

ALONG THE SILK ROAD

Sīchóu Zhī Lù

丝绸之路

1. From Almaty to Lanzhou

SILK ROAD

The Silk Road, the well-known ancient trade route, running through Asia and linking China with Europe, boasts a history of more than 2,000 years. It started from Chang'an (today's Xi'an) in the East, ran through Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai and Xinjiang, crossed Congling (today's the Pamirs), and reached the Mediterranean coast after running across central Asia. Its total length is over 7,000 kilometres, with 4,000 within the boundary of China.

For three weeks, I went on an epic journey through western China, almost entirely by train. Starting at the Kazak/Chinese border, I travelled more than 5,000 kilometers through Xinjiang, Gansu, Qinghai and Tibet.