



## Magnificent China Dossier

### Classic Tour | 22 Days | Comfortable

Beijing - Xian - Yangtze River Cruise - Chengdu - Guilin - Yangshuo - Shanghai

China is home to a great number of magnificent and world renowned sights. This tour incorporates them all – visit the pandas and admire the Great Wall and Terracotta Army, then cruise along the Yangtze and Li Rivers.

#### TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Walk on the Great Wall
- Four nights on the Yangtze
- Watch Giant Pandas play
- Cruise on the Li River
- Stroll old gardens in Suzhou
- Admire Shanghai's bright lights



## Magnificent China tour inclusions

- Return international 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)

*Personal expenditures e.g. drinks, 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.*

## Classic Tour

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of China on an excellent value group tour while 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

'Magnificent 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. 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 civilisation is the oldest in the world and has a history dating back over 5,000 years. With 56 ethnic groups, 22 provinces and eight major dialects, China has a rich and varied culture and way of life. It is home to a wealth of tourist sights and cultural relics, which entice our guests to return again and again to this exciting destination.

## Joining Your Tour

The tour is 22 days in duration including international flights.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only, the price includes visa fees and your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations. Join the tour on Day 1 in Beijing and end the tour on Day 21 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 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

### 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.

## Magnificent China Itinerary

### DAY 1: AUSTRALIA TO BEIJING

Fly to Beijing, the capital of China, for a four 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. The rest of the day is at leisure. 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: IMPERIAL 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, before enjoying a traditional Peking duck dinner this evening.

*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.*

#### 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. 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 13<sup>th</sup> 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 - GREAT WALL**

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 approximately two hours free time to explore at your own pace. Later, visit the Jade Museum. This afternoon, stroll through the Summer Palace.

#### **Destination Information**

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

**Jade Museum** – 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.

### **DAY 4: BEIJING**

Soak up the harmonious ambience of the Temple of Heaven where you can watch, or take part, in an outdoor dance group. There will be around one hour on foot here. This evening, watch a Chinese acrobatics show.

#### **Destination Information**

**Temple of Heaven** – Set in a 267-hectare park surrounded by a long wall and with a gate at each compass point, the Temple of Heaven is absolutely unique. It is one of the most perfect examples of Ming architecture, 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.

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

### **DAY 5: BEIJING TO XIAN**

This morning you will be transferred approximately one hour to Beijing airport for your two hour flight to Xian. Visit the lovely Little Wild Goose Pagoda, before enjoying a delicious feast of traditional Shui Jiao dumplings and a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing in the evening.

#### **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.

**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.

**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 - TERRACOTTA WARRIORS**

Spend the morning viewing the enigmatic ranks of the life-sized Terracotta Warriors. The Museum of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses is located approximately a 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 cost. There is no electric cart available for the return from the museum exit to the bus park. Within the museum area the warriors can be seen in three different 'pits', which are active archaeological digs. The site is large and will take about 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 14<sup>th</sup> century city walls that enclose Xian's old town. The local guide will give you time

to explore the ancient city walls at your own pace. There are options here to hire a bicycle or an electric cart to drive along the length of the wall. These are offered by private vendors and can be organised at your own expense. End the day exploring the atmospheric Muslim Quarter. The Muslim Quarter can get crowded, so please be mindful of your belongings.

#### **Destination Information**

**Terracotta Warriors** – One of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 walls** – Dating back to the Ming Dynasty in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Xian ancient city wall is one of the best preserved urban fortifications in China. The wall's ideal spot and layout gives visitors a bird's eye view over this fantastic city. Follow the locals' example and hire a bike to get an ever more spectacular experience.

**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.

#### **DAY 7: XIAN - YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE**

You will take a morning flight from Xian to Wuhan which takes one and a half hours. On arrival, transfer six to seven 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 due to flight schedules there may be an opportunity to board a one and a half hour flight from Xian to Yichang as an alternative to flying via Wuhan. In this instance, there will be additional sightseeing at Binjiang Park and Yichang Museum before boarding your 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 approx. USD20-USD30 dollars per person however this amount can vary and for security reasons, it is not always possible to disembark at all ports of call.*

*Please be aware that there are a number of steps involved in embarking and disembarking your Yangtze River Cruise Ship, particularly during low tide. If you think this may be an issue, please inform us in advance.*

*You may be offered cabin upgrades locally and payable direct to the cruise company, which may include some of the amenity package services. The amenity package benefits start on the second day of the cruise.*

#### **Destination Information**

**Yangtze River** – One of the world's greatest 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.

#### **DAYS 8: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE**

Visit the Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world. Disembarking the ship, drive approximately 20 minutes (the coach is not permitted to stop for photos) to the viewing area above the ship locks where you will be able to truly appreciate the scale of this hydroelectric project. There is also a small museum here and a lookout point. 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.

## **DAYS 9: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE**

Prepare for breath-taking vistas as the ship passes through Wu and Qutang gorges. Switching to smaller vessels, take a relaxing trip on the Shennong Stream or the Goddess Stream (which one 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.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

### **Destination Information**

**Goddess Stream** – Goddess Stream, also known as 'Shennü Xi' in Chinese, flows from the southern bank of the Yangtze opposite Goddess Peak.

**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.

## **DAYS 10: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE**

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 and you will be off ship for two hours.

*Depending on local conditions of the river and the cruise programme, you may visit Jade Emperor Scenic Area near Fengdu or the Shibaozhai Temple.*

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

### **Destination Information**

**Shibaozhai Temple**– Shibaozhai Temple is a nine-storey temple, named after the hill on which it stands. Dating back to the 18th century, it 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.

## **DAYS 11: YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE – CHENGDU**

Check out of your cabin early this morning and disembark in Chongqing. Take a tour around Ciqikou, a centre of cobbled streets and porcelain wares. Continue your journey driving four to five hours to Chengdu.

### **Destination Information**

**Chongqing** – a city perched on the steep hills overlooking the confluence of the Jialing and the Yangtze Rivers, Chongqing is the chief industrial centre of south west China, producing approximately one fifth of Sichuan's industrial output. Chongqing has been reshaped by the Three Gorges Dam Project, which now allows larger sea-going vessels to sail all the way upriver to China's most famous waterfront mountain city.

**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. With a fast-paced economy that is dragging China's west into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is no wonder that Chengdu's appeal is growing year on year. As the gateway into Sichuan Province's large collection of sights, as well as Chengdu being its own trove of historical and cultural treasures, Chengdu is a must-visit on any trip to China.

## **DAY 12: CHENGDU**

Today we will visit China's most famous resident, the Giant Panda. Visit the Panda Conservation Centre where you can learn about China's celebrated bear. See these lovable creatures in surroundings that mirror their natural habitat. It is not guaranteed that you will be able to see the feeding of the younger pandas, as this only happens at the start and end of each day. Sightseeing involves approximately one and a half hours on foot and there are electric carts offered by private vendors that can be organised at your own cost. Later, wander through Matchmaker's Corner in People's Park where parents search for suitable suitors for their children, and visit a traditional Tea House where you can try traditional Chinese tea (at your own expense). Return to Chengdu where you will sample a delicious Sichuan meal this evening.

### **Destination Information**

**Panda Conservation Centre** - 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.

**People's Park & Matchmakers' Corner** - People's Park is a pleasant respite from urban Chengdu. Here you can see beautiful golden koi, locals dancing and practicing tai chi, and most interesting of all, Matchmaker's Corner, where parents search for suitable boyfriends or girlfriends for their children.

**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 13: CHENGDU TO GUILIN**

Enjoy a day at leisure before transferring one hour to the airport for your evening flight to the attractive city of Guilin. Your flight duration will be one and a half hours. On arrival transfer to your hotel and check in.

#### **Destination Information**

**Guilin** - 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 14: GUILIN – YANGSHUO**

Take a relaxed four hour cruise along the Li River to the charming village of Yangshuo, where you will spend two nights. 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 30-minute walk from the river. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organised at your own cost. In Yangshuo, visit the local markets.

#### **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 15: 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 countryside, before having an afternoon at leisure. There are many activities available including cycling, rafting (at your own expense) and walking, 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.

#### **Destination Information**

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

#### **DAY 16: YANGSHUO - GUILIN**

Drive approximately two hours back to Guilin. On arrival, visit the Reed Flute Caves to admire the stunning colours of the stalagmites and stalactites. It usually takes one hour to complete the route 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. Enjoy a leisurely walk around Ronghu Lake and visit Sun & Moon Pagodas for a spectacular view over downtown Guilin.

#### **Destination Information**

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

**Ronghu Lake** – One of two lakes originating from the Tang Dynasty when they made up part of the city moat. As Guilin expanded in all directions, the moat became a lake within the city area.

**Sun and Moon Pagodas** – Known as the Gold and Silver Pagodas because of their colours at night, the sun and

moon pagodas sit on top of the Chinese Fir Lake but are connected underwater by a glass tunnel.

**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.

#### **DAY 17: GUILIN – SHANGHAI**

Today you will fly two hours and 15 minutes to the exuberant city of Shanghai. On arrival, wander for a couple of hours through the Xintiandi area to admire the 1920s architectural styling.

##### **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.

**Xintiandi** – An affluent area, Xintiandi is a newly redeveloped district in the centre of Shanghai home to boutique shopping and luxurious dining. The buildings here are designed and redeveloped from traditional style of Shanghai housing from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, called Shikumen.

#### **DAY 18: SHANGHAI - SUZHOU**

Travel approximately two hours to neighbouring Suzhou, which is renowned for its gardens. Visit one of its finest, the Humble Administrator's Garden. Cruise the Grand Canal, before returning to Shanghai to dine on local Shanghainese cuisine. There will be three to four hours walking while sightseeing today.

##### **Destination Information**

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

**Humble Administrator's Garden** - Part of the UNESCO World Heritage site of classical gardens in Suzhou, the Humble Administrator's Garden is the largest and is seen as one of the most iconic and beautiful in the area. Dating back to 1509, the Humble Administrator's Garden was

designed by the Ming Dynasty civil servant, Wang Xianchen, as a private garden residence.

**Grand Canal** - China's Grand Canal is the longest artificial waterway in the world with some sections dating back to the 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

**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 19: DISCOVER SHANGHAI**

Explore the ancient treasures of the Shanghai Museum in People's Square. Admire the magnificent colonial architecture with a stroll along the Bund. This evening, cruise on the Huangpu River for panoramic vistas of the Shanghai skyline.

##### **Destination Information**

**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. Spread out 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.

**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.

**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 20: DISCOVER SHANGHAI**

Today's explorations include the peaceful Yu Garden and the atmospheric alleys of the old town, as well as the Silk Museum. Next, explore the futuristic Pudong district, home to Shanghai's world-famous skyline. Sightseeing today involves touring the city for approximately three to four hours on foot.



### **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, is the original centre of Shanghai and for decades was the seat of Chinese authority in Shanghai. The Yu Gardens is seen as one of the most perfect examples of Chinese garden style. Built by the Ming-era governor, Pan Yunduan, as a retirement gift for his father, the Yu Gardens is home to exquisite jade rock, goldfish-filled ponds and stunning, tranquil pavilions.

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

**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.

### **DAYS 21-22: SHANGHAI TO AUSTRALIA**

Any time before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from your hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight. Arriving home, the same or following day.

## **MAGNIFICENT CHINA TRAVEL INFORMATION**

### **Visas**

Entry visas are required by all visitors to China and Wendy Wu Tours' Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. We will supply you with all paperwork and submit the visa application on your behalf. Visas for China are valid for 90 days from the date of issue and allow you to stay in the country for up to 30 days. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office 60 days prior to departure; if received after this date urgent visa processing fees will apply. Passports will be returned with your final documentation four weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15AUD courier fee will apply.

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

### **Insurance**

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

### **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 Classic 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, chilli 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.

Your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead. When dining in China, although some restaurants have adopted a western approach to dining, expect some restaurants to follow the traditional communal style of eating. Typically, this will mean each diner has their own small bowl and may serve themselves from a variety of shared dishes. At some local restaurants, appetizers and main courses might be served when they are ready instead of following a particular order.

Determining when it's appropriate to use chopsticks, forks or spoons can be challenging for some travellers, even other Asians, as each country has different customs. In China, dishes are normally placed in the centre and people serve food for themselves with their own chopsticks and bowl. In parts of China, forks and spoons are used for most dishes and chopsticks are typically provided to eat noodles. Usually chopsticks or other utensils are provided to scoop the food into your bowl to prevent your own chopsticks from touching the food that remains on the table. Dining in China is fairly casual with not too many rules. Leaving food on the plate is not considered rude.

## 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.

## 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.*

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

**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

## 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 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 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018. Golden Week public holidays fall annually between 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> 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

Local tipping is customary in Asia. However, this can often lead to awkwardness in knowing when it is appropriate to tip and how much, as well as ensuring you have a suitable amount of change available at the time. For your convenience, with years of experiences in providing the best customer service, Wendy Wu Tours operates a kitty system on our Group Tours so your National Escort will look after this aspect of your trip for you.

It also ensures that the amounts paid are reasonable for you but still fair for the local people. The amount is stated on each Group Tour page will be advised again on your final documentation. Tipping is paid in RMB (Chinese Yuan) and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf.

If you are taking a tour that includes a Yangtze River cruise, the total amount listed on the tour pages is collected in two parts: 1) RMB amount, paid to your National Escort on arrival, as above, and 2) A separate service levy in RMB to be paid upon boarding the cruise vessel.

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](http://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 and flammable liquids in hand luggage will 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\$250 per person, per week should be sufficient; however for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

**Optional Tours** - May be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. In your Final Documentation an Optional Excursion Sheet will be included outlining the activities available in each city and local cost associated. Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

### 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](http://www.travelvax.com.au)

### Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://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 four weeks prior to departure.

**Updated: 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018**