



In Pursuit of Pandas

Classic Tour | 9 Days | Comfortable

Beijing - Xian - Chengdu

This short adventure in China is designed for exploring imperial Beijing and experience ancient Xian before being whisked off to Chengdu to get up close to the resident Giant Pandas.

Tour Highlights:

- **Beijing** – The Great Wall, Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square
- **Xian** – The archaeological marvel of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses
- **Chengdu** – The Chengdu Research Base of Giant
- Panda Breeding and the Grand Buddha of Leshan



In Pursuit of Pandas 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.

Comfortable Tour

'In Pursuit of Pandas' is a **comfortable** tour. Although this is the easiest grading of tour Wendy Wu Tours offers it still requires a reasonable level of fitness. Accessible to most people with an average level of fitness and average mobility. Tours may involve sightseeing on foot, some climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats.

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'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 9 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 13 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 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

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 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

In Pursuit of Pandas 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 to your hotel, the transfer will take approximately one hour. 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 at Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City will involve approximately three to four hours on foot. Later 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. Tonight, eat a traditional Peking duck dinner.

The Forbidden City is closed on Mondays. If this day of touring falls on a Monday, your touring in Beijing will be switched round so that the Forbidden City is visited on an alternative day.

Destination Information

Tiananmen Square - Built under the guidance of Chairman Mao Zedong, Tiananmen Square is 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.

Temple of Heaven - The Temple of Heaven is one of the most perfect examples 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.

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 the rest at your own pace. Later, visit the jade factory and stroll through the Summer Palace. This evening enjoy 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 and is 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 you will be transferred approximately one hour to Beijing airport for your two hour flight to Xian. On arrival take a walk on the ancient city wall before you check in. Your 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. Later this evening enjoy a delicious feast of traditional Shui Jiao dumplings and a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing.

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

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.

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.

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 5: XIAN TO CHENGDU

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 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 take your one hour and 20 minute flight to Chengdu.

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.

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 Provinces 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.

DAY 6: CHENGDU - LESHAN

Travel two hours south of Chengdu to Leshan, where you will see the world's largest stone-carved Buddhist monument, the Leshan Grand Buddha and take a boat ride in front of the statue to grasp the size of this structure. Return to Chengdu, stopping at Huanglongxi, a town which has managed to retain the charm of Qing dynasty simplicity. Sample a delicious Sichuan meal this evening.

Destination Information

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

Huanglongxi - Named after the Huanglong River which flows through this historic town, Huanglongxi houses a number of traditional buildings, dating back mainly to the Qing Dynasty. Home to picturesque temples and idyllic water vistas, Huanglongxi is a beauty spot famous with directors who use the area for its stunning scenery.

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 7: CHENGDU

Today we will visit China's most famous resident, the Giant Panda at 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 and can be organised at your own expense. Take a trip to the Shu Brocade and Embroidery Museum. Later, visit Matchmaker's Corner where you can watch parents search for suitable suitors for their children and visit a traditional tea house.

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 too 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 further how these richly decorative fabrics are created and take the opportunity to purchase a piece yourself.

Matchmakers' Corner -. Matchmaker's Corner is where parents search for suitable boyfriends or girlfriends for their children.

DAY 8: DEPART CHENGDU

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 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.

Due to flight schedules, Brisbane and Perth passengers may arrive home on Day 8.

DAY 9: ARRIVE AUSTRALIA

Arrive home today.

IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS 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 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 In Pursuit of Pandas group tours from the groups' arrival until the groups' day of departure.

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. Please note that long driving distances or flight times, for example, may delay/alter your mealtime.

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 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.

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.

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.smarttraveller.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.

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