

China opens record-breaking transparent bridge

Glass-bottomed bridges have become something of a social craze in China. Earlier this year, a Chinese couple decided to hold their wedding ceremony suspended up high as they dangled on a small hammock platform below the Haohan Qiao bridge in Shiniuzhai National Park. A mass yoga session had been held in the same area the previous year too.

By [Emile Uys](#) 24 Aug 2016



These events generate great publicity for the parks and boost tourism. For visitors, these bridges hold an experience of nature that is both immersive and safely enclosed. It is the unconventional and daring photographic opportunities along with unique experience that drives the rising popularity of see-through bridges in China.

Now, the country boasts the greatest one of them all. Spanning 430m, the new glass-bottomed bridge connects two sheer cliffs in the scenic Zhangjiajie region of the Hunan province. Its construction was completed in December of 2015.

The bridge was designed by the Israeli architecture firm Haim Dotan. Its cost totalled approximately \$3.4m. Its floor consists of 99 solid glass panes that are arranged into three layers. Each pane of glass is 24mm thick. At its most narrow point, the bridge is 6m wide. The structure stands approximately 300m high above the ground.

Several publicised events were held before the bridge's official opening. Visitors and journalists were invited to deliberately attempt to crack the platform with sledgehammers. Zhangjiajie officials were confident to demonstrate the sturdiness of the new overpass. To further reassure the public of the bridge's tensile integrity, a two-tonne truck was driven across it without incident in July 2016.

Park authorities allow a maximum of 8,000 daily visitors to traverse the massive crossing and entry must be booked in advance.

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