

**JI-TONG-Line
Travel Guide 2004**

compiled by Hinrich Brümmer

December 2003

When visiting the JI-TONG-Line (with Bernd Seilers Farrail Tours – <http://www.farrail.com/>), I always thought that it would be nice to have all the information on that line as a handy reference (and not just lots of printouts etc.) when travelling around and taking photos. So I started to compile the information available on the internet for myself, which “grew” into the “Travel Guide 2003”. This is the updated (more or less) version for the current “season” 2004 (might also be the “last” considering the beginning dieselization between Zhelimu and Chabuga).

The most extensive coverage of this line on the internet can be found on the website of Hans Schaefer <http://home.c2i.net/schaefer/jitongoverview.html>. Most of the information and the maps as of October 2003 were taken from this website (with some minor modifications made by me). Any comments or news concerning this line should be made available to Hans Schaefer.

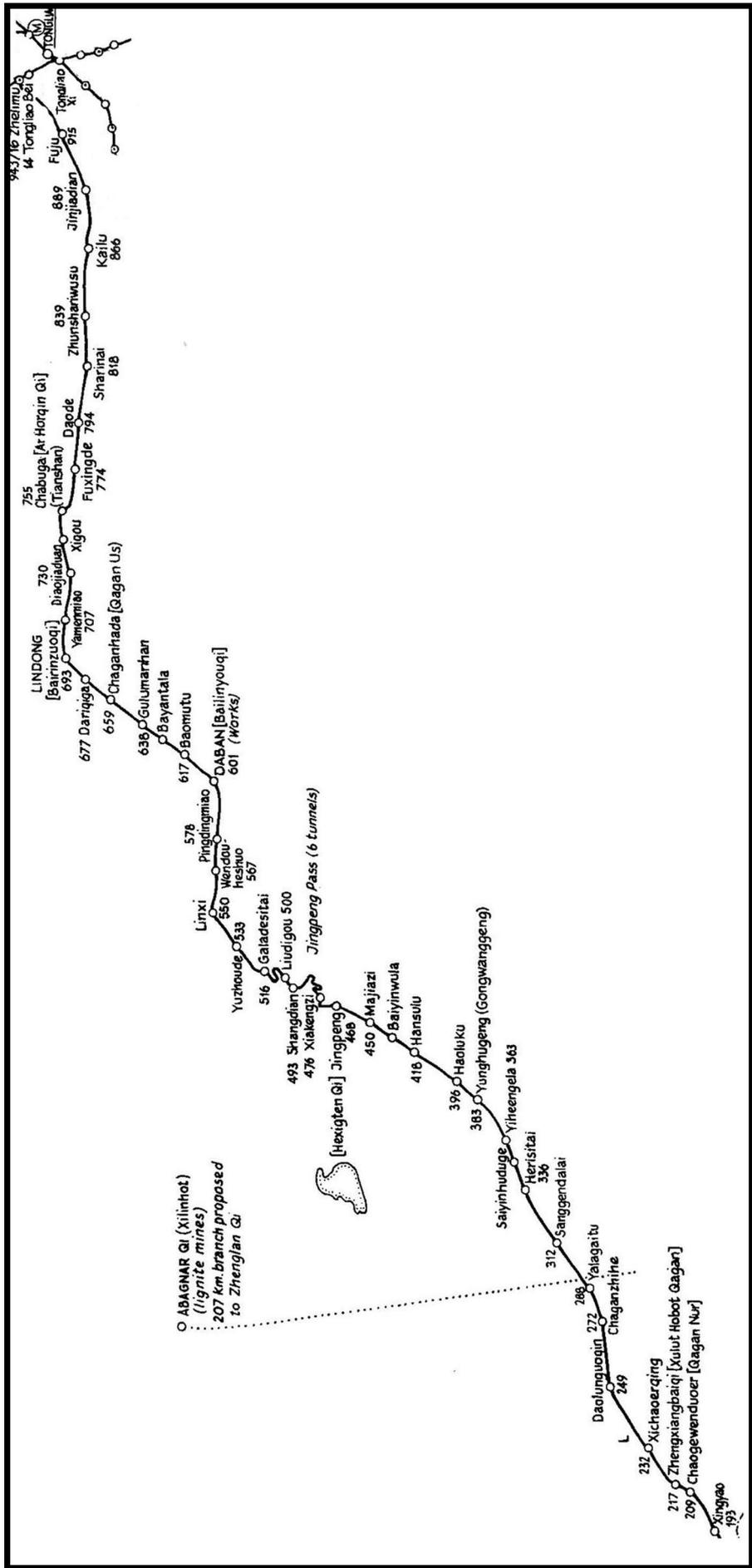
Additional information is also available on the websites of Florian Menius <http://www.gj-country.de/> and Rob Dickinson <http://dialspace.dial.pipex.com/steam/internat.htm>.

Enjoy your trip while it still lasts

*Hinrich Brümmer
Berlin 12/2003*

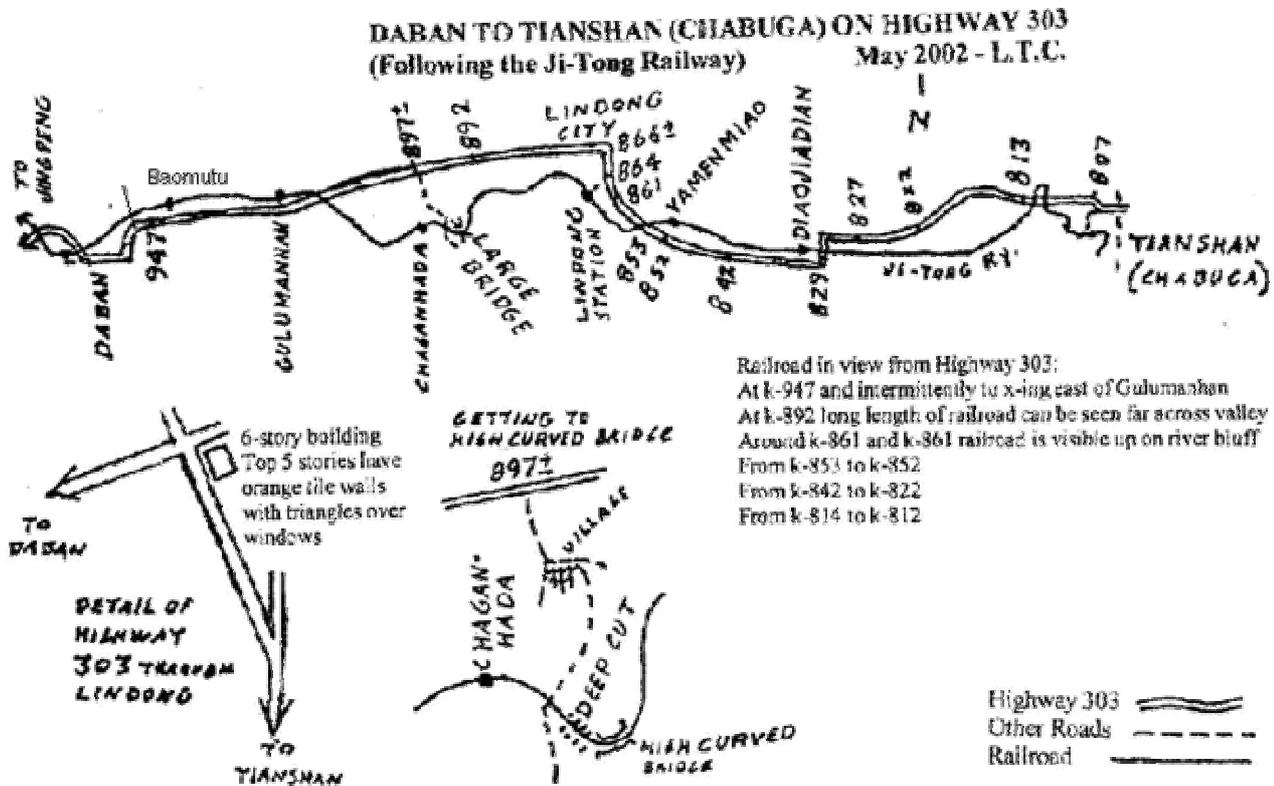
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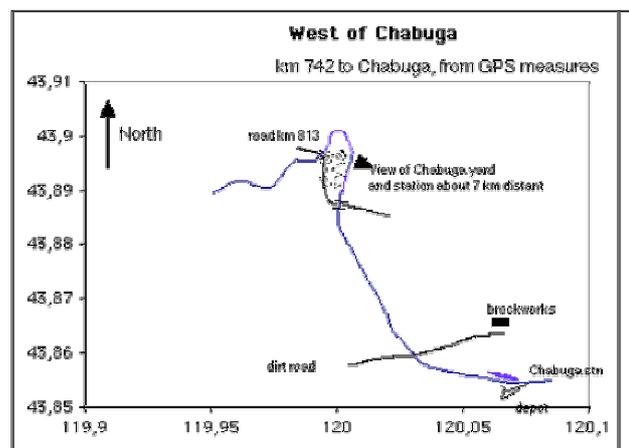


Chabuga to Daban:

This part of the Jitong railway is mostly served by single engines. However, some trains often run with double headers. Instead of sending off light engines, they rather put two engines on one train. Most trains have long stops at Chabuga, up to two hours, according to the official schedule. This is for a technical check of the wagons. The line is running through hilly terrain and has many grades of 5 to 6 per thousand, making the locomotives work hard. There are many good possibilities for photographing.

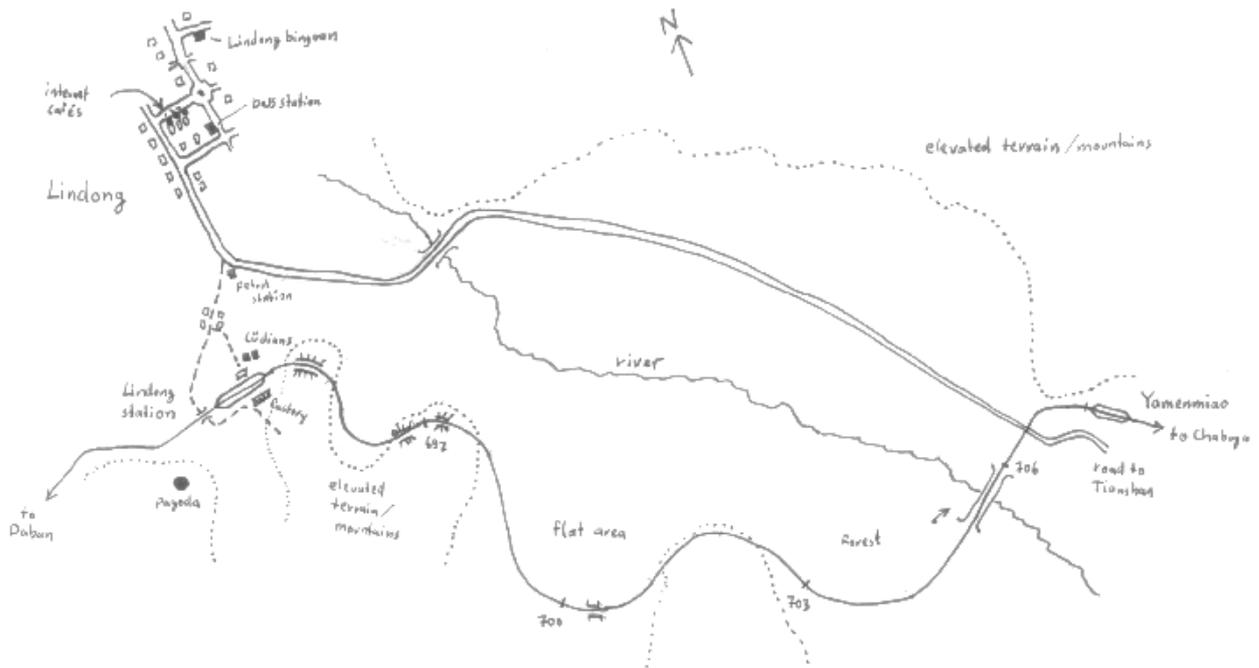


- From Chabuga the line immediately enters a hard incline (westbound), most of it about 5 per thousand. This lets the engine work about as hard as on the "Jingpeng pass" between Jingpeng and Reshui. A dirt road crosses the line at **km 751.5**, good photo position for evenings.
- A few kilometres out of Chabuga, at **km 748.8**, the highway to Lindong crosses the line with a bridge. Just after it comes a large curve. This may be a good evening photo position. Another bridge over the railway is at **km 745.5** (main road). Good photo position all day. The railway passes along a hill in the curve below it. There is a wonderful cut from which you can catch the eastbound trains round the curve, swing around through the cut and curve off rolling down toward Chabuga. Great for afternoon light. The whole incline is at 5.5 to 6 per thousand.
- The line runs upwards until Xigou station, where after it falls, but at less than 5 per thousand.
- There is a level crossing with the main road at **km 731.102** (near the highest point between Yamenmiao and Chabuga), and the line falls to the west of that. Large bridge at **km 728.4**, eastbound trains work hard here.
- From Xigou until Yamenmiao station (**km 707**), there a lot of small inclines and declines, and steam comes off and on. There is open undulating prairie/desert for many miles.



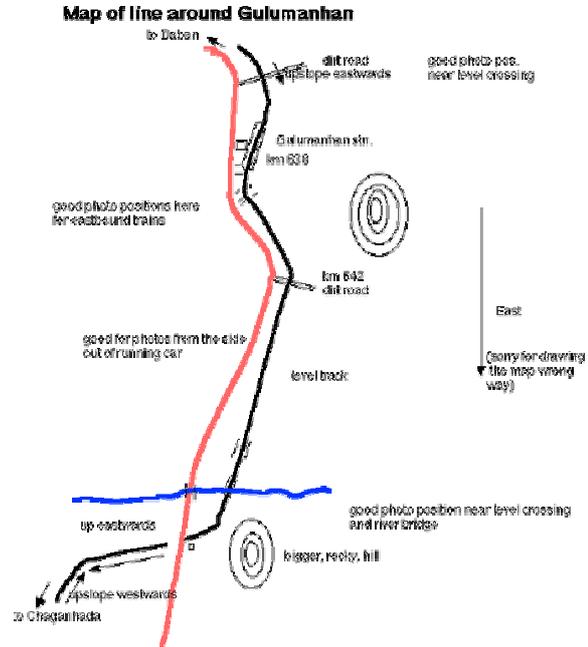
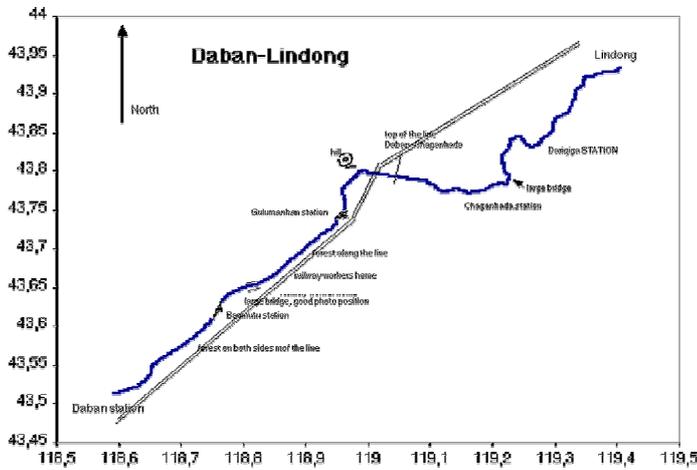
Lindong - Yamenmiao Area

© H. Schäfer / F. Menius, Oct 2004



- North of Yamenmiao, you find a steep mountain as a background. Level crossing with main road at **km 706.1**. The line falls towards a large river bridge and then slowly rises towards Lindong. In the Lindong direction, the line skirts several ranges of hills as it climbs out of the Olji Moron He river valley towards Chaghanhada summit. The first section to Lindong is quite photogenic and relatively easily accessible. Good for afternoon photography, with long curves. Lindong station (**km 693**) is 14 km up the bank and some 4 km by road from the town of the same name. The station here has several through roads, watering and fire cleaning facilities and a few sidings.
- Desert like terrain near the big river bridge and the steep mountain may give a good background for pictures. Light is best from the middle of the day to the evening. You may take the morning passenger train from Daban and take one of the evening trains back.
- From the river bridge at **km 706** to Lindong at **km 693** most of the line is upslope at 4 to 6 per thousand. Large curves at **km 704** to **km 694** give ample possibilities for pictures.
- The line here is criss-crossed by several dirt roads which are easily accessible by bus if your driver knows the area.
- At Lindong the locomotives take water and sometimes do some shunting. Even eastbound freights take water. Note a large 1000 years old pagoda on the hill above Lindong. It was build to safeguard Lindong from a wild dragon. Nice photos of starting westbound trains at Lindong station from here! In 2003, there is major work going on in the area of the Lindong station due to new tracks being built to a new Lead Smelter under construction to the south of the tracks west of the station. From here the line slopes up 2 to 6 in thousand westwards. There is a small road crossing at Wangjiawan (**km 699**) and there are several good photo positions on the line for uphill trains.
- The incline continues past Dariqiga, thereafter most of the time 6 per thousand until just after Chaghanhada. The line is less accessible but appears to climb through relatively open country. Level crossing with main road at **km 683.6** with the line going up towards the west.
- At **km 665.8** is a large river bridge in a curve. Good for afternoon photography. Accessible from the main road at a crossing 29 km west of Lindong. The side road (with a sign that reads "Yezhugou 23 km") leads to a spot near the bridge. About 2 km of walking. You may chase a train from here towards the west if you have an able taxi driver. Locomotives with westbound trains work very hard here. Mountains are in the background to the south. Since 2002, there is construction work being done for an new road bridge just south of the railway bridge (for an new motorway from Huhhaote to Hailaer).

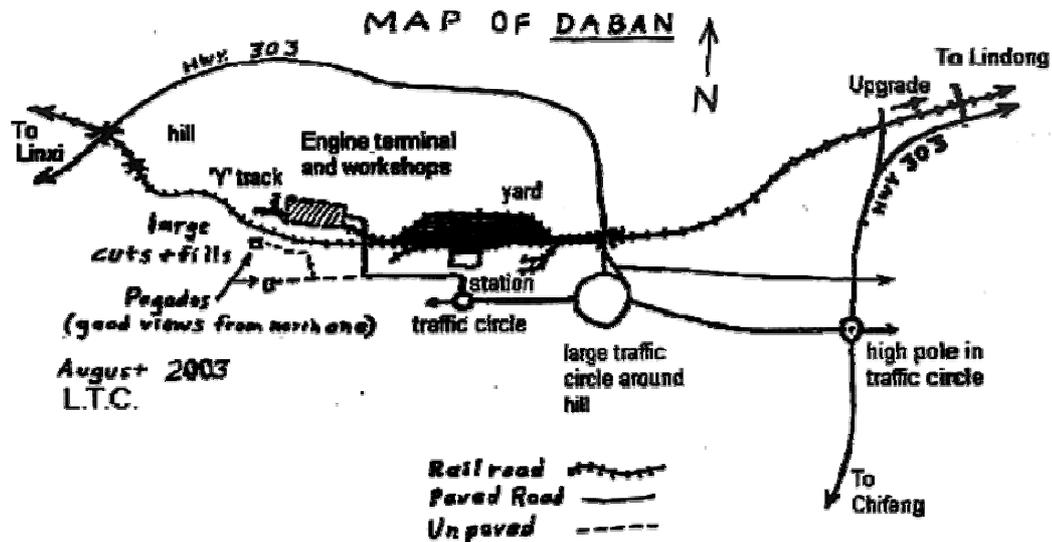
- The top is between Chaghanhada and Gulumanhan, one kilometer east of the level crossing with the main road at **km 646**. Nice photo position just after this level crossing towards the west. You may drive on the main road in parallel to the train and take photos from aside, until near Gulumanhan. Westbound trains will steam at parts of the line, eastbound ones all the way from west of Gulumanhan until after passing the top after the road crossing. Just at and after the road crossing, eastbound trains will work hard, as the incline here is 6 per thousand.



- Gulumanhan (**km 638**) is equipped for taking on water and has three tracks. Here eastbound trains will have to work hard. Westbound trains accelerate out of the station (good from the dirt road/level crossing on the western side of the station (see map)), thus you have steaming both ways. Some nice curves are here, and the main road is very near the line.
- On the way westwards the line runs first downhill at 5 per thousand, then flat with small declines and inclines in a forest until a large bridge at **km 623**. From there it turns upwards towards Baomutu. There is also an S-curve just west of the bridge. After passing Baomutu, the last station before Daban, there is still an incline for westbound trains until **km 614**, from which the line turns down until Daban.
- The countryside around Baomutu is quite flat, with a mongolian style hotel north of the line and wild mountains in the far north. The main road is just south of the railway. From **km 608** the downgrade is about 6 per thousand, making it hard for eastbound trains. At **km 608** is a level crossing with a tarmac road, and several good photo positions nearby.
- Most of the time between Gulumanhan and Daban, the road is not far south of the rails. On the north side, there are lots of trees, probably planted when the railway was built. It can be seen quite well, how these trees stop the blowing sand. Tree planting is especially tight from **km 610** to **km 617**, from **km 627** to **638.5** and from **km 659** to **677**.
- **Km 605** is a good spot to reach by walking the line from Daban, for the morning passenger train. You may also go by taxi to the level crossing at road km 945.
- The line between Chabuga and Daban (and further to Linxi) has 75 km/h maximum speed.
- At places with trees along the line, firing restrictions apply during the time from Sept. 15 to Nov. 30 and April 15 to May 30, in order not to set the forest on fire.

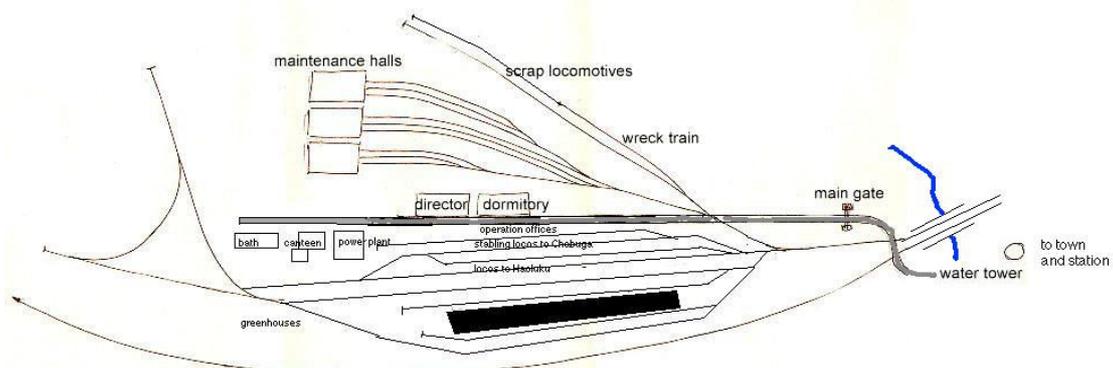
Daban to Haoluku:

This part of the line is the steep part. The ruling grade between Linxi and Haoluku is 12 per thousand. This means that most freight trains (all trains with more than 1150 tons load) run with two QJ engines.



Daban Depot

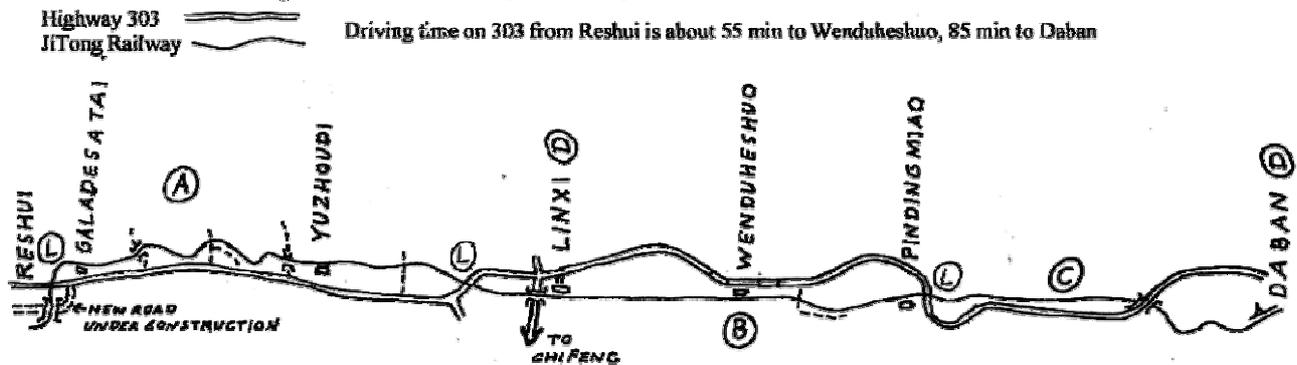
- Daban depot is Ji-Tong line's largest depot. It cares for both its own engines and the engines from the depot in Chabuga. Most of the time you can find some 4 to 6 locomotives being washed out or repaired, plus some 5 to 10 locomotives being serviced or waiting for their next train.
- From Daban station, follow the rails one kilometer to the west. You enter the depot at a level crossing. Visiting is easy. There are standard conditions, a fee of 200 RMB. The responsible person is Mr. He Li Wen, who sits in the second floor of the administration building. He is working for the party, as information secretary, but is educated railwayman. It may be a good idea to call him from any station along the line before your visit, if you come on a Sunday. This because on Sundays he may not be in the office, and nobody else may be. If you call 0476 6210490, you may leave him a message at his beeper number 16685. However, you will have to speak Chinese to the telephone exchange people. Mr. He Li Wen takes both pictures and videos himself. He speaks quite well English (better every year). You may also ask him about other photo positions along the line. He may also assist you in getting a taxi driver who knows what railway friends want to see.
- You ask the entrance guard for Mr. He Li Wen, pay the entrance fee at his office and off you go. You will be free to move around all over the depot area and take photos during daylight. In darkness (evening or early morning hours) they want you to stay at the walkways (safety reasons). At the repair shop people wear helmets. You should either ask for a helmet when going in there, or keep well out of reach of any dangerous items. Be aware that most locomotives have warm boilers while being repaired!
- But please keep in mind: Make sure you are moving around safely. Until now, no visitor has had any injury there. First time this happens, visits will be much more difficult.



**HIGHWAY 303 and JITONG RAILWAY
RESHUI to DABAN**

August 2003

by Louis Cerny



A – Between Yuzhoudi and Galadesatai is, I believe, the steepest average grade between any two stations on the Jitong. Many fine photo positions exist here. There are three general S formations in this stretch. The middle one has a lesser grade between the two curves for a future passing siding.

Daban (km 601)

- Daban station lies in a small downslope towards west, helping trains to start.
- From Daban westwards, the first two kilometres rise at 4 to 6 per thousand, after which there is a quite flat stretch with desert like landscape until crossing the river after about 15 kilometres. In this flat part, the line runs northwards. Some small ups and downs in desert like terrain. The main road crosses the line on a bridge after some 5 kilometres. From Daban station until here it is about 90 minutes walking. Several good photo positions along this stretch (marked C on the map). After that, the line can be seen from the road, with several good photo positions along here. Both ways the engines will not work hard, and speed is considerable, often about 50 to 60 km/h for freights. Eastbound freights will very seldomly open up steam. If at all, this happens after passing the large river bridge (Xila Muluen He river) near Pingdingmiao eastwards.
- But the eastbound passenger train will steam from a stop at about **km 590** to a place some 3 kilometres west of Daban. This may give some nice morning photos. At the same place it is good to photo trains going west. Westbound trains may steam most of the way to Pingdingmiao, but usually not the last 3 km before the large river bridge.

Pingdingmiao (km 578)

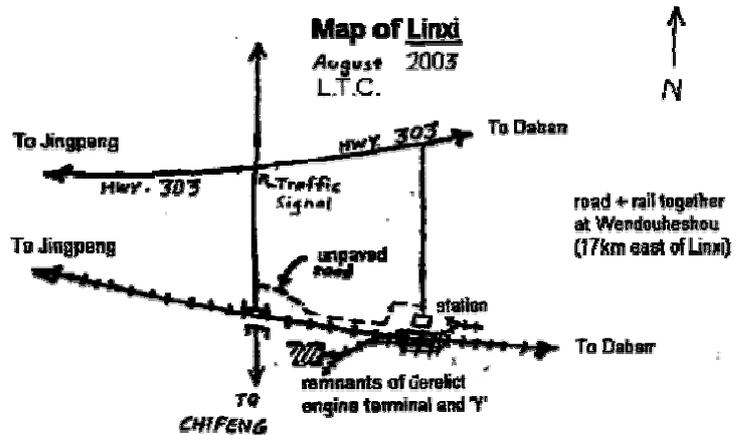
- At the first station after the river bridge (Pingdingmiao) many freight trains stop to check the running gear. Just east of the station at **km 578.8** is a level crossing with the main road number 303. West of the station is a small level crossing with a dirt road. Nice photo position for westbound trains leaving the station. From here to Linxi the line rises most of the time at 3 to 6 per thousand. It leads through agricultural areas; sometimes it is on dams, sometimes in cuttings.
- The road is near the line at about **km 570 to 590** (the road is now finished and in good shape. Buses are available, one bus from Daban at 8.20. A taxi between Linxi and Daban will cost about 100Y.). Engines work at medium power up to Linxi.

Wenduoheshuo (km 567)

- The station is visible from the road, which runs parallel to the railway for 1.5 more kilometres on the east side of the station. Near the station, the road crosses four nonpermanent rivers by bridges. Most of the time, the railway runs through flat agricultural land, rising at about 3 to 4 per thousand. Speed of westbound trains is about 40 km/h, sometimes up to 60, eastbound trains may run at 75 km/h. Linxi is reached about 1 to 1 1/2 hours after starting from Daban.

LinXi (km 550)

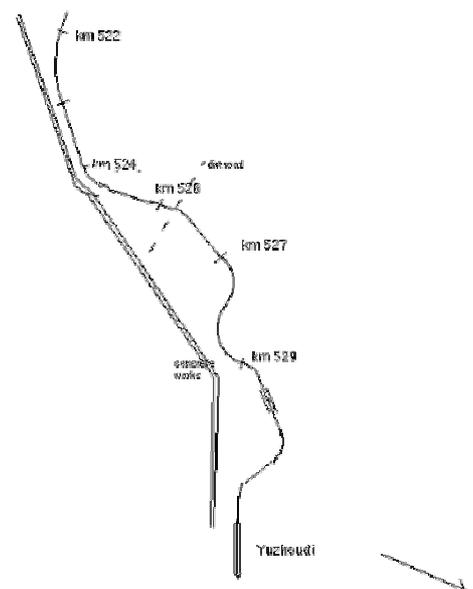
- LinXi is a water stop. Westbound trains tend to stop in track 2, eastbound trains in track 3. The town itself is located about one kilometer north of the railway. The water stop takes twenty minutes to half an hour if there is no extra waiting for crossing trains. Often, shunting is also done here.
- Local workers push coal forward in the tenders. The train stops before reaching the water crane, then pulls ahead to a precise stop. There is only one water crane, so the train must be pulled forward 29 meters to water the second engine. Local people collect any coal that falls down from the tenders or is on the frame between loco and tender. The women sometimes wear brightly colored clothes, which makes it a good motive for photography. Linxi is reached about 1 to 1 1/2 hours after starting from Daban.



- Linxi once had a locomotive service station during the construction of the line. Some abandoned tracks and an abandoned triangle can be seen just west of the station. Linxi also has a few side tracks, one of them to oil tanks. On the west side of the station, the new road towards Chifeng is starting. There is also a tin, silver and lead factory just outside town to the west. The ride by taxi from Daban to Linxi takes about one hour.

Yuzhoudi (km 533)

- After LinXi the action starts. Until the level crossing at **km 544.5**, the grade is mostly below 6 per thousand and the terrain is flat with vegetable fields. Most of the line after that rises at 11 per thousand, sometimes on straight stretches even 12, along the road to Reshui. Heavy trains are often creeping along at 16 km/h to 20 km/h.
- Yuzhoudi station gives relief for some 2 kilometres. This station has some side tracks because an iron ore mine delivers iron ore for loading here. It looks like black dust and is usually kept wet to prevent it from blowing away. Probably, this mine will deliver its ore to Shangshuitou farther west in the future.
- After the station, the line passes right through the village of Yuzhoudi. Before the village ends, there's a market place between the road 303 and the railway line framed by buildings. There you can take nice photos of hardworking engines with the market activity in the foreground.
- The Daqing mountains become visible in the north now, and start dominating the scenery. At the cement factory 2 km west of Yuzhoudi the rise is up to 12 per thousand again. An S-curve here is nice for photography. But many curves on the way afterwards may also yield nice photo positions. Two good ones are near the cement factory and one kilometer west of it.
- The road is near the line, especially at **km 521 - 523**, which makes chasing trains by taxi possible. The area is marked by an encircled A on the map. Small minibuses (*mianbao chuzuche*) run all the times during daylight. Average cost is 5 RMB from Linxi to Reshui if you share the ride with all other people, 50 if you take one alone. The ride in a taxi alone takes about half an hour from Linxi to Reshui, while freight trains generally take one hour.



- Most of the area along the line is used for agriculture, with corn, sugarbeets, buckwheat, wheat and sunflowers being the crops. But also many animals will graze here. The road is enclosed by poplar trees. At one point is a police roadblock, used to check that no wood is exported from the area illegally.

Galadesitai (km 516) / Reshui

- Just before reaching Galadesitai, the line rises on a dam, passing the outer entrance signal and then through a cutting. Here are some niche positions either for westbound trains entering or eastbound trains leaving the station.
- Level crossings, since 2001 with guards, at the main road are at Reshui (**km 515.6**) and at SanDi (**km 509.8**). At the big river bridge at Reshui there's often a strong westerly wind blowing. Locomotive crews are well aware that all the foreign railway friends are standing at certain positions above Reshui and are taking photos. Since autumn 2002, a new road is being constructed in the river bed passing Reshui. Its ditches make the crossing of the valley difficult.
- To rise more than 200 m in 10 km, several horseshoe curves have been built, so the line turns on itself twice on the eastern ramp. After leaving Galadesitai station the line passes a bridge over a dry gully, then enters a 90 degree left hand curve. It passes the school, then the level crossing. Fir trees have been planted along the line here. After the level crossing with road 303, trains pass the entrance signal for the eastbound trains and cross the valley on the large bridge. Here, the incline of 12 per thousand begins. Trains will slow down. The right hand curve after the viaduct has only 9 per thousand. The line to SanDi continues more or less straight with a 2 per thousand gradient. Trains work hard here and go slow.
- Near the school of SanDi, the line turns a bit right, over the river bridge and then enters the first horseshoe curve (from level 1 to level 2). Most of this is in a cutting, deep down into the clay. The signal for entering SanDi is on the RIGHT side of the line. This is difficult for some engines, as the QJs are slippery when in curves. Near the end of the curve the railway crosses the main road, and then reaches the new (November 2001) SanDi station.

SanDi (km 508)

- Here is a flat stretch, only 1.5 per thousand incline. Before, at this place was only a railway workers home. Here only one of the engines may work. This is true if one engine has a bad boiler and needs to cook water to get steam pressure up. If both engines work, speed may rise to 40 km/h, but they nearly never open up steam to maximal power. Maximum speed on this section (Reshui to Jingpeng) is 50 km/h.
- At the end of the straight stretch, the line enters a deep cutting, then turns to the left on a high dam, a famous photo position. The dam seems to sink down in the middle. It is easy to see that the gradient is steeper towards the end of it. Then comes the second horseshoe curve from level 2 to level 3 with two short tunnels, the first (#7 tunnel) 205 m long, the second (#6 tunnel) 275 m long but having an S-curve. Between these tunnels are the places with the first morning sunlight. Both tunnels are short enough to walk through with care.
- The line then follows the slope of the mountains in fillings and cuttings. From most of these places, all three levels of the approach are visible, and you can see the trains for more than half an hour climbing the hills. Just below Liudigou near the signal are the places with the last sunlight of the day.

Liudigou (km 500)

- This station is situated on the mountain slope. The station building was placed on bad ground, was finished but never taken into use. Cracks opened up. In 2000 it fell down. Local people have taken some of the materials, the rest is still laying in a heap. The station master resides in a one story house with the railway workers. The station is easy to reach by a sand road from the level crossing below SanDi. Walking up from the level crossing takes you 15-20 minutes, depending on your condition and the photo gear you're carrying
 - As the station lies in a 6 per thousand incline, it is not popular to stop westbound trains here. The passing siding branches off on the north side of the track. If eastbound trains have to stop, they will normally use the passing siding.
-

- Above Liudigou the line is more or less straight, most of the time 12 per thousand incline, locomotives still work very hard. After some five kilometres there are a few curves, passing the village ShiDi on a high dam and then the outer signal to Shangdian station. Here, at the tunnel entrance, is a good photo position, as it is just below the road. It is easy to chase trains by car to this position, after photos further down. The summit of the line is in the 982 m long tunnel #5, near the west end of it. It normally takes about two hours for the train to climb from Linxi to Shangdian.

Shangdian (km 493)

- In the tunnel or at the station entrance to Shangdian the engine crews shut off steam, they pass the station rolling, and slowly start rolling down the slope towards Jingpeng. The grade here is 9 to 11.5 per thousand most of the time. The line follows the mountain slope to the left, through three tunnels (#4, #3, #2) into a side valley near ErDi. This side valley is a famous morning photo position. A brickwork is situated inside the curve. On the north side of the side valley is the steep mountain Hadashan. A good vantage point for people who want to have an overview or just want to hear and see the long climb of the eastbound trains. It is possible to climb it from the east side (but takes some 60 minutes).
- Shangdian station has two side tracks, from east number 3 first branches off to the left, then number one to the right. Westbound trains tend to stop for crossing in track 2, while eastbound trains then pass in track 1.

Hadashan (km 484)

- At HaDaShan station there's a two kilometre flat stretch (only 1.5 per thousand incline). The Station was opened in November 2001. Hadashan station has two side tracks, westbound trains tend to stop for crossing on track 3, while eastbound trains then pass on track 2.
- Then the line enters the western horseshoe curve with a 400 meter radius, passing the tunnel #1 first (not easy to walk, as it is long and curved), and then over the big bridge at Simingyi. The line falls mostly at 9 to 11 per thousand. After some backtracking the line comes back east as far as Hadashan again entering the second horseshoe curve, now crossing the road 303 towards Jingpeng. On the bridge you can read the slogan "the railway was built by the people, the railway serves the people". Then the trains further roll down the north side of the valley, into Xiakengzi. There are several deep cuttings all along this stretch, and incline is most of the time around 9 per thousand. Only on straight stretches it is more.
- Just before reaching Xiakengzi station, the line passes above SiMingYi primary school, on a photogenic filling between two cuts.

Xiakengzi (km 476)

- The station lies in a 6 per thousand incline. The loop branches off to the south side of the main track. Downbound trains, if stopped, use the side track.
- Again, below this, most of the time the line falls at 8 to 12 per thousand, with nice curves in cuttings and on fills. It enters another side valley to the north, crosses a large bridge and runs south towards Jingpeng, passing two large brickworks just before the station. Along all of this, the locomotives on eastbound trains will work hard.

Jingpeng (km 468)

- Jingpeng has another water stop with double water cranes for both directions, and here, local workers push the coal to the front of the tender. Westbound trains use tracks 1 and 2, eastbound trains track 2 and 3. All trains take water here, and some westbound locomotives may get cleaned the fire.
 - Jingpeng has a few side tracks east of the station and a loading area for ballast stone, which is manufactured locally here. Some trains will stop for shunting here. The town is situated below the station on the east side, about three kilometres by taxi. You may also walk along the line a kilometre or so westwards and then enter the town through a foot path near an old temple.
 - From Jingpeng, the first five kilometres are quite flat, until the large river bridge west of Jingpeng. Westbound trains may reach 60 km/h, whereas eastbound trains roll fast without using steam. There are actually two bridges, one smaller first, then the large one. The bridge after Jingpeng was the most expensive on the line. It is 45m high (its pillars extending 10m below the river level) and 400m long. To get to the west bank it is best to walk over the bridge, as the river often has water and there are some high fences on the west bank.
-

- The section between Jingpeng station and the large viaduct 5 km west of JingPeng offers, though flat and not hard working engines, very photogenic spots:
 - ancient temple just below the railway line, JingPeng city and mountains as backdrop
 - curves, hills
 - a level crossing with guard hut
 - crossing a side valley on a dam plus a smaller bridge (km 462)
 - large viaduct at km 461, possibly the largest one of the whole JiTong line. Photogenic in the afternoon, taxi 5 km west of Jingpeng.
- Scenery west of the viaduct is less rewarding, however nice at Majiazi.

Majiazi (km 450)

- There is an 11 kilometer long 11 per thousand rise towards Majiazi. Mostly straight line, but some desert like landscape with a lot of sand and even some sand dunes on both sides of the line, and the road 303 (towards Xilinhaote) not far north of the line. Westbound trains are working very hard here.
- Then through the next two stations the line runs mostly straight, rising at mostly 6 to 8 per thousand. Here they have been planting trees, in order to stop the sand from blowing on the line. A dirt road leads along parts of this line. The problem here for the firemen is the quite full firebox, the quite empty tender, and very often slag in the fire. Steam production may not be on top any longer.

Shangshuitou (km 439)

- This is a new station opened November 2001, with side tracks to load iron ore. Lorries deliver the ore from a mine some 40 km away in the northwest. It is kept wet in order no to be blown away. The side tracks are more or less covered by sand. This is still in a hard incline. The incline continues westwards, more or less on a straight line. The station building here is nonstandard, mongolian style.

Baiyinwula (km 428)

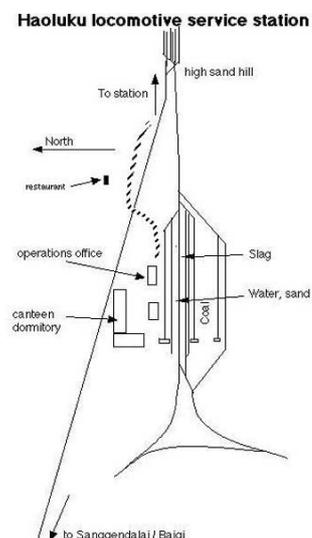
- The line up until here is quite straight, some hard inline at 11 per thousand, some less. Landscape is near desert with sand dunes and some trees. The loop at Baiyinwula is on the north side.

Hansulu (km 418)

- The last 15 kilometers from Hansulu to Haoluku contains small ups and downs, mostly 2 to 4 per thousand, with the last 2 kilometres down. On this stretch both eastbound and westbound trains will be working, speed being at 30 to 50 km/h. Some desert and some sand dunes with birch trees on their top make a nice background, but the line can only be reached by walking from Haoluku. The line between Jingpeng and Haoluku has a 75 km/h maximum speed limit.

Haoluku (km 396)

- This is a locomotive changing station in the middle of nowhere. There is a small railway workers town near the station, the depot is west of it. The cars get a brake inspection, locomotives change from two Daban based engines to one Baiqi based one. Landscape around the station is sand dunes, the southern horizon is far away. Some birch and oak trees grow on the dunes north of the station. A few small farms and a private restaurant are around. Westbound trains normally enter track 2, eastbound trains track 3.
- The locomotives enter the servicing facility from the station and go directly to the coal area (on either the left or the far right track). Then they are cleaned at the beginning of triangle. After they're turned they proceed to the sanding and water area, replenishing their supplies. Slag is removed just before going back into service, and again the water is filled up.



Haoluku to Baiqi

- The ruling grade for everything west of Haoluku is 6 per thousand. This means one QJ can handle up to 2300 tons trains. The line is up and down in rolling hills, no general trend observable. Speed limit here is 75 km/h. There is a grade out of Haoluku against westbound trains. Some photogenic sand dunes right after Haoluku. Locomotives keep working until the next station.

Gongzhugeng (km 383)

- Gongzhugeng station is situated in a long left curve and westbound trains work hard here, photogenic sand dunes and trees, some cows are often here. There is also a nice curve 1 km east of the station, making this a good position for all day photography. The top is about 2 km west of the station, after which the line falls at 6 per thousand, with some S-curves along sand dunes.

Yiheengela (km 363)

- Yiheengela sees new steaming for westbound trains, however no incline. Small hills are here. Steam is on until just before Sanggendalai, but speed is high, as the line is quite flat.

Saiyinhuduge (km 352)

- Saiyinhuduge has desert around, and after that the terrain is flat.

Sangendelai (km 312)

- Sanggendalai is a small town south of the line. the area is flat and un-photogenic. Sanggendalai station is in the bottom of two slight declines on both sides of the station. Here, the new line to Xilinhot starts out. The station was equipped with three rails originally, but has got another three rails and an engine depot during 2001. There are some side tracks and an oil depot. The engine depot was finished but not yet open in October 2002

Yalagaitu (km 288)

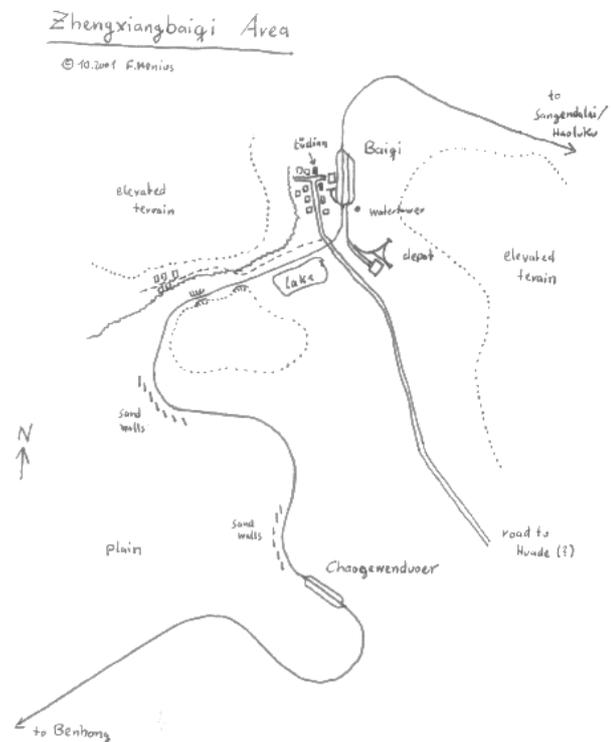
- Near Yalagaitu some trees, sand dunes, hills. Good for photography near the station. It is at a top, i.e. most trains may steam here.
- Many places along the line there is a fence to protect the grass along the line from grazing. Most of the terrain outside the fence is quite barren, but inside the fence is grass.
- West of Xihuerqing is a nice curve with a grade against westbound trains. The last 10 kilometers into Baiqi are good for photography. There is a top about 5 km east of Baiqi with 6 per thousand grades on both sides. Eastbound trains out of Baiqi work hard in the curve out of Baiqi station, and westbound trains work hard until 5 km before Baiqi.

Baiqi (km 217)

- Baiqi station is outside of town, about 3 km to the south of the city. There is a railway worker town around the station. The depot has a large blue painted maintenance hall. The slogan above the entrance doors reads: "Whoever breaks the rules will loose his job".
 - Surrounded by slight hills, it is not necessary to ask for entrance. You can walk around the fence and take photos from outside using some longer lenses. Baiqi depot is more photogenic than Daban.
 - Near the entrance of the depot area, the water cranes, coaling and waiting tracks for the in-service engines are located. Between the "service area" and the "maintenance hall", some tracks for stabling spare engines (both under steam and not) are located. West of the maintenance hall, the 2 scrap engine tracks contained some 10 QJs, partly no longer identifiable.
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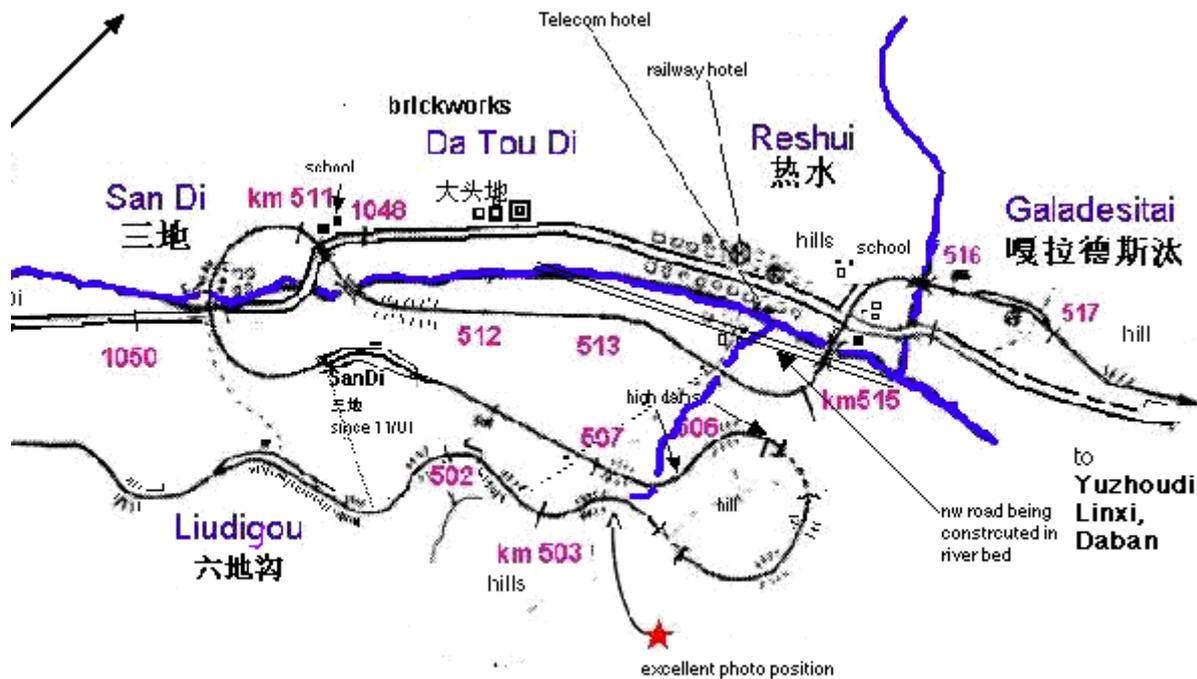
Baiqi to Benhong

- ❑ Flights between Europe and Beijing head right west of Baiqi over the prairie. If you sit on the east side and have a window place, you may see steam from up there, and Baiqi depot's blue maintenance hall. This part of the Jitong railway is mostly served by single engines. Ruling grade 6 per thousand. Max. speed here is 75 km/h. At many places there are stone walls along the line.
- ❑ First 3 km west of Baiqi : lake/water reservoir, cuttings, mongolian village. A large horseshoe curve is here, up into Baiqi. Locomotives on eastbound trains work hard.
- ❑ the further line to Chaogewenduoer is undulating prairie, Chaogewenduoer station unphotogenic due to a "forest of concrete masts" around the station.
- ❑ Xingyou - Xinghe: Xingyou station has semaphores and is situated straight east-west. A village is here. The road is south of the line until about **km 180**. Mobile coverage from 5 km east of Xinghe until Xinghe. Tree planting 3 km before Xinghe. The line enters Xinghe station after a dam, and a cutting in a right curve. The road is north of the line here.
- ❑ Xinghe to Dagai: No trees. The line has an S-curve right after Xinghe, first left, then right. No trees. Mobile phone coverage.
- ❑ Dagai: Left curve into station, then right curve with a large bridge. No trees. Mobile phone coverage here. Semaphores. A photogenic place.
- ❑ Mobile phone coverage towards Baiyintela, but not afterwards. Undulating prairies, featureless. Towards Baojian some forest along the line, but not always. Large curve on dam at a railway workers home near **km 116**. Flat country towards Huade. Huade-Deyi: Huade is a major town. The railway station is in the south of it.
- ❑ There comes a hard upgrade towards Deyi, with a dam, but masts on the south side of the railway, villages, cuttings. S-curves. The main road crosses the railway 3 km west of Huade from north to south side, then S-curves with a landscape like near Chabuga. Locomotives must work hard towards west. Hills. The large cutting near Deyi, the highest point of the line, isclad with stones. Easy access from the road. !! Restricted Area - probably because of radar installation NW of Huade !!
- ❑ Deyi - Erdaogou: Large right curve after Deyi. Hills. The road is far north of the line. Large dam at about **km 90**. S-curve east of Erdaogou.
- ❑ Erdaogou - Sanyingtou: Erdaogou is a village with clay houses. Hills, some photogeneous spots. 3-5 km west of Erdaogou is an S-curve. Not much tree plantation along the line.
- ❑ East of Shangdu: Flat countryside. Line is quite straight, main road just north, then south of the railway. Often trees along the line. Shangdu is a Water stop. Loading tracks on both sides of the station. The station is far north of the town. Flat area
- ❑ Shangdu - Dadonggou: A lot of forest near the line. Hills north of the line, a high dam before Dadonggou.
- ❑ Dadonggou - Sanjiahaizi: Some good grass near km 30, flat area. Large left curve on a dam, then cuttings, near Sanjiahaizi tree planting, a high dam east of the station.
- ❑ Chaobuhan is a village with houses clad with dried clay. East of here a lot of trees planted along the line, and stone walls along the north side, for snow protection. Some forest further away from the line, flat area.
- ❑ Flat landscape near Benhong. River bridge (ca. km 3,5-4,0) and a long high dam for some kilometers. May be good for eastbound trains during mornings. !! Restricted area !!



Detailed photo positions Reshui / Galadesitai to Jingpeng

This description covers some of the best photo positions from East to West, starting at Reshui / Galadesitai, and ending at Jingpeng

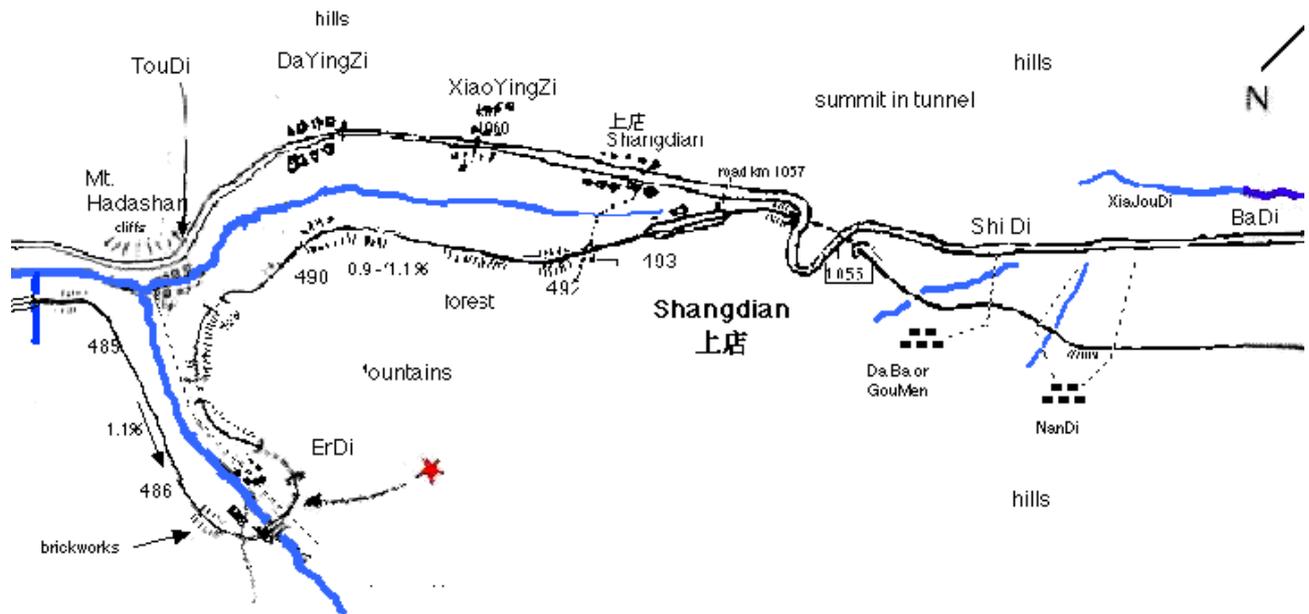


East side Jingpeng pass

- Galadesitai station, **km 516**, 2 tracks. Two places are good for photography: The cutting below the station, and the hill overlooking the curve from the station to the road crossing. Also the eastern part of the Station with the semaphores and the hill/cliff with a small quarry in the background. From the cutting you can take nice photos of the trains either entering or leaving the station.
- Small Bridge just after Galadesitai station. For this picture, you have to leave the road towards the line (into the fields).
- From the hill north of the road crossing at Reshui at **km 515.5**: A good position for westbound-trains in the afternoon. School in the foreground, also the curve and bridge at the station exit..
- Road crossing at Reshui, line **km 515.5**: A good position for early morning for westbound-trains and for afternoon for eastbound trains. If you are lucky you find a few local people waiting, pigs, cows etc. And you may chase -trains further up from here, if you have a taxi parked at the crossing.
- Large river bridge at **km 515.2** (Reshui ErHao Daqiao). Nice early morning position standing in the river bed below the bridge. Here , the hard work starts, and the drivers have to find out the right steam pressure and cutoff for steady state working up the grade. After taking this picture you may walk up the line to level 2 near **km 505** or **506** and see the train once more (if your condition is up to it).
- Curve at **km 514.5** (south side of bridge). Nice afternoon and evening position. Also good to take pictures from higher up at level 2, but then this curve is miniature size. But you get the whole train plus villages. If you take photos of a train down here you may run up the hill and have another passing at level 2, **km 506** or **506.5** (if you are in good condition and run fast enough...)
- Level crossing at **km 514**: Good early morning position for shots against the rising sun.

- ❑ River and road bridge at **km 511.5**, below SanDi: Good for eastbound trains in the morning and westbound trains in the afternoon. There are several good places for photos (one from the river bed). After this place the train makes a U-turn around SanDi. It makes a nice shot from the level crossing, when the train is coming out of the curve heading towards SanDi.
 - ❑ Level crossing with main road at SanDi, **km 510**: Good anyway, but best late in the day. Hard working engines, whistling, waiting cars, maybe animals, especially early in the day and before sundown. From here a dirt road goes up to Liudigou. It is possible to go by car (even smaller buses managed to go up there when there was no snow). You could also walk up there (it takes some 10 minutes) and try to catch them again at Liudigou (might be possible with heavy trains). The guard may be able to tell you when the next train is due.
 - ❑ The slow passenger trains stop at the station SanDi at about **km 509**. This is a relatively flat spot on the line where trains accelerate and often only one locomotive will work. The station may be good for photography, especially if there is one train waiting while one is driving or with a starting train. The evening gives good light for shots against the sun, at the long straight stretch after SanDi.
 - ❑ There is a guarded level crossing at **km 507.5**. You may be invited for tea or something stronger (take some coins and photos along). Trains are working hard here to have a jump start for the following incline, and light is good for most of the day.
 - ❑ High bank and cutting at **km 507** . Good for afternoon (sun should be high). You may run the 250 or so meters to level 3 at **km 503.5** and have another passing of the train here.
 - ❑ High dam at **km 506.5**. Many good positions here. You can follow the train on all three levels. If a train is heavy, you may still run up to level 3 at **km 503.5**. You may also go into the cutting right after the high dam, and have some nice view at the train going into the double curve. Good position if it is blowing from west. Light does not come here early.
 - ❑ A double curve leads into a cutting, before approaching the tunnel #7. This place can be reached running up from level one, if the train is slow (and you're up to it..).
 - ❑ High dam and tunnel #7 portal at **km 506** : Standing on top of the tunnel portal or on the hill you have Reshui in the background. Often, the locomotives will slip here. At this position , however, the wind can drive steam up instead of backwards from the engines.
 - ❑ Between the tunnels: **Km 505 - 504**. There are two cuttings about in the middle between the tunnels. Light is best from noon to afternoon. If you stand on top of the cuttings outside the line , the view is very good. Good for video shots if you like to have an aerial view of the passing locomotives. The position at the outside of the curve near the east portal of tunnel #6 is one of the best positions for early morning, as it gets the first sunlight of the day.
 - ❑ After tunnel #6, **km 503.5**: The classic picture, with level 2 in background. Best in afternoon. From here you can see the train on all three levels. If you stand high enough, you may have an aerial look of the locomotive. Often, firemen are working in the tender here, pulling coal forward. You may also take good pictures from the next cutting (either sides) with all three levels visible.
 - ❑ The next curve after this is good in the evening, as it has the last light of the day. This is just below the lower outer entrance signal to Liudigou. From here you have a good view of the action along the line from Galadesitai to San Di.
 - ❑ High dam at entrance to Liudigou: Good in late afternoon, but very difficult light. Light landscape and black locomotives are a hard combination. Often, cows or horses are here. Locomotives often blow out boiler sludge here. This position is one of the last to have sun in the evening. A good place is on the south side of the tracks at the entrance to Liudigou, but also from the top of the cutting on both sides of the track just before the outermost signal east of Liudigou (about 800 meter farther east). You can reach this position easily by walking from Liudigou station along the tracks.
 - ❑ Liudigou station: **Km 500**. 2 tracks. Not the best place, but the station staff are nice here. Semaphore signals. Good for westbound trains in the afternoon while passing the semaphores struggling uphill.
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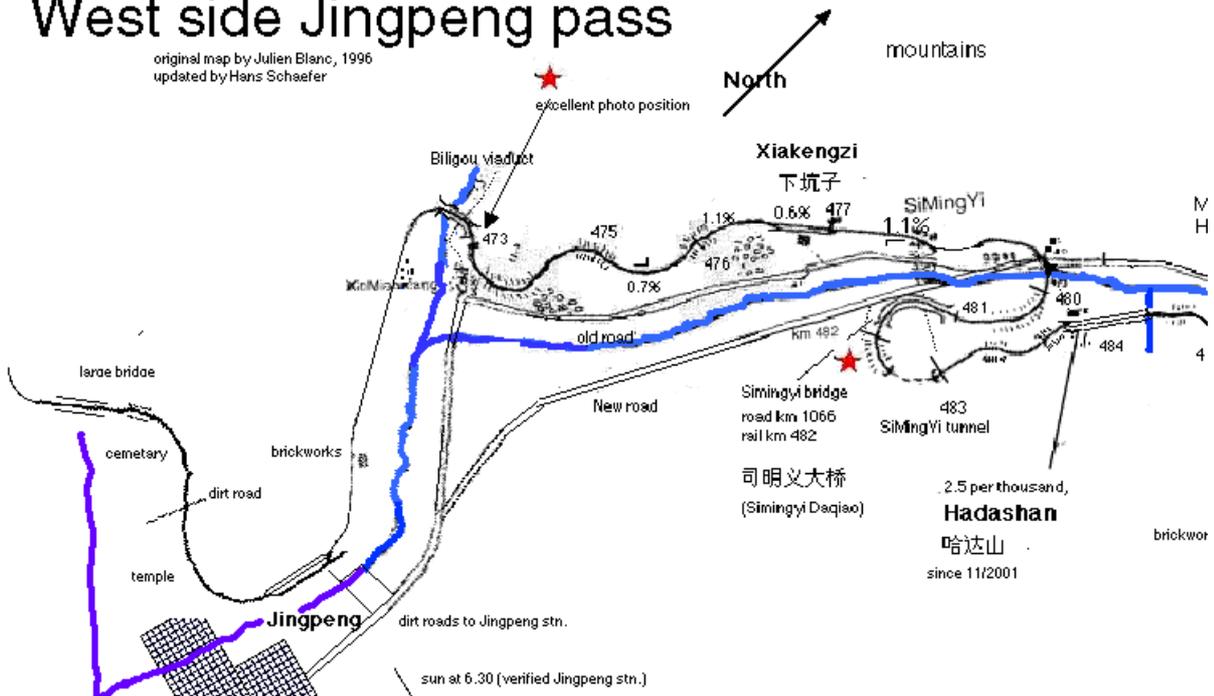
Jingpeng pass



- ❑ Above Liudigou the line is quite straight, with some nice positions some 1.5 - 2 km (from noon) after the station (from some higher embankments right and left). They can be reached either by walking from the station or the road crossing in **km 496**.
- ❑ At **km 496** there is a dam with two level crossings flanking it (one official with a hut and one unofficial). This nice spot can be reached by road from the road 303 (Turn left at ShiDi when going to Jingpeng). This one's good all day. In the morning a good spot is down in the little village below the dam.
- ❑ Tunnel entrance before Shangdian: **Km 494**. A nice position from above the tunnel portal, the street or near the signal.
- ❑ Shangdian station: **Km 493**. 3 tracks. Otherwise good for starting eastbound trains and for asking train times. You can get some nice shots against the light in late afternoon of eastbound trains entering the station. Do not go too near the tunnel on the east side, as the locomotives shut off steam well before entering it.
- ❑ Level crossing just west of Shangdian : Hard working locomotives, very slow, often with low boiler pressure and lack of steam. On Sundays there may be schoolchildren here. Good morning position. Good in late afternoon too, for shots against the sun. Often, they blow down the boiler here.
- ❑ **Km 491** to Shangdian: Here the line is hugging the side of the hill. Nice position at XiaoYingzi from the hillside on the other side (especially in the afternoon). It makes for some nice glint shots.
- ❑ **Between Tunnel #4 and km 491** there's is a spot overlooking the line after tunnel #4. Especially good in the morning, when the sun is over the mountains. You can reach this spot by walking up from DaYingZi.

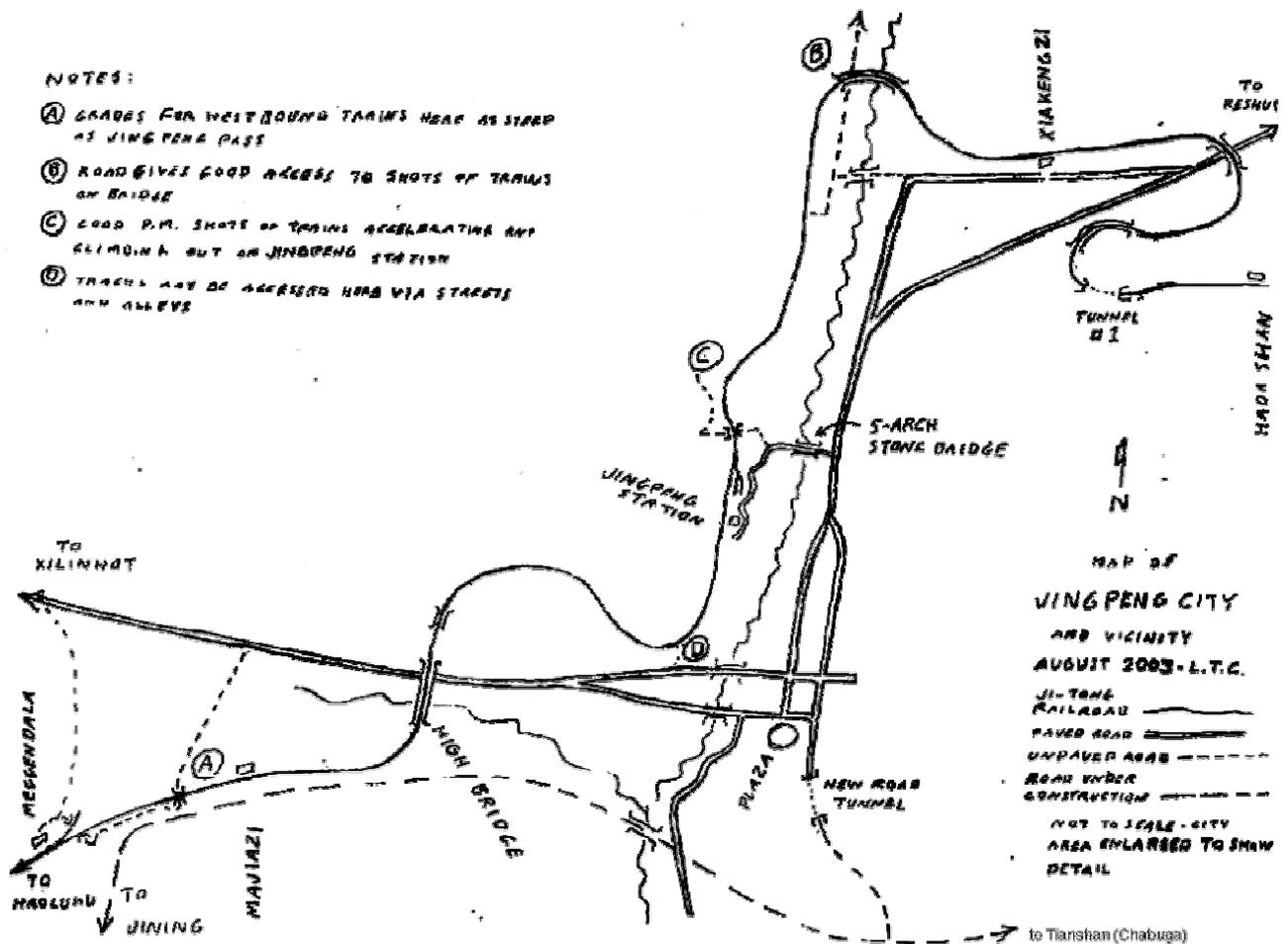
West side Jingpeng pass

original map by Julien Blanc, 1996
updated by Hans Schaefer



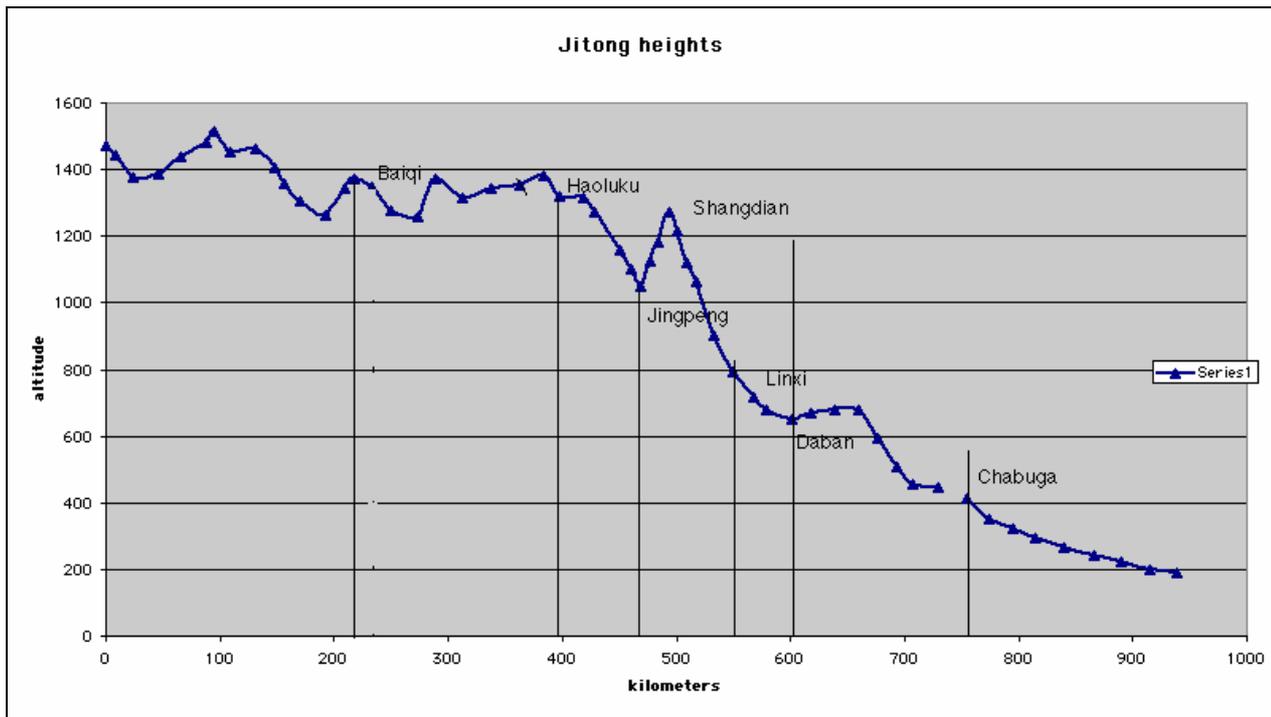
- ❑ **Km 488 to 490:** You have to walk the line to find good positions. It is dry landscape like in Utah, USA, and 3 short tunnels. Really a good thing, for afternoon especially. But partly difficult light conditions. You can get some nice shots from the road and the hills near the village DaYingZi in the evening light. Enter the line walking up from ErDi or DaYingZi. The stretch between tunnel #3 and #4 makes for nice photo positions either entering tunnel #4 or leaving tunnel #3.
- ❑ Between the tunnels, the grade is some 9 per thousand and engines work hard. You have to climb up the steep embankment (several paths run up here from the dirt road) to get there.
- ❑ **Viaduct at Erdi (ErDi He Daqiao, km 487.3, Side valley).** Also known as the "brick works viaduct". **km 487.** Very good early morning. Your first choice in the morning on this side.
- ❑ On top of Hadashan mountain: Climb the mountain from the east side. No problem, just a little effort. You see everything from near Jingpeng to near Shangdian!
- ❑ New station Hadashan (Nov 2001), former railway worker home at **km 484.** Two good positions up on the hill at the western end of the station (probably also known as "Ted's thumb"). You may combine level 2 and level 3 shots if you run a little after the train has passed below you. Passenger trains 6051 and 6052 stop here.
- ❑ Just above Simingyi bridge, below Hadashan, after leaving the tunnel, you have some cuttings. The large bridge of Si Ming Yi is visible in the background. Here, very often the fireman may be seen working on top of the tender shovelling coal forward. If you have a slow train, you may run to this photo position after taking pictures in the curve below.
- ❑ **Km 481.2 - 481.7 Simingyi Da Qiao (90 degree bridge).** You may spend a day around here and take it from any angle. For mobile phone coverage and to see if anything comes from Jingpeng, you have to walk on top of the mountain. Some of the best light is in the early morning. Also, from the top of the mountain (provided there's good visibility) in the afternoon.
- ❑ Road bridge and curve where level 1 goes into level 2, **km 480.** Good for afternoon shots. Last train of the day with low sun. You may get it once more on level 3 from positions near here, and then you get the reflection of the sun on the locomotive. With a taxi you can then chase the train to the big bridge or to Shangdian. Remaining about here, you may have the possibility to take evening glint photos when the train passes the level above.
- ❑ From the primary school at the lower entrance to SiMingYi village. Nice shots are possible from the old road, but also from the top of the cutting right above the school.
- ❑ The line passing Xiakengzi, **km 474 to 480.** Two track station at **km 477.** Some good cuttings and curves. You will pass here anyway when taking local taxis along the old main road. Or you just walk.

- Light is best for morning shots, but you may have some nice views against the light in the afternoon. This area is very good if there is heavy westerly wind blowing. Then the smoke will go right up from the engines. You also have a chance to chase the train by taxi if you take pictures here. The entrance to Xiakengzi station from the lower end is good, with a curve and the semaphore signals.



- **Km 473:** Cutting above large bridge near Biliugou, and the bridge (**km 473.465-473.875**). Nice all day, but especially in afternoon light. After taking a train here you may chase it by taxi to the 90 degree bridge (Sumingyi Da Qiao) and Shangdian. Some nice spots in the village with the bridge in the background.
- After leaving the bridge, the trains are in a double curve, and the landscape is like in a desert, with dramatic rocks in the background.
- Down to Jingpeng station. Trains are working hard here, so there should be possibilities, especially in the morning. There are two large brick works just one kilometer above Jingpeng. They may provide a good background.
- **Jingpeng station: km 468.** 3 tracks. Trains taking water, shunting, starting from the station. The station has a kiosk, for food and soda. A little restaurant also, about 100 meter to the west from station building near the water facilities. Bad dirt road to station. The workers doing watering and coal service for the locomotives are very friendly. Picture:
- Level crossing with a small road west of Jingpeng. About **km 464**. Good for afternoon photography.
- Large river bridge west of Jingpeng, **km 462.814 - 463.144**: Good for westbound trains in the evening. A Chinese graveyard on east bank of river.
- Majiazi station. Good for evening shots. Follow the road from Jingpeng towards Xilinhaote, about 15 km.

Gradient Profile



Other information

Maximum freight load: 2300 tons for QJ (between Daban and Haoluku double traction), 2500 tons between Linxi and Daban (eastbound), 3000 tons for DF4 between Baiqi and Benhong. (2800 tons in test period in 2000).

Train numbers

22x trains are through trains, not remarshalled en route, 44x trains have some shunting here and there. 84xxx trains are oil empties. In addition to the usual freights in the 228xx and 441xx series there are also a number of 8xxxx and 8xxxx trains, thought to be through freights, not remarshalled en-route. Many of them are empty coal or oil trains, run on demand. 51xxx numbers denote permanent way work trains and 56xxx denote light engines, although in practice expected trains can turn up as light engines and vice versa.

Typical freight running times

(from the official Jitong timetable). In practice especially the heavier westbound trains need about an hour more than shown here.

Eastbound			Westbound		
1.	Benhong - Baiqi	6.30 hours	1.	Zhelimu - Chabuga	4.50 - 6.15 hours
2.	Baiqi - Haoluku	5.50 hours	2.	Chabuga - Daban	5.20 - 6.30 hours
3.	Haoluku	0:00	3.	Daban	0:00
4.	Passing Majiazi	1:05	4.	Pingdingmiao	0:32
5.	Jingpeng (water stop)	1:27 to 1:46	5.	Linxi (water stop)	1:22 to 1:47
6.	Xiakengzi	2:07	6.	Yuzhoudi	2:19
7.	Shangdian	2:49	7.	Galadesitai	3:00
8.	Liudigou	3:00	8.	Liudigou	3:38
9.	Galadesitai	3:26	9.	Shangdian	3:58
10.	Yuzhoudi	3:49	10.	Xiakengzi	4:27
11.	Linxi (water stop)	4:10 to 4:25	11.	Jingpeng (water stop)	4:43 to 5:10
12.	Daban	5:26	12.	Majiazi	5:40
13.	Daban - Chabuga	3.50 - 5.30 hours	13.	Haoluku	6:50 ¹
14.	Chabuga - Zhelimu	4.30 - 5.30 hours	14.	Haoluku - Baiqi	5.40 hours
			15.	Baiqi - Benhong	5:55 - 6:40 hours

¹ Most of the time, trains will rather need 8 hours than 6.50!

There exists an official timetable for freight trains. This timetable is just a rough guideline. The trains may be numbered as in the timetable, with numbers in the 228xx and 441xx series, but times are not according to schedule. Thus, the above times can only be used as a rough guideline if you know when trains go from locomotive changing stations. (but these are nearly never followed):

Timings eastbound from Haoluku and Daban			Timings westbound from Chabuga and Daban		
Train No.	from Haoluku	from Daban	Train No.	from Chabuga	from Daban
T44121	9.38	18.17	T44122	6.46	12.54
T44123	3.53	10.31	T44124	18.32	1.16
T22801	12.12	20.49	T22802	0.44	0:00
T22803	13.06	22.09	T22804	2.20	8.50
T22805	15.06	1.06	T22806	4.19	10.47
T22807	19.02	3.21	T22808	9.03	15.06
T22809	20.50	5.58	T22810	11.42	20.37
T22811	23.24	9.04	T22812	16.15	23.20
T22813	5.13	13.25	T22814	20.18	0:00
T22815	7.29	15.48	T22816	23.00	5.09

Stationlist

Name	Distance (km)	Altitude (official)	Altitude (measured by GPS)/remarks	Comments
Jining Nan (China Rail)			1439	China Rail until Benhong
Benhong	0	1471		large, locomotive service station
Chaobuhan	8.680	1445		light signals, 2 tracks, since 1998
Sanjiehaizi	23.518	1376		semaphores, 2 tracks, 3 tracks in Sept. 2001
Dadonggou	34.340			new station in 2001, light signals, 3 tracks, open in Nov 2001
Shangdu	46.351		1394	light signals, 3 tracks, water stop for westbound freights, 4th track under construction Nov 2001
Sanyingtu	66.248		1446	semaphores, 2 tracks
Erdaogou	87.610		1480	semaphores, 2 tracks
DeYi	95.470	1513.87 (summit)	1515	light signals, 2 tracks, since 1998
Huade	108.830	1453		3 tracks, water stop for westbound passenger and both ways freight, loading point and industrial sidings, light signals
Baiyintela	130.537	1462		semaphores, 2 tracks
Baojian	147.937	1406		2 tracks
Dagai	156.487	1360		semaphores, 2 tracks, 3 in Oct 2001
Xinghe	170.552	1304		3 tracks, water stop for freights both ways
Xingyao	193.047	1263		2 tracks
Chaogewenduoer	209.858	1343		2 tracks, 3 tracks in Sept. 2001
Zhengxiangbaiqi	217.428	1374		Depot, 6 tracks, industrial connection towards town, light signals, track maintenance depot, side tracks
Xihuerqing	232.330	1348		2 tracks, 3 tracks Oct 2001
Daolunguole	249.130	1278		2 tracks, 3 tracks Oct 2001
Chaganmanghe	272.980	1256		2 tracks
Yalagaitu	288.660	1372		3 tracks, water stop for passenger and both ways freight
Sanggendalai	312.880	1317		3 tracks, in 2/2001 new 3 tracks under construction, side tracks, oil tank facility, line to Xilinhaote from here with a locomotive depot. Depot and side tracks under construction in 2001.
Herisitai	336.880	1345		2 tracks, 3 tracks Oct 2001
Saiyinhuduge	352.770			3 tracks, since 1998 or later
Yiheengela	363.180	1355		2 tracks, 3 tracks Oct 2001
Gongzhugeng	383.258	1383		2 tracks
Haoluku	396.904	1322	light signals	large (6 tracks), locomotive service station
Hansulu	418.706	1313	semaphores	2 tracks
Baiyinwula	428.550	1272	semaphores	2 tracks, since 1998
Shangshuitou	439.700		light signals	A new alignment beside the existing tracks. Massive earthworks. New iron ore line from here to northeast to be constructed. 2 loading tracks on northeast side. Mongolian style station building. Open on Nov 16, 2001, 3 tracks
Majiazi	450.591	1159		2 tracks
Toudi	459.941			only railway worker's home, no extra tracks
Jingpeng (Keqi)	468.650	1050	light signals	3 tracks, water, water stop for westbound passenger and both ways freight, side tracks
Xiakengzi	476.847	1125	semaphores	2 tracks
Hadashan	484.600	ca. 1195	light signals	3 tracks, on level section after SiMingYi tunnel, construction spring to autumn 2001, open Nov 2001
Shangdian	493.152	1273	semaphores	Jingpeng pass summit, 3 tracks
Liudigou	500.402	1214	semaphores	2 tracks
SanDi	508.700	ca. 1137	light signals	3 tracks, level section after 180 degrees curve around village SanDi, construction spring to autumn 2001, open Nov 8, 2001
Galadesitai (Reshui)	516.852	1062	semaphores	2 tracks, 6 per thousand incline, new apple plantation east of station in 2001.
Yuzhoudi	533.302	904	light signals	3 tracks, side track
Linxi	550.201	794	light signals	3 tracks, water, water stop for eastbound passenger and both ways freight, old depot from construction of the line, side tracks, oil tank facility, in Oct 2001 4 tracks
Wenduheshuo	567.409	717	semaphores	2 tracks
Pingdingmiao	578.282	677	semaphores	2 tracks
Daban (Balinyouqi)	601.539	651	light signals	large, locomotive and car depot, side tracks, roadbed maintenance facility, car maintenance facility

Name	Distance (km)	Altitude (official)	Altitude (measured by GPS)/remarks	Comments
Baomutu	617.639	670	semaphores	2 tracks
Gulumanhan	638.593	679	semaphores	3 tracks, water stop for all westbound trains
Chaghanhada	659.693	679	semaphores	2 tracks
Dariqiga	677.083	592	semaphores	2 tracks
Lindong	693.783	509	light signals	4 tracks, water stop for both ways freight trains, side tracks, oil tank facility
Yamenmiao	707.733	458	semaphores	2 tracks
Diaojiaduan	730.121	448	4 51	2 tracks
Xiaoxinglongdi	738.700		484, light signals	2 tracks, since April 1998
Chabuga (Tianshan)	755.226	413	414, light signals	6 tracks, industrial side tracks, depot
Fuxingdi	774.061	350		3 tracks, 4 in Nov 2001
Daode	794.761	323		2 tracks
Sharinai	814.561	296		2 tracks, water stop for westbound freights 3 tracks in Oct 2001
Zhunshariwushu	839.856	265		2 tracks
Pingandi	854.750			new in autumn 2001, light signals, 3 tracks
Kailu	866.736	243		4 tracks, water stop for all trains, oil tank car loading facility
Jinjadian	889.536	222		2 tracks
Fuju	915.357	200		2 tracks
Banjiedian	929.200	189		2 tracks, since 1998
Zhelimu	943.351	183		large, locomotive service point



BW Daban (03/2002)



Xiakengzi (01/2003)
