



Ancient China Dossier

Classic Tour | 18 Days | Physical Level 1

Beijing - Datong - Wutaishan - Taiyuan - Pingyao - Xian - Luoyang - Zhengzhou - Shanghai

China is one of the world's oldest and most monumental civilisations. On this journey, you will encounter millennia-old culture and religion at some of China's most intriguing sites.

- Discover the imperial treasures of Beijing
- Marvel at the Hanging temple at Jinjia Gorge
- Experience the spectacular Terracotta Warriors
- Explore the fascinating Longmen Grottoes
- Soak up the atmosphere in vibrant Shanghai



Ancient China tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) and Local Guides
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

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:

See the classic sights in the company of expert guides so you can really understand the history and culture of the destination. On our classic tours we take care of everything, leaving you to sit back and enjoy the experience to the full. The tours are fully inclusive with all meals and a comprehensive touring programme.

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.

‘Ancient China’ 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.

- On several days there will be sightseeing on foot for extended periods of time.
- On the Great Wall of China in Beijing, some of the walking may be at more of an incline.

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.

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 18 days in duration including international flights. Due to flight schedules passengers may arrive/depart on Day 2.

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 17 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.

- From November to March the Tang Dynasty music and dance performance is not available on all evenings. If it is not operating on the evening your group is due to attend, a suitable alternative will be arranged by your National Escort/Local Guide.
- 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.

2020 changes:

- On day 2, the rickshaw ride in the hutongs in Beijing has been replaced with a walk through the hutongs from September 2019 onwards.

Itinerary – Ancient China

Day 1: Beijing

Fly overnight to Beijing, the capital of China, for a 4-night stay. On arrival in Beijing Capital International Airport on day 2, you will be met in the arrival hall by your local guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, transfer around 1 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 day.



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 through Tiananmen Square and into the magnificent Forbidden City; sightseeing at Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City will involve approximately 3-4 hours on foot. Later, enjoy a leisurely stroll through the warren-like hutongs where you will meet a local family. Tonight, eat a traditional Peking duck dinner.



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.

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 13th 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. 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.

Day 3: Beijing

Rise early this morning to avoid the crowds and drive approximately 2 hours northwest of the city to the Juyongguan Pass to take a walk on the Great Wall of China, appreciating the wall itself and the dramatic scenery. Your visit involves walking from the bus to the first section; once your group has been given an introduction to the Great Wall's unique history you will have free time to explore at your own pace. Later, visit the Jade Factory, and this afternoon stroll through the 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 4: Beijing

Soak up the harmonious ambience of the Temple of Heaven where you can watch, or take part in, an outdoor dance class. Later, search for Chinese antiques and knick-knacks at Panjiayuan Market.



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. The Temple of Heaven was 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.

Panjiayuan Market – Selling many items including furniture, sculptures and Mao era items, Panjiayuan Market is the perfect shopping area for Chinese memorabilia, knick-knacks and antiques.

Day 5: Beijing - Datong

Today, travel to the train station in Beijing for your 6-and-a-half-hour train journey to Datong, the former western capital of the Jin Dynasty. On arrival transfer to your hotel for check in.

**Destination Information**

Datong – Located in Shanxi Province, Datong was formerly known as Pingcheng and is located near the Great Wall Pass which separates Shanxi from Inner Mongolia. Datong's most famous sight are the Yungang Grottoes, home to thousands of intricately carved Buddhist statues.

Day 6: Datong - Wutaishan

This morning, drive 40 minutes to visit the Yungang Grottoes, replete with intricate Buddhist imagery. Touring the caves involves walking 1km, and you will spend approximately 2 hours here. Afterwards, drive 1 hour and 45 minutes to see the jaw-dropping Hanging Temple, which seemingly floats up the face of Jinxia Gorge, where you will spend about 1 hour. Continue driving 4 hours to Wutaishan to check in to your hotel.

**Destination Information**

Yungang Grottoes – Prime examples of rock-cut architecture, the Yungang Grottoes are ancient Chinese Buddhist temple grottoes, home to over 50,000 Buddhist statues.

Hanging Temple – Built over 1,500 years ago, the Hanging Temple is not only stunning for its unique location in the side of Jinxia Gorge, it is also one of the only existing temples to combine Buddhism, Taoism and Confucian symbols.

Wutaishan – Wutaishan is one of China's four sacred Buddhist Mountains and received UNESCO status in 2009. Wutaishan literally translates as Five Plateau Peak and its most northern Peak, also known as Beitai, is the highest point in northern China.

Day 7: Wutaishan - Taiyuan

Spend the day exploring Wutaishan's alpine valleys and important monasteries, including the Bodhisattva Temple and Xiantong Temple. This afternoon, drive 4 ½ hours to Taiyuan, home to the Twin Pagoda Temple. If time permits, there will be easy sightseeing at the Ming Dynasty Twin Pagoda Temple.



Destination Information

Taiyuan – Taiyuan is the capital of Shanxi Province and its largest city. The city has had a long and important history, especially during the 20th century.

Twin Pagoda Temple – The Twin Pagoda Temple is home to two Pagodas which date back to the Ming Dynasty and are the tallest set of twin pagodas in China.

Day 8: Taiyuan - Pingyao

This morning we will spend around 1-2 hours at the Jin Ci Temple in Taiyuan. Afterwards, drive 2 hours to the small ancient town of Pingyao where you will transfer to an electric cart to take you to your hotel. Take part in a traditional Chinese paper cutting experience, dating back to the 6th Century.



Destination Information

Jin Ci Temple – The Jinci Temple is situated at the foot of Mount Xuanweng and was built in memory of Jiyu, the Founding Father of the Jin State.

Pingyao – A UNESCO World Heritage listed town, Pingyao is renowned for its ancient City Wall, which was built in the 11th century and still stands encircling the town. With a 2,000-year history, Pingyao has retained its layout from the Ming and Qing dynasties; the houses, streets, storefronts and temples have all been preserved in their historical appearance.

Day 9: Pingyao - Xian

Take a walk around the cobbled streets for spectacular views of the city walls of Pingyao, dating back to the Zhou Dynasty. Next, visit the Rishengchang Financial House Museum. There will also be some time to visit the Yamen, a former government building from the Qing Dynasty. Sightseeing will involve around 4 hours on foot, including a stop for lunch. Later take a 3-hour bullet train to Xian, the former ancient capital.



Please note, a red cap (porterage) service is included at Xian train station. This service is however not available at the other train stations you will be travelling through.

Destination Information

Pingyao Ancient City Walls – One of the best-preserved fortifications in China, the Pingyao Ancient City Wall encloses the old town of Pingyao.

Rishengchang Financial House – The Rishengchang Financial House is the home of China's first draft bank, dating back to the 17th century.

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 10: Xian

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 expense. 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 three different 'pits', which are active archaeological digs. The site is large and will take about 2 ½ 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 evening, enjoy a delicious feast of Shui Jiao dumplings and a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing.



Please note: If you wish to undertake a bike ride on the Ancient City Wall, we strongly recommend wearing a helmet.

Destination Information

Terracotta Warriors – One of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th 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 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 and layout gives visitors a bird's eye view over this fantastic city. Follow the locals' example and take a bike ride to get an ever more spectacular experience.

Tang Dynasty Dancing Show – Xian, previously known as Chang'an, was an important cultural and historical centre, 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 the period.

Day 11: Xian

Admire the thousands of fascinating relics at the Xian Museum, followed by a visit to the Little Wild Goose Pagoda and a short, traditional calligraphy demonstration. Sightseeing will be approximately 2 ½ hours on foot. There will also be time to explore the atmospheric alleys of the Muslim Quarter.



Destination Information

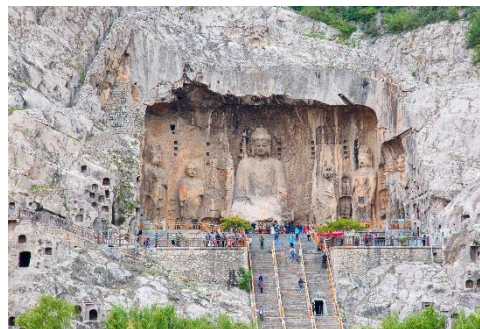
Little Wild Goose Pagoda – Dating back to the Tang Dynasty, the Little Wild Goose Pagoda is one of two prominent pagodas in Xian. A former centre for translating Buddhist scriptures from India, the Little Wild Goose Pagoda was said to have survived one of the strongest earthquakes in world history.

Xian Museum – Opened in 2007, this museum holds thousands of cultural relics that represent the history of Xian.

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.

Day 12: Xian - Luoyang

This morning transfer to the railway station for your 2-hour bullet train to Luoyang. On arrival, check in to your hotel and then visit the Longmen Grottoes which date back to the 5th century. Sightseeing here involves around 2 hours on foot.



Destination Information

Luoyang – A city in Henan Province, Luoyang is situated on the north bank of the Luo River and interchanged as the ancient capital city with Xian. It is also known as the ‘City of Peonies’, as the Peony Festival is held in Wangcheng Park every April in celebration of the blossoming flower.

Longmen Grottoes – The Longmen Grottoes are regarded as one of the three most famous treasure houses of stone inscriptions in China, along with Yungang and Magao caves. The Grottoes date back to 493AD, when Emperor Xiaowen moved the capital of Luoyang, and house numerous historical material concerning art, music, religion, calligraphy, medicine, costumes and architecture.

Day 13: Luoyang - Zhengzhou

Travel 2 hours to the famous Shaolin Temple, best known for its association with martial arts and watch a Kung Fu demonstration by the famous Shaolin Monks. Walk through the Pagoda Forest, a collection of 228 pagodas from the Tang and Qing dynasties. You will spend approximately 3 hours here before continuing with a 3-hour drive to Zhengzhou for your overnight stay.



Destination Information

Shaolin Temple – The Shaolin Temple is the place of origin for Chinese Zen Buddhism and Chinese martial arts. Here, watch a Kung Fu Demonstration by the famous Shaolin Monks.

Pagoda Forest – Located at the foot of Shaoshi Mountain, the Pagoda Forest is made up of over 200 stone pagodas, dating back to the Tang Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty.

Day 14: Zhengzhou - Shanghai

Today, fly 1 ½ hours to the exuberant city of Shanghai. In the evening, view the city from the Huangpu River on a scenic cruise.



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.

Destination Information

Huangpu River Cruise – There is no better way to see the juxtaposition of eras in Shanghai's history than by taking a cruise on the Huangpu River. At night, the dazzling colours and lights from Pudong shine bright onto the more modest twilight of the Bund.

Day 15: Shanghai

Today's explorations include the peaceful Yu Garden and the atmospheric alleys of the old town. Admire the magnificent colonial architecture along the Huangpu River with a stroll along the Bund and watch a Chinese acrobatic show. Sightseeing today involves a full day of touring around the centre of the city with 3-4 hours on foot. In the evening, take your seats to see the fascinating ERA acrobatic show.

**Destination Information**

Old Town and Yu Gardens – The old town 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.

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.

ERA Show – One of Shanghai's most famous shows, the "ERA – Intersection of Time" was created by leader in the field Erick Villeneuve and under the lead of composer and music director Michel Cusson. 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 16: Shanghai

Wander for a couple of hours through the Xintiandi area to admire the 1920s architectural styling. Visit the ancient treasures of the Shanghai Museum and the People's Square before visiting the Silk Factory. Taste the delicious, traditional Shanghai cuisine for dinner.



Destination Information

Xintiandi – An affluent area, Xintiandi is a newly redeveloped district in the centre of Shanghai home to boutique shopping and luxurious dining. The buildings here are designed and redeveloped from traditional style of Shanghai housing from the early 20th century, called Shikumen.

Shanghai Museum – One of the most esteemed and acclaimed museums in China, the Shanghai Museum has a comprehensive collection of ancient Chinese art. Sprawled over five floors, one could spend half, if not a full day exploring here. The shape of the museum was designed to resemble a Chinese vessel, known as a Ding.

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.

Silk Factory – The Silk Factory 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.

Days 17-18: Depart Shanghai

Any time before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from your hotel to the airport, per the departure time of your international flight arriving home the same or following day.

Late check-out is not included in our China group tours. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in China, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.



Ancient China 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.

Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

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 table top. 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.

Please read your travel guide which you will receive with your final documents for more information about eating in China. 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!

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 double bed requests can be made at time of booking but can't 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. 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 flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Pre-seat flight allocation is not available.

Trains: On this tour, you will take a high-speed train journey. 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. The National Escort will inform you of specific details prior to boarding. 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 the west.

Chinese 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 on 25th January 2020 and on 12th February 2021. Golden Week public holidays fall annually between 1st – 3rd May and 1st – 7th October.

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.

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 usually 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.

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 in RMB and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf. 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

Please refer to our website or brochure for detailed temperature charts.

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

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 five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. 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

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 \$250AUD per person, per 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.

Climbing Steps

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense 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

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

Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with 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 followed by deposit documentation, which includes 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.

Last updated 19/09/19