



## China: The Big One Dossier

### Immerse Yourself Tour | 28 Days | Flexible

Beijing - Xian - Guilin - Yangshuo - Kunming - Dali – Lijiang - Chengdu - Yangtze River Cruise - Shanghai

The complete China adventure – this itinerary takes more time to explore the highlights of this eclectic country, from busy cities to rural utopias and quirky ancient towns where you are free to absorb the relaxed atmosphere

#### TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Enjoy your freedom and choose amazing optional experiences
- Mingle with local people
- Practise Tai Chi in Yangshuo
- Ascend Jade Dragon Snow Mountain by cable car



## China: The Big One tour inclusions

- Return international flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Meals as stated on itinerary
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English-speaking National Escort (If your group is 10 or more passengers)

*Personal expenditures e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary are at your own expense.*

## Immerse Yourself

Designed for those who wish to be further immersed in the authentic charm of Asia; our Immerse Yourself Tours include more cultural and active experiences. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts or Local Guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience. Our Immerse Yourself tours include:

- Cycling and walking through classic sites
- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- Off the beaten track destinations
- More evenings at leisure for independent exploration

## Flexible Tour

'China: The Big One' is a flexible tour with some active optional excursions. By making the more physically demanding features of this tour optional you can pick and mix activities and free time, meaning more opportunity for independent exploration. Some of the optional excursions, such as hiking at the Longji Rice Terraces, will require a higher level of fitness to take part, please refer to the Travel Information section below for a list of optional activities.

- On the Great Wall of China, you may be walking on steep ground
- In Beijing, Xian and Shanghai there will be long periods of walking while sightseeing
- You will be required to get on and off varying sizes of boats without assistance during the tour
- From Beijing to Xian you will travel by overnight train
- You will be at high altitude at Jade Dragon Snow Mountain

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.

## Altitude

This itinerary visits areas of high altitude. If you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your doctor before undertaking this itinerary. The following part of the itinerary have high altitude:

- Jade Dragon Snow Mountain near Lijiang. Sightseeing is at Yunshaping (Cloud Fir Meadow) which has an altitude of approximately 3,240m. Please note that the town of Lijiang, where you will be staying overnight is not at high altitude.

AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness) occurs in some people when they travel to altitudes over 3,000m. Mild symptoms of AMS include dizziness, fatigue, nausea or loss of appetite, breathlessness or headache. These usually develop over the first 36 hours at altitude and not immediately on arrival. AMS symptoms are experienced by people of varying ages and levels of fitness, and usually the symptoms will subside after a day or so. If symptoms worsen, you should seek medical advice and descend in altitude immediately. It is recommended to drink more water, non-alcoholic and noncaffeinated drinks and avoid exertion after arriving in altitude over 3,000m.

Making sure you are well hydrated (by drinking lots of water and refraining from alcohol/caffeine) before and during the tour, as well as exercising to improve your aerobic fitness before you leave, are generally considered to be excellent ways to prevent or alleviate the severity of mild AMS. If you smoke, your doctor will probably also advise you to stop several weeks before your

tour. If you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your doctor before undertaking this tour. Take this Tour Dossier with you to your appointment to explain the altitude at which you will be travelling. Information on AMS can also be found at [http://www.travelvax.com.au/resource\\_files/Travel-Tips---Altitude-Sickness.pdf](http://www.travelvax.com.au/resource_files/Travel-Tips---Altitude-Sickness.pdf)

## Country Profile: China

China's civilisation is the oldest in the world and has a history dating back over 5,000 years. With 56 ethnic groups, 22 provinces and eight major dialects, China has a rich and varied culture and way of life. It is home to a wealth of tourist sights and cultural relics, which entice our guests to return again and again to this exciting destination.

## Joining Your Tour

The tour is 28 days in duration including international flights.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only, the price includes visa fees and your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations. Join the tour on Day 1 in Beijing and end the tour on Day 27 in Shanghai. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

## 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 maintaining the integrity of your trip.

The Forbidden City is closed on Mondays, due to maintenance. If it is not open on the day our group is due to visit, Beijing touring will be rearranged by your National Escort/Local Guide accordingly.

Yangtze River. Please note that all sections of the itinerary for the Yangtze River Cruise are especially subject to change. The movement of each vessel along the Yangtze is regulated by the Government's Yangtze River Authority (YRA). The river's rapid flow, the narrowness of the gorges and the recent increase in numbers of passengers means that the timetables are under some pressure. The YRA allocates times for access to mooring points, embarkation and disembarkation at docks and passage through the gorges. This means that the captain of each cruise ship is unable to confirm a final itinerary until shortly before departure (usually 24 hours prior). This can affect both the time and location where you embark and disembark your cruise ship. Your National Escort/Local Guide will explain any such changes to you as soon as they are informed by the cruise operator.

### Changes:

- **Day 26:** The optional tour to Suzhou has been replaced with a tour to the water canal town of Zhujiajiao (paid locally if you wish to participate).

## Important Information Regarding Itinerary Changes and Flight Delays

Due to unforeseen circumstances, flights can be delayed, and therefore connecting flights may be missed. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact our China office on **+86 21 5888 5681 or +86 159 0929 1082** (outside China) or **21 5888 5681 or 159 0929 1082** (within China) to urgently advise your arrival details have changed. Please ensure you have your trip number, tour name (both included in your final documentation) and new arrival details (flight number and arrival time) handy to pass on to our local office in China. This will ensure your National Escort/Local Guide can be informed of your most up to date information and ensure someone is at the airport to meet you on arrival.

If we are not advised of late changes and missed connections, Wendy Wu Tours cannot guarantee someone will be able to meet you upon arrival in China as our local office will have no way of knowing which flight you will be arriving on. Wendy Wu Tours will not be responsible for providing reimbursement of transportation costs from the airport to your hotel in the event that our local office was not advised of changes to arrival time.

# China: The Big One Itinerary

## **DAY 1: AUSTRALIA TO BEIJING**

On arrival in Beijing Capital International 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 approximately one hour to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure. A tour introduction will be held in the hotel either this evening or the next. Food and drinks will not be served at this meeting, it is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in China.

### **Destination Information**

**Beijing** – Beijing is 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, and has been the heart of politics and society throughout its long history. The ancient monuments, the stories of days gone by as well as the dynamic and modern city Beijing has become today, make it a destination not to be missed.

## **DAY 2: BEIJING**

Walk across Tiananmen Square into the magnificent Forbidden City and the Jingshan Park. Next, visit Yandaixiejie where you will have some free time to explore the Hutongs and then enjoy a local lunch. Sightseeing will be approximately four hours. Later, enjoy some free time in the traditional Houhai area. There will be an optional Kung Fu Show this evening.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

*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 around so that the Forbidden City is visited on an alternative day.*

### **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.

**Hutongs** – The Mongol rulers of Beijing established this style of housing in the 13<sup>th</sup> century as tenancy for the growing population of the city. Hutongs were designed to reflect the Chinese system of Feng Shui with four hutongs joining together to make a courtyard in the middle, known as Siheyuan.

## **DAY 3: THE GREAT WALL**

Rise early this morning and transfer two hours to the Huanghuacheng section of the Great Wall of China, one of the most picturesque sections. You will need to get on and off a boat, taking you across a lake to where you will begin your walk on the wall. First, you will be given a brief history of the area before having a couple of hours free to walk on the fortified wall. On your return to Beijing, visit the Jade Museum. This evening, stroll around Wangfujing, a lively area in central Beijing renowned for its small food stalls.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

### **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 Museum** – 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 Jade into works of art.

## **DAY 4: BEIJING**

Wander around the beautiful grounds of the Summer Palace, former holiday home to the Qing emperors. Whilst here, climb magnificent Longevity Hill for spectacular views over the palace's Kunming Lake. Make a photo stop this afternoon at the iconic Bird's Nest Stadium, home of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Time at the Olympic Village will not include entry to any of the Olympic venues.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

### **Destination Information**

**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.

**Olympic Village** – See the home of the most watched Olympic event in history at the Beijing Olympic Village. Most spectacular of sights here is the iconic Bird's Nest Stadium, host to the spectacular opening and closing ceremonies in 2008.

#### **DAY 5: BEIJING TO XIAN**

Start your day at the Temple of Heaven where you can watch the locals take part in dancing, Tai Chi and Mahjong games. This evening, board your overnight train to Xian.

The overnight train takes approximately 12 hours (over 1,300km). The cabins are first class soft sleeper compartments, where each cabin consists of four shared berths. Wear comfortable clothes on board to sleep in on the train, and you may wish to take some snacks with you.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

#### **Destination Information**

**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. Walking through the park we will see the many groups of local people that gather here every day to sing folk songs, practice Tai-Chi and sword dancing, play chess or just come to sit and chat.

**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**

On arrival in Xian this morning, transfer one hour to view the formidable ranks of terracotta warriors and horses, lined up in ranks to protect the first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang. 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 are no electric carts available for the return

from the museum exit to the bus park. Within the museum area the warriors can be seen in three different 'pits', which are active archaeological digs. The site is large and, towards the summer months, can be hot outside. Sightseeing here involves approximately 2 and a half hours on foot. Next, visit the Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition centre to see smaller models of the warriors being made, before returning to explore the atmospheric alleys of the Muslim Quarter. This evening, there will be an optional Tang Ever-Bright City Night Tour payable locally if you wish to participate.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

#### **Destination Information**

**Terracotta Warriors** – One of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this unearthed terracotta 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 Centre** – See smaller versions of the enigmatic Terracotta Warriors being created at the captivating Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Centre; even purchase your own portable soldier.

#### **DAY 7: XIAN**

Start the day with a gentle cycle ride around the 14 kilometres of the Xian Ancient City Wall. Visit the lovely Little Wild Goose Pagoda before seeing the 130,000 fine cultural relics on display in the Xian Museum. This evening, there will be an optional Tang Dynasty Dancing Show & Dumpling Dinner payable locally if you wish to participate.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

#### **Destination Information**

**Ancient city walls** – Dating back to the Ming Dynasty in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Xian ancient city wall is one of the best preserved urban fortifications in China. The wall's ideal spot and layout gives visitors a bird's eye view over this fantastic city. Follow the locals' example and take a bike to get an ever more spectacular experience.

**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.

## **DAY 8: XIAN TO GUILIN**

Fly two hours to Guilin, one of China's most beautiful spots. This afternoon, you will take a stroll around two of Guilin's most beautiful lakes, Ronghu and Shanhu, before heading to Zhengyang Pedestrian Street where there are many dining options for your perusal. There is an optional visit to the Sun and Moon Pagodas today payable locally if you wish to participate.

*Meals Included: Breakfast*

### **Destination Information**

**Guilin** – Guilin is one of China's most stunning and panoramic cities and was founded during the reign of the Qin Dynasty. It is renowned for the unique karst mountain beauty that encloses the city. Guilin developed as a trading town due to the building of the Ling Canal which links the important Pearl and Yangtze River systems.

**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.

## **DAY 9: GUILIN**

Today there is an option to take a full day tour of the stunning Longji Rice Terraces at Ping An payable locally if you wish to participate or explore the beautiful scenery of Guilin independently.

*Meals Included: Breakfast*

*Please note: The optional tour to Longji involves approximately four hours of trekking, depending on the capability of the group. The ground here is uneven and the trek will include steep climbs.*

## **DAY 10: GUILIN TO YANGSHUO**

Take a relaxed four hour cruise along the Li River to the charming village of Yangshuo where you will spend two 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. As it is so popular, there are generally many boats at the docks – please be reassured that the cruise itself will be scenic and relaxing as the boats cruise past unspoilt countryside. Usually

the boats depart at 9am from the dock located a one 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 15-minute walk from the river. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organised at your own cost. Take a walk in the idyllic countryside this afternoon. There will also be an option to walk up Moon Hill for spectacular views of Yangshuo payable locally if you wish to participate.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

*Please note, climbing Moon Hill involves a significant number of steep steps.*

### **Destination Information**

**Li River Cruise** – 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 11: YANGSHUO**

This morning, take part in a traditional Tai Chi class to learn the skills behind this ancient and spiritual exercise. The rest of the day is at leisure. Explore independently or take part in optional morning countryside cycling trip and/or an afternoon bamboo rafting trip payable locally if you wish to participate.

*Meals Included: Breakfast*

## **DAY 12: YANGSHUO TO KUNMING**

Return to Guilin by road, visiting the Reed Flute Caves en route, to admire the stunning colours of the stalagmites and stalactites. You will take a short walk through the caves, sometimes along damp paths and stairs. It usually takes about one hour to complete the route and it is very cool inside. Visit the South China Pearl Museum before taking your one and a half hour flight to Kunming.

*Meals Included: Breakfast*

### **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 houses a grotto of multi-coloured stalactites and stalagmites.

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

**Kunming** – Nicknamed China's 'Spring City' due to its temperate weather, Kunming is the capital of Yunnan Province. Kunming has long played an important city for trade due to its significant location on the borders of Southeast Asia.

### **DAY 13: KUNMING**

Spend the morning exploring the unusual limestone rock formations of the Kunming Stone Forest. Visit Green Lake Park before an evening at leisure in the Wenhua Alley district. Today, there will be an optional Yunnan Impression Show payable locally if you wish to participate.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

### **Destination Information**

**Stone Forest** – Located 120km south east 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.

### **DAY 14: KUNMING TO DALI**

Drive approximately four hours to Dali, a great destination to get a peek of a China of times gone by. View the Three Pagodas and wander around Dali's charming Old Town before heading to lively Foreigners' Street.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

### **Destination Information**

**Dali** – Sandwiched between the Jade Green Mountains and serene Erhu 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.

**Three Pagodas** – Presented in a perfect triangle, the Three Pagodas date back to the 9<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Foreigners Street** – Popular with the foreign backpack community, Dali's Foreigners Street is lined with market stalls selling items from the Bai people, beautiful fabrics and delicious 'small eats' snacks.

### **DAY 15: DALI**

Enjoy a day at leisure in peaceful Dali. There will be an optional visit to Weibaoshan, one of the fourteen sacred Taoist mountains, for meditation with a Taoist Master payable locally if you wish to participate.

*Meals Included: Breakfast*

### **DAY 16: DALI TO LIJIANG**

Drive two hours to Shaxi, a former ancient market town on the famous Tea and Horse Route, and enjoy some easy sightseeing around the old town. Continue a further two hours to the quaint town of Lijiang. Spend the evening in the historic old town.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

### **Destination Information**

**Shaxi** – Shaxi became an important trading point on the famous Tea and Horse Route during the Tang Dynasty. The Tea and Horse Route like the Silk Route, increase trade between China and the rest of Asia, as it passed through Tibet and Burma.

**Lijiang** – A beautiful tapestry of cobbled streets, rickety wooden buildings and sultry streams, Lijiang is a vision of idyllic wonder; a great place to just take a stroll and soak up the atmosphere.

### **DAY 17: LIJIANG**

A magnificent mountain, the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain comprise several peaks, the tallest of which is 5,500m. Today, you will explore one of the beautiful high meadows and enjoy the amazing vistas. To avoid the large crowds of people queuing at the same time, the local government's tourist authority allocates a time to each group. The bus will drive to the base of the mountain, from where you will take a 10-minute chairlift to Yunshaping (Cloud Fir Meadow) at an altitude of approximately 3,200m. From the chairlift, there is a wooden pathway to the meadow, which takes approximately one hour to walk. Descend by chairlift and re-board the bus. Later, visit Baisha Old Town to view the fascinating Baisha Frescoes, painted during the early Ming Dynasty, and visit the Mu Family Embroidery School. Sightseeing at Baisha Old Town is leisurely. There are ruthless souvenir sellers near the bus park so be firm to avoid any hassle.



*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

*Please note, this section of the itinerary is subject to change at late notice. Your local guide will keep you informed of any changes as they are made aware of them. Jade Dragon Snow Mountain is at an altitude of 3,200M. All passengers should stay well hydrated to acclimatise to the higher altitude.*

#### **Destination Information**

**Jade Dragon Snow Mountain** – Jade Dragon Snow Mountain is known for its mysterious ambience and snow-covered peaks and is considered the Holy Mountain amongst the Naxi ethnic group and other ethnic minorities in Lijiang. Popular for hiking, mountaineering, botanizing and skiing, Jade Dragon Snow Mountain attracts thousands of visitors every year who enjoy exploring its lofty peaks.

**Baisha Old Town and Frescoes** – Once the capital of the Naxi minority group, the Baisha Old Town is home to typical Naxi architecture and a great place to see the Naxi people going about their daily lives. The Baisha Frescoes date back to the early Ming Dynasty and are made up of 44 pieces. Most of the paintings depict religious stories from Taoism and Buddhism.

**Mu Family Embroidery School** – Watch as locals make intricate pieces of embroidery and take advantage to buy a piece yourself.

#### **DAY 18: LIJIANG**

Today, there is an option to visit the impressive Tiger Leaping Gorge and take a mini-trek. Alternatively, you can spend the day at leisure in Lijiang.

*Meals Included: Breakfast*

#### **Destination Information**

**Tiger Leaping Gorge** – Tiger Leaping Gorge is believed to be one of the deepest and most dramatic gorges in the world, measuring at 16km. Hiking along Tiger Leaping Gorge has become incredibly popular, as those who do can view its roaring stream, cascading waterfalls and magnificent scale – great for those who crave an adventure.

#### **DAY 19: LIJIANG TO CHENGDU**

Fly one and a half hours to Chengdu, capital of fascinating Sichuan Province. Take a stroll around People's Park and visit a teahouse for a cup of delicious Chinese tea (tea at your own expense), as well as Matchmaker's Corner, where parents search for suitable suitors for their children. This evening, stroll round Wide and Narrow Alleys.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

#### **Destination Information**

**Chengdu** – China's symbolic western capital and the residence of the country's most lovable black and white bear, Chengdu has an abundance to offer. With a fast-paced economy which is dragging China's west into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is no wonder that Chengdu's appeal is growing year on year. 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.

**People's Park** – People's Park is a pleasant respite from urban Chengdu. Here you can see beautiful golden koi, locals dancing and practicing tai chi, and most interesting of all, Matchmaker's Corner, where parents search for suitable boyfriends or girlfriends for their children.

#### **DAY 20: CHENGDU**

Today we will visit 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. Later, visit the Shu Brocade and Embroidery Museum. There is an optional Sichuan Hot Pot meal this evening with a Face Changing Show payable locally if you wish to participate.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

#### **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.

**Shu Brocade and Embroidery Museum** – Brocade production has been an integral piece of Chinese history for over 2,000 years. At this museum, enjoy the opportunity to learn further how these richly decorative fabrics are created and take the opportunity to purchase a piece yourself.

#### **DAY 21: CHENGDU – YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE**

Take the bullet train for two and a half hours to Chongqing, one of the most important cities on the Yangtze River, where you will visit the porcelain district of Ciqikou. Tonight, board your Yangtze River Cruise ship for a three night stay.



### *Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner*

*Please note: 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.*

*Further note: 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 dollars per person however this amount can vary and for security reasons, it is not always possible to disembark at all ports of call.*

### **Destination Information**

**Chongqing** – A city perched on the steep hills overlooking the confluence of the Jialing and the Yangtze Rivers, Chongqing is the chief industrial centre of south west China, producing approximately one fifth of Sichuan's industrial output. Chongqing has been reshaped by the Three Gorges Dam Project, which now allows larger sea-going vessels to sail all the way upriver to China's most famous waterfront mountain city.

**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.

**Yangtze River** – One of the world's great and legendary waterways, this 6,300km river has its origins high up in the snow-covered mountains 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 22: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE**

Today, visit the Shibaozhai Temple or the Ghost City of Fengdu (which one you visit is dependent on local conditions). River conditions permitting, the other may also be offered as an optional excursion at an additional cost payable locally.

Visit the Shibaozhai Temple, an 18<sup>th</sup> century architectural marvel. This small temple was built at the top of a nine-storey pavilion clinging to the sheer south bank near Qutang Gorge. Disembark from the ship to the dock close

to the pavilion's entrance. Sightseeing here involves climbing the nine storeys inside the building.

Or

Visit Fengdu, known as the Ghost City and located on Ming Mountain. Fengdu is home to complexes of shrines, temples and monasteries dedicated to the Chinese belief of the afterlife. After disembarking from the boat, you will be taken in vehicles half way up the mountain and continue to the top on foot or by an open-air escalator.

### *Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner*

### **Destination Information**

**Shibaozhai Temple** – Shibaozhai Temple is a nine-storey temple, named after the hill on which it stands. Dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was built during the Xianfeng Emperor's reign and is an example of Buddhist architecture. The temple is said to have been constructed without the use of nails.

**Fengdu** – The city's architecture combines the cultures of Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism with the mysticism of ghosts. With history dating back for nearly two thousand years, the Ghost City became separated from the city of Fengdu due to the rising water level during the building of the Three Gorges Dam. Highlights include the Bridge of Helplessness, Ghost Torturing Pass and Tinzi Palace, all of which, according to Chinese belief, the dead must pass through and be tested in before moving on to the next life.

### **DAY 23: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE**

Prepare for breathtaking vistas as the ship passes through Wu and Qutang gorges. Switching to smaller vessels, take a relaxing trip on the Goddess Stream or the Shennong Stream (which one you visit is dependent on local conditions) cruising through the beautiful and narrow gorges. Many protected species make the stunning peaks their home, including monkeys, mountain goats, deer and wild boar.

### *Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner*

### **Destination Information**

**Goddess Stream** – Goddess Stream, also known as 'Shennü Xi' in Chinese, flows from the southern bank of the Yangtze opposite Goddess Peak.

**Shennong Stream** – This crystal-clear stream flows from north to south through stunning deep gorges, finally merging with the Yangtze to the east of the mouth of Wu Gorge.

## **DAY 24: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE - SHANGHAI**

Visit the Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world. Disembark the ship and drive approximately 20 minutes through the surrounding areas (the coach is not permitted to stop for photos) to the viewing area above the ship locks where you can truly appreciate the scale of this hydroelectric project. There is a small museum and a lookout point here. The sightseeing will involve around 1 hour on foot. Disembark your cruise ship in Yichang, transfer by coach to Wuhan Airport (approximately six to seven hours drive) and board your two hour flight to Shanghai.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner*

### **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 Three Gorges 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 building of this huge dam was for the purpose of flood control, electricity, navigation, and irrigation.

**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. Modern skyscrapers intermingle with 1920s ‘shikumen’ buildings. This combination is what attracts millions of visitors each year.

## **DAY 25: SHANGHAI**

This morning, take a breakfast tour around some of Shanghai’s most exciting districts, tasting local delicacies, including pancakes and fried bread sticks. Afterwards, wander the pleasant Yu Gardens and the bustling Old Town before visiting the informative Silk Museum. This evening, take a cruise down the Huangpu River to see the neon lights of Pudong.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch*

### **Destination Information**

**Old Town and Yu Gardens** -The Old Town (Yuan Bazaar) of Shanghai, where cobbled streets are lined with traditional shops selling herbal medicines, handicrafts, Chinese tea and a variety of tantalising snacks, is the original centre of Shanghai and for decades was the seat of Chinese authority in Shanghai. The Yu Gardens is seen as one of the most

perfect examples of Chinese garden style. 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.

**Silk Museum** – The Silk Museum is 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 which brought this product across Asia and Europe.

**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 26: SHANGHAI**

Today is free to explore the vibrant city of Shanghai independently or you can take an optional day trip to the laid-back water town of Zhujiajiao payable locally if you wish to participate. There will be no other sightseeing or activities arranged in Shanghai, however, your National Escort will be happy to recommend things for you to do (at your own expense) such as heading up the Jinmao Tower, exploring the impressive Shanghai Museum or taking a ride on the futuristic Maglev Train. This evening, enjoy a farewell dinner of Shanghainese cuisine.

*Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner*

### **Destination Information**

**Zhujiajiao** – One of Shanghai’s sleepy water towns, Zhujiajiao is built on an old canal system once used to transport goods all over imperial China. The town’s alleyways exude old-world charm, whilst the waterways are lined with ancient buildings and crossed by stone bridges.

**Shanghainese Cuisine** – Influenced by neighbouring provinces and known for its sweeter taste, Shanghai cuisine is a plethora of delicious treats. Dishes are usually seasoned with vinegars and rice wines and a popular cooking method is to braise the food.

## **DAYS 27-28: SHANGHAI TO AUSTRALIA**

This morning is at your leisure before you are transferred to Shanghai airport to board your flight to Australia, arriving home the same or following day.

*Meals Breakfast*

## CHINA: THE BIG ONE TRAVEL INFORMATION

### Visas

Entry visas are required by all visitors to China and Wendy Wu Tours' Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. We will supply you with all paperwork and submit the visa application on your behalf. Visas for China are valid for 90 days from the date of issue and allow you to stay in the country for up to 30 days. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office 60 days prior to departure; if received after this date urgent visa processing fees will apply. Passports will be returned with your final documentation four weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15AUD courier fee will apply.

Please note that if you intend to arrive more than 24 hours before your tour commences or intend to stay in China after your tour has ended and you are NOT staying in a hotel you will need to register with the local police station. If you are staying in a hotel, registration is done on your behalf as part of the check-in process.

### Insurance

We strongly 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 originals.

### 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. Chinese dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavours. Though Chinese cuisine can vary greatly from Chinese food we get in Australia, it is important to keep an open mind and be adventurous. Meals shown on the above itinerary (excluding drinks) are included in our group tours.

Sichuan cuisine (or Szechwan as it is still known in the west) is distinguished by its use of ginger, chili and the 'Sichuan peppercorn' called fagara. Each meal will usually have some mild dishes for those who don't enjoy eating hot or spicy food, but please bear in mind that the majority of local specialty dishes will be hot. If your group finds there are not any mild dishes served, please inform your National Escort/Local Guide so that they may resolve the problem for the next meal. Please note that long driving distances or flight times, for example, may delay/alter your mealtime.

Your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead. When dining in China, although some restaurants have adopted a western approach to dining, expect some restaurants to follow the traditional communal style of eating. Typically, this will mean each diner has their own small bowl and may serve themselves from a variety of shared dishes. At some local restaurants, appetizers and main courses might be served when they are ready instead of following a particular order.

Determining when it's appropriate to use chopsticks, forks or spoons can be challenging for some travellers, even other Asians, as each country has different customs. In China, dishes are normally placed in the centre and people serve food for themselves with their own chopsticks and bowl. In parts of China, forks and spoons are used for most dishes and chopsticks are typically provided to eat noodles. Usually chopsticks or other utensils are provided to scoop the food into your bowl to prevent your own chopsticks from touching the food that remains on the table. Dining in China is fairly casual with not too many rules. Leaving food on the plate is not considered rude.

### 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 Australia and China. All

group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. 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. Please note that the Chinese government has strict environmental regulations in regards to the use of air conditioning and heating during certain times of the year. Hotels are only permitted to turn air conditioning on in the summer months from mid-May to mid-October and heating is permitted to turn on from mid-November to mid-March. Double bedding can be requested at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

## 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. Main and inner city roads in China have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner. Roads in China have generally been 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 one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections below are approximations only.

*Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in China and therefore the Chinese people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your National Escort/Local Guides.*

**Air:** Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Pre-flight seat allocation is not available on international and internal flight sectors.

**Cruise ships:** On this tour you will take a three night cruise up the Yangtze River. Your cabin on your Yangtze River cruise ship will have a private bathroom and balcony. Please note that the cruise ship and all shore excursions arranged by the cruise are on a shared basis.

**Overnight/Bullet Trains:** On this tour, you will take an overnight train journey from Beijing to Xian and a Bullet Train from Chengdu to Chongqing. You will travel in a first class soft sleeper compartments where each cabin consists of a 4 shared berth with air conditioning. Wear comfortable clothes on board to sleep in on the train and you may wish to take some snacks. *On overnight trains, the train companies have implemented a policy which does not allow passengers to carry inflammable liquids including aerosols, styling gel, compressed air or insecticides; any explosives, magnetised material, 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).*

## 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 Australia. It is important that our guests travel to China with an open mind and a sense of humour. All of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort/Local Guide.

## Chinese Public Holiday

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 on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018. Golden Week public holidays fall annually between 1-3 May and 1-7 October.

## Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs; so in each city, we will visit a museum or exhibition 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.

## Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by both a National Escort/Local Guides. There will usually be no more than 18 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.

## Tipping Policy

Local tipping is customary in Asia. However, this can often lead to awkwardness in knowing when it is appropriate to tip and how much, as well as ensuring you have a suitable amount of change available at the time. For your convenience, with years of experiences in providing the best customer service, Wendy Wu Tours operates a kitty system on our Group Tours so your National Escort will look after this aspect of your trip for you.

It also ensures that the amounts paid are reasonable for you but still fair for the local people. The amount is stated on each Group Tour page will be advised again on your final documentation. Tipping is paid in RMB (Chinese Yuan) or US Dollars (on selected tours) and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf.

If you are taking a tour that includes a Yangtze River cruise, the total amount listed on the tour pages is collected in two parts: 1) RMB amount, paid to your National Escort on arrival, as above, and 2) A separate service levy in RMB to be paid upon boarding the cruise vessel.

Any additional tipping on any of our tours is welcomed at your discretion. Further guidance for tipping contributions will be outlined in your final documentation.

## Packing List and Climate

You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which will be included in the pre-departure information link sent within your deposit documentation. Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com).

## 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 5kgs. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that Chinese authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles and any flammable liquids in hand luggage will be confiscated.

## Exchanging Cash

It is highly recommended that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money when travelling to cities outside of Beijing and Shanghai. US Dollars are easily exchanged throughout China and other currencies such as Australian Dollars can generally be exchanged in hotels and airports provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

## Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

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. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AUD\$350 per person week should be sufficient; however for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional Tours - May be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. In your Final Documentation an Optional Excursion Sheet will be included outlining the activities available in each city and local cost associated. Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

## Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au)

## Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au) as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian 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 with deposit documentation via email. This includes important information and links to access the visa application form and instructions sheet online (if applicable). Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

**Updated: 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

## Travelling on an Active Paced Tour

We hope you are looking forward to what we are sure will be a trip of a lifetime. Before you embark on this adventure, we ask you to consider the points listed below that relate to our active paced tours. This will ensure you understand what is involved with an active paced tour and therefore help you decide if your chosen tour is right for you.

This is to ensure that your tour runs as smoothly as possible for you and your fellow tour members.

Please consider the following aspects of active paced tours prior to confirming your arrangements;

- ☐ While we believe that age is no barrier, please give special consideration to the fact that medical assistance and public infrastructure can be limited in these areas.
- ☐ There will be long periods of physical activity, including walking, climbing of stairs, in/out of boats. Tour participants who will travel with a cane/walking stick may come across difficulties. It is our experience that using a cane/walking stick in these areas where there are rough and uneven surfaces, stairs to climb and high altitudes, becomes difficult.
- ☐ Only limited meal options will be available. People with special dietary requirements should expect difficulties on these tours. Please understand that depending on the trip you are taking, you may be given very little or no meat.
- ☐ Your tour may include basic accommodation facilities including home stays, guest houses, truck stops and tented accommodation. This may mean, no or limited hot water, and no private bathroom facilities.
- ☐ There will be long periods of driving on often unsealed, rural and bumpy roads in vehicles ranging from tour coaches to local jeeps and canter vehicles.
- ☐ Altitude affects people in many different ways and a certain level of fitness is required in order to limit the effects. Please discuss how to manage altitude sickness with a health care professional.
- ☐ Overnight trains only have basic bedding in four berth compartments with limited or no ladder facilities to climb to the top bunk. You may be sharing with other tour members or locals.
- ☐ Some tours may have sightseeing en route to the next destination. Therefore participation is required or you will need to remain with the coach until the rest of the group has finished touring.

National Escorts/ Local Guides will endeavor to provide rest stops in your itinerary where possible. Please be advised that some days may have a more physical programme than others.

If you are comfortable with the above mentioned aspects of travelling on an active paced tour, we look forward to welcoming you on what is sure to be a unique and memorable experience.

However, if you have any hesitations please contact your valued travel agent or our reservations department to discuss the tour further or explore alternative options.