



GRAND TOUR OF CHINA

Classic Tour | 27 Days | Physical Level 1

Beijing – Xian – Yangtze River Cruise – Chengdu – Kunming – Dali – Guilin –
Yangshou – Hangzhou – Suzhou – Shanghai

This journey has all of China's top destinations covered, with time to soak up the sights. Whether you are looking for history, character and culture or the modern and marvelous, this itinerary has it all.

- Walk on the Great Wall of China
- Experience the spectacular Terracotta Warriors
- Take a 4-night cruise on the Yangtze River
- Get up close to the Giant Pandas
- Discover the fascinating Stone Forest
- Relax with a scenic cruise along the Li River
- Explore the Yangshuo countryside
- Soak up the atmosphere in vibrant Shanghai

TOUR MAP

GRAND TOUR OF CHINA INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals as per the itinerary
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escorts (if your group is 10 or more passengers) and Local Guides
- Visa fees for New Zealand passport holders (please see visa section below for further information)
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of China on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully inclusive basis, so you'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights.

'Grand Tour of China' is rated as a physical level 1 tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time
- On the Great Wall of China in Beijing, some of the walking will be at an incline
On the Yangtze River Cruise, the Li River Cruise, on Erhai Lake and on the West Lake you will be required to get on and off the boats without assistance.

Of course, our National Escort and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 27 days in duration including international flights or 25 days in duration based on 'Land Only'. Join the tour on Day 2 in Beijing and end the tour on Day 26 in Shanghai.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour, or when booking pre and post night accommodation with Wendy Wu Tours.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Days 1-2: Fly to Beijing

Meals: D

On arrival in Beijing Daxing or Beijing Capital Airport, you will be met in the arrival hall by your local guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer for approximately 1 hour to your hotel.

Early check-in is not included. Additional nights before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.



Destination Information

Beijing – The capital of the People’s Republic of China, with its unequalled wealth of history, Beijing served as the centre for the many different empires and cultures that ruled China. It has been the heart of politics and society throughout its long history. The ancient monuments, stories of days gone by, and the dynamic, modern city Beijing has become today, make it a destination not to be missed.

Day 3: Beijing

Meals: B, L, D

Walk through Tiananmen Square and into the magnificent Forbidden City. Later, soak up the harmonious ambience of the Temple of Heaven. Sightseeing today will involve approximately 3-4 hours on foot. Tonight, enjoy a traditional Peking duck dinner. For those seeking extra excitement, this evening there is an optional Kung Fu show (time permitting, payable locally).



Please note: The Forbidden City is closed on Mondays. If this day of touring falls on a Monday, your touring in Beijing will be switched round so that the Forbidden City is visited on an alternative day.

In an effort to preserve the Forbidden City, the number of entry tickets per day has been significantly reduced. Whilst every effort will be made to obtain the tickets, should this not be possible, then you will instead visit the Forbidden City from the outside and visit the nearby Prince Kung’s Palace Museum.

Destination Information

Tiananmen Square – Built under the guidance of Chairman Mao Zedong, Tiananmen Square is one of the largest public squares in the world, said to hold a capacity crowd of over one million. It houses not only the Monument to the People’s Heroes, it is also the final resting place of Chairman Mao himself in the Mausoleum of Mao Zedong.

Forbidden City – The sacred centre of the Chinese empire for 500 years and home to the Ming and Qing dynasties, the Forbidden City is a vast complex of over 900 buildings and covers an area of 180 acres. Since 1987, the Forbidden City has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site and its palatial architectural style has been an influence on many imperial buildings throughout Asia.

Temple of Heaven – Set in a 267-hectare park surrounded by a long wall and with a gate at each compass point, the Temple of Heaven is absolutely unique. It is one of the most perfect examples of Ming architecture, created as a place of worship for the Emperors, who would ask for prosperity, longevity and good harvest for the people.

Peking duck – A favourite of the Emperor's court and the upper-class elite during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), Peking duck quickly spread throughout Chinese society to become a national favourite and a symbol of China.

Day 4: The Great Wall

Meals: B, L, D

Rise early this morning and drive around 2-hours northwest of the city to the Juyongguan Pass. Here you can take a walk on the Great Wall of China, appreciating the wall itself and the dramatic scenery. After walking from the coach to the first section, your group will receive an introduction to the Great Wall's unique history and a briefing on the different walking routes available, depending on your level of fitness. You will then have approximately 2.5 hours free time to explore at your own pace. Please note that there are many steps at the wall and certain sections are steeper than others. Later, visit a jade factory before taking a stroll through the exquisite Summer Palace.

**Destination Information**

Great Wall of China – Originally built under the first Emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang, The Great Wall of China is the country's most iconic sight. Snaking through the northern countryside from the Gobi Desert in the west into the Bohai Sea in the east, the Great Wall of China is the longest wall in the world and was used as a fortification against northern nomadic tribes. The current structure dates back to the Ming Dynasty - over 700 years old.

Jade Factory – Learn about one of China's most symbolic and important materials: jade, at this comprehensive factory. Understand how to tell if jade is real or fake and watch artisans at work, carving this emerald stone into works of art.

Summer Palace – The former holiday retreat of the Qing emperors, the Summer Palace is a stunning example of Chinese garden style. The Summer Palace incorporates the Fengshui notion of 'Mountain' and 'Water', seen here with tranquil Kunming Lake and magnificent Longevity Hill. A favourite resort of the Empress Dowager Cixi, the Summer Palace is home to a stunning Marble Boat and the Long Corridor, one of the longest outdoor passageways in the world.

Day 5: Beijing – Xian

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, enjoy a leisurely stroll in the warren-like hutongs where you will meet a local family. There will be around 1 hour on foot here. Transfer to the train station and take the speedy bullet train to Xian, a journey of around 5.5 hours.

Please note you will need to carry your own luggage on and off the train.

**Destination Information**

Hutongs – The Mongol rulers of Beijing established this style of housing in the 13th century as tenancy for the growing population of the city. Hutongs were designed to reflect the Chinese system of Feng Shui with 4 hutongs joining together to make a courtyard in the middle, known as Siheyuan. In more recent times, the hutong suburbs were in jeopardy of disappearing, but a fierce debate between developers and those who fought to protect the architecture and the hutong way of life diminished the threat.

Xian – Xian has long played a pivotal role in China's extensive history and has been a thriving hub for cultural exchange, economic trade as well as national politics for centuries. Home to some of China's most ancient sights, diverse architecture and delicious fares, Xian is a must-see destination.

Day 6: Xian

Meals: B, L, D

Spend the morning viewing the enigmatic ranks of the life-sized Terracotta Warriors. The Museum of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses is located approximately a 1-hour drive outside of Xian. From the bus park to the museum entrance there is a 15-minute walk. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organised at your own cost. There is no electric cart available for the return from the museum exit to the bus park.



Within the museum area the warriors can be seen in 3 different 'pits', which are active archaeological digs. The site is large and will take about 2 and a half hours to explore. After this, visit the Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Workshop to see smaller models of the warriors being made.

Later, stroll on the beautifully preserved 14th century city walls that enclose Xian's old town. The local guide will give you time to explore the ancient city walls at your own pace. There are options here to hire a bicycle or an electric cart to drive along the length of the wall. These are offered by private vendors and can be organised at your own expense. This is an optional night tour to Tang Everbright City this evening (time permitting, payable locally).

Please note we recommend wearing a helmet if cycling on the wall.

Destination Information

Terracotta Warriors – One of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century, this unearthed army is comprised of over 7,000 soldiers, horses and chariots. The army was built in life-sized form by thousands of workers and designed by Emperor Qin Shi Huang to defend himself in the afterlife.

Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Workshop – See smaller versions of the enigmatic Terracotta Warriors being created at the captivating Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Workshop; even purchase your own portable soldier.

Ancient City Walls – Dating back to the Ming Dynasty in the 14th century, the Xian ancient city wall is one of the best-preserved urban fortifications in China. The wall's ideal spot gives visitors a bird's eye view over this fantastic city. Follow the locals' example and hire a bike to get an even more spectacular experience.

Day 7: Xian

Meals: B, L, D

In the morning, visit the lovely Little Wild Goose Pagoda before wandering through the atmospheric Muslim Quarter. The Muslim Quarter can get crowded, so please be mindful of your belongings. Later, enjoy a delicious feast of traditional Shui Jiao dumplings before a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing.



Destination Information

Little Wild Goose Pagoda – Dating back to the Tang Dynasty, the Little Wild Goose Pagoda is one of two prominent pagodas in Xian. A former centre for translating Buddhist scriptures from India, the Little Wild Goose Pagoda was said to have survived one of the strongest earthquakes in world history.

Muslim Quarter – The Muslim Quarter is the hub of Xian's Islamic community and is home to many stalls selling a myriad of snack foods, a trove of silks and fabrics, and delightful oriental knick-knacks.

Tang Dynasty Dancing Show – Xian, previously known as Chang'an, was an important cultural and historical centre in not only China but in the known-world. The Tang Dynasty dancing show is an exciting exponent of this prosperous society and keeps alive the splendour of this period.

Day 8: Xian – Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to the airport and take a 1-and-a-half-hour flight to Yichang. Upon arrival, transfer to Maoping docks and board your cruise ship which will take you on an amazing journey up China's Yangtze River for the next 4-nights.

Whilst we aim to ensure passengers are transferred direct to Yichang, flights in this region are subject to change/cancellation and we may need to adjust transportation at the last minute. It may be necessary to depart your hotel in the early morning or to fly to Wuhan and transfer 6 hours by road.



The Yangtze River cruise section of your itinerary will not be confirmed by the cruise operators until after you commence your tour as it is subject to local river conditions and water levels. Your local guide will do their utmost to keep you informed of any changes but cannot guarantee against delays or – in rare cases – cancellations of sections of your itinerary. Shore excursions are subject to change depending on local conditions. A detailed itinerary will be handed out on the vessel each day.

If you do not wish to take part in a shore excursion but you still wish to disembark the cruise ship, there is a mandatory port tax which must be paid by each customer. The port tax amount is approx. USD20-USD30 per person; however, this amount can vary and for security reasons, it is not always possible to disembark at all ports of call. Please be aware that there are a number of steps involved in embarking and disembarking your Yangtze River Cruise Ship, particularly during low tide. If you think this may be an issue, please inform us in advance.

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There are amenities package, deck and cabin upgrades available to pre-book – please enquire with our Reservations team.

Destination Information

Yangtze River – One of the world's great and legendary waterways, this 6,300km river has its origins high up in the snow-covered mountain of Tanggula, in the southwestern Qinghai Tibet Plateau, and runs into the ocean in Shanghai. It is estimated that the banks of this river are home to almost a third of China's population.

Day 9: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Visit the Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world. Disembark the ship and drive around 45-minutes (the coach is not permitted to stop for photos) to the viewing area above the ship locks where you will be able to truly appreciate the scale of this hydroelectric project. There is also a small museum here and a lookout point. The sightseeing will involve around 1 hour on foot. Return to the ship and sail through Xiling Gorge, the longest and deepest of the three gorges.

**Destination Information**

Three Gorges Dam – Commenced in 1994 and completed in 2009, the Three Gorges Dam is the largest water conservancy project ever undertaken. The Dam is located near Sandouping, which is in the middle of the Xiling Gorge, the longest of the Three Gorges. The dam is 2,335m long, 185m high, 18m wide on the top and 130m wide at the bottom. The dam has raised the river to a level of 175m above sea level, creating a 600km long reservoir. The purpose of building the dam was flood control, electricity, navigation, and irrigation.

Day 10: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to smaller vessels for a relaxing 1.5-hour excursion through the Shennong Stream gorges, which are narrower than the Three Gorges, but very impressive. There is no walking involved on this shore excursion, however you will need to get on and off the boat without assistance. Later, as the cruise ship continues upstream, prepare for breathtaking vistas as you pass through Wu and Qutang gorges. Wu gorge is known for its quiet beauty, forest-covered mountains, and sheer cliffs, while Qutang Gorge is the shortest, narrowest, and most dramatic gorge.



Depending on local river conditions, you may travel along the gorges of Goddess Stream instead of Shennong Stream.

Destination Information

Shennong Stream – Shennong Stream flows from north to south through stunning deep gorges finally merging with the Yangtze to the east of the mouth of Wu Gorge. The landscape on both banks of this crystal-clear stream is unique and tranquil.

Day 11: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Continue cruising along the mighty Yangtze River. Relax onboard or disembark to visit the Snow Jade Cave, aptly named for the stalactites inside the cave that are “white as snow and pure like jade”. The coach ride to the cave is around 30-minutes with a 10-minute walk to the cave entrance. The cave is 1.3-kilometres in length and has over 200 steps, taking approximately 40-minutes to walk through. Please wear suitable footwear as the cave has dim lighting and often damp conditions.



Depending on local river conditions and the cruise programme, you may visit Shibaozhai Temple, Fengdu Ghost City or Mt. Shuanggui instead.

Destination Information

Snow Jade Cave – A stunning underground labyrinth of streams and formations created from easily eroded Karst limestone around 50,000 years ago, though it was only recently discovered by local farmers. Snow Jade Cave is notable for its white, jade-like stalactites, rapid stalactite growth rate of thirty-three millimeters per century, and a variety of unique formations.

Day 12: Yangtze River Cruise – Chengdu

Meals: B, L, D

Check out of your cabin early this morning and disembark in Chongqing. Take a tour around Ciqikou, a centre of cobbled streets and porcelain wares. Continue your journey driving 4-5 hours to Chengdu and dine on a delicious Sichuanese meal. This evening, there is an optional Sichuan Opera show (time permitting, payable locally).

**Destination Information**

Ciqikou – Known colloquially as ‘Little Chongqing’ and the ‘Porcelain Port’, Ciqikou dates back to the Ming Dynasty and has maintained its original appearance. Lined with shops selling delicious snacks, Ming-style trinkets and Chinese curios, Ciqikou is a fun way to spend a morning and is a must-see in Chongqing.

Chengdu – Chengdu is China’s symbolic western capital and the residence of the country’s most lovable black and white bear. With a fast-paced economy, Chengdu is dragging China’s west into the 21st century. As the gateway into Sichuan Province’s large collection of sights, as well as Chengdu being its own trove of historical and cultural treasures, Chengdu is a must-visit on any trip to China.

Sichuanese Meal – Sichuanese cuisine is famous for its use of Sichuan pepper and chillies. These spices are known for their ‘mala’ (numb and spicy) flavours, which seem to cool and heat your mouth at the same time.

Day 13: Chengdu – Dali

Meals: B, L, D

See China's most famous resident, the Giant Panda. Visit the Panda Conservation Centre where you can learn about China's celebrated bear. See these lovable creatures in surroundings that mirror their natural habitat. It is not guaranteed that you will be able to see the feeding of the younger pandas, as this only happens at the start and end of each day. Sightseeing involves approximately 1 and a half hours on foot and there are electric carts offered by private vendors that can be organised at your own cost. Later, fly 1 and a half hour to the charming city of Dali.

**Destination Information**

Panda Conservation Centre – With over 80 pandas holding residence, the Chengdu Panda Research Base is equipped with the latest technology and research materials to gain a further understanding in how we can protect the panda and maintain, if not increase, its numbers. The park is set up to resemble the mountain and forest regions in north Sichuan, the original home of the Giant Panda, with extensive bamboo trees and large green spaces. Red Pandas, the Giant Panda's lovable cousin, and flamboyant peacocks too roam the park, making for an interesting mix.

Dali – Sandwiched between the Jade Green Mountains and serene Erhai Lake, Dali is naturally striking in its setting. Mainly a base for the Bai people, Dali has played an important role in the history of south China and was once a post on the old Burma Road.

Day 14: Dali

Meals: B, L, D

Head over to Xizhou Village to explore the local wares at the market, as well as the iconic Yan Family house. Later, take a cruise on tranquil Erhai Lake. You will be required to get on and off the boat here. Visit the Golden Flower Tie Dye shop and explore Dali's quaint old quarter. Time permitting, there is an optional cable car ride to Cangshan Mountain (payable locally). Sightseeing today is relaxed, involving approximately 3 hours on foot.

**Destination Information**

Xizhou Village – Xizhou Village was once a military stronghold and flourished during the Ming Dynasty. Surrounded by rice paddies and shadowed by Cangshan Mountain, Xizhou is not only famous historically but is a great place to shop and browse for Bai minority people wares and delicious fares.

Yan Family House – Previously owned by a famous local merchant, Yan Family House is now a museum of a traditional Bai ethnic house well-known for its wood carvings, stone sculptures and clay statues.

Erhai Lake – The centrepiece of Dali, Erhai Lake is a beautiful oasis of striking blue waters, temple islands and cormorant fishermen. Erhai literally means ‘ear sea’ and is named so due to the ear shape of the lake. A cruise on the lake is the best way to fully appreciate the natural beauty of the area.

Day 15: Dali – Kunming

Meals: B, L, D

Enjoy some relaxed sightseeing around the symmetrical Three Pagodas before boarding the bullet train approximately 2.5-hours to Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province.

**Destination Information**

Three Pagodas – Presented in a perfect triangle, the Three Pagodas date back to the 9th century and were built under the Nanzhao State. Made of brick and white mud, the Pagodas are known for their resilience, having survived many natural disasters, including earthquakes.

Kunming – Nicknamed China’s ‘Spring City’ due to its temperate weather, Kunming is the capital of Yunnan Province. Kunming has long played an important role as a trading city due to its significant location on the borders of Southeast Asia.

Day 16: Kunming

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, drive 1 and a half hours to the Stone Forest and spend the morning exploring its unusual limestone rock formations. The visit involves around 2 hours on foot, walking along cobblestone paths. Return to Kunming and dine this evening on the delicious local delicacy, Across the Bridge Noodles. This evening, there is an optional Yunnan Impression Show (time permitting, payable locally).



Destination Information

Kunming Stone Forest – Located 120km southeast of Kunming, the Stone Forest consists of thousands of narrow, fantastically shaped pillars of rock, scattered over an area of more than 80 hectares. The park is designed so that you can follow a walkway through the formations of water pools and grey pinnacles, the tallest of which is over 30m high.

Across the Bridge Noodles – Across the Bridge Noodles are a type of rice noodle soup from Yunnan Province served in a broth style. Usually accompanied by meat, bean curd and vegetables, this is a truly therapeutic dish.

Day 17: Kunming – Guilin

Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to the railway station for your bullet train to the scenic city of Guilin, a journey of 7-hours. The journey to from Kunming through Yunnan's beautiful southern mountain ranges to Guilin is known for being one of the most scenic in China. The rest of the day is at leisure.



Destination Information

Guilin – Guilin is one of China's most stunning and panoramic cities, founded during the reign of the first Chinese empire, the Qin Dynasty. It is renowned for the unique beauty of the mountains that fringe it. Guilin developed as a trading town due to the building of the Ling Canal which links the important Pearl and Yangtze River systems.

Day 18: Guilin – Yangshuo

Meals: B, L, D

Take a relaxed 4-hour cruise along the Li River to the charming village of Yangshuo, where you will spend 2 nights. Around every river bend is a view to take your breath away as jagged peaks loom over rural scenes of lush greenery, grazing buffalos and local fishermen. These are small cruise boats usually holding approximately 100 passengers: with an enclosed dining area on the lower deck and an open viewing area on the upper deck. Usually, the boats depart at 9am from the dock located a 1-hour drive from your hotel. However, when the river level is low, they depart from further downstream which would mean a longer drive and an earlier check-out from your hotel. Disembarking from the cruise, your Local Guide will walk with you to your hotel, approximately a 30-minute walk from the river. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organised at your own cost. In Yangshuo, visit the local markets.



An optional outdoor Sanjie Liu Impression's show is available this evening (time and weather permitting, payable locally).

Destination Information

Li River Cruise – You will pass tranquil farming and fishing scenes and picturesque villages as you cruise down the Li River. The main attraction is the stunning limestone karsts that tower above the river creating a magical landscape of mountains and water. The unique and natural beauty of this region has for centuries been an inspiration to Chinese artists and poets alike.

Yangshuo – Yangshuo is home to some of the best scenery in the world. This quaint town is renowned for its breathtaking vistas and peaceful country life. Surrounded by stark karst peaks and attractively located on the Li River, Yangshuo, alongside Guilin, prides itself in being the most sought-after beauty spots in China.

Day 19: Yangshuo

Meals: B, L, D

Yangshuo sits in an exquisite rural location, surrounded by landscapes of jewel-green paddy fields and dramatic limestone karsts. Begin with a relaxing and invigorating session of Tai Chi, taking a class with a master to learn this ancient martial art before exploring the countryside. Stop on the banks of the Li River for a photo opportunity with a cormorant fisherman. Enjoy the afternoon at leisure or choose one of the many optional activities available, including cycling or bamboo rafting.



Destination Information

Cormorant Fishing – A traditional fishing method used for centuries in both China and Japan, skilled fishermen have trained their cormorants to catch fish for them by diving into the water and returning with their prize.

Day 20: Yangshuo – Guilin

Meals: B, L, D

Drive 1 hour back to Guilin and visit the Reed Flute Caves to admire the stunning colours of the stalagmites and stalactites. You will take a walk through the caves, sometimes along damp paths and stairs. It usually takes about 1.5 hours to complete the route and can be quite cool inside. Take a tour of the South China Pearl Factory where you will have the opportunity to buy these precious stones. Also stroll around picturesque Ronghu Lake and admire the Sun and Moon Pagodas – two towering examples of traditional Chinese-Buddhist architecture, and visit the Ancient South Gate.



Destination Information

Reed Flute Cave – Named so because of the clumps of slender reed once commonly found at the entrance to the caves which was also used to make flutes, the Reed Flute Caves house a grotto of multi-coloured stalactites and stalagmites.

South China Pearl Factory – Gain a fascinating insight into the pearling industry of southern China at the South China Pearl Factory, where you have the opportunity to purchase some of these elegant silver jewels.

Ronghu Lake – One of two lakes originating from the Tang Dynasty when they made up part of the city moat. As Guilin expanded in all directions, the moat became a lake within the city area.

Sun and Moon Pagodas – Known as the Gold and Silver Pagodas because of their colours at night, the sun and moon pagodas sit on top of the Chinese Fir Lake but are connected underwater by a glass tunnel.

Ancient South Gate – The Ancient South Gate is a remnant of the old walled city of Guilin. Restored to its pristine condition, this ancient gate was constructed back in the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

Day 21: Guilin – Hangzhou

Meals: B, L, D

Take a flight to Hangzhou, a flight of just under 2 hours. This evening, there is an optional Song Dynasty Show (time permitting, payable locally).



Destination Information

Hangzhou – As the southern terminus of the Grand Canal, Hangzhou has long played a leading part not just as a trade port but also as a place for relaxation and contemplation. Most famous is the city's stunning West Lake, which sits peacefully amongst verdant hills and the city itself.

Day 22: Hangzhou – Suzhou

Meals: B, L, D

Today, spend time wandering around the Temple of Inspired Seclusion (Lingyin Temple), one of China's largest and most renowned Buddhist temples. Because the Temple is one of the most significant temples in southern China, it can get crowded with domestic tourists, particularly during weekends and holidays. There will be around 2 hours sightseeing on foot at this site.



Also visit Meijiawu Village, famous for its tea cultivation, and enjoy a tea tasting tour. Later, cruise on Hangzhou's West Lake, admiring the gardens, pagodas and old bridges on its shores. Disembark your cruise and explore the Xihutiandi area before transferring 3 hours to Suzhou, renowned for its gardens and quaint charm, and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

Destination Information

West Lake – The central inspiration of Chinese garden style and a muse to the Chinese literati for centuries, Hangzhou's West Lake epitomizes China's natural charm, refinement and beauty. Laced with temples and pagodas, Hangzhou's West Lake is a source of Buddhist architecture and traditional Chinese ideologies.

Temple of Inspired Seclusion – The most famous Buddhist Temple in Hangzhou, the Temple of Inspired Seclusion dates back to the 4th century during the Eastern Jin Dynasty when it was founded by an Indian monk named Hui Li. Though it has been destroyed throughout time due to war, religion and disrepair, the temple today is an important place of pilgrimage for followers of Buddhist religion and a centre for tourism.

Meijiawu Tea – Tea has long played an important role in China. At Meijiawu Village, enjoy the opportunity to see how tea is cultivated and sample a cup of local tea yourself.

Xihutiandi – Located in the southern scenic area of the West Lake, Xihutiandi is a large garden area dotted with cafes, restaurants and shops to explore.

Suzhou – Suzhou, situated on the lower reaches of the Yangtze and close to Shanghai, may be a modern city at first glance, but venture into the old centre and you'll find a world of meticulously designed classical gardens, cobbled streets and picturesque waterways.

Day 23: Suzhou

Meals: B, L, D

Today, enjoy a leisurely day of sightseeing. Start your day with a tour of the Humble Administrator's Garden, one of the most exquisite examples of Chinese garden style in the world. Later cruise on the thousand-year-old Grand Canal, an important commercial route for centuries. There will be 3-4 hours walking while sightseeing today.



Destination Information

Humble Administrator's Garden – Part of the UNESCO World Heritage site of classical gardens in Suzhou, the Humble Administrator's Garden is the largest and is seen as one of the most iconic and beautiful in the area. Dating back to 1509, the Humble Administrator's Garden was designed by the Ming Dynasty civil servant, Wang Xianchen, as a private garden residence.

Grand Canal – China’s Grand Canal is the longest man-made waterway in the world with some sections dating back to the 5th century BC. The section that passes through Suzhou makes for an interesting journey as the banks are lined with places of historical interest and crossed by elegant bridges.

Day 24: Suzhou – Shanghai

Meals: B, L, D

Transfer 2 hours to the vibrant city of Shanghai. Visit Matchmaker’s Corner where parents search for worthy suitors for their children, before exploring People’s Square and Nanjing Road, the perfect stop for last minute shopping! Enjoy time at leisure to explore, or alternatively there is an optional visit to the Jin Mao Tower and ride on the Maglev train (time permitting, payable locally). Sightseeing today includes 2-3 hours on foot. End the day with a panoramic evening cruise on the Huangpu River and a dinner of delicious Shanghaiese cuisine.



Destination Information

Shanghai – Once known as the ‘Paris of the East’, Shanghai is now one of Asia’s most influential cities. Prior to communist arrival in 1949, Shanghai was a city with European-style mansions and was the most important trading port in Asia. Today it presents a blend of cultures; the modern and the traditional, along with the European and oriental.

People’s Square – Home to the Shanghai Museum, People’s Square is an ideal centre for people to meet, do tai chi and take part in dance classes.

Nanjing Road – A vibrant shopping street in Shanghai, it is renowned for its bustling commercial activity and rich ambiance. Divided into Nanjing Road East and Nanjing Road West, it is famous for its mix of traditional shops and international brands, attracting both tourists and locals.

Huangpu River – The Huangpu River flows through the centre of Shanghai and separates the city into Pudong, meaning ‘east of the Huangpu’ and Puxi, ‘west of the Huangpu’. Cruising down the river, you will see the contrast of the historical Bund architecture on one side of the river with the modern Pudong skyline on the other side. At night, the banks of the Huangpu light up, turning Shanghai into a neon wonder.

Day 25: Shanghai

Meals: B, L, D

Today's explorations include the peaceful Yu Garden and a visit to the old town. Admire the magnificent colonial architecture with a stroll along the Bund, before visiting a silk factory. Sightseeing today involves a full day of touring around the centre of the city, including 3-4 hours on foot. End the evening with the fascinating ERA acrobatic show.



Destination Information

Yu Gardens – The Yu Gardens is seen as one of the most perfect examples of Chinese style gardens. Built by the Ming-era governor, Pan Yunduan, as a retirement gift for his father, the Yu Gardens is home to exquisite jade rock, goldfish-filled ponds and stunning, tranquil pavilions.

The Bund – Recognised as Shanghai's former 'Wall Street', the Bund is home to an impressive collection of buildings from the early trade houses of the 1850s to the glamorous Art Deco modernism of the 1920s. Originally the home of the foreign population of Shanghai, the Bund's architecture has inherited much western influence and is a stark contrast to the Pudong skyline, sitting across the Huangpu River.

Silk Factory – An educational journey through the production of silk, one of China's most famous and luxurious materials. Learn about the use of silkworms and silk moths in its production; the manufacturing process; as well as silk's journey along the Silk Road.

ERA Show – One of Shanghai's most famous shows, the "ERA – Intersection of Time" is a multi-million-dollar acrobatics extravaganza that redefines Chinese acrobatics. It is a meditation on time and a love story told through a spectacular sequence of acrobatic performances guaranteed to leave you enthralled and amazed.

Day 26 - 27: Depart Shanghai

Meals: B

Any time before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from your hotel to Shanghai Pudong or Shanghai Hongqiao Airport, according to the departure time of your international flight.

Please note: Late check-out is not included. Additional nights before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

CHINA - TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

China - Entry visas are required by all visitors to China for stays over 15 days, Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Please note - Once an online visa application has been completed you may be advised to visit one of three visa centres in New Zealand – Auckland, Wellington, or Christchurch. Full details will be advised by Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into New Zealand.

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate; Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa. Currently a visa is required for New Zealand Passport holders. Your travel consultant will inform you if any changes are applicable prior to your departure.

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original

GROUP SIZE:

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by both a National Escort and local guides. There will be no more than 28 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

EATING IN CHINA:

Chinese cuisine is one of the most influential, diverse, and flavoursome culinary styles in the world with a legacy stretching back thousands of years. Often, you'll find that the local Chinese style is very different from what you're used to at home.

We welcome people on our tours with a wide variety of tastes and as such try to present an array of food to suit everyone in the group. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout China.

All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from dinner on the day of the groups' arrival until breakfast on the groups' day of departure.

Dishes served in restaurants on our group tours are varied. Some will be vegetable-based with meat mixed in, and a few will be meat-based. Traditionally, Chinese people cook with a lot of vegetables because meat used to be hard to come by. Dishes often come pre-seasoned with soy sauce or other sauces. Our restaurants are well aware of the western palate – there are plenty of non-spiced options. Most meals are served with plain rice on the side which is intended as an accompaniment to your meal. Unlike the western world, Chinese people do not normally pre-heat their plates and food can be presented at a variety of temperatures, which is a typical Chinese way of doing things.

When eating meals on group tours, you will be seated around a circular table with other tour members. Dishes will be served in the traditional 'family style' on a lazy Susan; meaning that various dishes will be laid out on a spinning turntable in the centre of the tabletop. These dishes are intended to be shared amongst the group – there is always more than enough to feed everybody. 'Family style' means that there is a pair of serving chopsticks for each dish which are used specifically to serve the food (please ask your server if you require a fork or spoon) and everybody will help themselves to all the dishes on the lazy Susan. You will have an individual bowl, chopsticks, and cup for your own use. Please be courteous and consider your fellow diners; if your favourite dish is on the other side of the table, it will make its way round to you soon! We find our customers really enjoy this sociable style of eating.

Your National Escort will do their utmost to cater for any special requests such as gluten free or vegetarian meals, however, people on restricted diets should expect complications. Although most Asian countries are now quite developed, only quite recently have they started to widely accept Western guests. Western food requirements are quite far removed from Asian food requirements, and even medical reasons can be quite difficult to explain. While our ground partners will do everything they can to cater for a wide range of dietary requirements on tour, we ask kindly for your patience and understanding that they cannot always be delivered to the standard you will be used to at home. It is recommended that passengers with food intolerances bring snacks or additional food items with them, especially when travelling further from major cities as not all dietary requests will be met due to the limited foods available. We recommend that when it comes to Chinese food, you stay open minded, try to be adventurous and always have a go with the chopsticks!

**PLEASE INFORM US OF ANY ALLERGIES AND/OR SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS
AT TIME OF BOOKING**

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

If you are travelling within the below Chinese Public Holidays, please note that celebrations last for several days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open but may be crowded. Chinese New Year is from 9 – 16 February 2024 and 28 January – 4 February 2025. Golden Week public holidays fall annually between 29 April – 3 May and 30 September – 7 October.

DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA:

Though parts of China match the west in modernity and technological advances, it is important to remember that China is still a developing country and as such, many aspects of tourism in China do not have the solid infrastructure and safety standards as seen here in the west.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Roads in China have generally improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road – not just 1-2 kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only. There may be sections of road where the surface is comparatively bumpy, but our drivers will do their utmost to lessen the impact.

Planes: Internal flight/s are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Lithium-Ion batteries, usually used in laptops, cell phones and digital cameras, must be carried in your hand luggage (not in your checked luggage). Portable chargers with a case that does not state the capacity or with a capacity of 160wh and more are not allowed on internal flights at all.

Trains: On this tour, you will take multiple high-speed “bullet” train journeys. You will travel in second-class soft seats with air conditioning. For train journeys you must ensure that you pack liquids, aerosols and gels/lotions in your hand luggage as per recent regulations. Passengers are not allowed to carry any aerosols over 100ml. Passengers are also not allowed to carry flammable gases or liquids including styling gel, compressed air or insecticides; any explosives, magnetised material, knives (including Swiss Army knives), scissors or sharp items (medication is fine). Bag checks are conducted randomly and any of these items may be confiscated before boarding the train (in hand luggage or main luggage). The National Escort will inform you of specific details prior to boarding.

High-Speed Train Facilities: The second-class seats are in a 3 x 2 seating configuration. Facilities vary from train to train. Most carriages have a western style toilet. Most seats will have a foldable tray table and power socket for charging your electronic devices. There are dining carts on board if you wish to purchase your own additional food.

SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs; so, in each city, we will visit a workshop or factory which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places which hold local interest; for example, in Shanghai you will be able to see how silk is created all the way from the silk worm to beautiful garments; and in Xian we will take you to a workshop which creates replicas of the Terracotta Warriors, from tiny little warriors to seven foot behemoths! We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and China is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed to local guides and drivers throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the national escort.

If you are travelling in a smaller group with local guides only, then tipping is paid in each destination. To be fair to the guides we ask for slightly higher amounts per traveller with small groups. Yangtze cruise companies operate a service charge policy, and this is paid separately when boarding the vessel.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy, but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour, we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that portorage is not included on our tours in Taiwan. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort, or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town.

In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between New Zealand and China.

All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Due to environmental regulations, not all hotels in China provide toiletries in the rooms. In China, plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room.

If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 5kg. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. In general, we recommend packing only as much as you can lift as you will need to carry your own luggage on and off trains. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

EXCHANGING CASH:

Exchanging Money - We recommend exchanging money prior to departure at banks, money exchanges, or at international airports in New Zealand. It is possible to exchange money at your arrival airport and some banks in China, we recommend bringing USD which is more widely accepted.

Credit/Debit Card & Mobile Payment Apps - It's hard for those of us who live outside of China to grasp how paying for everything has gone digital in the country.

Most businesses there, from the fanciest hotels to roadside fruit stands, display a QR code — a type of bar code — that people scan with a smartphone camera to pay. However, it is not possible to utilise this without a Chinese bank account. Therefore, we recommend taking a mixture of payment methods (cash, debit/credit cards)

Please do not rely on a credit/debit card as your only source of spending money. We strongly suggest taking enough cash to cover your trip.

We strongly suggest you alert your bank in New Zealand of your travel plans and check any potential foreign transaction fees or ATM withdrawal limits imposed by your bank.

Your tour guide will explain more regarding this at your welcome meeting.

PERSONAL EXPENSES AND OPTIONAL TOURINGS:

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you.

Optional Tours - Our fully inclusive Classic tours feature full days of sightseeing to ensure you experience all the must-see sights and unforgettable moments. Occasionally, when time allows, we offer optional extras such as evening shows for those seeking extra excitement. These excursions will be listed in your final documents and can be paid for locally through your guide

CLIMBING STEPS:

Sightseeing at nearly all the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defence against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

Wendy Wu does not give specific health advice, but we do recommend you see your doctor at least six weeks prior to travel for advice and to allow time for any necessary vaccinations. Please remember to take your itinerary with you. Safe travel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.safetravel.govt.nz

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.safetravel.govt.nz as in the event of an emergency, New Zealand Consular assistance will be more readily available.

Up until the day you travel, it is vital you keep up to date and familiarised with the entry requirements as these can change at short notice. You are personally responsible for completing any entry forms, conducting any covid tests (if necessary), etc and adhering to countries' specific entry requirements. You can also access the New Zealand Government's travel advisory service for up-to-date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

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