the same place we had Yam Cha with Auntie Ah Yi at Shek Kip Mei. Later, we had dessert at a specialised place nearby!



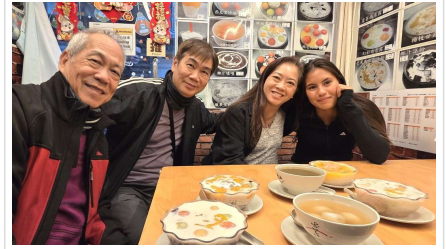
YY-Mansion



Sai Wan Flyover



Farewell Dinner at Shek Kip Mei.....



....concluded with Dessert

Then 112 bus home by 23.00.

Sun.14.12

Last Day ending at Airport

Fair, cool 16-20° (Winter is coming)



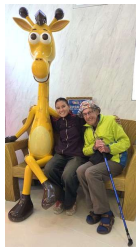
Jam Cha



....my Favourite....



....also Favourite



Nostalgia



Bye bye Hongkong.... sad to go...



..soothing Pain

Walked to Causeway Bay with Padi and Laeti for our last Dim Sum at Windsor Shopping Center. Very nice dishes of everything and ending with Singapore-Style Noodles.... then all walking home last time along the harbour for packing.

At 17.45 we hugged bye-bye with Andrew and then at 18.20 we 4 took the slow E11A bus for the last panoramic drive on top deck. We reached the airport on time to catch our flights:

1st **Laeti to Dubai** (later to continue to Geneva) at 21.00, then **Peggy and I to London** at 22.45 and last **Padi to Perth** at 23.15.

Bon Voyage!



Hongkong

At security I had a unpleasant intermezzo, where the officer did repeated checks on me. In hindsight I suspect, that my 5mm insole (Absatzeinlage) for my left heel, which was still glued in my shoe, caused some alarm signals.

Mon.15.12

Journey home to Ipsach

Anyway, we left on time! It was a smooth but very long flight till 05.30 (13h) since I could not sleep at all!

Flight to Basel at 7.30. (UK time) arr at 10am (1.5h).

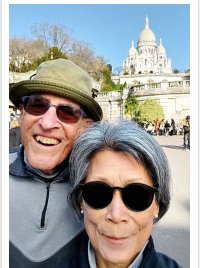
Bus to Basel SBB at 10.33 , arr 10.50, Train to Biel 11.02, arr 12.11 (gratis Buns, coffee, tea...1st day BLS)

Then ALDI for today's survival, then Bähnli to Ipsach.

It was cold!

Outlook: The next night I already started coughing and within a few days it turned into a virulent **Influenza** which from before X-Mas till after New Year put me down completely with some fever (38°-39°), heartbreaking coughing, repellent food taste, total lethargy even regarding reading I was thus very happy that I was just feeling a very little bit better a few days after New Year, when Laeti came to visit us 1 day/night in Ipsach. I could find a little pleasure to eat dinner that evening! Soon later Laeti and Oci returned home to go back to school!

Back to Normal! Early March Peggy decided that we should use the good weather forecast and we immediately made an improvised 5-day trip to Paris with our Caddy Hotel (2 n Caddy, 2 n Hotel).



5.03.2026

.....

Spare Page before Annexes (see next page)

Annexes - Other Trips 2025

Annex 1. Australia - Malaysia - Thailand: 2nd December 2024 to 13th February 2026, see separate Trip Report
Narrative: After visiting Padi and Family at Fremantle over the X-Mas / End Year Festivities, we flew to Singapore and from there undertook a 5 weeks backpacking trip through Malaysia and Thailand. I was turning 80 at Philmae in Thailand and was very apprehensive of the undertaking beforehand.... but then routine took over and of course Peggy did all the practical things on the way making it work! Many thanks to Peggy!
For more info: see the Trip Report (30 pages) in www.xelliant.ch

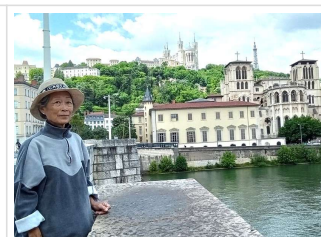
Annex 2. France - Mai/June/July: 2 weeks Caddy 'Loire+', then 7 weeks Holiday in Ste Marie

Introduction: Peggy suggested that we should take advantage of the little time left to use the ageing Caddy as a Camper Car and also I, at over 80, will soon no longer be able for such challenges. She expressed her wish to once follow the Loire all the way from its source (Haute Loire) to its estuary at St Nazaire (Loire Atlantique) taking the time it needs!

a) Ipsach to the Sources of the Loire:

We chose to start in direction of Lyon and then to follow the Rhone to the South of Valence from where we turned West via Provas into the Massif Central to the Mont Gerbier where the Loire starts in different trickles.

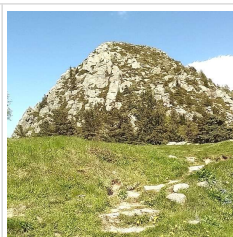
Day 1: Ipsach - Bourg en Bresse (via Geneva, Natua). Night on a parking in town
Day 2: Bourg en Bresse - St Cyr/Rh (via Villefranche/S, Lyon (nice visit along the Rhone). 40km later, below St Cyr stopping for night on leisure parking beside the Rhone!
Day 3: St Cyr - Monastier/Gazeille (along the Rhone via Condrrieu, Valence, la Voulte, then via Privas to Mont Gerbier and the **Source of the Loire**).



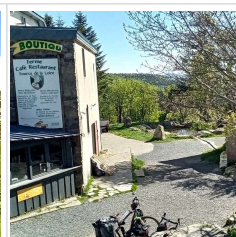
Lyon Basilique & Cathédrale

We could not refuse to climb the very rocky Mt. Gerbier with a breath-taking 360° view! Then we enjoyed being at the start of something big and going to the end of it 1020km further!

We then continued and ended up for the night at Monastier on the parking of the eglise de St.Jean with beautiful view!



Mont Gerbier....



...Café Source de.....



...la Loire..1020km



.... a trickle

b) Along the Loire: Instead of 1020km it took us 1270km with some detours!

We had already visited many of the great sites of the Loire in the past. But this time we will have them lined up in one go! We knew that we will have to be selective otherwise we would be on the way for months...

Day 4: Monastier - Cascade de la Baume. We started with the sentier de la Loire Sauvage at les Salles and walked steep down round the Mas de Bonnefort, then on to Solignac (visit) then the Cascade de la Baume (visit). Night with roundview on the lonely parking of the Cascade!

Day 5: Cascade - Aurec/L. Sinuous drive mostly through wild valleys passing the volcanic lake Bouchet, visiting remarkable Puy en Velay and on to the Pont du Diable beneath the Château de Chalencon. We ended up at Aurec/L on a lonely parking right beside the Loire and enjoyed a little walk along the Loire after sumptuous picnic.

Day 6: Aurec - Charité/L. Lost the way and ended up in Périgneux after a nice drive. Then continued to Roanne and Digoin where we had passed the night several times on other occasions. We stayed the night parked along the Loire at Charité with view to town and the Eglise de Notre Dame de Charité and of course made a turn to visit.

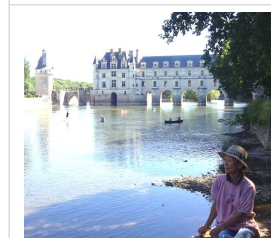
Day 7: Charité - Blois. Followed the Loire to Orléans and then turned to Chambord (visited in 1989) ending up in Blois, again parking faced to the Loire and the Château.

Day 8: Blois - Langais. Along the Loire to Chaumont, Amboise and just crossing Tours (all visited years ago) before making a turn to Langais and its Castle. Then continued to Asay le Rideaux but after turning around we returned over the Loire to a nice parking beside the big Pont de Langais and had a nice evening in setting sun. (Suddenly Peggy asked about Chenonceaux which she absolutely wanted to see again - go back 60km tomorrow & return)

Day 9: Langais - Les Lombardières. We really did the 120km detour for a nice walk along the Cher to pass the Château de Chenonceau twice. Then continued to Saumur and walked up to the Château. After crossing Angers it was time to look for a place to stay... after a long search we crossed over the Loire at Savennieres and ended up in the hameau Les Lombardières (47.376409,-0.639795). Lovely parking beside the Loire. In spite of 34° degrees at 7pm we enjoyed Picnic at a small meadow facing the Loire upstream.



Château de Chambord

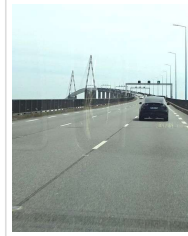


Château Chenonceaux

Day 10: Les Lombardières - La Prée/ Pointe de St. Gildas.
 Nice drive towards Nantes avoiding the Centre to continue to St Nazaire, our main target. Easy parking near the seafront (I got a fine!) and then enjoyed the walk to the Light Tower over the long jetty! Then we crossed the estuary of the Loire over the impressive Pont de St Nazaire via St. Michel-Chef-Chef to the Pointe de St. Gildas and found a parking at La Prée along the sea, good for apéro, nice walk and picnic!



St. Nazaire Jetty



Pont over Loire



Walk at Pte G.

Mission Loire accomplie!

c) Pointe de St Gildas to Ste Marie

Day 11: Pte Gildas - Aytré Plage. Very good night (did not get up). First we went to see the old St Gildas Sémaphore from 1861 (12m high/ with 6 wings à 7 positions). Then headed for La Rochelle and made short visit before moving on to Aytré Plage. Excellent parking with view over the bay with many Kiteers. Nice Picnic (incl. tin of Dolmades from Greece 2022).



Sémaphore



Marennes Oysters++

Day 12: Aytré Plage - Roque de Thau (nr Blaye). Heading South we skipped Ile d'Oléron and Royen and went straight for a yummy oyster barquette: 6 oysters, 6 bulots, 6 prawns, 6 langoustines, 2 crab pinchers) near Marennes. Then continued passing Royen and found good night stop after Blaye with view over the Gironde.

Day 13: Roque de Thau - Mimizan Plage. Our first stop: where the Garonne and Dordogne join to form the Gironde. Closer to Bordeaux I took the Motorway to avoid the city and then headed to Arcachon. We stayed at the Bassin for a while and then visited (once more) the Dune du Pilat. In Biscarosse we did not find a good parking but finally we were very happy with Mimizan Plage when devouring our grilled chicken with Atlantic view right in front!



Dune du Pilat



Rocher la Vierge

Day 14: Mimizan - Piétat (near Tarbes). Now we headed to Biarritz and enjoyed the cliffs of the vieux port with the rocher de la vierge once again.

Then we had to move inland in direction of Pau and soon after Tarbes, getting late, we found a good and quiet parking (43.2003275, 0.1305381) beside the Chapelle de Notre Dame de Piétat and then enjoyed the 2 huge chicken filets from yesterday with juicy mangos!

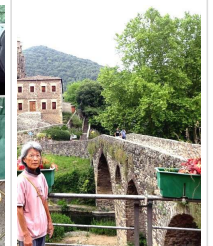
Day 15: Piétat - San Joan Les Fonts (E). Now headed towards Spain passing Montréjeaux and over the Spanish border to Bosost. Then followed the Garona (E) up to the Bonaigua Pass (2070m, short walk) and then down to Sort, up again to the Del Canto Pass and down to Adrall and over La Seu d'Urgell (fresh water source) to Puigcerda. Then a never ending drive over the Toses Pass to Ripoll. Then heading towards Olot where we noticed a interesting small Town, San Joan Les Fonts. Soon we found a good parking for the night at 5pm. Picnic and nice walk.



Drinking Water

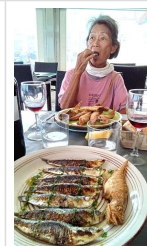


S. Joan, last Picnic



S. Joan, Bridge

Day 16: San Joan - Ste Marie. Spotless blue sky and 19.5°. Last Caddy breakfast, then on the way via Castellfolit and Figueres to L'Escala. First shopping at Mercadona, our 'house coffee', cava+... then moved to our favourite restaurant, l'Escull (Catalan) at waterfront and had our usual menu choice: 1st: mixed friture/grill anchovies, 2nd: Paella Marinera, dessert: delicious cheese pie with cream! Nice drive home via Le Perthus. We arrived at Ste Marie at 17.30. Then 3 hours of work to settle provisionally. Picnic dinner at 20.15 on our terrace with our Grand Kids' mural from 2022 (our 50th wedding Anniversary)



L'Escull: 1st..



...2nd



S. Marie: Mural 22

d) 07.June - 25. July, Resting 7 Weeks in Ste Marie.

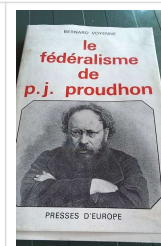


Oyster Fiest

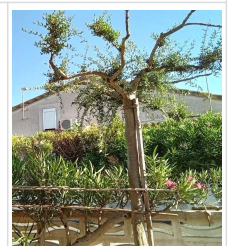


Beach Pizza

During the 7 weeks we did not do anything in particular and we were very happy to have Evi and Co joining us for a week. I did some reading of books from the street library and was also busy on the PC. Peggy did the household and kept tidying the garden. We also had a bit of socialising with Lucette and Jacques, our neighbours.



Reading..me

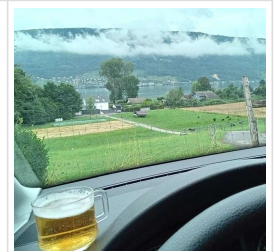


Gardening..Peggy

Otherwise we made our daily walks and bicycle rides, the latter mainly for shopping and also watched French TV.

Returning Home: As usually we turned back home before the start of the very crowded peak holiday time. For the same reason we drove back the shortest way to Geneva on main road, with one night stop at St Laurant du Pont (Chartreuse) on a good parking. Smooth but long drive home! Shortly before we stopped at Sutz for having a relaxing bite to be fit for the strenuous coming home procedures!

Note: 2 weeks later we recieved the sad news that our Swiss Co-Resident at Ste Marie, Hermann Christen, had died on 8th August, 71 years young.



Chill-out at Sutz

Annex 3: France - 5 days Caddy 'Rhone & Midi', then 4 weeks Holiday in Ste Marie (28th August - 27th Sept.) Unfortunately I can no more find the numerous photos I made with the Sony Camera.

a) Home to Ste Marie

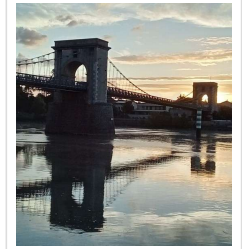
Note: The most important issue for this trip to Ste Marie was the urgent necessity to fix the terrace awning (Vordach), likely to collapse with any strong gust.

Encouraged by the Loire Trip we thought to take it slow again and this time we started river driving from Burgundy along the Saône and continued to the Bouches du Rhone and the Mediterrenian in the Camargue.

Day 1: Ipsach - Chalon/S (250km). Lovely country-side drive to Chalon, via Pontarlier. We easily found a good parking for the night along the Saône. Of course a picnic and a walk.

Day 2: Chalon - Andance/R (223km). Nice drive a long the Saône to Lyon and then the Rhone stopping here and there until it was time to pull aside for the night at Andance facing an the impressive Pont d'Andance. Picnic and walk over the bridge.

Day 3: Andance - Avignon(179km). Another nice drive via Arles (short visit) to Avignon, where we went straight to a parking along the Rhone facing the old city.



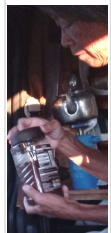
Andance Bridge

Picnic and walks (also the next morning) on both sides of the Rhone and of course into the city and around the Palais des Papes and the big Jardin de Doms giving view to the famous bridge over the Rhone and the region!

Day 4: Avignon - Saintes Maries de la Mer (86km). After more sightseeing we drove directly to Saintes Maries de la Mer and made a nice sightseing tour along the sea and in town. We parked about 1km out of town beside the sea. (43°26'59.71"N, 4°24'56.99"E).



Avignon across the Rhône (at mid-night there was some unrest, young people, so we moved 300m)



Coffee

Day 5: Saintes Maries - Ste Marie P.O. (240km/980km). We continued driving as close to the sea and here and there we saw beautiful Flamingos in the 'Etangs'..

b) 4 Weeks in Ste Marie

The most important activity was to get the Terrace Roof fixed by replacing the cracked and bent supporting beam. We were horrified when we saw the hollow spaces after cutting the beam in pieces! Imagine the roof crumbling while we would sit on the terrace! Peggy insisted that she wants to paint the new beam herself.

Otherwise there was no particular action or event.



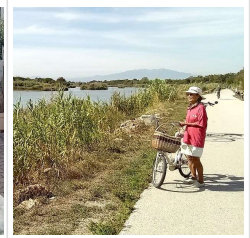
Cracked Beam....



...ohoh!



....Painting



Bicycling to Barcares

On 26th September we started our drive home.....after 30km just before the Avia Petrol Station on road 6009 the **Caddy's engine started spluttering!** We just managed to continue to park at the petrol station and call the roadside assistance.

Of course it was the ominous injection problem which has been grounding us now for the 7 times in over 10 years! We where picked up and then dropped at a repair workshop in Port La Nouvelle.

Lucky that I had a spare fuel injector with me! In 2021 we had replaced all injectors and there was no more problem since for 47'000km.... et voilà! We paid 200E cash for the work.... no receipt....

Then we still managed to drive home the normal way with a night stopover at Remoulins.

Home on 27th in the afternoon!



.....again!