

ADVERTORIAL

# The Yangtze River Here today gone tomorrow!

Ever since the decision was made to build the Three Gorges Dam a cruise through the gorges has taken on a new perspective, as many travelers realize that time is running out to experience one of the world's great natural wonders.

The Yangtze has always inspired awe. From its headwaters in Tibet, it tumbles down the mountains, gathering volume and speed to swirl through Sichuan, Hubei and Jiangsu before reaching the East China Sea close to Shanghai. At 3,900 miles it is the third longest river in the world and the longest in China. It is also a cradle of ancient Chinese civilization and has always been a vital lifeline, for transporting people, products and everyday supplies.

This makes a journey on the river a marvellous opportunity to see a centuries old way of life. Ever present are strings of barges riding the current loaded with goods for the booming cities downstream. Weaving between them are small ferries that deliver passengers and produce to simple piers on the banks, where paths and stone steps lead up the cliff face to quarries, primitive factories and ancestral villages, complete with vest-pocket farms.

The most impressive section of the river is the three Yangtze River gorges: the

Qutang Gorge, Wuxia Gorge and Xiling Gorge. Collectively, the gorges are known as the Three Gorges.

Each one of the gorges offers spectacular sites. Qutang Gorge features the Meng Liang Staircase: the Ancient Zhandao (boardwalk and footpath) the Kui Gate: the Seven Gate Cave; the Bellows Gorge; and the Rhinoceros Watching the Moon. Wu Gorge is known for its deep valley and quiet beauty. The Twelve Peaks, lining the banks of Wu Gorge are admired by visitors from all over the world.

The 850 mile voyage between Chongqing and Wuhan is orchestrated with overnight stops so that the gorges are traversed by day and the shore excursions are interposed at practical times. This means that the journey upstream takes 5 days and 4 nights. Today more than 40 luxury cruisers operate in the region, taking visitors to the incredibly beautiful spot.

One of the most memorable excursions is a visit to Zigui, a small town that appears from below to cling like an eagle's nest to the high cliff. But as your bus heaves its way up from the river bank you will find all the features of a traditional plains community.

There is a temple dedicated to Qu Yuan, the scholar statesman who was born here and

who drowned himself in a river to protest his government's policy. He was proved right and his death was memorialized in the Dragon Boat Festival, now celebrated annually worldwide. His tomb stands in the temple and both are scheduled to be moved downstream.

### The Dam

Whatever the arguments for or against it, the projected hydro-electric dam across the Yangtze at Sandouping just below the Three Gorges is an awesome project, designed to generate 84.7 billion kilowatt-hours a year for Shanghai and the lower Yangtze basin. It is expected to cost at least \$34 billion US. When completed the dam wall will be two miles long and 607 feet high. Behind it a lake will be created that covers 418 square miles and stretches for 373 miles, thereby inundating most of the Xiling and half of the Wu Gorges, as well as forcing the evacuation of a million or more people. As for traffic, all boats will have to climb up or down a series of eight locks.

Come explore the Yangtze river with us, before the centuries old river changes forever. For details on our 18 day fully escorted tour of China, Yangtze River and Hong Kong call Roos Travel (905) 873-2000.

## Our Readers Write

# Praise for hospital

Dear Editor:  
I would like to take the time to let the people of Acton and Georgetown know what a wonderful hospital we have in Georgetown Memorial Hospital.

I have lived in Acton all my life and my family doctor is in Georgetown.

As a child I was taken to Georgetown Hospital to have my tonsils taken out and to the emergency room on occasion for minor bangs and bruises associated with being a kid.

All my memories of my stays there are as pleasant as can be expected under the circumstances.

As an adult I have had occasion to go to the hospital, again for various ailments or sporting accidents. If I have been in obvious pain I have always been taken straight in to see a doctor ... as well members of my family have gone to Georgetown Hospital and have always been treated with kindness and efficiency.

Since becoming a parent I have made a few late night/early morning trips to the hospital with my children and have been taken to see a doctor immediately.

The nurses and doctors have always been very patient and understanding with me and very gentle and caring with my children. Recently my four-year-old son had to have minor day surgery and the treatment he received was exceptional.

I have never received anything but exceptional care at Georgetown Hospital with doctors and nurses who take the time to treat myself and my family as individuals, not just cases.

They are grossly understaffed and overworked and yet they still find the time to offer a comforting word and touch.

I think that we are lucky to have this hospital and I want to thank everyone involved for their wonderful treatment of my son.

Linda Robson

## On the Tee

### Long Drivers

There are very few golfers who would not like to hit the ball a little farther off the tee. That extra distance would allow them to approach greens with shorter irons and maybe even to reach the odd par five in two.

Club manufacturers continually come up with new products which they guarantee (well, almost guarantee) will add length to your tee shots. One of their recent innovations is the extra-long driver.

Extra-long drivers may be anywhere from 1" to 5" longer than the standard 43" men's driver. The longer shaft means that the clubhead travels a greater distance and, given the same swing, it will impact the ball at a higher speed.

A group of British scientists found that a 48" driver produced the longest tee shots. The benefits of additional length beyond that were canceled out by increased club weight and wind resistance.

But there is a price to pay for this added distance. The longer the club is, the more difficult it is to bring the centre of the clubface back squarely to the ball. The result is a significant increase in the number of mishits and a general loss of control.

Although it may be nice to hit that booming tee shot, it is also nice to have some idea of where it is going. You might want to consider a slightly more flexible shaft, perhaps with a small increase in shaft length, as a safer way to get more distance.

## Winter Tune-Up Time

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