

Unlike the multi-millennium capital of Beijing and other more militarily strategic cities which have been around for thousands of years, in the lush and fertile southwest the city of Guiyang happily missed out on the downside of being historically prime and much sought-after real estate. Avoided were the serial dramas of armed conflict, recurring destruction, royal machinations, homicidal emperors, volatile power struggles, threatening Mongol hordes and bloodthirsty greed-driven foreign intrusions. Among other more recent misfortunes missed, the region avoided the scourge of the Eight-Nation Alliance in the early 1900s and the brutality of Japanese aggression. During World War II, as part of the effort to beat back the invading Japanese from more easterly regions, Guiyang did serve Allied efforts as a logistical transit point. Guiyang senior citizens still recount the strange sight of US soldiers in the streets directing supply convoys, for instance. But the high drama that comes with epic conflict and major political upheaval mostly missed Guiyang. And that's a good thing. Guiyang has long been known as a green and peaceful place; and it remains so today.

- Excerpt from the Text

Guiyang shows us what a future eco-city will be like. Looking around this beautiful city, I am struck by all sorts of examples showing how Guiyang is transforming itself into an eco-city. Particularly apparent are the green areas, including both parks and forests, which provide the citizens with a healthy environment of sustainable development.

- Bertie Ahern, former Taoiseach of Ireland and Honorary President for Life of Ireland-China Cooperation Council

Guiyang's ecological progress is amazing. Impelled by a long-standing awareness of ecological issues, its socio-economic development has achieved great things. The improved eco-environment, the thriving ecological industry and the atmosphere of ecological culture paint wonderful backdrop against which this eco-city flourishes.

- Tung Chee-hwa, Vice Chairman of the CPPCC National Committee and the first and former Chief Executive of Hong Kong SAR

The 21st century is one in which ecological progress will be a matter of the greatest concern. While others worry about the deteriorating climate, Guiyang has won the title of "National Forest City" - only one of several awards for environmental and ecological protection secured by this multi-ethnic city. Carrying in its name the word "Gui" that means "noble," and the capital of a province that carries in its name that same word, Guiyang is a city that very much lives up to its noble name!

- Yu Qiuyu, contemporary scholar of Chinese cultural history



About the Author
Lowell Bennett

Considering China since 2005

Based in Beijing for five years, award-winning writer and photographer Lowell Bennett was under contract as an editorial consultant with China International Publishing Group, China's largest foreign-language publishing organization. Also maintaining his longtime freelance business, Bennett otherwise earned a living advising, editing, writing, handling collateral web development projects and shooting photos on behalf of publications, corporations, government agencies and organizations worldwide.

During and since that original five-year consulting contract, in the course of professional assignments and personal travels Bennett explored much of China, recording in image and reflecting in writing its many regions, provinces, cities, towns, villages and remote hinterlands. On assignment in China's southwest in 2012, he took particular note of an especially cool and green place.

Guiyang: The Philosopher City, featuring more than 200 images, covers regional ecological protection efforts, culture, industry, and the land and people of Guiyang, the capital of Guizhou Province.

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