



China & Tibet Discovery

Classic Tour | 16 Days | Physical Level 2

Beijing – Xian – Lhasa – Chengdu – Yangtze River – Shanghai

This journey takes you to the roof of the world to uncover the mysteries of Tibet in the incredible city of Lhasa whilst enjoying the very best cultural, historical and natural treasures of China.

- Discover imperial Beijing
- Experience the spectacular Terracotta Warriors
- Reach the top of the world in mystical Tibet
- See the loveable pandas
- Take a three-night cruise along the Yangtze River

TOUR MAP



CHINA & TIBET DISCOVERY 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
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders and Tibetan entry permit
- 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 and Tibet 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 2:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights.

'China & Tibet Discovery' is rated as a **physical level 2** 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 and climbing some steps.

This tour has been carefully designed to minimise the effects of Altitude Sickness as we gain altitude steadily over a number of days as we ascend from Xian to Lhasa. Please be prepared for mild symptoms of Altitude Mountain Sickness (AMS) which include dizziness, fatigue, nausea, loss of appetite, breathlessness, headache and disturbed sleep. These usually develop over the first 36 hours at altitude and not immediately on arrival. AMS symptoms are experienced by people of varying ages and levels of fitness, and usually the symptoms will subside after a day or so. If symptoms worsen, you should seek medical advice and descend in altitude immediately. The following precautions may help to prevent or lessen the effects of AMS:

- Since fluid loss usually accompanies the acclimatisation process, drink plenty of fluids (3 - 4 litres daily at least) and eat carbohydrate food to keep the body properly hydrated
- Do not over exert and only partake in light activity immediately after your arrival
- Don't smoke, drink alcohol or take other depressants such as tranquilisers and sleeping pills, as these depress the respiratory drive and reduce oxygen intake.
- Assume any sickness at high altitude is AMS until proven otherwise
- Never ascend to higher altitudes while showing symptoms of AMS
- You must report any symptoms of AMS immediately to your National Guide

Of course, our National Escort and 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.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 16 days in duration including overnight international flights in one direction as this is the most likely flight option from Australia.

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. Please email your international flight times to info@wendywutours.com.au so we can arrange your transfers accordingly.

Join the tour on Day 1 in Beijing and end the tour on Day 15 in Shanghai. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure. An informal Welcome Dinner will be held on Day 1 of the itinerary. If you miss this due to your arrival time, all information will be provided to you at breakfast the following morning.

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: Arrive 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 here will involve approximately 3-4 hours on foot. Later, soak up the harmonious ambience of the Temple of Heaven for about 1 hour. Tonight, sit down to a traditional Peking duck dinner before enjoying a Chinese acrobatic show.



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 to that the Forbidden City is visited on an alternative day.

Please note: In an effort to preserve the Forbidden City, the number of entry tickets has been reduced from 80,000 to 30,000 per day. Whilst every effort will be made to get 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.

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.

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: The Great Wall

Meals: B, L, D

Rise early this morning to avoid the crowds and drive approximately 2 hours northwest of the city to the Juyongguan Pass to take a walk on the Great Wall of China, appreciating the wall itself and the dramatic scenery. Your visit involves walking from the bus to the first section. Once your group has been given an introduction to the Great Wall's unique history you will have free time to explore at your own pace. Later, visit the Jade Factory, and in the 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 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 - Xian

Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to the train station and take a 5-and-a-half-hour bullet train to Xian. Wander through the Muslim Quarter and then later this evening, enjoy a delicious feast of traditional Shui Jiao dumplings and a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing.

**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.

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 and delightful oriental knick-knacks.

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

Day 5: 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 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 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. There are options here to hire a bicycle or an electric cart to drive along the length of the wall (these are offered by private vendors and can be organised at your own expense).

Destination Information

Terracotta Warriors – One of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century, this unearthed 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, Xian ancient city wall is one of the best-preserved urban fortifications in China. The wall's ideal spot gives visitors a bird's eye view over the city.

Day 6: Xian - Lhasa

Meals: B, L, D

Fly 3 hours to Lhasa, the capital of spiritual Tibet. The afternoon is at leisure to help acclimatise to the altitude.

Daytime altitude: 4,000m

Overnight altitude: 3,700m



Destination Information

Lhasa – Historically and spiritually a centre for Buddhism, Lhasa is home to many culturally significant sights, including the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple and the Norbulingka Summer Palace. Set on the Tibetan Plateau, Lhasa is one of the highest cities in the world, reaching heights of 3,700m.

Day 7: Lhasa

Meals: B, L, D

Wander around the Barkhor to see traditionally dressed locals, stalls of religious trinkets and prostrating pilgrims. Inside the Jokhang Temple, the sacred centre of Tibetan Buddhism, the devotion is palpable as queues of people worship in the flickering light of yak butter candles. There will also be a visit to the Sera Monastery, a renowned seat of Buddhist learning. Sightseeing at the Jokhang Temple and Sera Monastery will involve climbing many steps and walking over uneven surfaces in dim light.



Daytime altitude: 4,000m

Overnight altitude: 3,700m

Destination Information

Barkhor – Encircling the Jokhang Temple, the Barkhor is a cluster of narrow streets that acts as a circuit of pilgrimage for Buddhists around the Jokhang. There are many stalls here where you can peruse for Tibetan trinkets, religious relics and exquisite jewellery.

Jokhang Temple – Considered the most important and sacred temple in Tibet, the Jokhang Temple is located amongst Barkhor and dates back to the 7th century. The architecture is a simple blend of Indian, Chinese and Nepalese designs and is a mix of stunning colours both inside and out.

Sera Monastery – The Sera Monastery is one of the ‘Great Three’ monasteries in Tibet located 5km outside of Lhasa. Although its monk population is rather small, there is still a bustle of activity, especially in the morning and late afternoon, when you can see debates on religious theory.

Day 8: Lhasa

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, visit the iconic palace of Potala, the largest monastery in the world. Sitting atop Red Mountain, the Potala Palace is painted in a traditional Tibetan blend of deep red and stark white. At the Potala Palace there are over 1000 steps. A small torch can be helpful to make your surroundings clearer. Next, visit Norbulingka, Lhasa’s answer to Beijing’s Summer Palace. Visit a Tibetan arts and crafts shop and enjoy a traditional Tibetan dinner this evening, accompanied by a dance performance.



Daytime altitude: 4,000m

Overnight altitude: 3,700m

Destination Information

Potala Palace – The former winter residence of the Dalai Lama, the Potala Palace has long been a symbol of Tibetan Buddhism and struggles between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government. Abandoned by the Buddhist spiritual leader in 1950, the Potala Palace now acts as a museum of old treasures and intricate shrines.

Norbulingka – Norbulingka served as the summer residence of the Dalai Lama from the 1780s to 1959. Set over an extensive park, Norbulingka is home to several chapels and palaces, as well as beautiful flower arrangements.

Day 9: Lhasa - Chengdu

Meals: B, L, D

Fly 2 hours Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province, where, after a leisurely tour of Jinli Street, there will be a delicious Sichuanese meal to savour.

Please note: flights from Lhasa to Chengdu are subject to delay and as such, the visit to Jinli Street could be missed.



Destination Information

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 dragging China's west into the 21st century, it is no wonder that Chengdu's appeal is growing year on year.

Jinli Street – Recorded back as far as the 2nd century BC, Jinli Street houses traditional-style buildings and delicious snacks. Famous for its baldachin manufacturing, Jinli Street is a great place to stop for a traditional Chinese tea in one of the many teahouses.

Day 10: Chengdu – Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Today you will visit China's most famous resident, the Giant Panda, at the Panda Conservation Centre. 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 1 and a half hours on foot and there are electric carts offered by private vendors that can be organised at your own cost. Later, travel 4-5 hours by coach to Chongqing, where you will board your Yangtze River Cruise.



Please note that 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.

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 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 which may include some of the amenity package services. Please note that the amenity package benefits start on the second day of the cruise.

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.

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

Day 11: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Today, visit Mt. ShuangGui, also know as “Luming Mountain”. Disembark from the ship to the dock and take a short bus transfer to the area. Sightseeing here involves climbing some steps. You will be off the ship for around 2.5 hours.

Depending on local river conditions and the cruise programme, you may visit Shibaozhai Temple or Fengdu Ghost City instead.



Destination Information

Mt. ShuangGui – A national forest park known for its picturesque scenery and has for centuries been a favorite destination for literati and artists. There are cliff brush writings of calligraphists here from the Song Dynasty to the present day, and pavilions are named for notable historic figures.

Day 12: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Prepare for breathtaking vistas as the ship passes through Wu and Qutang gorges. Switching to smaller vessels, take a relaxing trip on the Goddess Stream, cruising through the beautiful and narrow gorges for approximately 15km. Many protected species make the stunning peaks their home, including monkeys, mountain goats, deer and wild boar.



Depending on river conditions, you may travel along the Shennong Stream instead of the Goddess Stream.

Destination Information

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

Day 13: Yangtze River Cruise - Shanghai

Meals: B, L, D

Visit the Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world. Disembark the ship and drive approximately 20 minutes through the surrounding areas (the coach is not permitted to stop for photos) to the viewing area above the ship locks where you can truly appreciate the scale of this hydroelectric project. There is a small museum and a lookout point here. The sightseeing will involve around 1 hour on foot. Later, transfer to Yichang to board a 2 hour flight to cosmopolitan Shanghai.



Please note flights in this region are subject to change and can often be changed last minute, we aim to ensure passengers are transferred direct from Yichang. However, it may be necessary to transfer 6 hours by road to Wuhan to board a flight to Shanghai.

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.

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.

Day 14: Shanghai

Meals: B, L, D

Shanghai is China’s great metropolis, where east and west collide on streets lined with futuristic skyscrapers and 10th century temples. Today’s explorations start with the peaceful Yu Gardens and the atmospheric alleys of the old town. Admire the magnificent colonial architecture with a stroll along the historical Bund before visiting the Silk Factory. Sightseeing today involves 3-4 hours on foot. This evening, view the city from the Huangpu River on a panoramic cruise before sampling some traditional Shanghai cuisine.



Destination Information

Yu Gardens – The Yu Gardens is seen as one of the most perfect examples of Chinese garden style. Built by the Ming-era governor, Pan Yunduan, as a retirement gift for his father, the Yu Gardens is home to exquisite jade rock, goldfish-filled ponds and stunning, tranquil pavilions.

The Bund – Recognised as Shanghai’s former ‘Wall Street’, the Bund is home to an impressive collection of buildings from the early trade houses of the 1850s to the glamorous Art Deco modernism of the 1920s. Originally the home of the foreign population of Shanghai, the Bund’s architecture has inherited much western influence and is a stark contrast to the Pudong skyline, sitting across the Huangpu River.

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

Huangpu River – The Huangpu River flows through the centre of Shanghai and separates the city into Pudong, meaning ‘east of the Huangpu’ and Puxi, ‘west of the Huangpu’. Cruising down the river, you will see the contrast of the historical Bund architecture on one side of the river with the modern Pudong skyline on the other side. At night, the banks of the Huangpu light up, turning Shanghai into a neon wonder.

Days 15-16: Depart Shanghai

Meals: B

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. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.



TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS AND PERMITS:

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. 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.

An entry permit is required for travel to Tibet and is included for all passengers. You must have a valid China visa in order to apply for a Tibet permit. Changes can occur to the Chinese Government policies regarding the issue of these permits, sometimes at short notice. Wendy Wu Tours will keep all customers up to date with any changes regarding the issuing of Tibet permits that may affect our ability to operate this tour as per the original itinerary. In all cases, alternative arrangements are offered. There is no consular representation in Australia. Therefore, Wendy Wu Tours will forward information to our office in China to process and the permit will be provided to you locally.

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance. We also 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 original.

GROUP SIZE:

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by both a National Escort and local guides. There will be no more than 28 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu our groups while you are travelling. All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 10 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

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. Due to environmental regulations, not all hotels in China provide toiletries in the rooms. 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.

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. Roads in China have generally 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 1-2 kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only. There may be sections of road where the surface is bumpy but our drivers will do their utmost to lessen the impact.

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

Cruise Vessels: Included is a cruise on the Yangtze River. Your cabin will have a private bathroom and balcony. Due to tightened security process for luggage upon cruise disembarkation in Yichang, the Transport Authority has imposed a fee of RMB25 per main luggage item. Wendy Wu tours will cover the cost of one main luggage item per person. If you have additional items (excluding hand luggage) you will need to cover the cost yourself locally – RMB25 per item.

Trains: On this tour, you will take a high-speed train journey. You will travel in second-class soft seats with air conditioning. For train journeys you must ensure that you pack liquids, aerosols and gels/lotions in your hand luggage as per recent regulations. Passengers are not allowed to carry any aerosols over 100ml. Passengers are also not allowed to carry flammable gases or liquids including styling gel, compressed air or insecticides; any explosives, magnetised material, knives (including Swiss Army knives), scissors or sharp items (medication is fine). Bag checks are conducted randomly and any of these items may be confiscated before boarding the train (in hand luggage or main luggage). The National Escort will inform you of specific details prior to boarding.

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. Often you'll find that the local Chinese style is very different from what you're used to at home. We welcome people on our tours with a wide variety of tastes and as such try to present an array of food to suit everyone in the group. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout China.

Dishes served in restaurants on our group tours are varied. Some will be vegetable-based with meat mixed in, and a few will be meat-based. Traditionally, Chinese people cook with a lot of vegetables because meat used to be hard to come by.

Dishes often come pre-seasoned with soy sauce or other sauces. Our restaurants are well aware of the western palate – there are plenty of non-spiced options. Most meals are served with plain rice on the side which is intended as an accompaniment to your meal. Unlike the western world, Chinese people do not normally pre-heat their plates and food can be presented at a variety of temperatures, which is a typical Chinese way of doing things.

When eating meals on group tours, you will be seated around a circular table with other tour members. Dishes will be served in the traditional 'family style' on a lazy susan; meaning that various dishes will be laid out on a spinning turntable in the centre of the tabletop. These dishes are intended to be shared amongst the group – there is always more than enough to feed everybody. 'Family style' means that there is a pair of serving chopsticks for each dish which are used specifically to serve the food (please ask your server if you require a fork or spoon) and everybody will help themselves to all the dishes on the lazy susan. You will have an individual bowl, chopsticks and cup for your own use. Please be courteous and consider your fellow diners; if your favourite dish is on the other side of the table, it will make its way round to you soon! We find our customers really enjoy this sociable style of eating.

Your National Escort will do their utmost to cater for any special requests such as gluten free or vegetarian meals, however, people on restricted diets should expect complications. Although most Asian countries are now quite developed, only quite recently have they started to widely accept Western guests. Western food requirements are quite far removed from Asian food requirements, and even medical reasons can be quite difficult to explain. While our ground partners will do everything they can to cater for a wide range of dietary requirements on tour, we ask kindly for your patience and understanding that they cannot always be delivered to the standard you will be used to at home. It is recommended that passengers with food intolerances bring snacks or additional food items with them, especially when travelling further from major cities as not all dietary requests will be met due to the limited foods available. Please read your travel guide which you will receive with your final documents for more information about eating in China. We recommend that when it comes to Chinese food, you stay open minded, try to be adventurous and always have a go with the chopsticks!

PLEASE INFORM US OF ANY ALLERGIES AND/OR SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS AT TIME OF BOOKING.

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 the west.

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 from 9 – 16 February 2024 and 28 January – 4 February 2025. Golden Week public holidays fall annually between 29 April – 3 May and 30 September – 7 October.

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.

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. Yangtze cruise companies operate a service charge policy and this is paid separately when boarding the vessel.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognize 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.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that portering is not included on our tours in China. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

PERSONAL EXPENSES AND OPTIONAL TOURINGS:

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 \$300AUD 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

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

Updated: April 2024