# ANCIENT CHINA

## Classic Tour | 18 Days | Physical Level 1

Beijing – Datong – Wutaishan – Taiyuan – Pingyao – Xian – Luoyang – Zhengzhou – Shanghai

China is one of the world's oldest and most monumental civilisations. On this journey, you will encounter millennia-old culture and religion at some of China's most intriguing sites.

- Discover the imperial treasures of Beijing
- Marvel at the Hanging temple at Jinxia Gorge
- Experience the spectacular Terracotta Warriors
- Explore the fascinating Longmen Grottoes
- Soak up the atmosphere in vibrant Shanghai

## TOUR MAP

## ANCIENT 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 Escorts (if your group is 10 or more passengers) and Local Guides
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

## 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 Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

## PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

Our tours come with a physical rating to guide you in selecting a holiday that suits your comfort level. Joining any of our tours involves independent mobility and the ability to stay active throughout the day, which is essential for fully enjoying the unique charm of each destination.

'Ancient China' is rated as a physical level 1 tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights, carrying your luggage on and off trains, and climbing some steps. Please consider:

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

Our National Escort is dedicated to providing a high level of service and support throughout your journey. However, their primary role is to manage the daily aspects of the tour. They are unable to offer extensive personal physical assistance. We kindly ask our travellers to be prepared for the physical aspects of the tour to ensure a comfortable and enjoyable experience for everyone.

## JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 18 days in duration including international flights or 17 days in duration based on 'Land Only'. Join the tour on Day 1 in Beijing and end the tour on Day 17 in Shanghai.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour, or when booking pre and post night accommodation with Wendy Wu Tours.

## ITINERARY CHANGES:

It's 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'll make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

**Day 1: Fly to Beijing** Meals: D

On arrival in Beijing Daxing or Beijing Capital 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 1 hour to your hotel.

Early check-in is not included. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

An informal Welcome Dinner will be held on day 1. Late arrivals will receive a box dinner.

**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** Meals: B, L, D

Walk through Tiananmen Square and into the magnificent Forbidden City; sightseeing at Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City will involve approximately 3-4 hours on foot. Later, enjoy a leisurely stroll in 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 switched round so that the Forbidden City is visited on an alternative day. In an effort to preserve the Forbidden City, the number of entry tickets per day has been significantly reduced. Whilst every effort will be made to obtain the tickets, should this not be possible, then you will instead visit the Forbidden City from the outside and visit the nearby Prince Kung's Palace Museum.*

**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 Dadu developed this type of housing in the 13th century as rental accommodation for the city's expanding population. Hutongs were laid out following Chinese feng shui principles, with four sides of buildings enclosing a central compound known as a *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.

## Day 3: Beijing — Meals: B, L, D

Rise early this morning and drive around 2-hours northwest of the city to the Juyongguan Pass. Here you can take a walk on the Great Wall of China, appreciating the wall itself and the dramatic scenery. After walking from the coach to the first section, your group will receive an introduction to the Great Wall's unique history and a briefing on the different walking routes available, depending on your level of fitness. You will then have approximately 2.5-hours free time to explore at your own pace. Please note that there are many steps at the wall and certain sections are steeper than others. Later, visit a jade factory before taking a stroll through the exquisite 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 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.

**Day 4: Beijing** Meals: B, L, D

Soak up the harmonious ambience of the Temple of Heaven, a masterpiece of Chinese architecture and orderly oasis in a bustling urban landscape. Later, browse your way through Panjiayuan, Beijing's most extensive arts, crafts and antiques market.

**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.

**Panjiayuan Market** – Selling many items including furniture, sculptures and Mao era items, Panjiayuan Market is the perfect shopping area for Chinese memorabilia, knick-knacks and antiques.

**Day 5: Beijing – Datong** Meals: B, L, D

Travel by bullet train to Datong, a journey of 2 hours watching the rural splendour of China pass by your window. Known for its abundant historical relics and natural beauty, upon arrival visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Yungang Caves where you will see the well-preserved rock carvings from the surrounding sandstone cliffs. Today, it is one of the three most famous ancient Buddhist cultural sites of China. Touring the caves involves walking 1km, and you will spend approximately 2 hours here.

*Please note you will need to carry your own luggage on and off the trains.*

**Destination Information**

**Datong** – Located in Shanxi Province, Datong was formerly known as Pingcheng and is located near the Great Wall Pass which separates Shanxi from Inner Mongolia. Datong's most famous sight are the Yungang Grottoes, home to thousands of intricately carved Buddhist statues.

**Yungang Grottoes** – Prime examples of rock-cut architecture, the Yungang Grottoes are ancient Chinese Buddhist temple grottoes, home to over 50,000 Buddhist statues.

**Day 6: Datong – Wutaishan** Meals: B, L, D

This morning visit the 1,400 year old, gravity defying Hanging Temple, which seemingly floats up the face of Jinxia Gorge, where you will spend about 1 hour. Continue driving 4 hours to Wutaishan to check in to your hotel.

*Please note, in an effort to preserve the Hanging Temple, the number of climbing tickets per day has been significantly limited. Foreign visitors must present passports for on-site purchase. Whilst every effort will be made to obtain the climbing tickets, should this not be possible, then you will view the Hanging Temple from the mountainside.*

**Destination Information**

**Hanging Temple** – Built over 1,500 years ago, the Hanging Temple is not only stunning for its unique location in the side of Jinxia Gorge, it is also one of the only existing temples to combine Buddhism, Taoism and Confucian symbols.

**Wutaishan** – Wutaishan is one of China's four sacred Buddhist Mountains and received UNESCO status in 2009. Wutaishan literally translates as Five Plateau Peak and its most northern Peak, also known as Beitai, is the highest point in northern China.

**Day 7: Wutaishan – Taiyuan** Meals: B, L, D

Spend the day exploring Wutaishan's alpine valleys and important monasteries, including the Bodhisattva Temple and Xiantong Temple. This afternoon, drive 4 and a half hours to Taiyuan, home to the Twin Pagoda Temple. End the day with a noodle making class where you'll learn to make the traditional Shanxi style noodle along with steamed buns.

**Destination Information**

**Taiyuan** – Taiyuan is the capital of Shanxi Province and its largest city. The city has had a long and important history, especially during the 20th century.

**Twin Pagoda Temple** – The Twin Pagoda Temple is home to two Pagodas which date back to the Ming Dynasty and are the tallest set of twin pagodas in China.

**Day 8:** **Taiyuan – Pingyao** Meals: B, L, D

This morning we will spend around 1-2 hours at the Jin Ci Temple in Taiyuan. Afterwards, drive 2 hours to the small ancient town of Pingyao where you will transfer to an electric cart to take you to your hotel. Take part in a traditional Chinese paper cutting experience, dating back to the 6th Century.

**Destination Information**

**Jin Ci Temple** – The Jinci Temple is situated at the foot of Mount Xuanweng and was built in memory of Jiyu, the Founding Father of the Jin State.

**Pingyao** – A UNESCO World Heritage listed town, Pingyao is renowned for its ancient City Wall, which was built in the 11th century and still stands encircling the town. With a 2,000-year history, Pingyao has retained its layout from the Ming and Qing dynasties; the houses, streets, storefronts and temples have all been preserved in their historical appearance.

**Day 9:** **Pingyao – Xian** Meals: B, L, D

Take a walk around the cobbled streets for spectacular views of the city walls of Pingyao, dating back to the Zhou Dynasty. Next, visit the Rishengchang Financial House Museum. There will also be some time to visit the Yamen, a former government building from the Qing Dynasty. Sightseeing will involve around 4 hours on foot, including a stop for lunch. Later take a 3-hour bullet train to Xian, the former ancient capital.

*Please note you will need to carry your own luggage on and off the trains.*

**Destination Information**

**Pingyao Ancient City Walls** – One of the best-preserved fortifications in China, the Pingyao Ancient City Wall encloses the old town of Pingyao.

**Rishengchang Financial House** – The Rishengchang Financial House is the home of China's first draft bank, dating back to the 17th century.

**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 10: Xian** Meals: B, L, D

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 1-hour drive outside of Xian. From the bus park to the museum entrance there 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 about 2 and a half hours to explore. After this, visit the Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Workshop to see smaller models of the warriors being made.

Later, stroll on the beautifully preserved 14th 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.

This evening, enjoy a delicious feast of Shui Jiao dumplings and a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing.

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

**Ancient city walls** – Dating back to the Ming Dynasty in the 14th century, the Xian ancient city wall is one of the best preserved urban fortifications in China. The wall's ideal spot and layout gives visitors a bird's eye view over this fantastic city.

**Tang Dynasty Dancing Show** – Xian, previously known as Chang'an, was an important cultural and historical centre, not only China but in the known-world. The tang Dynasty Dancing show is an exciting exponent of this prosperous society and keeps alive the splendour of the period.

**Day 11: Xian** Meals: B, L, D

Admire the thousands of fascinating relics at the Xian Museum, followed by a visit to the Little Wild Goose Pagoda. Take part in a calligraphy lesson then spend time exploring the atmospheric alleys of the Muslim Quarter.

*After Hours Experience: For those seeking extra excitement this evening, you may wish to visit Tang Ever Bright City for its traditional architecture, colourful costumes, and dazzling lights (time permitting, payable locally).*

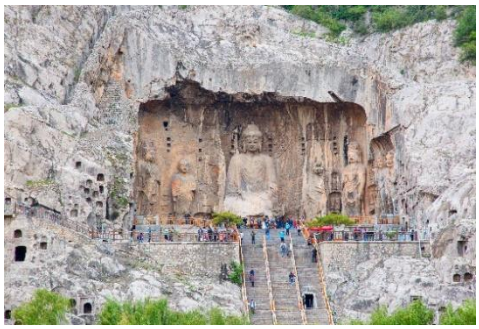
**Destination Information**

**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.

**Xian Museum** – Opened in 2007, this museum holds thousands of cultural relics that represent the history of Xian.

**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 12: Xian – Luoyang** Meals: B, L, D



This morning transfer to the railway station for your 2-hour bullet train to Luoyang. On arrival, check in to your hotel and then visit the Longmen Grottoes which date back to the 5th century. Sightseeing here involves around 2 hours on foot.

*Please note you will need to carry your own luggage on and off the trains.*

**Destination Information**

**Luoyang** – A city in Henan Province, Luoyang is situated on the north bank of the Luo River and interchanged as the ancient capital city with Xian. It is also known as the 'City of Peonies', as the Peony Festival is held in Wangcheng Park every April in celebration of the blossoming flower.

**Longmen Grottoes** – The Longmen Grottoes are regarded as one of the three most famous treasure houses of stone inscriptions in China, along with Yungang and Magao caves. The Grottoes date back to 493AD, when Emperor Xiaowen moved the capital of Luoyang, and house numerous historical material concerning art, music, religion, calligraphy, medicine, costumes and architecture.

**Day 13: Luoyang – Zhengzhou** Meals: B, L, D

Travel 2 hours to the famous Shaolin Temple, best known for its association with martial arts and watch a Kung Fu demonstration by the famous Shaolin Monks. Walk through the Pagoda Forest, a collection of 228 pagodas from the Tang and Qing dynasties. You will spend approximately 3 hours here before continuing with a 3-hour drive to Zhengzhou for your overnight stay.

**Destination Information**

**Shaolin Temple** – The Shaolin Temple is the place of origin for Chinese Zen Buddhism and Chinese martial arts. Here, watch a Kung Fu Demonstration by the famous Shaolin Monks.

**Pagoda Forest** – Located at the foot of Shaoshi Mountain, the Pagoda Forest is made up of over 200 stone pagodas, dating back to the Tang Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty.

**Day 14: Zhengzhou – Shanghai** Meals: B, L, D

Board the bullet train to the exuberant city of Shanghai, a journey time of 4-5 hours. In the evening, view the city from the Huangpu River on a scenic cruise.

*Please note you will need to carry your own luggage on and off the trains.*

**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.

**Huangpu River Cruise** – There is no better way to see the juxtaposition of eras in Shanghai's history than by taking a cruise on the Huangpu River. At night, the dazzling colours and lights from Pudong shine bright onto the more modest twilight of the Bund.

**Day 15: Shanghai** Meals: B, L, D

Today's explorations include the peaceful Yu Garden, the atmospheric alleys of the old town and a stroll along the Bund to admire the magnificent colonial architecture by the Huangpu River. Sightseeing today involves a full day of touring around the centre of the city with 3-4 hours on foot. In the evening, take your seats to see the fascinating ERA acrobatic show.

**Destination Information**

**Old Town and Yu Gardens** – The old town of Shanghai, where cobbled streets are lined with traditional shops selling herbal medicines, handicrafts, Chinese tea and a variety of tantalising snacks, is the original centre of Shanghai and 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.

**ERA Show** – One of Shanghai's most famous shows, the "ERA – Intersection of Time" was created by leader in the field Erick Villeneuve and under the lead of composer and music director Michel Cusson. It is a meditation on time and a love story told through a spectacular sequence of acrobatic performances guaranteed to leave you enthralled and amazed.

**Day 16: Shanghai** Meals: B, L, D

Wander for a couple of hours through the Xintiandi area to admire the 1920s architectural styling. Visit the ancient treasures of the Shanghai Museum before visiting a silk mill. Later, take in sweeping views of Shanghai's stunning skyline from the iconic Jin Mao Tower (weather permitting) then dine on delicious, traditional Shanghai cuisine for dinner.

**Destination Information**

**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 20th century, called Shikumen.

**Shanghai Museum** – One of the most esteemed and acclaimed museums in China, the Shanghai Museum has a comprehensive collection of ancient Chinese art. Sprawled over five floors, one could spend half, if not a full day exploring here. The shape of the museum was designed to resemble a Chinese vessel, known as a Ding.

**Silk Mill** – 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 17 - 18: Depart Shanghai** Meals: B

Any time before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from your hotel to the airport, per the departure time of your international flight.

# CHINA TRAVEL INFORMATION

## VISAS:

A visa is not required for Australian passport holders for entry into China for stays **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.

For the latest information on visa procedures, processing times and requirements, please kindly refer to our website https://www.wendywutours.com.au/help-and-advice/passports-and-visas/

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate, Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

Wendy Wu Tours does not accept responsibility for lost or undelivered items.

## INSURANCE:

It is a condition of your booking that you are insured for the duration of your trip. We recommend comprehensive travel insurance to cover cancellation, medical requirements, luggage, repatriations and additional expenses. At a minimum, the policy is required to cover medical requirements including medical evacuations / repatriations. The choice of insurer is yours.

We strongly suggest you purchase insurance at the time you pay your deposit. This is because cancellation fees and charges are payable from that time. We may request you to provide evidence that you have taken out and paid for a policy to comply with this condition. If you fail to provide a certificate of currency of insurance within a reasonable time after our request, then this will be deemed a cancellation by you and standard cancellation fees will apply.

## GROUP SIZE:

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by both a National Escort and local guides. On Classic Tours, will be no more than 28 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu our groups while you are travelling. Dedicated Solo Departures have a maximum group size of 18 passengers.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 10 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

## EATING IN CHINA:

Chinese cuisine is one of the world's most diverse and flavourful, with a rich history spanning thousands of years. The local dishes you'll experience on tour may differ from what you're used to at home, offering an authentic taste of China's regional flavours and cooking styles.

All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout China – from the bold, spicy cuisine of Sichuan to the savoury flavours of Shanghainese cooking, as well as the hearty noodles and dumplings of the north and fresh seafood of the south.

Breakfasts are buffet-style at your hotel with both Western and Chinese options available, although rural parts of China may offer limited options. Lunches and dinners on our tours are varied, with a mix of vegetable-based and meat-based dishes. Many are pre-seasoned with soy sauce or other traditional flavours, though our selected restaurants offer plenty of mild options. Dishes may be served at different temperatures, as is customary in China.

Dining mostly follows the traditional 'family style' approach, with dishes placed on a lazy Susan for everyone to share. Serving chopsticks are provided for each dish, and individual bowls, chopsticks, and cups are set for personal use. If you require a fork or spoon, please ask your server. This communal style of dining is an integral part of Chinese culture and a fun, social experience.

**If you have allergies or dietary requests, you must inform us prior to departure.** Western food requirements differ from those in Asia, and even medical dietary needs can be challenging to accommodate. While your National Escort will do their best to assist, we kindly ask for your patience and understanding, as dietary requests may not always be met to the standard you are accustomed to at home. Passengers with food intolerances are advised to bring snacks or additional food items, especially when traveling beyond major cities, where options may be more limited. Kosher and Halal food are extremely limited in China, and we regret that we are unable to cater to these dietary requirements.

## ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation is chosen for its convenience, comfort, or character. Hotels are generally of a four-star standard in major cities, though there is no international classification system, so facilities and quality may differ from Australia. In remote areas, standards may be lower, and some Western amenities may be unavailable.

All group tour hotels include private Western-style bathrooms, air conditioning*, TV, and a telephone. Due to environmental regulations, toiletries may not always be provided. Plumbing and electricity can be inconsistent, and power in rooms is often switched off when unoccupied. If you encounter any issues, please speak to your National Escort or Local Guide. Rest assured, all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected to ensure they meet our standards.

**Please note that regional energy conservation and environmental regulations may restrict air-conditioning and heating use during certain months, with minimum and maximum temperature limits in place.*

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

If you are traveling during a Chinese public holiday, please note that while tourist attractions remain open, they may be crowded with domestic visitors. Festivities often span several days, during which some businesses may close, and coach, air, and train services could be impacted. The major Golden Week holidays occur annually from April 29 to May 3 and September 30 to October 7.

## 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 5kg. This is a requirement on internal trains and flights. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. In general, we recommend packing only as much as you can lift as you will need to carry your own luggage on and off trains.

## TRANSPORT:

**Trains:** When traveling by high-speed 'bullet' train, you will be seated in second-class soft seats with air conditioning. **Facilities** may vary depending on the train. Most carriages feature a Western-style toilet, and most seats are equipped with a foldable tray table and a power socket for charging electronic devices. Luggage is stored at the end of the carriage or in overhead. Dining carts are available on board if you wish to purchase additional food.

For daily products containing flammable ingredients, such as perfumes, colognes, sprays, and gels, non-self-spray pressure containers should not exceed 100 millilitres per item, with only one container allowed per product. For self-spray pressure containers (e.g., hair mousse, hair spray, hair dye, cold wave lotion, insecticides, and air fresheners), each container must not exceed 150 millilitres, with a total cumulative volume of all such items not exceeding 600 millilitres. Passengers are not permitted to carry insecticides, explosives, magnetised materials, knives (including Swiss Army knives) with a blade longer than 60mm, scissors, or other sharp objects. Bag checks are conducted at random, and any restricted items—whether in hand luggage or main luggage—may be confiscated before boarding. Your National Escort will provide specific details before your journey.

**Yangtze River Cruise Vessel:** If travelling on a Yangtze River cruise, a standard cabin is included equipped with Wi-Fi access, an ensuite bathroom, and a private balcony. Upgrades are available at an additional cost upon enquiry with our Reservations team.

**Coaches:** Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Roads in China have generally improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. For this reason, the timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only.

**Planes:** Internal flight/s are based on economy class. Lithium Ion batteries, usually used in laptops, cell phones and digital cameras, must be carried in your hand luggage (not in your checked luggage). Portable chargers with a case that does not state the capacity or with a capacity of 160wh and more are not allowed on internal flights at all.

## AFTER-HOURS EXPERIENCES:

Our Classic tours include full days of sightseeing, so you can experience all the must-see sights and create unforgettable memories. Occasionally, when time permits, we may offer extra evening experiences, such as a show, for those who want a little extra excitement. These experiences are not mandatory, will be outlined in your final documents, and can be paid for locally in RMB, either by cash or mobile payment app.

## TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and China is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed to local guides and drivers throughout your tour. 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.

If you are travelling in a smaller group with local guides only, then tipping is paid in each destination. To be fair to the guides we ask for slightly higher amounts per traveller with small groups.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognise that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

## SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs; so in each city, we will visit a workshop or factory which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places which hold local interest; 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.

## DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA:

Though parts of China match the west in modernity and technological advances, it is important to remember that parts of China are still developing and as such, many aspects of tourism in China do not have the solid infrastructure and safety standards as seen here in the west.

## INTERNET RESTRICTIONS IN CHINA:

In China, certain Western apps, such as Google Services (e.g. Gmail, Google, Google Maps) and social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp), are blocked due to government restrictions on internet content. Some travellers may choose to download and use a VPN (Virtual Private Network) to bypass these restrictions and access blocked apps. Guests are strongly advised to conduct their own research into the legal implications as VPN usage is subject to government regulations. E-Sim providers such as Airalo and Holafly have built-in VPN capabilities.

## TRAVEL MONEY IN CHINA:

We recommend having access to multiple sources of money while traveling. A combination of payment methods, including mobile payment apps, cash, and cards, will offer the most security and flexibility. Mobile payment apps like WeChat and Alipay are often more widely accepted than international cards or cash in China. You will need an internet connection when in China to use the apps. For more information, please refer to our currency and spending money in China: https://help.wendywutours.com.au/knowledge/currency-spending-money-china

## 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 an email with your confirmation invoice, along with a link to our website where you can find your visa information (if applicable) and other important information. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

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