

### **Introducing LUX\* Tea Horse Road Benzilan – The Group's Second Boutique Hotel Along The Tea Horse Road, China**

LUX\* Resorts & Hotels is delighted to announce the opening of its second boutique hotel along the LUX\* Tea Horse Road, China – [LUX\\* Tea Horse Road Benzilan](#).

Inspired by one of the greatest journeys of all time and the magnificent surroundings of the Greater Shangri-La region, LUX\* Resorts & Hotels has created a once in a lifetime discovery experience. With exclusive boutique hotels strategically positioned along the ancient tea horse road, guests can explore one of the world's most famous and scenic routes, complete with modern luxuries, whilst maintaining authenticity and honouring the incredible setting. The ancient Tea Horse Road was once a trade route through Yunnan, Sichuan and Tibet. For thousands of years, traders in Sichuan and Yunnan provinces exchanged tea for horses, salt or medicine with Tibetans, all transported by Mabang (caravans). Today, you can still see the 70cm-deep holes in the stone plates, caused by the stamping of horse hooves, along with various religious engravings and mottos along the side of the road.

LUX\* Tea Horse Road Benzilan is located at the core of the sun-drenched valley of Benzilan in the Yunnan province of China. Located at the centre of what was once a strategic post along the ancient tea trading route, LUX\* Benzilan is the perfect base for travellers making their way to the sacred glaciers of the Meili Snow Mountains. The boutique hotel's design is inspired by typical Tibetan architecture and traditional materials and methods have been used where possible. LUX\* Benzilan features an all day restaurant, a Café LUX\*, a large swimming pool and 30 Tibetan-inspired spacious rooms and suites, all further enhanced by panoramic views of the snow-capped peaks of Baima Snow Mountains, surrounded by tranquil Tibetan villages on the banks of the Jinsha River, one of the three branches of the Yangtze river. This itinerary now links LUX\* Benzilan to LUX\* Lijiang, offering new discovery experiences.

Thanks to year-round pleasant temperatures, LUX\* Benzilan allows guests to explore the surrounding glaciers on tailor-made hikes, mushroom-picking missions or discovering hidden mountain trails with local Tibetan guides. Other authentic experiences on offer at LUX\* Benzilan include the chance to meditate with the hotel's in-house master, as well as spending time with a resident spiritual guide of the local monastery, who would reveal the ancient stories of the muleteers of the Tea Horse Road. Lucky guests are even able to join local monks for their daily chant at the major peak of the Meili Snow Mountain, the sacred Kawagebo.

For guests who are interested in the native cuisine, the hotel organises dinners with a local Tibetan family, for a truly traditional taste of village life. Delicacies include homemade rice noodles, fried potato cakes and Yak meat, washed down with Yak butter tea and homemade barley whiskey. Curious travellers will also have the chance to understand precious local handcrafts, the Naxi black pottery and local wooden bowls. LUX\* guests will learn how to create these authentic works of Tibetan art from a local master and try their hand at creating a piece of their own.

LUX\* Tea Horse Road Benzilan joins sister hotel LUX\* Lijiang which launched last year. The two hotels are linked via a carefully defined route that follows the original path of the ancient trade route (approximately 4 hour drive). LUX\* Tea Horse Road Lijiang is located at the foot of the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, in the heart of Lijiang's ancient town, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Sheltered by the traditional timber-frame structures of Naxi architecture, rooms are luxurious and contemporary, with views over tranquil courtyards and traditional style rooftops. Fusion Naxi cuisine is on offer in the restaurant and some of the finest Pu'er teas in the region can be sampled in their teahouse, where daily tea ceremonies take place.

Bringing its award-winning "Lighter, Brighter" formula to China, LUX\* Resorts & Hotels epitomises the essence of "travel light and experience in depth" by introducing a set of Reasons To Go LUX\*, exclusively designed for LUX\* Tea Horse Road properties. The renowned Mamma Aroma embraces the locale by offering a Tibetan roseroot scented collection of amenities; movies are screened under the starry skies of the Snow Mountains or framed by the rolling roofs of ancient towns, and Café LUX\* presents a unique selection of Yunnan coffee blends, both in Lijiang and Benzilan.

Paul Jones, CEO of LUX\* Resorts & Hotels comments: "We are proud to launch this new property which will enable our guests to discover this magnificent region of China and one of the most compelling cultural and scenic landscapes in the world. The tea horse road is fascinating and the opening of our second boutique-hotel in the heart of Benzilan, along the tea horse road is only the beginning of our vision. We are very excited for what is to come, a truly unique and exciting concept". He also added that LUX\* Resorts & Hotels admires and respects the traditional lifestyle of the local community. "We wish to share our knowledge and contribute to the local economy. As such, we propose to guide and train young talent within our LUX\* Tea Horse Road hotels team, by teaching them the English language and giving them hospitality training courses in Mauritius. In addition, we will also provide two tertiary educational scholarships per year to students of the region wishing to study hospitality. In doing so, we are bringing our "LUX" light to the region to help people celebrate life".

Liu Xiao Hua, General Manager of the Lijiang Yulong Tourism Co Ltd, shared that he is delighted that the cooperation between Lijiang Yulong Tourism Co Ltd and LUX\* Resorts & Hotels has reached new heights. "We look forward to continuing the development of tourism in this region as well as the social and economic development in the area. This region is culturally rich and offers magnificent landscapes, making it one of the most beautiful tourist destination in China."

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**For press enquiries, please contact: LUX\* Resorts & Hotels** Axelle Mazery / Group Press & PR Manager –

Axelle.Mazery@luxresorts.com or visit the [online media centre](#)

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LUX\* Resorts & Hotels helps people celebrate life by delivering consistently on the promise of a different kind of Luxury; hospitality that is Lighter and Brighter. LUX\* stages exceptional experiences in different locales – on the Beach, in the City or in Nature – by banishing thoughtless patterns and being more simple, fresh and sensory than its competitors.

The resorts and hotels in the LUX\* portfolio are: LUX\* Belle Mare, Mauritius; LUX\* Le Morne, Mauritius; LUX\* Grand Gaube, Mauritius; LUX\* South Ari Atoll Maldives, LUX\* Saint Gilles, Réunion, LUX\* Tea Horse Road Lijiang, Yunnan, China and LUX\* Tea Horse Road Benzilan, Yunnan, China.

New hotels opening soon are: LUX\* Sud Sauvage, La Reunion (2016); LUX\* North Malé Atoll Maldives (2016), LUX\* Al Zorah, UAE (2017); and LUX\* Dianshan Lake, China (2017).

LUX\* Resorts & Hotels is a member of Lux Island Resorts Co Ltd, which is listed on the Stock Exchange of Mauritius and is an affiliate member of GML (Groupe Mon Loisir), a major economic player in the Indian Ocean, leader of the "Top 100" Mauritian companies. GML is active in key sectors of the Mauritian economy, representing a portfolio of approximately 300 subsidiaries and associated companies.