

Yi costumes from Yuanmou County in Yunnan Province



Women's costumes from Yunnan's Shiping County

# A world of vibrant colors, exquisite craftsmanship

The Yi costumes are frequently compared to having an "encyclopedia" on the body.



Wang Jie

The Jiading Museum is hosting "Brilliant Yi Clothing," an exhibition of 100 exhibits (sets) of traditional Yi people's clothes and costumes.

The exhibition is structured into three sections that depict the past and present days of Yi people's clothing through rich exhibits and instructive visuals: "The Origin and Evolution of Yi Clothing," "Six Types of Yi Clothing" and "Yi Clothing and Embroidery in the New Era."

The Yi ethnic minority group is spread extensively in southwestern China's Sichuan, Yunnan and Guizhou provinces. Yi culture is included in the national intangible cultural heritage, and its clothing is a cultural treasure.

The Yi costumes, representing a culmination of significant historical, scientific, artistic, and aesthetic values, are sometimes considered equivalent to an "encyclopedia" on the body.

Historically, clothes from different places have diverse styles, strong regional hues, and a variety of distinguishing elements.

For example, many areas in Sichuan's Liangshan remain chilly all year round, with little climate variation; therefore, Yi clothes are not seasonal, and the *cha'erwa* (shawl) is worn all year round.

Both Yi men and women in Liangshan wear *cha'erwa*. It is knitted from wool and styled like a cape. It falls below the knee.

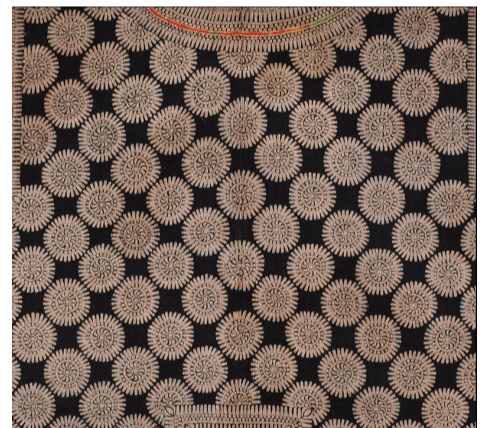
There are six main clothing types among the Yi people, depending on the places where they live. Women wear garments with gorgeous flowers embroidered on them, long trousers with lace, or pleated skirts. Men are dressed in black, narrow-sleeved clothing and loose slacks. Both men and women wear head scarves, but women's scarves are embroidered.

Yi women from Yunnan's Xiaoliangshan wear skirts, but other Yi women wear trousers. Married Yi women's lapel cuffs and collars have detailed and colorful lace, especially the waistband embroidery.

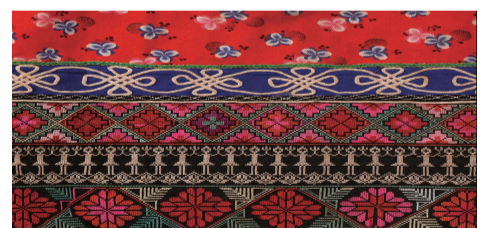
With ancestral embroidery skills, Yi people needle nature designs onto their



Embroidery on the chest of a women's jacket from Yunnan's Funing County



Embroidery on the back of a man's jacket from Yunnan's Malipo County



Embroidery on the trouser of a young Yi woman from Yunnan's Wuding County

costumes, such as flowers, butterflies, birds, tigers and cats, as well as the sun, moon and stars.

All these costumes are handcrafted. Each stitch captures the effort and knowledge of this community, expressing their outlook on life and appreciation of beauty.

**Date:** Through December 17 (closed on Mondays), 8:30am-5pm  
**Venue:** Jiading Museum  
**Address:** 215 Bole Road | 博乐路215号  
**Admission:** Free