



China Delights Dossier

Classic Tour | 18 Days | Physical Level 1

Shanghai – Suzhou – Hangzhou – Guilin – Yangshuo – Chengdu – Xian – Beijing

From international Shanghai and the pandas of Chengdu to the imperial highlights of Beijing and all the dramatic landscapes in between, relish the historical, cultural and natural delights of China on this comprehensive trip.

- Enjoy vibrant Shanghai
- Relax on a Li River Cruise
- Explore the peaceful Yangshuo countryside
- Marvel at the Grand Buddha
- Experience the spectacular Terracotta Warriors
- Walk on the Great Wall of China



China Delights 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 more than 10 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.

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

- 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.
- You will be required to get on and off a boat both in Hangzhou and Guilin.

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. Please note 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 Shanghai and end the tour on Day 17 in Beijing. 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

Itinerary – China Delights

Day 1: Shanghai

Fly to Shanghai. On arrival you will be met at the airport 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 1 hour to your hotel for your 3-night stay. The rest of your day is at leisure.



Destination Information

Shanghai – Once known as the ‘Paris of the East’, Shanghai is now one of Asia’s most influential cities. Prior to communist arrival in 1949, Shanghai was a city with European-style mansions and was the most important trading port in Asia. Today it presents a blend of cultures; the modern and the traditional, along with the European and oriental. Modern skyscrapers intermingle with 1920s ‘shikumen’ buildings. This combination is what attracts millions of visitors each year.

Day 2: Shanghai

Today’s explorations include the peaceful Yu Garden and the atmospheric alleys of the old town. Admire the magnificent colonial architecture of Shanghai with a stroll along the Bund and round off your day with some delicious Shanghainese cuisine. Sightseeing today involves a full day of touring around the centre of the city including approximately 3-4 hours on foot.



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.

Shanghainese Cuisine – Influenced by neighbouring provinces and known for its sweeter taste, Shanghai cuisine is a plethora of delicious treats.

Day 3: Shanghai

Today involves a full day of sightseeing. Explore the ancient treasures of the Shanghai Museum in the People's Square before visiting the Silk Factory. This afternoon, discover the ultramodern district of Pudong. Round off the day with a panoramic evening cruise on the Huangpu River.



Destination Information

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 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.

Pudong – Originally an underdeveloped farming area, Pudong went under mass-expansion in the early 1990s to become one of China's top financial hubs. Characterised by its forest of skyscrapers, Pudong is now a world economic zone with one of the most recognisable skylines in the world.

Huangpu River Cruise – There is no better way to see the juxtaposition of eras in Shanghai than 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 4: Shanghai - Suzhou

Today, enjoy a leisurely day of sightseeing. Transfer 2 hours to Suzhou, renowned for its gardens and quaint charm. Start your day with a tour of the Humble Administrator's Garden, one of the most exquisite examples of Chinese garden style in the world. Later, cruise on the thousand-year-old Grand Canal, an important commercial route for centuries.



Destination information

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

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

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

Day 5: Suzhou - Hangzhou

Transfer 1-2 hours to the water town of Wuzhen, laced with wooden canal boats and white-faced houses, for a leisurely tour on foot. Continue your journey 1-2 hours to Hangzhou and check in at your hotel.

**Destination information**

Wuzhen – Wuzhen is a very small tranquil water town whose origin as an important port dates back to the Tang Dynasty. Wuzhen was an important gateway to the Grand Canal – the largest canal in the world - which stretches from Hangzhou in the south to Beijing in the north.

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

Day 6: Hangzhou

A restful morning is spent wandering around the Temple of Inspired Seclusion, one of China's most renowned Buddhist temples. The Temple of Inspired Seclusion (Lingyin Temple) is one of the largest and most significant temples in southern China so it can get crowded with domestic tourists, particularly during weekends and holidays. There will be approximately 2 hours sightseeing on foot at this site. Later, cruise on Hangzhou's West Lake, admiring the gardens, pagodas and old bridges on its shores.



Destination information

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

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

Day 7: Hangzhou - Guilin

Spend the morning browsing through Hangzhou's local markets. Afterwards, visit Meijiawu Village, famous for its tea cultivation, and enjoy a tea tasting tour. Later, fly 2 hours to Guilin where the rest of the day is at leisure.



Destination information

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

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 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.

Day 8: Guilin - Yangshuo

Take a relaxed 4-hour cruise along the Li River to the charming village of Yangshuo where you will spend 1 night. 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 around 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 1-hour drive from your hotel. However, when the river level is low they depart from further downstream which would mean a longer drive and an earlier check-out from your hotel. Disembarking from the cruise, your Local Guide will walk with you to your hotel, around a 30-minute walk from the river. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organised at your own cost. In Yangshuo, visit the local markets. Today you will also stop for a photo opportunity on the banks of the Li River and meet a genuine cormorant fisherman.



Destination information

Li River Cruise – Joining the twin beauty spots of Guilin and Yangshuo, the Li River offers a leisurely tour through some of the area’s most stunning and dramatic scenery. Pass karst mountain landscapes and unhurried cormorant fishermen as you chug along on your river cruise ship.

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 spot in China.

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

Day 9: Yangshuo - Guilin

Start the day with a relaxing and invigorating session of Tai Chi, taking a class with a master to learn this ancient martial art. Spend the rest of the morning exploring the verdant countryside of Yangshuo. Walk by lush paddy fields and slow-moving water buffalos as you admire the panoramic mountain scenery that so epitomises the area. Transfer back to Guilin this afternoon.



Day 10: Guilin - Chengdu

This morning visit the Reed Flute Caves and the South China Pearl Factory. Transfer to Guilin airport for your 1-and-a-half-hour flight to Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province. On arrival, transfer to your hotel for check-in.



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

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 that is dragging China’s west into the 21st 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.

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.

Day 11: Chengdu

Travel 2 hours south of Chengdu to Leshan, where you will see the world's largest stone-carved Buddhist monument, the Leshan Grand Buddha and take a short boat ride in front of the statue to grasp the size of this structure. On arrival at the Grand Buddha there is a 10-minute walk up to the entrance of the park. From here there are 250 steps to ascend and a similar amount to descend to the feet of the Buddha; a time of approximately 2½-3 hours. The steps are extremely steep and can be very slippery in wet weather. There are handrails but the utmost care is still required. You must be physically capable if you decide to take part. Once you have started the walk to the feet of the Buddha you are committed as the steps are very narrow and strictly one-way only. There are a number of attractions for those who wish to stay at the Grand Buddha Park. Covering an area of 18sqkm, the park is home to such sights as Haishi Cave, Lingyun Temple, Dragon Pond and Tiger Cave. Return to Chengdu and dine on a delicious Sichuanese meal in the evening.



Destination Information

Leshan Grand Buddha – The Leshan Buddha was built in the 9th century under the direction of Haitong, a monk who felt the presence of Buddha would help calm the waters below so that shipping vessels could make their journey safely. Amazingly, once the structure was completed, the waters below did calm, some say due to the Buddha's presence, others to the large amount of rock removed in order to carve the Buddha, which resulted in a current change in the waters. The Buddha remains watching over the waters below; no position gives a better view of this structure than from a boat ride along the river.

Sichuanese Meal – Sichuanese cuisine is famous for its use of Sichuan pepper and chillies. The spices from the area are known for their 'mala' (numb and spicy) flavours, which seem to cool and heat your mouth at the same time. Famous dishes include Kung Pao Chicken, twice-cooked pork and spicy Sichuanese hotpot.

Day 12: Chengdu - Xian

Today, see China's most famous resident, the Giant Panda. Visit the Panda Conservation Centre where you can learn about China's celebrated bear. See these lovable creatures in surroundings that mirror their natural habitat. It is not guaranteed that you will be able to see the feeding of the younger pandas, as this only happens at the start and end of each day. Sightseeing involves around 1 ½ hours on foot. There are electric carts offered by private vendors that can be organised at your own cost. Later, take a 4-hour bullet train to Xian.



Destination Information

Panda Conservation Centre – 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.

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 13: 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 cost. There is no electric cart available for the return from the museum exit to the bus park. Within the museum area the warriors can be seen in 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, dine on delicious Shui Jiao dumplings and watch a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing this evening.

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 holds 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 hire a bike to get an ever more spectacular experience.

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

Day 14: Xian - Beijing

Today, visit the lovely Little Wild Goose Pagoda, involving approximately 1 ½ hours on foot. This afternoon, board your 2-hour flight to Beijing, China's capital. On arrival, drive 1 hour to your hotel. Spend your evening soaking up the atmosphere of this fascinating city.



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.

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 15: Beijing

Soak up the harmonious ambience of the Temple of Heaven, an orderly oasis in a bustling urban landscape, where you can watch, or participate in, a dance class. Next, head into Beijing's symbolic heart, Tiananmen Square, and head into the magnificent Forbidden City – a complex full of imperial treasures. A Chinese acrobatic show rounds off the day. Today includes a full day of sightseeing, predominately on foot.



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. You will also need to bring your passport for a security check.

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.

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.

Chinese Acrobatics – Chinese acrobatics incorporates many forms of dramatic art, including acrobatics, contortionism, juggling and plate spinning.

Day 16: Beijing

Rise early this morning and drive around 2 hours northwest of the city to the Juyongguan Pass. Here you can take a walk on the Great Wall of China, appreciating the wall itself and the dramatic scenery. Your visit involves walking from the bus to the first section. After 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 in the afternoon, wander around the beautiful grounds of 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. Learn how to spot real jade, watch artisans at work carving this precious stone, and even buy a piece to take home yourself!

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.

Days 17-18: Depart Beijing

Any time before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from your hotel to the airport, according to 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.

China Delights 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 the UK 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