

red dust a path through china ma jian

Red Dust: A Path Through China by Ma Jian – Exploring a Literary Journey

red dust a path through china ma jian is more than just the title of a travelogue; it's an evocative journey through the vast, complex, and often contradictory landscape of modern China. This remarkable work by Ma Jian, a renowned Chinese writer and dissident, offers readers an intimate and compelling glimpse into the undercurrents of Chinese society, culture, and politics during a transformative era. For anyone interested in contemporary Chinese literature, travel memoirs, or understanding China beyond the headlines, Ma Jian's Red Dust stands as a crucial and unforgettable read.

Understanding the Essence of "Red Dust: A Path Through China"

Ma Jian's Red Dust is not a conventional travel book filled with tourist spots and picturesque scenery. Instead, it is a raw and unfiltered narrative that follows the author's journey on foot through the heart of China. The "red dust" metaphorically refers to the dusty roads and the ideological residue left by decades of political upheaval, cultural revolution, and rapid modernization.

The book, originally published in the 1990s, is a powerful mix of travel writing, social commentary, and personal reflection. Ma Jian traverses provinces, towns, and villages, interacting with ordinary citizens whose stories often reveal the fractures and tensions beneath China's glossy exterior. This journey is both physical and metaphorical, illustrating how the nation struggles with its past while hurtling toward an uncertain future.

Ma Jian: The Voice Behind the Journey

To fully appreciate Red Dust, it's essential to understand who Ma Jian is. Born in 1953 in Qinghai Province, Ma Jian grew up during the Cultural Revolution, an experience that profoundly shaped his worldview and literary voice. Known for his outspoken criticism of the Chinese Communist Party, Ma Jian has lived in self-imposed exile for many years, yet his work continues to resonate deeply with readers inside and outside China.

His writing style in Red Dust is poetic yet unpretentious, blending vivid descriptions with sharp political insight. His journey through China is not just a physical trek but also a quest for truth and human connection in a society marked by censorship and repression.

The Journey Through China: Insights and

Observations

Unlike traditional travel narratives that emphasize sightseeing, *Red Dust* focuses on the people Ma Jian encounters and the societal issues they face. Walking through rural areas and urban centers alike, Ma Jian paints a picture of a country in flux.

Encounters with Ordinary People

One of the most compelling aspects of *Red Dust* is the author's interactions with farmers, monks, miners, and street vendors. These encounters reveal the diversity of Chinese life and the struggles faced by ordinary citizens. For example, Ma Jian meets Tibetan monks whose spiritual way of life is under threat, and peasants displaced by government policies. These personal stories bring to life the human cost of China's rapid modernization and political control.

The Landscape of Change

The physical journey through China's varied landscapes—from dusty villages to burgeoning cities—mirrors the social and economic changes sweeping the country. The title's "red dust" symbolizes not only the literal dust on the roads but also the ideological and cultural residue left by decades of Communist rule and revolutionary zeal. Ma Jian's vivid descriptions of these landscapes provide a backdrop for understanding the broader transformations taking place.

Why "Red Dust: A Path Through China" Matters Today

Even decades after its initial publication, *Red Dust* remains relevant for readers seeking to understand the complexities of China today. Ma Jian's observations offer a unique perspective that contrasts sharply with official narratives and travel guides.

The Role of Literature in Revealing Hidden Truths

Red Dust exemplifies the power of literature to shine a light on the realities often obscured by propaganda and censorship. Through Ma Jian's eyes, readers gain access to voices that might otherwise be silenced, making the book an important cultural and political document.

Lessons for Travelers and Readers

For those interested in traveling to or learning about China, *Red Dust* serves as a reminder to look beyond the surface. It encourages a deeper engagement with the people and places that define this vast country. Ma Jian's journey suggests that understanding China requires patience, empathy, and a willingness to confront uncomfortable truths.

Exploring Themes and Literary Style in *Red Dust*

Ma Jian's *Red Dust* is rich with themes that resonate beyond the context of China alone. The narrative explores freedom, exile, identity, and the search for meaning in a rapidly changing world.

The Theme of Exile and Alienation

Throughout the book, there is a pervasive sense of alienation—not only from the physical places Ma Jian travels through but also from the political ideology under which he was raised. His status as an outsider in his own country adds poignancy to the narrative, highlighting the personal costs of dissent and exile.

Poetic Realism and Vivid Imagery

Ma Jian's writing style combines poetic realism with journalistic precision. His descriptions of the natural environment—the “red dust” roads, the stark mountains, the bustling streets—are vivid and immersive. This literary approach helps readers visualize the journey and feel its emotional weight.

Where to Find and How to Approach *Red Dust*

For readers intrigued by *Red Dust*, there are several ways to engage with Ma Jian's work and the broader literary landscape it inhabits.

Translations and Editions

Originally written in Chinese, *Red Dust* has been translated into English and other languages, making it accessible to a global audience. When choosing an edition, look for versions with comprehensive introductions or footnotes to help contextualize the historical and cultural references.

Tips for Reading and Reflecting

- **Read with an open mind:** Ma Jian's critiques can be sharp and unsettling, but they offer valuable insights into China's complexities.
- **Research historical context:** Understanding the Cultural Revolution, Tiananmen Square, and other key events enhances appreciation of the narrative.
- **Engage with supplementary materials:** Interviews with Ma Jian, critical essays, and documentaries can deepen your understanding of the themes.

Broader Impact of Ma Jian's Work on Contemporary Chinese Literature

Ma Jian's *Red Dust* belongs to a wave of contemporary Chinese literature that challenges official narratives and explores themes of freedom, identity, and resistance. His influence extends beyond his own writing, inspiring other authors and activists who seek to tell stories that are often suppressed.

This book is an essential piece in the puzzle of modern Chinese literature, reflecting the tensions between tradition and progress, authority and individuality.

Reading **red dust a path through china ma jian** is a journey into the heart of a country that is as fascinating as it is complex. Through Ma Jian's eyes, readers experience China's contradictions and challenges in a way few other books can offer. Whether you are a literature enthusiast, a traveler, or simply curious about China, *Red Dust* promises an unforgettable exploration of a land where history, culture, and politics intersect in profound ways.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'Red Dust: A Path Through China' by Ma Jian?

The main theme of 'Red Dust' is the exploration of modern China through a personal and often critical journey, highlighting the social, cultural, and political changes and challenges faced by the country in the 1990s.

Who is Ma Jian, the author of 'Red Dust'?

Ma Jian is a Chinese writer and dissident known for his critical and often controversial works that explore Chinese society and politics. He has lived in exile and is recognized internationally for his literary contributions.

What type of book is 'Red Dust: A Path Through China'?

'Red Dust' is a travel memoir that combines personal narrative with social critique, documenting Ma Jian's extensive travels across China and his reflections on the country's transformation.

When was 'Red Dust: A Path Through China' published?

'Red Dust: A Path Through China' was first published in 2001.

Why is 'Red Dust' considered an important work about China?

'Red Dust' offers a rare, candid, and intimate perspective on China during a period of rapid change, providing insights into the lives of ordinary people and the complexities of Chinese society often overlooked in mainstream narratives.

How does Ma Jian portray Chinese society in 'Red Dust'?

Ma Jian portrays Chinese society as complex and often contradictory, revealing both the beauty and harsh realities of life in China, including issues like poverty, censorship, and political repression.

What makes 'Red Dust' different from other travel books about China?

'Red Dust' stands out because of Ma Jian's unfiltered and critical voice, his deep engagement with the people he meets, and his willingness to confront difficult social and political issues during his journey.

Has 'Red Dust: A Path Through China' faced censorship or controversy?

Yes, due to its critical portrayal of China and political content, 'Red Dust' has faced censorship in China and has been banned, making it a significant work in discussions about freedom of expression.

Additional Resources

Red Dust: A Path Through China by Ma Jian – An Investigative Review

red dust a path through china ma jian is a compelling narrative that offers an unvarnished glimpse into the vast, complex, and often contradictory landscape of modern China. Written by Ma Jian, a prominent Chinese author and dissident, the book transcends conventional travel literature by weaving personal experience, political critique, and cultural observation into a seamless tapestry. This work stands as a significant contribution to contemporary Chinese literature, providing readers with an insightful and

often provocative journey through the heart of a rapidly changing nation.

Exploring the Essence of Red Dust: A Path Through China

At its core, *Red Dust: A Path Through China* is not merely a travelogue; it is a profound exploration of identity, freedom, and the human spirit under the shadow of authoritarianism. Ma Jian's narrative is structured around his extensive travels across China in the 1980s, a period marked by political upheaval and social transformation. Unlike sanitized official accounts, the book candidly portrays the harsh realities faced by ordinary Chinese citizens, including poverty, censorship, and repression.

Ma Jian's prose is both poetic and incisive, capturing the nuances of Chinese society with a journalist's eye for detail and a novelist's sensitivity to human emotion. His depiction of China's physical and ideological landscapes is imbued with a sense of urgency and melancholy, reflecting the tension between tradition and modernity that defines the country's ongoing evolution.

Thematic Depth and Narrative Style

Thematically, *Red Dust* delves into issues such as cultural dislocation, the suppression of dissent, and the struggle for personal autonomy. Ma Jian's journey is as much internal as it is external, with the author grappling with his own disillusionment and hopes. This dual perspective enriches the narrative, allowing readers to engage with China's complexities on multiple levels.

Stylistically, the book employs a fragmented, episodic structure that mirrors the fractured nature of the society Ma Jian describes. This approach enhances the authenticity of the narrative, as it resists simplistic or linear interpretations. Instead, readers are invited to piece together a mosaic of experiences that collectively reveal the multifaceted reality of China.

The Significance of Ma Jian's Work in Contemporary Chinese Literature

Ma Jian's *Red Dust* occupies a unique place within the canon of Chinese literature, particularly in its candid criticism of the Communist Party's policies and its impact on individual freedoms. His willingness to confront taboo subjects and expose uncomfortable truths has made the book controversial, leading to its ban in mainland China. Despite—or perhaps because of—this, *Red Dust* has garnered international acclaim for its bravery and literary merit.

In a landscape often dominated by government-sanctioned narratives, Ma Jian's work

stands out for its unapologetic honesty and artistic integrity. It challenges readers both inside and outside China to reconsider their perceptions of the country and its people, fostering a more nuanced understanding that goes beyond stereotypes and propaganda.

Comparisons with Other Travel Literature and Political Memoirs

When compared to other travel literature about China, such as those by Peter Hessler or Jung Chang, Ma Jian's *Red Dust* distinguishes itself through its deeply personal and politically charged tone. Unlike purely observational travelogues, this book intertwines the author's own experiences with broader socio-political commentary, offering a rare insider perspective that is both critical and empathetic.

Similarly, while political memoirs often focus on prominent figures or high-level events, Ma Jian's narrative centers on everyday people and marginalized communities, thereby humanizing the abstract notions of repression and resistance. This approach enriches the discourse surrounding China's political climate by adding layers of emotional resonance and complexity.

Key Features and Impact of Red Dust: A Path Through China

- **Unfiltered Narrative:** Ma Jian's firsthand accounts provide raw and honest insights into life in China during a tumultuous era.
- **Cultural and Political Critique:** The book offers a balanced critique of both traditional customs and contemporary political realities.
- **Literary Merit:** The prose is evocative and richly descriptive, blending journalistic detail with poetic expression.
- **Global Relevance:** The themes of freedom, identity, and resistance resonate beyond China, appealing to a global audience concerned with human rights.
- **Controversy and Censorship:** The banning of the book in China underscores its provocative nature and the sensitivity of its content.

Pros and Cons of Red Dust as a Literary and Informative Work

1. Pros:

- Offers an insider's perspective rarely found in Western literature about China.
- Balances personal narrative with socio-political analysis.
- Raises awareness about human rights issues in China.
- Engages readers with evocative and vivid descriptions.

2. Cons:

- The episodic structure may challenge readers seeking a linear narrative.
- Its critical stance could be polarizing for readers sympathetic to the Chinese government.
- Some cultural references may require contextual knowledge for full appreciation.

Red Dust's Place in the Broader Discourse on China

Ma Jian's *Red Dust: A Path Through China* contributes significantly to the broader discourse on China's political and cultural identity. In an era where China is increasingly influential on the world stage, understanding the internal challenges and contradictions it faces is crucial. This book enriches that understanding by offering a voice that is often suppressed within China itself.

Moreover, the work encourages critical reflection on the costs of rapid modernization and economic growth, particularly when these come at the expense of civil liberties and cultural heritage. Through Ma Jian's vivid storytelling, readers gain a more comprehensive picture of the human dimension behind news headlines and geopolitical analyses.

The continued relevance of *Red Dust* lies in its ability to provoke thought and dialogue about freedom, censorship, and the resilience of the human spirit. It stands as a testament to the power of literature to illuminate truths that might otherwise remain hidden or ignored.

In sum, **red dust a path through china ma jian** is an essential read for those seeking a deeper, more nuanced understanding of China beyond surface impressions. Its blend of personal narrative, political insight, and literary craftsmanship ensures its place as a

seminal work in both travel literature and contemporary Chinese studies.

Red Dust A Path Through China Ma Jian

red dust a path through china ma jian: *Red Dust* Jian Ma, 2002 Part memoir, part travelogue, this volume shows Ma Jian's skills as novelist, poet and painter. It brings the people and places alive on the page, while his personal story offers an insight into Chinese society since the death of Mao.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *Red Dust* Ma Jian, 2002-11-12 In 1983, at the age of thirty, dissident artist Ma Jian finds himself divorced by his wife, separated from his daughter, betrayed by his girlfriend, facing arrest for "Spiritual Pollution," and severely disillusioned with the confines of life in Beijing. So with little more than a change of clothes and two bars of soap, Ma takes off to immerse himself in the remotest parts of China. His journey would last three years and take him through smog-choked cities and mountain villages, from scenes of barbarity to havens of tranquility. Remarkably written and subtly moving, the result is an insight into the teeming contradictions of China that only a man who was both insider and outsider in his own country could have written.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *Red Dust* Ma Jian, 2007-12-18 In 1983, at the age of thirty, dissident artist Ma Jian finds himself divorced by his wife, separated from his daughter, betrayed by his girlfriend, facing arrest for "Spiritual Pollution," and severely disillusioned with the confines of life in Beijing. So with little more than a change of clothes and two bars of soap, Ma takes off to immerse himself in the remotest parts of China. His journey would last three years and take him through smog-choked cities and mountain villages, from scenes of barbarity to havens of tranquility. Remarkably written and subtly moving, the result is an insight into the teeming contradictions of China that only a man who was both insider and outsider in his own country could have written.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *Reading on Location* Luisa Moncada, 2016-12-01 From the charming city of Bath, featured in Jane Austen's *Persuasion*, to the Amazon of Mario Vargas Llosa's *La Casa Verde*, this unique travel guide brings you to the places you've only read about. Whether you want to learn more about a destination or follow in the footsteps of a favorite character, *Reading on Location* helps you make the most of your trip.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *Going Places* Robert Burgin, 2013-01-08 Successfully navigate the rich world of travel narratives and identify fiction and nonfiction read-alikes with this detailed and expertly constructed guide. Just as savvy travelers make use of guidebooks to help navigate the hundreds of countries around the globe, smart librarians need a guidebook that makes sense of the world of travel narratives. *Going Places: A Reader's Guide to Travel Narratives* meets that demand, helping librarians assist patrons in finding the nonfiction books that most interest them. It will also serve to help users better understand the genre and their own reading interests. The book examines the subgenres of the travel narrative genre in its seven chapters, categorizing and describing approximately 600 titles according to genres and broad reading interests, and identifying hundreds of other fiction and nonfiction titles as read-alikes and related reads by shared key topics. The author has also identified award-winning titles and spotlighted further resources on travel lit, making this work an ideal guide for readers' advisors as well as a book general readers will enjoy browsing.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *Becoming China* Jeanne-Marie Gescher, 2017-11-09 An account of China's past and present, how a small group of people at the edges of the Yellow River evolved to become the state of China today. Despite decades of a relatively open door relationship with the rest of the world, China is still a mystery to many outside it. How does China work, what

does it want, why does it want it, and what does its rise to global power mean for the rest of the world? As the twenty-first century looks set to be the stage for a battle about competing geopolitical ideals, these are urgent questions for everyone with an interest in what the future might bring. A world of its own, China is both a microcosm and an amplification of questions and events in the wider world. China's story offers us an opportunity to hold a mirror to ourselves: to our own assumptions, to our values, and to our ideas about the most important question of all: what it means to be human in the world of the state. Epic in scope, this is the story of how China became the state it is today and how its worldview is based on what has gone before. Weaving together inspirations, ideas, wars and dreams, Jeanne-Marie Gescher reveals the heart of what it means to be Chinese and how the past impacts the present.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *China's Three Gorges, Xi'an and the Terracotta Warriors* Simon Foster, Vivien Loughheed, 2009-10-15 This guide is based on our much larger (530-page) guide to Bolivia. Here we zero in on La Paz, the capital, and all of the nearby attractions. La Paz is not a big city on the world scale, but it is certainly one of the more interesting ones. Built in a bowl created by the Choqueyapu River, the upper parts of the city stand 1,645 ft/500 m above the lower sections. Unlike any other city in the world, the richer neighborhoods are located at the lower levels. This is partly due to the fact that it is warmer and easier to breathe at the lower altitudes. Also, the pinnacles and spires of conglomerate rock and clay that have been sculptured by wind and water make a dramatic backdrop for those living below them. The higher up the bowl one goes, the more unstable the land becomes and the more likely a landslide will occur. The plazas, squares and Prado are well kept in La Paz and even in the depth of winter plants are tended to help make the city attractive. Street cleaners are out every day and local merchants regularly wash the area in front of their shops. On a clear day, Mount Illimani, a snow-covered monolith, can be seen as a sentry towering over the city. Valley of the Moon is six miles/10 km from the center of La Paz and can be reached by joining a tour or by taking micro bus #11 or minibus #231 or 273 to Mallasilla. The hillside features a maze of clay canyons and pinnacles that have been sculpted by wind and rain. Narrow trails through the landscape take about an hour to walk. There is also a cactus park just before the entrance. The park overlooks a gorge and has paths leading around numerous types of cacti. As you continue up the road you will come to Parque Nacional Mallasa with its bird observatory and, across the road, the zoo area. The road passes under natural stone bridges and past Chulpani's Red Hill. There is no mistaking which hill this is. From Mallasa one can see across the river to the highest golf course in the world. Devil's Tooth or Muela del Diablo is a huge volcanic plug sticking out of the landscape to a height of 13,000 ft/3,950 m. Several trails go to the right; follow the one that obviously leads to the village. From there, go to the left for .3 miles (about half a kilometer), to the foot of the rock. Climbers are occasionally found on the east face. Canyon de Palca, or Valle de Animas, is a deep canyon that was carved by the Rio Palca centuries ago. To get there, take a bus going to Huni from Plaza Belzu on Avenida Mexico in San Pedro. There are huge pinnacles and wind-carved conglomerates. The trail continues along the bottom of the canyon to a natural obelisk. Just past the obelisk is a rock that has the appearance of a human hiding in a cave. The rock is called the hermit of the canyon. Continue along the canyon to its end and climb to your left up to the village of Palca. This is a long day-hike. All of the detailed information you need is here about the hotels, restaurants, shopping, sightseeing. But we also lead you to new discoveries, turning corners you haven't turned before, helping you to interact with the world in new ways. That's what makes our Adventure Guides unique. An excellent addition to the Adventure Guide series, packed with detail, from where to stay and eat, to where to shop for local crafts and how to enjoy historic sites. This guide surveys the wildlife and outdoor opportunities of the country, which range from tropical jungle to high plains deserts. Hiking and viewing opportunities blend with cultural insights. Highly recommended. - The Midwest Book Review.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *The United Nations at Work in Asia* Roy D. Morey, 2013-12-05 The groundwork for the Asian economic miracle was established in the last 25 or so years--the time period covered in this book. China and Vietnam started substituting pragmatism for

communist ideology and Thailand started on a path toward greater democracy. The timing was perfect for an American United Nations representative to arrive in the two communist countries because, for the first time, both placed a premium on improving relations with the U.S. and both were moving toward a market economy. This book acquaints the reader with evolving political, economic and social conditions in these countries and the role played by UN organizations. A chapter on the South Pacific details the challenges of providing useful development assistance in small isolated countries. The book also reveals a hidden side of the United Nations, the role played by more than 30 UN agencies, funds and programs in providing development and humanitarian assistance. The past two or three decades were a period of great upheaval in Asia. Enormous events and developments involving the United Nations are analyzed in the book. These include the Tiananmen Square crisis in China; 300,000 Cambodian refugees camped along the Thai border; escaping the killing fields of the Khmer Rouge; efforts to rid the Golden Triangle of opium production; the sensitive diplomacy required in fostering cooperation among North Korea, South Korea, China and Mongolia; and a firsthand account of negotiating the international agreement creating the Mekong River Commission.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *Red Earth Diaries: A Migrant Couple's Backpacking Adventure in Australia* Jason Rebello, 2021-07-08 A one-way ticket to Australia...two months of travel...and a shoestring budget. In *Red Earth Diaries* we meet Jason and Ambika, a newlywed couple who migrated to Australia with the hope of a fresh start. However, unlike most migrants, they made a bold decision to postpone their settlement plans, throw caution to the wind and backpack in Australia on a shoestring budget. Their intention was to learn about the country and its people first-hand ... a land they would someday call home. Swimming with sharks, cuddling cute koalas, chartering private helicopters, venturing deep into ancient rainforests, and getting to know plenty of locals - the couple had incredible experiences in this stunning country. Their travel story is interwoven with snippets of history and provides the reader with a glimpse of Australia as viewed through the eyes of newly arrived migrants. Join Jason and Ambika on their spectacular journey of discovery. *Red Earth Diaries* is founded on four primary pillars: a migrant's journal, a travelogue, a delve into Australian history, and an inspirational tale. The central message of the book is for everyone to chase their dreams - however distant and impossible they may seem. The central message of the book is for everyone to chase their dreams - however distant and impossible they may seem. Moving to Australia has been one seemingly impossible goal the author had set decades ago, and he likewise urges the reader to shed all reservations and to dream the wildest dreams possible. The Preface of *Red Earth Diaries* is called Dreamtime, and in it, the author describes the evolution of his journey to this strange and peculiar wonderland. As a travelogue, the book harkens to all travellers as well as migrants who are already in Australia or who are thinking of making the move to this beautiful country. The book also contains stories of local Australians the couple met along the way. In it you will meet, amongst others - Helen, a 10-Pound-pom; Rowland Mosbergen, a sprightly man in his eighties who survived the horrors of WWII in a remote jungle in Bahau; Rafael and Nadia and their three kids based in Research, Victoria; Ranjit, a practising surgeon and his wife who are based in Kew, Melbourne. The travelogue aims to deliver an essential message to all migrants in Australia - to not take this country for granted but to try to understand and embrace its culture first. Some key personalities mentioned: Paul Hogan, Ned Kelly, Steve Irwin, Captain Cook, Burley Griffin, Gregory Blaxland, Jorn Utzon, Eddie Mabo Some key historical events described: The Endeavour striking the reef, finding a passage through the Blue Mountains, the discovery of gold, the naming of Sunshine Coast, the birth of Canberra as the nation's capital, the iconic rail journeys in Australia, WWI and WWII, Early colonization, Blackbirding, construction of Opera House. Charity Donation: Five per cent of all profits from the sale of this book in the first year of publication will be donated to the Red Cross towards the 2019-20 bushfire crisis management (www.redcross.org.au) and a further five per cent will be also be given to aged care in India through Help Age India (www.helpageindia.org).

red dust a path through china ma jian: World Student China Education Services Australia,

2014-08-26 "Understanding a culture's etiquette is an important part of ensuring your interactions with Chinese people are positive ones. Consider the following when travelling in China..." Get the most out of your first visit to China with this guide designed specifically for teachers, school students and tour leaders of school groups. Find great tips for school visits, gift-giving and home-stay. Get a list of books, websites and films that provide insights into contemporary China. Explore topics such as 'Etiquette', 'Health and Safety' and 'Culture Shock'. This free guide, prepared by a long-term traveller to China, will prepare you for the trip of your lifetime and enable you to get the most out of a unique experience.

red dust a path through china ma jian: China's Pearl River Delta, Guangzhou & Shenzhen Simon Foster, 2010-09-14 The economic heart of South China, the Pearl River Delta is both agriculturally and financially fertile and is one of the most developed parts of China. Intensely cultivated land is interspersed with some of China's newest and fastest-growing cities, which are linked by some of the country's best and most integrated transport services. The Delta's location makes it a popular trip from Hong Kong and a major gateway to enter China itself. Foremost among the Delta's gang of youthful upstart cities is Shenzhen, which was the first of China's Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and has grown from nothing to challenge the traditional heart of the region, Guangzhou, in less than 30 years. While Shenzhen has little in the way of historic sights, it offers shopping, skyscrapers and theme parks along with some insight as to what China's future looks like. Seventy miles to the north, Guangzhou has a longer history, but is also reaping the economic whirlwind. It's definitely worth a quick stop for its blend of Cantonese cuisine, markets, colonial relics and the gritty taste of a real Chinese city. With a population of seven million and long known in the West as Canton, modern Guangzhou provides many visitors with their first glimpse of a mainland Chinese city. Frenetically busy, polluted and steamily hot in summer, Guangzhou's conventional sights are comparatively sparse, but the city is renowned worldwide for its cooking and is worth visiting on these grounds alone. Before Hong Kong rose to prominence, Guangzhou was one of China's primary trading posts and as a result it has a wide ethnic diversity, including a large Hui (Muslim) population, and a smattering of colonial architecture, much of which is found on charming Shamian Island. Guangzhou is at the heart of the south's economic revolution. Although it is still undoubtedly a polluted city, attention is being paid to the environment, albeit often only in the most aesthetic sense. Every time I visit I notice new areas of greenery and the city is becoming more and more visitor-friendly. There is an ever-expanding subway network, a new airport and improved links with other Pearl River Delta destinations. There are also a host of sights to visit within a two-hour transport radius of Guangzhou and the city makes a good base from which to explore smaller towns such as Huizhou and Zhaoqing. This guide is based on our 640-page China Adventure Guide. Following are some reviews of that book: We travel to grow â€ Adventure Guides show you how. Experience the places you visit more directly, freshly, intensely than you would otherwise â€ sometimes best done on foot, in a canoe, or through cultural adventures like art courses, cooking classes, learning the language, meeting the people. This can make your trip life-changing, unforgettable. All of the detailed information you need is here about the hotels, restaurants, shopping, sightseeing. But we also lead you to new discoveries, turning corners never before turned, helping you learn about the world in a new way â€ Adventure Guides make that possible. Having traveled extensively through China over many years, I can see the book's intimacy, not only with the locations, but also with the locals in each place. The author reveals the secrets that he's learned from his long association with China. (Jason Williams, Managing Director, Grasshopper Adventures). A thorough guide not only to traveling in China but also to the country's history and culture, this should satisfy the novice and seasoned traveler alike. Each city and region is covered from all angles, including activities for those traveling with children. An informative read for those unfamiliar with the country and an excellent way to brush up for the more experienced traveler, this is an excellent guide for planning a China vacation. (Publishers Weekly).

red dust a path through china ma jian: Shanghai & Surroundings Travel Adventures Simon Foster, 2011-04-15 Eastern China is the country's boom-belt and its heart is the Pearl of the

Orient, Shanghai, a city which was recently wonderfully described to me as Hong Kong on steroids. Shanghai is the country's most modern city, but manages to retain both its Chinese and European history and its economic development is also helping a renaissance in culture and the arts, along with a shopping and nightlife scene matched only by Beijing and Hong Kong. Around Shanghai, the Water Towns have picturesque canals lined with classic Ming architecture and can make for great day trips, and a little further out, the city of Suzhou offers more of the same, albeit on a larger scale, along with some of the country's finest gardens and the opportunity for some serious silk shopping. Nearly 100 miles south along the Grand Canal, the former Southern Song dynasty (1126-1279) capital of Hangzhou is set on pretty West Lake and is a prime tea-growing region. Away from the lake the city is much like any other Chinese city, but the surrounding countryside and its smattering of temples and tea villages make for some excellent bike rides. Some 110 miles west of Hangzhou, Huangshan is arguably the most beautiful of eastern China's mountains and offers the region's finest scenery and best hiking. The mountain's mist-shrouded, jagged peaks, lone pines and perched temples are straight from a watercolor and it's no wonder Huangshan attracts so many visitors. But fortunately there are enough paths to ensure you can always find yourself a quiet spot. Known as the Pearl of the Orient, Shanghai has endured a boom-bust cycle like no other city in China and is a must-see for a glimpse into the China of the future. It currently has some 20 million residents. A walk along the Bund on the banks of the Huangpu River offers a cityscape to rival Hong Kong's, taking in the glory of Shanghai's colonial past, while at the same time giving views across the river to the city of tomorrow, Pudong. Less than 20 years ago, this was just marshy farmland, but today it boasts countless skyscrapers, among them China's highest tower, the Pearl Oriental TV Tower, and loftiest lodgings, the 88-floor Grand Hyatt. Traditional Chinese sights are a little sparse due to Shanghai's comparative youth, but its colonial and revolutionary history over the past 150 years has left it with a series of significant political buildings. What is more, there are modern activities aplenty, reflecting the city's dynamic and modern heart - fine dining, nightlife, shopping and a kaleidoscope of exhibition centers and good museums await. This a highly detailed guide to everything you need to know about Shanghai and its surroundings - the places to stay, the restaurants, and what to see and do - along with an extensive introductory section on China as a whole. The author lives in China and has been a tour guide there full-time for close to 10 years. This guide is an excerpt from his much larger guide to all of China, also published by Hunter, which is 650 pages in the print edition.

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Pfister, Susan L. Roberson, Paul Smethurst, Carl Thompson, C.W. Thompson, Margaret Topping, Richard White, Gregory Woods.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *China, Heart and Soul* L. Koss Stephen L. Koss, Stephen L. Koss, 2009 From 2001 - 2004, Steve Koss lived in Suzhou, China, a city so renowned for its magnificent classical gardens, rich cultural heritage, and beautiful women that a centuries-old proverb describes it as paradise on Earth. There he met Ping Ping (his wife-to-be), lived in a middle class building in a neighborhood where foreigners were rarely seen, shopped the local markets, taught in the university, and became a guest teacher at two local high schools where he introduced those students (and their teachers) to Western life from The Simpsons and South Park to Christmas carols and poetry slams. With Ping Ping ever-present at his side, Steve explored the city's ancient Buddhist temples, World Cultural Heritage gardens, and thousand-year-old Precious Belt Bridge as well as its quiet, canal-hugging lanes, newest shopping districts, and modern high-rise apartment complexes going up in the city's two, rapidly expanding suburban industrial parks. Yet even as he was discovering a China few outsiders see, Steve watched the old city disappearing under waves of industrialization, Westernization, and massive urban renewal and expansion. Through his personal experiences and observations, Steve Koss captures the country's poignant struggle to maintain its traditions while integrating new wealth, technology, and cultural influences from the West. His book opens a deeply personal window into the changing soul of an ancient city.

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red dust a path through china ma jian: The Social Life of Ink Ted Bishop, 2014-10-28 A rich and imaginative discovery of how ink has shaped culture and why it is here to stay Ink is so much a part of daily life that we take it for granted, yet its invention was as significant as the wheel. Ink not only recorded culture, it bought political power, divided peoples, and led to murderous rivalries. Ancient letters on a page were revered as divine light, and precious ink recipes were held secret for centuries. And, when it first hit markets not so long ago, the excitement over the disposable ballpoint pen equalled that for a new smartphone—with similar complaints to the manufacturers. Curious about its impact on culture, literature, and the course of history, Ted Bishop sets out to explore the story of ink. From Budapest to Buenos Aires, he traces the lives of the innovators who created the ballpoint pen—revolutionary technology that still requires exact engineering today. Bishop visits a ranch in Utah to meet a master ink-maker who relishes igniting linseed oil to make traditional printers' ink. In China, he learns that ink can be an exquisite object, the subject of poetry, and a means of strengthening (or straining) family bonds. And in the Middle East, he sees the world's oldest Qur'an, stained with the blood of the caliph who was assassinated while reading it. An inquisitive and personal tour around the world, *The Social Life of Ink* asks us to look more closely at something we see so often that we don't see it at all.

red dust a path through china ma jian: Around the Bloc Stephanie Elizondo Griest, 2007-12-18 Desperate to escape South Texas, Stephanie Elizondo Griest dreamed of becoming a foreign correspondent. So she headed to Russia looking for some excitement—commencing what would become a four-year, twelve-nation Communist bloc tour that shattered her preconceived notions of the "Evil Empire." In *Around the Bloc*, Griest relates her experiences as a volunteer at a

children's shelter in Moscow, a propaganda polisher at the office of the Chinese Communist Party's English-language mouthpiece in Beijing, and a belly dancer among the rumba queens of Havana. She falls in love with an ex-soldier who narrowly avoided radiation cleanup duties at Chernobyl, hangs out with Cuban hip-hop artists, and comes to difficult realizations about the meaning of democracy. is the absorbing story of a young journalist driven by a desire to witness the effects of Communism. Along the way, she learns the Russian mathematical equation for buying dinner-party vodka (one bottle per guest, plus an extra), stumbles upon Beijing's underground gay scene, marches with 100,000 mothers demanding Elián González's return to Cuba, and gains a new appreciation for the Mexican culture she left behind.

red dust a path through china ma jian: Hong Kong & Macau Travel Adventures Simon Foster, 2011-04-15 Fly into Hong Kong and spend a few days discovering its diverse attractions -from shopping in bustling Kowloon to hiking along one of the islands' well-marked lush trails. Eat dim sum downtown and head up Victoria Peak for an after-dinner drink to remember. Take a boat or a train to Guangzhou and sample yet more Cantonese delights, along with some fine colonial architecture, maybe stopping off in modern Shenzhen for a peek at the new China. From Guangzhou, take a bus, train or flight to Guilin and spend a day visiting its mountainous and man-made attractions. The following morning take a boat along the Li River to Yangshuo, where you can spend the next few days hiking and cycling through the famed idyllic limestone scenery. Head back to Guilin for the return flight to Hong Kong. Take the ferry over to Macau and enjoy a day or two soaking up the splendid architecture, fine cuisine, small fishing villages, temples and beaches. Whether flying into the vast, ultra-modern Chek Lap Kok Airport and being whisked into the city center on the hi-tech, ultra-fast Airport Express, or arriving by boat at the China Ferry Terminal, Hong Kong, with its population of seven million, never fails to impress. You instantly know you're somewhere special, particularly the first time you lay eyes on the spectacle of the skyscraper-filled island from the Kowloon side. After weeks or months on the road in China, Hong Kong is the perfect spot for some dining, shopping and splurging. But if it's the great outdoors you're after, there are plenty of hikes and beaches in the territory as well. Hong Kong is a place where even the mildest exploration can offer stark contrast and both traditional Chinese and colonial history lurk beneath the city's slick modern exterior. Whether swimming in the sea or hiking an island trail to a small shrine through lush tropical undergrowth on one of the outlying islands, it's difficult to imagine that the gleaming skyscrapers are only a short boat ride away. Forty miles across the water, Macau also served its time as a colony and its Portuguese history has engendered a laid-back ambiance unique in China, which remains to this day despite a recent building boom. Walking through the architectural monuments of Macau's stunning historic center you'd easily believe you were in Lisbon, were it not for the occasional Taoist temple. Conversely, a trip out to the islands will take you on a journey into Macau's casino-laden future at Cotai and then back to its past amidst the small fishing villages and beaches of yesteryear on Coloane. This a highly detailed guide to everything you need to know about Hong Kong, Macau and their surroundings - the places to stay, the restaurants, and what to see and do - along with an extensive introductory section on China as a whole. The author lives in China and has been a tour guide there full-time for close to 10 years. This guide is an excerpt from his much larger guide to all of China, also published by Hunter, which is 650 pages in the print edition.

red dust a path through china ma jian: The Immeasurable World William Atkins, 2018-07-24 Winner of the Stanford Dolman Travel Book of the Year (UK) William Atkins is an erudite writer with a wonderful wit and gaze and this is a new and exciting beast of a travel book.—Joy Williams In the classic literary tradition of Bruce Chatwin and Geoff Dyer, a rich and exquisitely written account of travels in eight deserts on five continents that evokes the timeless allure of these remote and forbidding places. One-third of the earth's surface is classified as desert. Restless, unhappy in love, and intrigued by the Desert Fathers who forged Christian monasticism in the Egyptian desert, William Atkins decided to travel in eight of the world's driest, hottest places: the Empty Quarter of Oman, the Gobi Desert and Taklamakan deserts of northwest China, the Great

Victoria Desert of Australia, the man-made desert of the Aral Sea in Kazakhstan, the Black Rock and Sonoran Deserts of the American Southwest, and Egypt's Eastern Desert. Each of his travel narratives effortlessly weaves aspects of natural history, historical background, and present-day reportage into a compelling tapestry that reveals the human appeal of these often inhuman landscapes.

red dust a path through china ma jian: *Biographical Dictionary of the People's Republic of China* Yuwu Song, 2013-07-22 This biographical dictionary is an indispensable research tool for information about the prominent persons of the past seven decades in China. The book documents nearly 600 Chinese individuals who contributed, for better or worse, to the development of Chinese life and culture since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Though the book is weighted toward political figures, it includes persons in business, the military, academia, medicine, social movements, the arts, entertainment and athletics. In addition to an objective description of the person's life, an analysis is provided that identifies the individual's contributions and importance.

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