



Sichuan Explorer Dossier

Immerse Yourself Tour | 15 Days | Physical Level 4

Chengdu – Emeishan – Mengdingshan – Dujiangyan - Wulong – Chongqing

Sichuan contrasts markedly from the rest of China, with differing attitudes, cuisine and spectacular landscapes of forest and mountain. Richly endowed with natural and cultural wonders, touring this magnificent province never fails to steal your breath away.

- Get up close to the Leshan Grand Buddha
- Explore the tea plantations of Mengdingshan
- Come face to face with the Giant Pandas
- Walk in the spectacular Three Bridges National Park
- Discover Heishan Valley



Sichuan Explorer Inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Meals as stated in the itinerary
- 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. meals not included, 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.

Immerse Yourself - Go Beyond Tours:

Venture off the beaten track to explore fascinating destinations away from the tourist trail. You will discover the local culture in depth and see sights rarely witnessed by other travellers. These tours take you away from the comforts of home but will reward you with the experiences of a lifetime. These 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

Physical Level 4:

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.

'Sichuan Explorer' is rated as a **physical level 4** tour. A good level of fitness is required as you need to be comfortable walking for 2-3 hours and covering longer distances. Walking or other activities such as cycling will be at a gentle pace and will involve straightforward terrain.

- There will be long periods of walking whilst sightseeing, often on steep or un even ground, especially in the Wulong National Geology Park
- You will be walking down several hundred steps at Longshuixia Fissures
- You will be required to get on and off the boat in Leshan without assistance

Of course, our National Escorts 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. If you require any more information about the pace of the tours, please contact our reservations team who will be happy to answer your questions.

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 parts of the itinerary have high altitude:

1. Mt Emei – Sightseeing is at 3,077m [10,095ft].

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. If you smoke, your doctor will generally 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.

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 15 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 Chengdu and end the tour on Day 14 in Chengdu. 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.

- Due to an earthquake in the Sichuan Province on the 8th August 2017 and subsequent landslides, regrettably Nine Villages Valley (Jiuzhaigou National Park) is closed to visitors in 2018 due to slower than expected rebuilding on infrastructure in the region. Your itinerary will not visit Nine Villages Valley in 2019 and will now spend two nights in Wulong with sightseeing at Three Natural Bridges National Park.

Itinerary – Sichuan Explorer

Day 1: Chengdu

Fly to Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province. On arrival in Chengdu 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 1 hour to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure.



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 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.

Day 2: Chengdu - Emeishan

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Travel around 2 hours south of Chengdu to Leshan, where you will see the world’s largest stone-carved Buddhist monument, the Leshan Grand Buddha. 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 2 ½ 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. If you do not wish to walk up the steps, there are many other attractions to visit within the park including temples, pavilions and caves. You will also take a short boat ride in front of the statue to grasp the size of this structure. Continue 1 hour to Emeishan to check in for your 2-night stay.

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.

Day 3: Emeishan

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Spend a full day exploring spiritual Emeishan (Mount Emei). There are many pathways to allow an exploration of the steep cliffs, lofty peaks and towering trees. Take the cable car up to the golden summit from Jieyin Temple. You will walk for approximately 2 ½ hours from Wannian Temple to the Wuxian Gang Parking lot. From here you will be transferred back to your hotel in the evening.



Destination Information

Emeishan – One of the Four Sacred Buddhist Mountains of China, Emeishan is located in Sichuan Province and has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1996. Emeishan is home to the first Buddhist temple to be built in China, dating back to the 1st century.

Day 4: Emeishan – Mengdingshan

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Drive 2 hours to Mengdingshan and take a tour of the Mengdingshan Tea Plantation to learn about the entire tea making process and its fascinating history.



Destination Information

Mengdingshan – As one of the earliest tea growing areas in China, Mengdingshan is well known in tea communities. Tea has been drunk in China for millennia and has become ever more ingrained in the culture, influenced by the Taoist, Buddhist and Confucian views of its consumption. Quality tea is considered to be a gift fit for a king – it was once the tribute of choice for an emperor.

Day 5: Mengdingshan – Chengdu

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Drive 1 hour to Pingle Ancient Town. Dating back to the Han Dynasty, Pingle was a stopping point on the Tea Horse Road. Take time to walk through its maze of teahouse-lined streets before seeing the forest from above on Jinji Suspended Rope Bridge. Drive around 1 ½ hours back to Chengdu.



Destination Information

Pingle Ancient Town – Regarded as one of the best ancient towns in Sichuan Province, Pingle Ancient Town dates back to the Han Dynasty and was a stopping point on legendary Silk Road.

Day 6: Chengdu – Dujiangyan

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Drive 2 hours to visit one of the world's finest panda conservation centres and see the Giant Pandas. Located in the forested Sichuanese countryside north of Chengdu, Dujiangyan offers refuge to Giant Pandas with the ultimate aim to reintroduce them into the wild. The centre offers one of the most authentic, spacious and natural settings in the country. Later, visit the Dujiangyan Irrigation System.


Destination Information

Dujiangyan – Located 72km northwest of Chengdu, Dujiangyan is well renowned for its irrigation system which provides most of the water supply to Chengdu and neighbouring towns.

Dujiangyan Irrigation Project – One of the oldest projects of its kind in China – dating back to 256BC in the Qin Dynasty – the Dujiangyan irrigation system is credited with making the area one of the most productive agricultural regions in China. The area is now a listed UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Day 7: Dujiangyan

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Drive approximately 1 ½ hours to spend a day exploring Mt Qingcheng. You will spend 3-4 hours here, including meeting a Taoist priest who will teach you more about Taoism. You will also be shown how to master the art of Chinese painting and calligraphy.


Destination Information

Mt. Qingcheng – Located 65km west of Chengdu, Mt Qingcheng is amongst the most important centres of Taoism in China. Home to a trove of temples, beautiful trails lined with sweet-scented fruit and spectacular views over the Sichuan countryside. The mountain became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2000.

Day 8: Dujiangyan – Chengdu

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

In the morning, drive back to Chengdu, a journey of approximately 2 hours. The rest of your day is free at leisure.

Day 9: Chengdu – Chongqing - Wulong

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning, travel to Chongqing by a 2-hour bullet train. On arrival, you will be transferred around 3 hours by coach to Wulong – an area of stunning natural scenery with towering limestone karsts, deep gorges, caves and natural bridges.

**Destination Information**

Wulong Karst National Geology Park – Part of the South China Karst and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Wulong Karst National Geology Park is situated at the lower reaches of Wujiang River. It is divided into three karst systems containing the Three Natural Bridges, the Houping Tiankeng (Houping Giant Doline) and Furong Cave. Its remote location has ensured that the park is relatively unspoilt and retains its original, natural features of karst landforms.

Day 10: Three Bridges National Park & Longshuixia Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today, visit Three Natural Bridges National Park, a rare geological wonder consisting of three natural karst bridges: Tianlong Bridge, Qinglong Bridge and Heilong Bridge. Continue to Longshuixia Fissure, a narrow fault line that has been carved out by the river. The gorge is 5km long and 500m deep. You will need to climb down a few hundred steps, then travel further down by elevator. From here, start the one-way walk to the exit which takes around 2-3 hours, depending on the pace. Along the road you will need to climb down many steps, but most of the walk will be flat.



Please note, walking today will be approximately 4 to 5 hours on some uneven and slippery terrain which require extra care whilst walking. It is strongly advised that you wear sturdy footwear with ankle support if needed.

Destination Information

Three Bridges National Park – Situated in a 1.2km long gorge, the three bridges are natural karst stone arch bridges with an average height of 200m and an average span of 200m, making them the largest natural bridge cluster in Asia. Tianlong Bridge spans 450m and has two arches from north to south – the southern arch is also called Mihun Cave while the northern arch is a passage. Qinglong Bridge spans over 400m and Heilong Bridge has a deep long arch passage.

Longshuixia Fissures Gorge – Longshuixia Fissures is a stunning gorge with sheer cliffs, waterfalls and streams. At 5km in length, 500m in depth, and only a few metres in width in places, a journey through the gorge will be truly awe-inspiring.

Day 11: Wulong - Heishan Valley – Chongqing

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning, you will make the 3-hour journey back to Chongqing. En route, you will visit Heishan (Black Mountain) Valley, a scenic area enveloped by mysterious fog that is home to deep valleys, lush green forests, majestic waterfalls, rivers and streams, caves, and wildlife. Take time to explore the highlights of the valley before continuing to Chongqing.



Please note, walking today will be approximately 2 to 3 hours on some uneven and slippery terrain which require extra care whilst walking. It is strongly advised that you wear sturdy footwear with ankle support if needed

Destination Information

Heishan Valley – Also known as Black Mountain Valley, this scenic area is home to abundant wildlife and natural wonders and covered in fog and mist that gives it an other-worldly atmosphere. Covering an area of 103sq kilometres with 97% forest coverage, the primitive natural ecological environment in the valley is well-preserved. Highlights include Carp River Gorge, Fish Leaping Gorge and Fish-Like Waterfall.

Chongqing – Chongqing is the largest municipality in southwest China and a modern port city situated at the confluence of Yangtze and Jialing River. Also known as the ‘Mountain City’, Chongqing has seen rapid economic development in recent years.

Day 12: Chongqing – Chengdu

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning, visit charming Ciqikou and Erlin Gardens before learning about Joseph W. Stilwell, an American general who was posted to Chongqing during World War II, at General Stilwell Museum. Later, take the bullet train to Chengdu, a journey of approximately 2 hours.

**Destination Information**

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

General Stilwell Museum – The museum was founded in memory of General Joseph W. Stilwell, an American who fought alongside the Chinese during World War II. The Main building of the museum is his former residence and articles on display include uniforms, manuscripts, household utensils and several military cars.

Day 13: Chengdu

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Take a walk around People's Park, watch the local square dance and join in if you like, and visit Matchmakers Corner, where parents search for worthy suitors for their children. Stop at a traditional Sichuanese teahouse (tea will be at your own expense) before wandering the Wide and Narrow Alleys. This evening, enjoy a delicious Sichuanese hot pot dinner.



Destination Information

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.

Days 14-15: Depart Chengdu

Meals included: Breakfast

Any time before your flight is at leisure. After checking out, transfer to the airport for your 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.



Sichuan Explorer 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

Evenings at Leisure:

To give you more flexibility and choice when travelling on selected tours in our Immerse Yourself range; we have carefully balanced special highlight meals with evenings at leisure so that you can explore the many culinary delights that China has to offer. Alternatively, you can use this time to enjoy the facilities of your hotel. Your National Escort will be happy to provide you with advice about good places to eat, and assist in the booking of transportation to get you there (at your own expense).

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.

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.

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 5th February 2019 and 25th January 2020. 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. 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 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 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 Chengdu. 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 \$350AUD 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 29/03/19

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.