



Grand Tour of China

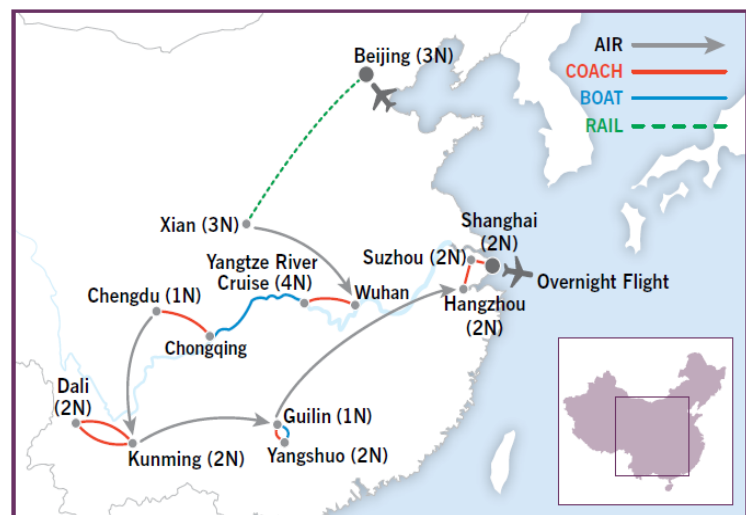
Classic Tour | 26 Days | Moderate

Beijing - Xian - Yangtze River - Chengdu - Kunming - Dali - Guilin - Yangshuo - Hangzhou - Suzhou - Shanghai

This journey has all of China's top destinations covered, with time to soak up the sights. Whether you are looking for history, character and culture or the modern and marvelous this itinerary has it all.

Tour Highlights:

- **Beijing** – The Great Wall, Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square
- **Xian** – The archaeological marvel of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses
- **Yangtze River** – Spectacular scenery of the Three Gorges
- **Chengdu** – The Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding
- **Kunming** – Home to the dramatic Stone Forest
- **Dali** – Nestled between Erhai Lake and the Cangshan Mountains and home to the Bai Ethnic Group
- **Guilin & Yangshuo** – Beautiful landscapes of the Li River



- **Suzhou & Hangzhou** – China’s famed garden and waterway cities
- **Shanghai** – Exploration of China’s most cosmopolitan city

Grand Tour of China Tour Inclusions

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

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

Classic 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. The tours are on a fully-inclusive basis so you’ll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escort/Local Guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

Moderate Tour

‘Grand Tour of China’ is a **moderate** tour. This has been defined in our brochure as anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. These programmes are not strenuous but do include several days where long periods of sightseeing on foot, climbing of stairs and in/out of boats will be necessary. These tours are generally longer in duration and could involve long days of driving or overnight train journeys. Some programmes may also include easy hiking or a home stay.

Our National Escort/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 - China’s civilization 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 26 days in duration including international flights. Travellers booked on ‘Land Only’ arrangements should make their own way to the starting point. Join the tour on Day 1 in Beijing and end the tour on Day 25 in Shanghai. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

Itinerary Changes

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst 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
- Yangtze River. Please note that all sections of the itinerary for the Yangtze River Cruise are especially subject to change. The movement of each vessel along the Yangtze is regulated by the Government's Yangtze River Authority (YRA). The river's rapid flow, the narrowness of the gorges and the recent increase in numbers of passengers means that the timetables are under some pressure. The YRA allocates times for access to mooring points, embarkation and disembarkation at docks and passage through the gorges. This means that the captain of each cruise ship is unable to confirm a final itinerary until shortly before departure (usually 24 hours prior). This can affect both the time and location where you embark and disembark your cruise ship. Your National Escort/Local Guide will explain any such changes to you as soon as they are informed by the cruise operator.

The following itinerary changes have been made to the 2017 itinerary to improve the flow and pace of sightseeing:

- Added Hutong family visit in Beijing on Day 2
- Removed Luilichang markets in Beijing on Day 4
- On Day 4 changed overnight train from Beijing to Xian to a bullet train and added one night in Xian
- Removed tea plantation in Suzhou on Day 21
- Added Silk Museum in Shanghai on Day 24

Important Information Regarding Flight Delays

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

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

Grand Tour of China Itinerary

DAY 1: AUSTRALIA TO BEIJING

Fly to Beijing, the capital of China, for a three-night stay. On arrival in Beijing Capital International Airport, you will be met in the arrival hall by your local guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer approximately one hour to your hotel. A tour introduction will be held in the hotel either this evening or the next. Food and drinks will not be served at this meeting, it is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in China

Destination Information

Beijing - Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. With its unequalled wealth of history, Beijing served

as the centre for the many different empires and cultures that ruled China and has been the heart of politics and society throughout its long history. The ancient monuments, the stories of days gone by as well as the dynamic and modern city Beijing has become today, make it a destination not to be missed.

DAY 2: BEIJING

Walk through Tiananmen Square and into the magnificent Forbidden City; sightseeing here will involve approximately three to four hours on foot. Later enjoy a rickshaw ride through the warren-like hutongs where you will meet a local family. Tonight, eat a traditional Peking duck dinner.

Please note: The Forbidden City is closed on Mondays. If this day of touring falls on a Monday, your touring in Beijing will

be rearranged so that the Forbidden City is visited on an alternative day.

Destination Information

Tiananmen Square - Built under the guidance of Chairman Mao Zedong, Tiananmen Square is said to hold a capacity crowd of over one million and is one of the largest public squares in the world. It houses not only the Monument to the People's Heroes, it is also the final resting place of Chairman Mao himself in the Mausoleum of Mao Zedong.

Forbidden City - The sacred centre of the Chinese empire for 500 years and home to the Ming and Qing dynasties, the Forbidden City is a vast complex of over 900 buildings and covers an area of 180 acres. Since 1987, the Forbidden City has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site and its palatial architectural style has been an influence on many imperial buildings throughout Asia.

Hutongs - The Mongol rulers of Beijing established this style of housing in the 13th century as tenancy for the growing population of the city. Hutongs were designed to reflect the Chinese system of Feng Shui with four hutongs joining together to make a courtyard in the middle, known as Siheyuan. In more recent times, the hutong suburbs were in jeopardy of disappearing, but a fierce debate between developers and those who fought to protect the architecture and the hutong way of life diminished the threat.

Peking duck - A favourite of the Emperor's court and the upper class elite during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), Peking duck quickly spread throughout Chinese society to become a national favourite and a symbol of China.

DAY 3: BEIJING

You will rise early this morning, to avoid the crowds and drive approximately two hours northwest of the city to the Juyongguan Pass to take a walk on the Great Wall of China, appreciating the wall itself and the dramatic scenery. Your visit involves walking from the bus to the first section; once your group has been given an introduction to the Great Wall's unique history you will have free time to explore at your own pace. Later, visit the jade factory and this afternoon stroll through the Summer Palace. This evening enjoying a Chinese Acrobatic Show.

Destination Information

Great Wall of China - Originally built under the first Emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang, The Great Wall of China is the country's most iconic sight. Snaking through the northern countryside from the Gobi Desert in the west into

the Bohai Sea in the east, the Great Wall of China is the longest wall in the world and was used as a fortification against northern nomadic tribes. The current structure dates back to the Ming Dynasty - over 700 years old.

Jade Factory - Learn about one of China's most symbolic and important materials: jade, at this comprehensive factory. Understand how to tell if jade is real or fake and watch artisans at work, carving this emerald stone into works of art.

Summer Palace - The former holiday retreat of the Qing emperors, the Summer Palace is a stunning example of Chinese garden style. The Summer Palace incorporates the Fengshui notion of 'Mountain' and 'Water', seen here with tranquil Kunming Lake and magnificent Longevity Hill. A favourite resort of the Empress Dowager Cixi, the Summer Palace is home to a stunning Marble Boat and the Long Corridor, one of the longest outdoor passageways in the world.

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

DAY 4: BEIJING TO XIAN

This morning soak up the harmonious ambience of the Temple of Heaven for approximately an hour where you can watch, or take part in, an outdoor dance group. This afternoon take the bullet train for approximately five hours train to Xian.

Destination Information

Temple of Heaven - The Temple of Heaven is one a perfect example of Ming architecture set in amongst a 267 hectare park with four gates set at each point of a compass. 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.

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 5: XIAN

This morning visit the lovely Little Wild Goose Pagoda before wandering through the Muslim Quarter. Later this evening enjoy a delicious feast of traditional Shui Jiao dumplings and a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing.

The Little Wild Goose Pagoda is closed on Tuesday due to maintenance. If this day of touring falls on a Tuesday, your touring in Xian will be re-arranged so that the Little Wild Goose Pagoda is visited on an alternative day.

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.

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.

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

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 6: XIAN

Spend the morning viewing the enigmatic ranks of the life-sized Terracotta Warriors. The Museum of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses is located more than one hour drive outside of Xian. From the bus park to the museum entrance it is a 15 minute walk. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organised at your own expense. There is no electric cart available for the return from the museum exit to the bus park. Within the museum area the warriors can be seen in three different 'pits', which are active archaeological digs. The site is large and will take approximately two and a half hours to explore. After this visit the Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition centre to see smaller models of the warriors being made. Later stroll on the beautifully preserved 14th century city wall that enclose Xian's old town. The local guide will give you time

to explore the ancient city wall 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.

Destination Information

Terracotta Warriors - One of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century, this unearthed terracotta army is comprised of over 7,000 soldiers, horses and chariots. The army was built in life-sized form by thousands of workers and designed by Emperor Qin Shi Huang to defend himself in the afterlife.

Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Centre - See smaller versions of the enigmatic Terracotta Warriors being created at the captivating Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Centre; even purchase your own portable soldier.

Ancient City Wall - 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 location and layout gives visitors a bird's eye view over this fantastic city. Follow the locals' example and take a bike to get an ever more spectacular experience.

DAY 7: XIAN – WUHAN TO YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE

You will take a morning flight from Xian to Wuhan which takes one hour and 15 minutes, on arrival transfer four to five hours through the countryside from the airport to the docks near Yichang which is located downstream from the Three Gorges Dam. Here you will board the Yangtze Cruise ship which will take you on an amazing journey up China's Yangtze River on a four night cruise

Please note the Yangtze River cruise section of your itinerary will not be confirmed by the cruise operators until after you commence your tour as it is subject to local river conditions and water levels. Your local guide will do their utmost to keep you informed of any changes but cannot guarantee against delays or – in rare cases – cancellations of sections of your itinerary. Shore excursions are subject to change depending on local conditions. A detailed itinerary will be handed out on the vessel each day.

Further note: If you do not wish to take part in a shore excursion but you still wish to disembark the cruise ship, there is a mandatory port tax which must be paid by each customer. The port tax amount is approximately USD20-30 dollars per person however this amount can vary and for security reasons, it is not always possible to disembark at all ports of call.

Destination Information

Yangtze River – The Yangtze River is one of the world's great and legendary waterways, this 6,300km river has its origins high up in the snow covered mountain of Tanggula in the south western Qinghai Tibet Plateau and runs into the ocean in Shanghai. It is estimated that the banks of this river are home to almost a third of China's population.

DAY 8: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE

Visit the Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world. Disembark the ship and drive approximately 20 minutes passing through the surrounding areas (the coach is not permitted to stop for photos) and will drop your group off at the viewing area above the ship locks to truly appreciate the scale of this hydroelectric project. There is a small museum and a lookout and the sightseeing will involve around one hour on foot. You will then continue upstream on your ship.

Destination Information

Three Gorges Dam - Commenced in 1994 and completed in 2009, the Three Gorges Dam is the largest water conservancy project ever undertaken. The Dam is located near Sandouping, which is in the middle of the Xiling Gorge, the longest of the Three Gorges. The Three Gorges Dam is 2,335m long, 185m high, 18m wide on the top and 130m wide at the bottom. The dam has raised the river to a level of 175m above sea level, creating a 600km long reservoir. The building of this huge dam was for the purpose of flood control, electricity, navigation, and irrigation.

DAY 9: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE

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

Destination Information

Goddess Stream - Goddess Stream, also known as 'Shennü Xi' in Chinese, flows from the southern bank of the Yangtze opposite Goddess Peak. Once just a stream, the Three Gorges Dam raised the water level to 70-100m in depth, depending on the season.

Shennong Stream - This crystal clear stream flows from north to south through stunning deep gorges finally

merging with the Yangtze to the east of the mouth of Wu Gorge.

DAY 10: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE

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

Visit the Shibaozhai Temple, an 18th century architectural marvel. This small temple was built at the top of a nine-storey pavilion clinging to the sheer south bank near Qutang Gorge. Disembark from the ship to the dock close to the pavilion's entrance. Sightseeing here involves climbing the nine storeys inside the building.

OR

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

Destination Information

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

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

DAY 11: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE – CHONGQING TO CHENGDU

Check-out of your cabin early this morning and disembark in Chongqing and take a tour around Ciqikou, a centre of cobbled streets and porcelain wares. Continue your journey

driving four to five hours to Chengdu for a typical Sichuan meal.

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.

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. A fast paced economy which is bringing 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 definite, a necessity, a must visit on any trip to China.

Sichuan Meal - Sichuan cuisine is famous for its use of Sichuan pepper and chillies. These 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 kungpao chicken, twice-cooked pork and spicy Sichuan hotpot.

DAY 12: CHENGDU

Today we will visit China's most famous resident, the Giant Panda. Visit the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding 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 approximately one and half hours on foot and there are electric carts offered by private vendors that can be organised at your own expense. Visit the Shu Brocade and Embroidery Museum. Later fly one hour and 20 minutes to Kunming the capital of Yunnan Province.

Destination Information

Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding - With over 80 pandas holding residence, the Chengdu Panda Research Base is equipped with the latest technology and research materials to gain a further understanding in how we can protect the panda and maintain, if not increase, its numbers. The park is set up to resemble the mountain and forest regions in north Sichuan, the original home of the Giant Panda, with extensive bamboo trees and large green

spaces. Red Pandas, the Giant Panda's lovable cousin, and flamboyant peacocks also roam the park, making for an interesting mix.

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

Kunming - Nicknamed China's 'Spring City' due to its temperate weather, Kunming is the capital of Yunnan Province. Kunming has long played an important role as a trading city due to its significant location on the borders of Southeast Asia.

DAY 13: KUNMING

This morning drive one and a half hours to the Stone Forest. Spend the morning exploring the unusual limestone rock formations of the Kunming Stone Forest which involves approximately two hours on foot along cobblestone paths. Return to Kunming for an afternoon at leisure and dine this evening on the delicious local delicacy, Across the Bridge Noodles.

Destination Information

Kunming Stone Forest - Located 120km south east of Kunming, the Stone Forest consists of thousands of narrow, fantastically shaped pillars of rock, scattered over an area of more than 80 hectares. The park is designed so that you can follow a walkway through the formations of water pools and grey pinnacles, the tallest of which is over 30m high.

Across The Bridge Noodles - Across the Bridge noodles are a type of rice noodle soup from Yunnan Province served in a broth style. Usually accompanied by meat, bean curd and vegetables, this is a truly therapeutic dish.

DAY 14: KUNMING TO DALI

Drive approximately five hours to the pretty city of Dali. In Dali enjoy some relaxing sightseeing around the symmetrical Three Pagodas.

Destination Information

Dali - Sandwiched between the Jade Green Mountains and serene Erhai Lake, Dali is naturally striking in its setting. Mainly a base for the Bai people, Dali has played an important role in the history of south China and was once a post on the old Burma Road.

Three Pagodas - Presented in a perfect triangle, the Three Pagodas date back to the 9th century and were built under the Nanzhao State. Made of brick and white mud, the Pagodas are known for their resilience, having survived many natural disasters, including earthquakes.

DAY 15: DALI

Explore Dali's quaint old quarter and head over to Xizhou Village to explore the local wares at the market and the iconic Yen Family house. Sightseeing around the Dali Ancient Quarter and surrounding countryside is relaxed, involving approximately three hours on foot. Take a cruise on tranquil Erhai Lake, you will be required to get on and off the boat here. Later visit the Golden Flower Tie Dye shop.

Destination Information

Xizhou Village - The Xizhou Village was once a military stronghold and flourished during the Ming Dynasty. Surrounded by rice paddies and shadowed by Cangshan Mountain, Xizhou is not only famous historically but is a great place to shop and browse for Bai minority people wares and delicious fares.

Yen Family House - Previously owned by a famous local merchant, Yen Family House is now a museum of a traditional Bai ethnic house well-known for its wood carvings, stone sculptures and clay statues.

Erhai Lake - The centrepiece of Dali, Erhai Lake is a beautiful oasis of striking blue waters, temple islands and cormorant fishermen. Erhai literally means 'ear sea' and is named so due to the ear shape of the lake. A cruise on the lake is the best way to fully appreciate the natural beauty of the area.

DAY 16: DALI TO GUILIN

Drive five hours back to Kunming today for your flight to the scenic city of Guilin. Your flight duration is one hour and 20 minutes.

Destination Information

Guilin - Guilin is one of China's most stunning and panoramic cities and was founded during the reign of the first Chinese empire, the Qin Dynasty. It is renowned for the unique beauty of the mountains that fringe it. Guilin developed as a trading town due to the building of the Ling Canal which links the important Pearl and Yangtze River systems.

DAY 17: GUILIN TO YANGSHUO

Visit wendywutours.com.au

Take a relaxed four hour cruise along the Li River to the charming village of Yangshuo where you will spend one 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 approximately 100 passengers; with an enclosed dining area on the lower deck and an open viewing area on the upper deck. Usually the boats depart at 9am, from the dock located a one hour drive from your hotel. However, when the river level is low they depart from further downstream which would mean a longer drive and an earlier check-out from your hotel. Disembarking from the cruise, your Local Guide will walk with you to your hotel, approximately a 15 minute walk from the river. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organised at your own expense. In Yangshuo, visit the local markets.

Destination Information

Li River - Today you will pass tranquil farming and fishing scenes and picturesque villages as you cruise down the Li River. The main attraction is the stunning limestone karsts that tower above the river creating a magical landscape of mountains and water. The unique and natural beauty of this region has for centuries been an inspiration to Chinese artists and poets alike.

Yangshuo - Yangshuo is home to some of the best scenery in the world. This quaint town is renowned for its breathtaking vistas and peaceful country life. Surrounded by stark karst peaks and attractively located on the Li River, Yangshuo, alongside Guilin, prides itself in being the most sought after beauty spots in China.

DAY 18: YANGSHUO

Yangshuo sits in an exquisite rural location, surrounded by landscapes of jewel-green paddy fields and dramatic limestone karsts. Spend the morning exploring the country side before having an afternoon at leisure; there are many activities available including cycling, rafting and walking (arranged locally at your own expense), though you may prefer to relax in the town. Stop for a photo opportunity on the banks of the Li river and meet a genuine cormorant fisherman.

DAY 19: YANGSHUO TO HANGZHOU

Drive one hour back to Guilin and visit the Reed Flute Caves to admire the stunning colours of the stalagmites and stalactites. It usually takes an hour to complete the route

Call 1300 727 998 to speak to a Reservations Consultant

and it is very cool inside. Take a tour of the South China Pearl Museum where you will have the opportunity to buy these precious stones. Fly one hour and 50 minutes to Hangzhou to check into your hotel for a two night stay.

Destination Information

Reed Flute Cave - Named so because of the clumps of slender reed once commonly found at the entrance to the caves which was also used to make flutes. The Reed Flute Caves house a grotto of multi-coloured stalactites and stalagmites.

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

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 20: 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 two hours sightseeing on foot at this site. Visit the Former Residence of Huxueyan before cruising on Hangzhou's West Lake and admiring the gardens, pagodas and old bridges on its shores. Disembark your cruise and explore the Xihutiandi area.

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 followers of the Buddhist religion and a centre for tourism.

The Former Residence of Huxueyan - The founder of Huqingyutang Pharmacy and the first Mandarin billionaire of the 19th Century, Hu Xueyan, built this outstanding collection of pavilions and gardens around a main building

which was used to house his concubines. The property even includes a miniature West Lake.

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.

Xihutiandi - Located in the southern scenic area of the West Lake, Xihutiandi is a large garden area dotted with cafes, restaurants and shops to explore.

DAY 21: HANGZHOU TO SUZHOU

Transfer three hours to Suzhou, renowned for its gardens and quaint charm and enjoy a day at leisure.

Destination Information

Suzhou - Suzhou, situated on the lower reaches of the Yangtze and close to Shanghai. This 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.

DAY 22: SUZHOU

Today enjoy a leisurely day of sightseeing. 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. There will be three to four hours walking while sightseeing today.

Destination Information

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 23: SUZHOU TO SHANGHAI

Transfer two hours to the vibrant city of Shanghai. Visit Matchmaker's Corner in People's Square where parents search for worthy suitors for their children before exploring

the ancient treasures of the Shanghai Museum. Round off your day with some delicious Shanghainese cuisine.

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.

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. The Square is iconic for its famous Matchmaker's Corner, where parents search for suitable suitors for their children.

Shanghai Museum - One of the most esteemed and acclaimed museums in China, the Shanghai Museum is a comprehensive collection of the Middle Kingdom's millennia old history. Sprawled over five floors, one could spend half, if not a full day in this comprehensive museum. The shape of the museum was designed to resemble a Chinese vessel, known as a Ding.

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

DAY 24: SHANGHAI

Today's explorations include the peaceful Yu Garden; and a visit to old town. Admire the magnificent colonial architecture with a stroll along the Bund before visiting the Silk Museum. Sightseeing today involves a full day of touring around the centre of the city including three to four hours on foot. End the day with a panoramic evening cruise on the Huangpu River.

Destination Information

Old Town and Yu Gardens - The Old Town (Yuan Bazaar) of Shanghai, where cobbled streets are lined with traditional shops selling herbal medicines, handicrafts, Chinese tea and a variety of tantalising snacks. This was 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.

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

Huangpu River Cruise - There is no better way to see the juxtaposition of eras 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 25: DEPART SHANGHAI

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.

Late check-out is not included in our China group tours. If you wish to book a late checkout 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.

Due to flight schedules, Brisbane and Perth passengers may arrive home on Day 25.

DAY 26: ARRIVE AUSTRALIA

Arrive home today.

GRAND TOUR OF CHINA TRAVEL INFORMATION

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 6 months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office 75 days prior to departure; if received after this date urgent visa processing fees will apply. Passports will be returned with your final documentation 2-3 weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15 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. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive Grand Tour of China group tours from the groups' arrival until the groups' day of departure.

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

During your stay in Yunnan Province, breakfast may consist of mostly local cuisine and western-style breakfast choices will be limited.

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 Australia and China. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Please note that the Chinese government has strict environmental regulations in regards to the use of air conditioning and heating during certain times of the year. Hotels are only permitted to turn air conditioning on in the summer months from mid-May to mid-October and heating is permitted to turn on from mid-November to mid-March. Please note double bed requests can be made at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

Transport

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

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

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

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

Day Trains: On this tour, you will take a bullet train journey from Beijing to Xian. 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 National Escort/Local Guide.

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 28th January 2017 and 16th February 2018. Golden Week public holidays fall annually between 1-3 May and 1-7 October.

Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs; so in each city, we will visit a museum or exhibition, which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places which hold local interest; for example, in Shanghai you will be able to see how silk is created all the way from the silk worm to beautiful garments; and in Xian we will take you to a workshop which creates replicas of the Terracotta Warriors, from tiny little warriors to seven foot behemoths! We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by both a National Escort/Local Guides. There will usually be no more than 29 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

Tipping while on holiday is a firm and expected element in the tourism industry and China is no exception. To remove the uncertainty and stress of not knowing how much is appropriate to tip or to whom, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy for our group tours where a nominated tipping amount is paid upon commencement of the programme by each tour member. This amount is stated in all group pricing, however it is not collected in your final payment received by Wendy Wu Tours.

This nominated tipping amount is to be given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour, who will then distribute it amongst your main service providers – guides, drivers and attendants – on your behalf during the tour. Any other tipping, such as tips for bathroom attendants or hotel porters that are taking luggage to your room, is at your discretion based on satisfaction of services received, as are gratuities for additional requested special services.

Yangtze River Cruise operators have introduced a compulsory service levy, which is to be paid immediately upon boarding the cruise vessel. For the purposes of your overall cost, this has been calculated into your AUD/RMB tipping amount as reflected on your invoice.

The tipping amount is determined based on the total number of passengers travelling in the group. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the National Escort. The final tipping amount will be outlined in your final documentation, which is distributed 2 weeks prior to your tours departure.

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 5kgs. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that Chinese authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles 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 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 National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

Vaccinations and Your Health

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

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 pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

Updated: 14 June 2017