



Wendy Wu Tours



Tour Dossier

Dreams of Nature

Discovery Tour | 23 Days | Active Pace

This document has been designed to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour. All passengers should read this dossier to assess the physical requirements of the programme and their ability to complete the tour.

Discovery Tours

Our Discovery Tours are designed for those who wish to be further immersed in the authentic charm of Asia; travelling on our Discovery range of tours includes more cultural and active experiences.

Dreams of Nature is an Active Pace tour; this has been defined in our brochure as the most demanding tour Wendy Wu Tours offers. As a whole, 'Dreams of Nature' requires a high level of fitness. The more difficult aspects of this itinerary involve long periods of trekking and climbing at Longji Rice Terraces, Zhangjiajie and Nine Villages Valley. Our National Escort/Local Guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. Tours require a good level of fitness, as they are physically more demanding. They may involve hiking, and some travel to remote, high altitude areas where facilities are less developed.

Altitude

This itinerary visits areas of high altitude. If you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your doctor before undertaking this itinerary. The following parts of the itinerary have high altitude:

1. Changhai (Long Lake) in the Nine Villages Valley. Sightseeing is at an altitude of 3,100m [10,170ft]. Please note that the place where you will be staying overnight is not at high altitude.
2. Huanglong – sightseeing is at 3,500m [11,483ft].

AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness) occurs in some people when they travel to altitudes over 3,000m. Mild symptoms of AMS include dizziness, fatigue, nausea or loss of appetite, breathlessness or headache. 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. It is recommended to drink more water, non-alcoholic and non-caffeinated drinks and avoid exertion after arriving in altitude over 3,000m.

Making sure you are well hydrated (by drinking lots of water and refraining from alcohol/caffeine) before and during the tour, as well as exercising to improve your aerobic fitness before you leave, are generally considered to be

excellent ways to prevent or alleviate the severity of mild AMS. If you smoke, your doctor will probably also advise you to stop several weeks before your tour. If you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your doctor before undertaking this tour. Take this Tour Dossier with you to your appointment to explain the altitude at which you will be travelling. Information on AMS can also be found at http://www.travelvax.com.au/resource_files/Travel-Tips---Altitude-Sickness.pdf.

Tour highlights:

On our Dreams of Nature itinerary, you will visit **Guilin, Yangshuo, Zhangjiajie, Yangtze River, Nine Villages Valley, Chengdu and Ya'an**.

- **Guilin & Yangshuo** – Beautiful landscapes of the Li River
- **Zhangjiajie** – Magnificent topography often referred to locally as ‘a goddess dancing on a heavenly stage’
- **Yangtze River** – Spectacular scenery of the Three Gorges
- **Nine Villages Valley** – ‘Jiuzhaigou’ Nature Reserve; breathtaking natural scenery
- **Chengdu** – View modern day Chinese lifestyle at People’s Park
- **Ya’an** – Bifengxia Pandas, Jinjigu Rope Bridge and explore Lugou Bamboo Sea

Destination Profile

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

Chinese Public Holidays - If you are travelling within the below Chinese Public Holidays please note that celebrations last for several days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open, but may be crowded.

Chinese New Year is on 8th February 2016 and 28th January 2017. Golden Week public holidays fall annually between 1-3 May and 1-7 October.

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 extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort/Local Guides.

Roads in China - Roads in China have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. 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. There may be sections of road where the surface may be comparatively bumpy but our drivers will do their utmost to lessen the impact. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road – not just one or two kilometers as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections below are approximations only.

Cuisine 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. Selected meals are included in our Discovery Tours, meals that are included (excluding drinks) are indicated in the below itinerary as B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner. Please be aware that dishes selected for your meals reflect the cooking styles and signature dishes of the local area you are in.

This itinerary visits areas which are popular with domestic Chinese tourists, but not yet known by international tourists. Facilities throughout Nine Villages Valley and Zhangjiajie cater for Chinese people and this usually means the hotels serve few if any western dishes for breakfast. Typical Chinese breakfast dishes include cold vegetable and pickle dishes, bean curd noodles, soups, congee (a rice porridge), steamed buns with pork or sweet red bean and green tea. Black tea and coffee are not always served, but usually can be requested. You may also be served fruit, a fried egg, or toast – although the bread tends to be very sweet and unlike the bread we have in Australia. Fresh milk is not generally available. If you cannot do without, you could either bring milk and cereal supplies / or muesli bars

from home, or purchase them in Shanghai. Other meals (lunch and dinner) could include dishes of local style, meaning there may be bones or fat in meat and fish.

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

Evenings at Leisure - Due to the more intrepid nature of our Discovery Tours, and to give you more flexibility and choice when travelling on Discovery Tours, we have carefully balanced special highlight meals with evenings at leisure so that you can explore the many culinary delights that China has to offer. Alternatively you can use this time to enjoy the facilities of your hotel. Your National Escort/Local Guide will be happy to provide you with advice in regards places to eat, and assist in the booking of transportation to get you there (at your own expense).

Joining Your Tour - The tour is 23 days in duration including international flights. Travellers booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the starting point. Join the tour on Day 2 in Guilin and end the tour on Day 22 in Chengdu. Please refer to your Final Itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

Itinerary Changes

1. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.
2. **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.

Flight Delays or Changes to Arrival Times - 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 (24 hours) 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 an arrival transfer will be arranged accordingly. We will endeavor to arrange a transfer as soon as possible however delays may occur.

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 times.



Itinerary – Dreams of Nature

Day 1-2: Australia to Guilin

Day Outline

Fly overnight to Guilin. Depending on your time of arrival the rest of the day is yours to start soaking up the local culture. *Brisbane passengers may depart on Day 2.*

Physical Description

On arrival in Guilin Airport, you will be met in the arrival hall by your Local Guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together, with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer to your hotel. The transfer will take approximately one hour. A tour introduction will be held in the hotel either this evening or the next. Food and drinks will not be served at this meeting, it is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in China. ***In the event of flight delays or changes to arrival times, please see the previous page for details as to what to do in this circumstance.***

Destination Information

Guilin - Is one of China's most stunning and panoramic cities and was founded during the reign of the Qin Dynasty. It is renowned for the unique karst mountain beauty that encloses the city. Guilin developed as a trading town due to the building of the Ling Canal which links the important Pearl and Yangtze River systems.

Day 3: Guilin to Yangshuo – B,L,D

Day Outline

Cruise downstream on the tranquil Li River, passing striking karst mountain scenery and lush, green fields. This afternoon explore the markets in the picturesque town of Yangshuo and amble through the colourful streets. There is an option this late afternoon to walk up Xiangong Hill for spectacular views over Guilin (at your own expense).

Physical Description

NB: You will be staying in Yangshuo for two nights before returning to Guilin. Your main luggage will be transferred

by coach whilst you cruise on the Li River. Please ensure you carry your medication and valuables in your hand luggage for the day as you will not have access to your main luggage until late afternoon. You will take a three hour leisurely cruise from Guilin to the small town of Yangshuo. 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. As it is so popular, there are generally many boats at the docks – please be reassured that the cruise itself will be scenic and relaxing as the boats cruise past unspoilt countryside. 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 National Escort/Local Guide will walk with you to your hotel, approximately a 15 minute walk from the river. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organised at your own cost.

Destination Information

Li River Cruise - Joining the twin beauty spots of Guilin and Yangshuo, the Li River offers a leisurely tour through some of the area's most stunning and dramatic scenery. Pass karst mountain landscapes and unhurried cormorant fishermen as you chug along on your river cruise ship.

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 spot in China.

Day 4: Yangshuo – B,L

Day Outline

This morning take part in a traditional Tai-Chi class to learn the skills behind this ancient and spiritual exercise. This afternoon, there is the option to explore independently or

take an optional cycling ride from Yangshuo to Jiuxian (at your own expense).

Physical Description

Your morning Tai-Chi lesson will last approximately 30-40 minutes.

Day 5: Yangshuo to Guilin – B,L,D

Day Outline

There the option this morning to take part in some river rafting on the Yulong River (at your own expense). This afternoon, drive back to Guilin, via the colourful Reed Flute Caves and the South China Pearl Museum.

Physical Description

The drive from Yangshuo to Guilin is approximately one hour (65km). Stop en route, at the Reed Flute Caves where it usually takes about one hour to complete the route, and is very cool inside. Please note that the ground may be slippery.

Destination Information

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

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

Day 6: Guilin – Longji – B,L,D

Day Outline

Travel to the iconic Longji Rice Terraces and head out for a four hour walk through the traditional rural landscapes. Drive back to Guilin, with the rest of the day at leisure.

Physical Description

Spend approximately 3-4 hours trekking through the hilled rice terraces of Longji, this will involve occasionally walking over uneven surfaces and walking at an incline and/or decline. After your hike, drive approximately two hours back to Guilin.

Destination Information

Longji Rice Terrace - Longji is home to some of the most famous and beautiful rice terraces in China. The name 'Longji' literally translates as 'Dragon's Backbone' and is called so because the rice terraces resemble the scales on a dragon's back.

Day 7: Guilin to Zhangjiajie – B,L,D

Day Outline

Catch the bullet train to Changsha, and then enjoy the breathtaking drive to Zhangjiajie.

Physical Description

Your bullet train from Guilin to Changsha is three hours and 20 minutes in duration. Upon arrival in Changsha transfer approximately four hours to Zhangjiajie for a three night stay.

Destination Information

Zhangjiajie - A scenic area of over 3,000 sandstone pillars, rising from misty folds of subtropical forest and cloaked in

vibrant green vegetation, Zhangjiajie's striking beauty is unforgettable.

Day 8: Zhangjiajie – B,L,D

Day Outline

Today enjoy a full day of exploring in Zhangjiajie National Park. Explore the colourful stalagmites and stalactites of the Huanglong Cave before heading upwards to Huangshi Village, located 800m above ground, for stunning panoramas.

Physical Description

Today walk approximately 4-5 hours around the Zhangjiajie National Park. You will begin at the entrance to the scenic area and make your way around the karst scenery. The Huanglong Cave may be slippery in places so please be careful. You will also take a cable car up to Huangshi Village.

Destination Information

Huanglong Cave - Is a cave stretching over 120 acres in area. Inside the cave, there are waterfalls, rivers, pools and lakes.

Huangshi Village - Is located up one of the karst peaks of Zhangjiajie and offers panoramic views over the stunning scenery of the National Park.

Day 9: Zhangjiajie – B,L,D

Day Outline

This morning, cruise on Lake Baofeng, a peaceful expanse of water amongst picturesque scenery. Cruise out on a sampan to enjoy water vistas, mountain and sandstone scenery. This afternoon, continue exploring Zhangjiajie.

Physical Description

This morning enjoy a cruise on Lake Baofeng for approximately 1-2 hours, where you will be required to get on and off a small boat. This afternoon spend 2-3 hours on foot to further exploring Zhangjiajie.

Destination Information

Lake Baofeng - Located up in the mountains, Lake Baofeng is an abundance of fresh water, accompanied by stunning waterfalls.

Day 10: Zhangjiajie – Yichang to Yangtze River Cruise – B,L,D

Day Outline

Travel by train today to Yichang. This evening board your Yangtze River cruise vessel for the next four nights.

Physical Description

Drive to Zhangjiajie railway station for your train to Yichang (five hours in duration). Upon arrival you will then transfer approximately one hour to your Yangtze Cruise ship. **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 National Escort/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 are 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 locally. The port tax amount is approximately 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.

Destination Information

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 south western Qinghai Tibet Plateau and runs into the ocean in Shanghai. It is estimated that the banks of this river are home to almost a third of China's population.

Day 11: Yangtze River Cruise – B,L,D

Day Outline

Visit the Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world. There will be time to visit the viewing area to truly appreciate the scale of this hydroelectric project. Continue upstream, passing through the Xiling Gorge, our boat must negotiate the five-tiered Three Gorges Dam ship lock.

Physical Description

Disembark the ship and drive approximately 20 minutes to the Three Gorges Dam. The coach will pass through the surrounding areas (they are not permitted to stop for photos) and will drop your group off at the viewing area above the ship locks. There is a small museum and a lookout and the sightseeing will involve around one hour on foot.

Destination Information

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

Day 12: Yangtze River Cruise – B,L,D

Day Outline

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.

Physical Description

Shore excursion to the Goddess Stream: cruise through the beautiful and narrow gorges. Many protected species make the stunning peaks their home, including monkeys, mountain goats, deer and wild boar. You will board a smaller craft for a ride of about 15km each way, to view the beauty of its narrow gorges.

Destination Information

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. ***Please note: if for some reason your cruise is***

unable to travel along the Goddess Stream you will pass along the Shennong Stream instead.

Day 13: Yangtze River Cruise – B,L,D

Day Outline

Today visit the Shibaozhai Temple, an 18th century architectural marvel.

Physical Description

Shore excursion to Shibaozhai Temple (two hours off ship): 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.

Destination Information

Shibaozhai - Is named after the hill on which it stands. Dating back to the 18th century, the Shibaozhai temple was built during the Xianfeng Emperor's reign and is an example of Buddhist architecture. The temple is said to have been built without any nails. ***Please note: if you are unable to visit the Shibaozhai Temple you will visit the Fengdu Relocation Village instead.***

Day 14: Yangtze River Cruise – Chongqing to Nine Villages Valley – B,D

Day Outline

Disembark your cruise ship this morning in Chongqing and visit the porcelain district of Ciqikou. Later fly to Jiuzhaigou and transfer to the Nine Villages Valley scenic area, arguably China's most beautiful national park.

Physical Description

You will disembark your Yangtze River cruise ship this morning. Enjoy some light sightseeing in Ciqikou before you fly to Jiuzhaigou (flight duration approximately one hour and 10 minutes). Upon arrival transfer approximately three hours to your hotel in the Nine Villages Valley National Park for a three night stay.

Destination Information

Ciqikou - Known colloquially as 'Little Chongqing' and the 'Porcelain Port', Ciqikou dates back to the Ming Dynasty and has maintained its original appearance. Lined with shops selling delicious snacks, Ming-style trinkets and Chinese curios, Ciqikou is a fun way to spend a morning and is a must-see in Chongqing.

Nine Villages Valley - One of China's most beautiful secrets, Nine Villages Valley (or Jiuzhaigou) is a natural wonderland, accidentally discovered by a lumberjack in 1972. Covering over 700sq kilometres of magnificent mountain valleys, the area is dotted with traditional Tibetan villages and exhibits a wealth of striking alpine scenery.

Day 15: Nine Villages Valley – B,L,D

Day Outline

Spend the day exploring the magnificent scenery of Nine Villages Valley, including visits to Long Lake, Five Coloured Lake, Nuorilang Falls and a Tibetan Temple.

Physical Description

You will spend approximately 5-6 hours walking around Nine Villages Valley over different types of terrain.

Day 16: Nine Villages Valley – B,L,D

Day Outline

Explore Shuzheng Tibetan villages and visit a local family to learn about local traditions and try some Tibetan butter tea. Take a walk past some of Nine Villages Valley's most beautiful lakes, dotted with an old water mill, prayer wheels and prayer flags.

Physical Description

There will be easy sightseeing this morning at the Shuzheng Tibetan villages. You will walk for approximately 2-3 hours this afternoon around the lakes in Nine Villages Valley.

Day 17: Nine Villages Valley – Huanglong to Chengdu – B,L,D

Day Outline

Hundreds of vivid pools in striking colours, formed by thousands of years of mineral deposit, tumble gently down through the bright green forests of the Huanglong Valley. There is an option to take a chairlift up the Huanglong Temple (at your own expense). Later fly to Chengdu

Physical Description

Most of the driving today is on sealed, winding mountain roads. This morning, drive three hours (130km) to Huanglong. You are required to walk both up and down the Huanglong scenic area. There is now a cable car here and it is possible to take the 10 minute ride both up and down (at your own expense), allowing more time for sightseeing at the top of the waterfall. We usually spend over two hours sightseeing here and this area is at an altitude of 3,500m. After lunch at a nearby restaurant, transfer to the airport for your flight to Chengdu (flight duration 50 minutes.)

Destination Information

Huanglong - Within neighbouring distance of Nine Villages Valley is the equally alluring area of Huanglong. Huanglong which means 'Yellow Dragon' is renowned for its wide variety of colourful pools and natural ponds which are said to shimmer like a 'yellow dragon'. The colour of the pools is caused by calcium deposits in the water which bring out the liquids in strong greens, blues and yellows.

Chengdu - China's symbolic western capital and the residence of the country's most lovable black and white bear, Chengdu has an abundance to offer. A fast paced economy which is bringing China's west into the 21st century; it is no wonder that Chengdu's appeal is growing year on year. As the gateway into Sichuan Province's large collection of sights, as well as Chengdu being its own trove of historical and cultural treasures, Chengdu is a definite, a necessity, a must visit on any trip to China.

Day 18: Chengdu – Pingle to Ya'an – B,L,D

Day Outline

Drive to Ya'an, stopping en route at the ancient town of Pingle. Walk the rickety old streets and visit a tea house before crossing the magnificent Jinjigu Suspended Rope Bridge for vistas of the forest below. Visit this Lugou Bamboo Sea before continuing to your hotel in Ya'an for a two night stay.

Physical Description

This morning drive 1.5 hours to the ancient town of Pingle where you will enjoy casual and easy sightseeing. You will spend approximately three hours on foot walking over the Jinjigu Suspended Rope Bridge and enjoying time in Lugou Bamboo Sea. Drive the remaining one hour to Ya'an.

Destination Information

Pingle Ancient Town - Regarded as one of the best ancient towns in Sichuan Province, Pingle Ancient Town dates back to the Han Dynasty and was a stopping point on the legendary Silk Road.

Lugou Bamboo Sea - The largest sea of bamboo in proximity to Chengdu, covering an area of over 2,500 acres, the Lugou Bamboo Sea is a lush forest of bamboo stretching high into the sky.

Day 19: Ya'an – Bifengxia – B,L,D

Day Outline

This morning drive to Bifengxia Panda Base, home of China's most lovable residents. Here you can see Pandas in their natural setting. This afternoon take a hike through scenic Bifeng Gorge, home to stunning forests and quaint streams. Later this afternoon return to Ya'an.

Physical Description

Drive one hour to the Bifengxia Panda Base. The walk from the entrance to the Pandas is a very pleasant 30 minute walk. You will enjoy a three hour walk this afternoon through the Bifeng Gorge. The Bifeng Gorge is at a slight decline throughout most of the walk. ***Due to Canine Distemper Virus affecting the panda's, conservation work will not be available. PLEASE NOTE: Panda Conservation work does not include handling of the pandas.***

Destination Information

Bifengxia - Originally more focussed on Panda research, after the devastating Sichuan Earthquake in 2008, many of the Pandas at the effected Wolong Nature Reserve were moved to Bifengxia, turning this base into a main centre for Panda breeding. Home to over 80 pandas, Bifengxia is one of the ideal locations to see Giant Pandas in a natural habitat.

Day 20: Ya'an – Mengdingshan to Chengdu – B,L

Day Outline

Travel through lush countryside to the tea plantations of Mengdingshan. Take a tour of a plantation with a local farmer to learn about the entire tea-making process and its fascinating history. Continue to Chengdu where you will enjoy an evening at leisure.

Physical Description

Transfer approximately one hour to Mengdingshan, where you will enjoy a private tour of the tea plantations with a farmer and there will be opportunities to try some of the tea. You will transfer 2.5 hours to Chengdu for a two night stay.

Destination Information

Mengdingshan - Tea has been drunk in China for millennia and has become ever more ingrained in the culture, influenced by the Taoist, Buddhist and Confucian views of

its consumption. Quality tea is considered to be a gift fit for a king – it was once the tribute of choice for an emperor.

Day 21: Chengdu – B,D

Day Outline

This morning, take a stroll around lovely People's Park where you can witness the locals taking part in early morning exercise, before visiting Matchmaker's Corner where parents search for suitable suitors for their children. This afternoon will be at your afternoon will be at leisure. Later visit the Shu Brocade and Embroidery Museum before dining on a delicious Sichuan meal, both spicy and delicious and enjoying the remarkable 'face changing' show.

Physical Description

Sightseeing around Chengdu this morning will be at an easy pace, with approximately 1-2 hours on foot.

Destination Information

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 partners for their children.

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

created and take the opportunity to purchase a piece yourself.

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 22: Depart Chengdu – B

Day Outline

The morning is at leisure before boarding the overnight flight to Australia. *Due to flight schedules, Brisbane and Perth passengers may arrive home on Day 22.*

Physical Description

Any time before your flight is free at your leisure. You will be transferred approximately one hour from your hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight. ***Late check-out is not included in our China group tours. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in China, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.***

Day 23: Arrive Australia

Day Outline

Arrive home today.

Tour Profile

Visas - Entry visas are required by all visitors to China and Wendy Wu Tours' Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. We will supply you with all paperwork and submit the visa application on your behalf. Visas for China are valid for 90 days from the date of issue and allow you to stay in the country for up to 30 days. Please be advised that your passport must have at least 6 months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office **60 days prior to departure**; if received after this date urgent visa processing fees will apply. Passports will be returned with your final documentation **2-3 weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure**. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15 courier fee will apply.

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

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

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 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 a 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.

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 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 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 Excursions - 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. The cost for each optional activity can range from RMB100 (AUD\$22) to RMB800 (AUD\$173) per activity. 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.

Transport: Roads - Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary.

Transport: Air - Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

Transport: Water - In this tour you will take a four night cruise down the Yangtze River. Your cabin on your Yangtze River cruise ship will have private bathroom and balcony.

Transport: Train - This tour features one day train. Day train journeys are in second-class soft seater for bullet trains and high speed trains. There is limited space for storing luggage. While our guides are there to assist, you will need to load and unload your own luggage on and off the train. There may be steps leading up to the train. Day trains only stop for several minutes at each stop, so you must be ready to leave the train when your guide instructs. Facilities on board are basic with both western-style and Asian-style toilets. On day trains you will need to be able to carry your own luggage. **Please note that you may find yourself carrying your luggage over numerous train tracks to reach your platform and carriage because of the layout of train stations.**

Group Size - In most cases the group will operate with a minimum of nine travellers with expert Local Guides in each of the main cities. If there are 10 travellers or more, your group will be accompanied by a National Escort as well as Local Guides. There will usually be no more than 18 travellers in each group.

Climate - You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which is 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.

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.

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. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that

Chinese authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

Tipping - Is a firm and expected element in the tourism industry. A nominated tipping amount is included in all group tour pricing, however is not collected in your final payment received by Wendy Wu Tours. This is so that it can be paid directly to your National Escort/Local Guides who will then distribute the tips among your main service providers – guides and drivers – on your behalf. Any other tipping, such as tips for bathroom attendants or hotel porters is at your discretion based on satisfaction of services received, as are gratuities for additional requested special services. The final tipping amount will be outlined in your final documentation.

Yangtze River Cruise operators have introduced a compulsory service levy of RMB150 per person (approximately AUD\$33 per person) which is to be paid immediately upon boarding the cruise vessel. For the purposes of your overall cost, this has been calculated into your AUD/USD tipping amount as reflected on your invoice.

After your booking - Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately two weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, a travel guide (which includes a suggested phrase book) and packing list, along with your final itinerary and international e-tickets.

Updated: 12 April 2016

Travelling on an Active Paced Tour

We hope you are looking forward to what we are sure will be a trip of a lifetime. Before you embark on this adventure, we ask you to consider the points listed below that relate to our active paced tours. This will ensure you understand what is involved with an active paced tour and therefore help you decide if your chosen tour is right for you.

This is to ensure that your tour runs as smoothly as possible for you and your fellow tour members.

Please consider the following aspects of active paced tours prior to confirming your arrangements;

- ☐ While we believe that age is no barrier, please give special consideration to the fact that medical assistance and public infrastructure can be limited in these areas.
- ☐ There will be long periods of physical activity, including walking, climbing of stairs, in/out of boats. Tour participants who will travel with a cane/walking stick may come across difficulties. It is our experience that using a cane/walking stick in these areas where there are rough and uneven surfaces, stairs to climb and high altitudes, becomes difficult.
- ☐ Only limited meal options will be available. People with special dietary requirements should expect difficulties on these tours. Please understand that depending on the trip you are taking, you may be given very little or no meat.
- ☐ Your tour may include basic accommodation facilities including home stays, guest houses, truck stops and tented accommodation. This may mean, no or limited hot water, and no private bathroom facilities.
- ☐ There will be long periods of driving on often unsealed, rural and bumpy roads in vehicles ranging from tour coaches to local jeeps and canter vehicles.
- ☐ Altitude affects people in many different ways and a certain level of fitness is required in order to limit the effects. Please discuss how to manage altitude sickness with a health care professional.
- ☐ Overnight trains only have basic bedding in four berth compartments with limited or no ladder facilities to climb to the top bunk. You may be sharing with other tour members or locals.
- ☐ Some tours may have sightseeing en route to the next destination. Therefore participation is required or you will need to remain with the coach until the rest of the group has finished touring.

National Escorts/ Local Guides will endeavor to provide rest stops in your itinerary where possible. Please be advised that some days may have a more physical programme than others.

If you are comfortable with the above mentioned aspects of travelling on an active paced tour, we look forward to welcoming you on what is sure to be a unique and memorable experience.

However, if you have any hesitations please contact your valued travel agent or our reservations department to discuss the tour further or explore alternative options.