



Essential China

Essential Tour | 9 Days | Comfortable

Beijing - Xian - Shanghai

Our Essential China itinerary has been designed for those who wish to see China's iconic sites and magnificent treasures. You'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of, with international flights, accommodation and all the touring listed below. You will be accompanied by our industry-leading local guides whose unparalleled knowledge and talent will turn your tour into an unforgettable experience.



- Discover the imperial treasures of Beijing
- Explore the Great Wall of China
- Experience the spectacular Terracotta Warriors
- Soak up the atmosphere in vibrant Shanghai

Essential China tour inclusions

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges
- All accommodation
- Meals as specified in itinerary below
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as specified
- All transportation and transfers
- English-speaking Local Guides

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

Essential Tours

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

Comfortable Tour

'Essential China' is a **comfortable** tour. Although this is the easiest grading of tour Wendy Wu Tours offers it still requires a reasonable level of fitness.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time
- On the Great Wall of China in Beijing some of the walking will be at an incline

Of course, our 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.

Itinerary Changes

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

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

Important Information Regarding Itinerary Changes and Flight Delays

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

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

Essential China Itinerary

DAY 1 – DEPART AUSTRALIA

Fly to Beijing. On arrival you will be met at the airport by your local guide from Wendy Wu Tours. Depending on your time of arrival, the rest of the day is yours to start soaking up the local culture. As dinner is not included, you may wish to take advantage of the hotel's selection of restaurants.

Destination Information

Beijing - The historical capital of the People's Republic of China has an 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

Today, explore Beijing and discover why it was one of the greatest capitals during the medieval era. Begin with a stroll across Tiananmen Square. At the head of the square, enter the magnificent Forbidden City, a monument to dynasties past (sightseeing will involve three or four hours on foot). Later, soak up the harmonious ambiance of the Temple of Heaven, where you can watch, or participate in, a dance class. This evening there is an option to have dinner and watch a Kung Fu Show at your own expense.

Please note: The Forbidden City is closed on Mondays. If this day of touring falls on a Monday, your touring in Beijing will be switched around so that the Forbidden City is visited on an alternative day. Please remember to bring your passport with you when visiting the Forbidden City for security check.

Optional Activity: Kung Fu Show with Dinner

RMB280pp (payable locally)

The Kung Fu show is a mix of traditional martial arts and modern theatre. Exhibiting stunning Kung Fu skills, exquisite ballet and music, this exciting show has become the most loved of all Kung Fu shows in China.

Meals Included: Breakfast. Lunch

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 people. 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 covering 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. When entering through the Gate of Supreme Harmony you will find a complex of a thousand rooms and many imperial treasures.

Temple of Heaven – The Temple of Heaven is one of the most perfect examples of Ming architecture. It is set in a 267-hectare park surrounded by a long wall with a gate at each compass point. 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. It is an orderly oasis in an urban landscape, and when walking through the park you 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.

DAY 3 - BEIJING

This morning is dedicated to the iconic Great Wall. Drive approximately two hours northwest of the city to the Juyongguan Pass where you can walk on the Great Wall of China, appreciating both the wall itself and the magnificent scenery. Your visit here 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. After lunch, visit the Jade Factory where you will have the chance to buy souvenirs made of jade. On your way back to Beijing, stop at the Olympic Green for a photo opportunity. In the evening, you have the option to take a rickshaw ride and enjoy dinner at a local family home in Beijing's Hutongs at your own expense.

Optional Activity: Hutongs by Rickshaw

RMB280pp (payable locally)

Explore the Beijing hutongs by rickshaw, meeting a local family and learning more about family life.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

Destination Information

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

Jade Factory – Learn about one of China's most symbolic and important materials that has been part of its culture since ancient times: 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.

DAY 4 – BEIJING TO XIAN

Take a five-and-a-half-hour bullet train to Xian. Please be aware that there will be limited food and drink services on board your train so it is advised to take snacks with you. You will have the rest of the day to independently explore the city and its lively Muslim Quarter, or take a walk along its 14th century city walls. This evening you may choose to partake in an optional Tang Ever-Bright City Night Tour at your own expense.

Optional Activity: Tang Ever-Bright City Night Tour with Dinner

RMB180pp (payable locally)

Take a night walk around Xian and marvel at the fountain and light show outside the Big Wild Goose Pagoda.

Meals Included: Breakfast

Destination Information

Xian – As one of the four ancient capitals of China and the starting point of the fabled Silk Road, Xian has long played a pivotal role in the country's extensive history. For centuries, Xian has been a thriving hub for cultural exchange, economic trade, as well as national politics. Home to some of China's most ancient sights, diverse architecture and delicious fares, Xian is a must-see destination.

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

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.

DAY 5: XIAN

Spend this morning viewing the enigmatic ranks of the life-like Terracotta warriors, who stand in their original formations at the exact location where they were excavated. Visit the workshop of the craftsmen who recreate Terracotta Warriors in the style of their ancient counterparts. Watch the skilled production process and buy a souvenir warrior to take home. In the afternoon, you will be taken to Little Wild Goose Pagoda, one of the two significant pagodas in Xian. Tonight, you will have the option to feast on traditional Shui Jiao dumplings and watch a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing at your own expense.

Optional Activity: Tang Dynasty Show with Dumpling Dinner

RMB290pp (payable locally)

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 the period.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

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.

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

DAY 6: XIAN TO SHANGHAI

Fly two hours to the exuberant city of Shanghai, once known as 'the Paris of the East'. The remainder of the day is at leisure. We recommend experiencing the panoramic views of Shanghai on the optional Huangpu evening cruise with dinner at your own expense.

Optional Activity: Huangpu River Cruise with Dinner

RMB280pp (payable locally)

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 the futuristic Pudong shine bright onto the more modest twilight of the colonial Bund.

Meals Included: Breakfast

Destination Information

Shanghai – Shanghai is China's great metropolis, and 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 occidental and oriental. Modern skyscrapers intermingle with 1920s 'shikumen' buildings. This combination is what attracts millions of visitors each year.

DAY 7: SHANGHAI

Today's explorations include the traditional Yu Gardens and the atmospheric alleys of the old town. Continue to Shanghai Museum, a museum of ancient Chinese art, situated in People's Square. Learn about the age-old silk production process at the Silk Museum, where there are also many gorgeous, handmade items for sale. Round off the day with an optional Chinese Acrobatic show with dinner at your own expense.

Optional Activity: Acrobatic Show with Dinner

RMB320pp (payable locally)

Elaborate use of multimedia, extravagant costumes, live music and brilliant acrobatics makes for an entertaining evening show, showcasing the diverse culture of Shanghai.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

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 was for decades the seat of Chinese authority in Shanghai. The Yu Gardens is 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, koi-filled ponds and stunning, tranquil pavilions.

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, there is plenty of exploring to do. 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 Museum – The Silk Museum is an educational journey through the production of silk, one of China's most famous and luxurious materials. Learn about the use of silkworms and silk moths in its production; the manufacturing process; as well as silk's journey along the Silk Road which brought this product across Asia and Europe.

DAY 8-9: DEPART SHANGHAI

Transfer to the airport and fly back Australia, arriving home the same or following day.

Meals Included: Breakfast

ESSENTIAL CHINA TRAVEL INFORMATION

Visas

Entry visas are required by all visitors to China and this is not included in the cost of your holiday.

Wendy Wu Tours' Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa for an additional cost. 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 6 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 two to three weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15AUD courier fee will apply.

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

Insurance

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

Eating in China

Chinese cuisine is one of the most influential, diverse and flavoursome culinary styles in the world with a legacy stretching back thousands of years. Chinese dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavours. Though Chinese cuisine can vary greatly from Chinese food we get in Australia, it is important to keep an open mind and be adventurous. Meals shown on the above itinerary (excluding drinks) are included in our group tours.

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 Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs. Please note that the Chinese government has strict environmental regulations in regards to the use of air conditioning and heating during certain times of the year. Hotels are only permitted to turn air conditioning on in the summer months from mid-May to mid-October and heating is permitted to turn on from mid-November to mid-March.

Transport

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Main and inner city roads in China have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner. Roads in China have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections below are approximations only.

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

Day Trains: On this tour, you will take a bullet train journey. You will travel in second-class soft seat class with air conditioning. *On high speed trains, the train companies have implemented a policy which does not allow passengers to carry inflammable liquids including aerosols, styling gel, compressed air or insecticides; any explosives, magnetised material, knives, scissors or sharp items (medication is fine). Bag checks are conducted randomly and any of these items may be confiscated before boarding the train (in hand luggage or main luggage).*

Development in China

Though parts of China match the west in modernity and technological advances, it is important to remember that China is still a developing country and as such, many aspects of tourism in China do not have the solid infrastructure and safety standards as seen here in Australia. It is important that our guests travel to China with an open mind and a sense of humour. All of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your Local Guide.

Chinese Public Holiday

If you are travelling within the below Chinese Public Holidays please note that celebrations last for several days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open, but may be crowded. Chinese New Year is on 16th February 2018. 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 museum or exhibition which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places which hold local interest; for example, in Shanghai you will be able to see how silk is created all the way from the silk worm to beautiful garments; and in Xian we will take you to a workshop which creates replicas of the Terracotta Warriors, from tiny little warriors to seven foot behemoths! We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by Local Guides. There will usually be no more than 40 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 10 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.

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 Guide will look after this aspect of your trip for you.

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

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 Chinese 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 Local Guide will remind you to do this before departure.

Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AUD\$270 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 Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

Vaccinations and Your Health

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

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 with deposit documentation via email. This includes important information and links to access the visa application form and instructions sheet online (if applicable). Your final documentation will be emailed to you approximately two weeks prior to departure.

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