



SILK ROAD EXPLORER

Go Beyond | 28 Days | Physical Level 2

Xian – Lanzhou – Xiahe - Lanzhou – Zhangye – Jiayuguan – Dunhuang – Turpan – Kurla – Kuqa – Aksu –
Kashgar – Urumqi – Beijing

Follow in the footsteps of intrepid adventurers by journeying along one of the world's most famous trading routes, the Silk Road. Beginning in ancient Xian, venture across this vast land to Kashgar.

- Walk on Xian's ancient city walls
- Explore the Tibetan Xiahe
- Discover the desert oasis of Turpan
- Shop like a local at Kashgar's legendary bazaar
- Enjoy the tranquillity of the Heavenly Lake
- Take a walk on the westernmost point of the Great Wall of China

To book call **1300 727 998** or visit your local travel agent

Visit wendywutours.com.au

TOUR MAP



SILK ROAD EXPLORER TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All Meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

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

GO BEYOND TOURS:

Venture off the beaten track to explore fascinating destinations away from the tourist trail. You will discover the local culture in depth and see sights rarely witnessed by other travellers. These tours take you away from the comforts of home but will reward you with the experiences of a lifetime. These tours include:

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.

‘Silk Road Explorer’ is rated as a **physical level 2** tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it is more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You will be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- There will be long periods of walking whilst sightseeing, often on steep or uneven ground.
- You will be at altitude in Xiahe. All passengers should rest and stay well hydrated to acclimatise to the higher altitude.
- On some days you will be travelling all day, up to 9 hours, by coach or train.

This tour has been carefully designed to minimise the effects of Altitude Sickness whilst in Xiahe. 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 overexert and only partake in light activity immediately after your arrival
- Do not 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 28 days in duration including international flights.

Travellers booked on a 'Land Only' package, the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to our reservations team.

Join the tour on Day 2 in Xian and end the tour on Day 27 in Beijing. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

We intend 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 dictated by local conditions. In these circumstances, we will endeavour to make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

DETAILED ITINERARY**Day 1 - 2: Fly overnight to Xian**

Meals: D

Fly overnight to Xian. On arrival, 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 rest of the day is at leisure.

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 2. Later arrivals will receive a box dinner.

Destination Information

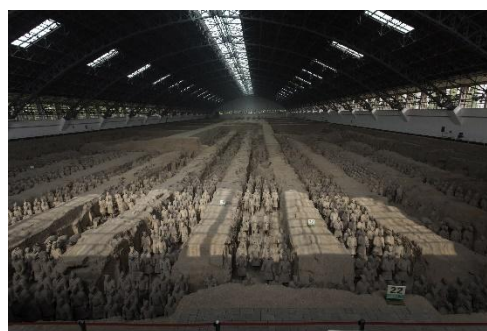
Xian – Xian has long played a pivotal role in China's extensive history and has been a thriving hub for cultural exchange and economic trade as well as national politics for centuries. Home to some of China's most ancient sights, diverse architecture and delicious fares, Xian is a must-see destination.

Day 3: Xian

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, view the formidable ranks of terracotta soldiers and horses, lined up in ranks to protect the first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang.

The Museum of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses is located around 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 towards the summer months it can be hot outside. Sightseeing here involves approximately 2 and a half hours on foot.

Next, visit the Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Workshop to see smaller models of the warriors being made. Return to Xian and enjoy a walking tour around the beautifully preserved 14th century city walls that enclose Xian's old town. Explore the Muslim Quarter, Xian's Islamic centre, where there are a myriad of small food stalls selling ample mouth-watering dishes. This evening, enjoy a traditional Shui Jiao dumpling dinner.

Destination Information

Terracotta Warriors – One of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century, this unearthed terracotta army holds 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 Terracotta Warriors being created at Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Workshop; even purchase your own portable soldier.

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.

Ancient City Walls – Dating back to the Ming Dynasty in the 14th century, the Xian 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 4: Xian - Lanzhou

Meals: B, L, D

Start the day with a visit to the ancient City Wall Park and Sculptures of Silk Road. Later, transfer to the train station to board your 3-hour bullet train to Lanzhou. Enjoy an evening at leisure.

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



Destination Information

Lanzhou – Lanzhou is the capital and largest city in Gansu Province. It has long been an important trading station between east and west China.

Day 5: Lanzhou

Meals: B, L, D

Today, take a leisurely walk by the Yellow River before enjoying a moment of tranquillity at the hilltop Baita Temple. Along the river and in Baita Park you can see locals practising exercises like Tai Chi and Square Dancing.

Walk about 15 minutes from the temple and enjoy some delicious hand stretched noodles for lunch. Your visit to Baita Temple involves 2 hours of walking and climbing some steps.



Destination Information

Baita Temple – Translating as the ‘White Dagoba Temple’, the Baita Temple dates back to the Mongol Yuan Dynasty. The Temple’s location offers fantastic vistas over the city.

Day 6: Lanzhou - Xiahe

Meals: B, L, D

Drive approximately 3 hours to picturesque Liujiaxia Lake and take a 40-minute speedboat ride across the water to the extraordinary Thousand Buddha Caves of Bingling Temple. Here, there is a wealth of Buddhist murals, statues and sculptures. Also visit the statue of Maitreya.



Please note that the speed boats are small and very limited on space. At Bingling Temple there are dirt paths, wooden walkways and stairs built around the side of the cliff face. The upper levels of caves have been closed for several years.

Drive to Xiahe, a journey of approximately 2.5 hours, arriving in the early evening.

Destination Information

Liujiaxia Lake – The Liujiaxia Lake is a reservoir that connects to the Yellow River.

Bingling Temple – The Bingling Temple is a series of grottoes carved into the caves alongside the Yellow River. Sculptures date back to over 1600 years. Make sure to check out the statue of Maitreya, over 27 metres high.

Xiahe – Though in Gansu Province, Xiahe is heavily populated by the Tibetan population and is home to the Labrang Tibetan Monastery.

Day 7: Xiahe

Meals: B, L, D

Visit the impressive Labrang Monastery, home to a maze of prayer wheels, chapels and chörtens. Explore on foot for around 2 hours. Take some time to reflect before heading back to Xiahe to wander around the town itself.



For lunch, dine on a traditional Tibetan meal, consisting of yak meat, tsampa and vegetable hotpot with dumplings.

Daytime altitude: 2,800 metres/ Overnight altitude: 2,800 metres

Destination Information

Labrang Monastery – The Labrang Monastery is one of the six great monasteries of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism. Outside of Tibet, Labrang is one of the largest Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in the world.

Day 8: Xiahe - Lanzhou

Meals: B, L, D

Depart early this morning for the return drive through Lingsha to Lanzhou, which takes around 5 hours. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

**Destination Information**

Lingsha – Passing through Lingsha provides an insight into the agricultural heartland of Ningxia, with its patchwork of fields and traditional rural communities

Day 9: Lanzhou – Zhangye

Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to the railway station for your 3-hour bullet train to Zhangye, once an important commercial town along the Silk Road.

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

**Destination Information**

Zhangye – Zhangye became the garrison headquarters after General Huo established control of the Hexi Corridor.

Day 10: Zhangye – Jiayuguan

Meals: B, L, D

Rise early this morning to visit the Danxia National Park at sunrise. Return to Zhangye and visit the Giant Buddha Temple. Transfer to the station and take the bullet train approximately 1 and a half hours to Jiuyaguan.

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



Destination Information

Danxia National Park – With a landscape of red cliffs and multicoloured ridges of strata, Danxia National Park was formed by the erosion of red sandstone. Visiting at sunrise means you can see the colours of the mountains change continuously as the position of the sun changes.

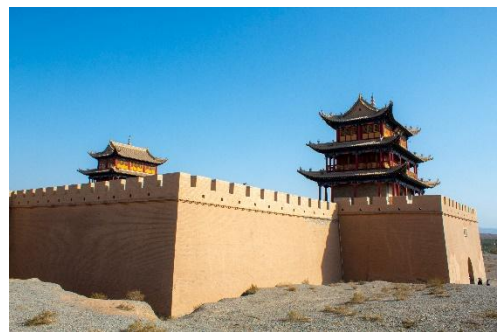
Giant Buddha Temple – Otherwise known as the Dafo Temple, this is where the largest reclining Buddha in China resides.

Jiayuguan – Long an important resting point on the Silk Road, Jiayuguan is perhaps most famous for the Jiayu Pass, the largest and most intact pass of the Great Wall of China.

Day 11: Jiayuguan

Meals: B, L, D

Drive around 20 minutes to visit the Jiayu Fortress before taking a walk on the Jiayu Pass and the western extremes of the magnificent Great Wall for panoramic views over the starkly beautiful Gobi Desert. Here there will be about 1 hour allocated to explore this section of the wall at your own pace; there are some steep sections so please be careful.



Destination Information

Jiayu Fortress – The Jiayu Fortress is the city's main attraction and protects the pass which lies between the snow-capped peaks of the Qilian and Black mountains.

Jiayu Pass – The Jiayu Pass is the western most point of the Great Wall of China and is the largest and most intact section of the Great Wall.

Day 12: Jiayuguan - Dunhuang

Meals: B, L, D

Drive 4 hours westward along the Hexi corridor to the oasis city of Dunhuang. Located on a major trade and cultural crossroads, Dunhuang, known as the 'City of Sands', sits in a verdant oasis on the edge of the Taklaman Desert. Visit the Shazhou Night Market this evening and try local snacks (at your own expense).



Destination Information

Dunhuang – Dunhuang was a major post on the Silk Road and is best known for the temple system of Mogao Grottoes. It is also an oasis town, with nearby Crescent Moon Spring.

Day 13: Dunhuang

Meals: B, L, D

Early this morning, drive 30 minutes out of town to visit the Mogao Grottoes Museum and the Mogao Grottoes, a system of temples and sanctuaries that exhibit wonderful examples of Buddhist paintings and statues that span thousands of years. Sightseeing at Mogao involves approximately 3-4 hours on foot.

Lunch today will be a simple meal as the choice of restaurants in this area is limited.



Please note, Mogao has high visitor numbers every day and the site guides tend to pressure groups to move through the caves faster than people would like. It can be very difficult and awkward for our Local Guides or National Escorts to change this, so your patience and understanding is requested.

Destination Information

Mogao Grottoes – Mogao Grottoes are one of the largest and grandest collections of Buddhist art in the world. In the past, the Mogao Grottoes acted as monasteries and housed monks, nuns, artists and calligraphers.

Day 14: Dunhuang

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, drive around 10 minutes to Crescent Moon Spring, nestled amongst rolling sand dunes, and the famous Singing Sand Dunes, a phenomenon produced by the wind blowing through the grains. You will spend about 3 hours walking or riding camels.

Please note, the cost of the camel ride is not included in your tour cost, but you can arrange this at your own expense.

**Destination Information**

Crescent Moon Spring – One of the most picturesque images on the Silk Road, the Crescent Moon Spring is an oasis nestled amongst sand hills in the desert. It is named after its crescent shape.

Day 15: Dunhuang – Turpan

Meals: B, L, D

Spend time at leisure in Dunhuang until you will transfer approximately 2 hours by bus to the Liuyuan train station for your high-speed day train to Turpan. You will be in 2nd class soft seats and the train journey takes approximately 4 hours. On arrival in Turpan, transfer to your hotel.

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

**Destination Information**

Turpan – Turpan is the centre of a fertile oasis and has long been inhabited. Another important trading city on the Silk Road, Turpan is famous for its grape production.

Day 16: Turpan

Meals: B, L, D

Today, visit the ruins of ancient Jiaohe. Spend 2 hours exploring the ruins before enjoying some leisurely sightseeing around the elegant Emin Minaret. Admire the scenery in Grape Valley, an area that is responsible for over 80% of China's grape and raisin production.

**Destination Information**

Jiaohe Ruins – Jiaohe Ruins were established by the Chinese during the Han Dynasty as a garrison town. Located 8km out of Turpan, the Jiaohe Ruins are one of the best preserved ancient cities in the world.

Emin Minaret – The Emin Minaret was founded in 1777 by Emin Hoja, a Turpan general. The minaret's architectural style is inspired by those in Afghanistan.

Day 17: Turpan – Kurla

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, learn about the fascinating Karez irrigation canals. Drive around 6 hours to the town of Kurla.



Destination Information

Karez Irrigation System – The word karez means “well” in the local Uyghur language. This underground well irrigation system is unique to central Asia.

Kurla – Kurla is situated close to the site of the ancient city of Loulan. During the Han Dynasty, this was the only route from the central plains to the western regions. Kurla is an old trading town known for its fragrant pears

Day 18: Kurla – Kuqa

Meals: B, L, D

Drive 5 hours to Kuqa where you will visit the Subashi Ruins, a lost city of the Silk Road. Sightseeing here involves approximately 30 minutes on foot. Feast on traditional Uyghur lamb skewers flavoured with spices commonly traded along the Silk Road including cumin, fennel seeds, and chilli.



Destination Information

Kuqa – A former centre for Buddhism on the Silk Road, Kuqa was home of Kumarajiva, the first person to translate the Buddhist scriptures into Chinese.

Day 19: Kuqa – Aksu

Meals: B, L, D

Drive 2 hours out to the Kyzil Thousand Buddha Caves, a spectacular blend of art styles. Sightseeing here involves up to 2 hours on foot, including numerous steep, stone steps. Some of the upper-level caves are currently closed to the public. Afterwards, drive another 5 hours to Aksu.



Destination Information

Kyzil Thousand Buddha Caves – Kyzil Thousand Buddha Caves is a set of Buddhist rock caves, built between the 3rd and 8th centuries. Although many of the paintings in the caves have been destroyed, those that remain are still as colourful as they were originally.

Day 20: Aksu - Kashgar

Meals: B, L, D

The journey continues through the Taklamakan Desert, along the ancient Silk Road, all the way to Kashgar. The drive takes approximately 7 hours.

Please note that due to security checks along the way, the total journey might take up to 9 hours.

**Destination Information**

Kashgar – Kashgar is an oasis city and is geographically one of the westernmost cities in China. Kashgar has a long and rich history as a vital trading point on the Silk Road. Due to its location, Kashgar's culture, way of life, cuisine and traditions are heavily influenced by the cultures of China, the Middle East and Pakistan. The old town in the centre of this modern city has charming narrow streets which hold its deeply entrenched heritage. It is certainly one of the highlights of our tour.

Day 21: Kashgar

Meals: B, L, D

Although now a modern city, the sights and sounds of Kashgar's bazaar have remained unchanged for millennia, as it continues to be an integral trading post like it was in its Silk Road heyday.

In the heart of the city, visit the Id Kah Mosque before spending some free time exploring the old alleys that intertwine around Id Kah Square.

Here you will see artisans producing copper pots, traditional musical instruments, carpet and kilim rugs, as well as carpenters making colourful children's cots. Visit the Minority Art and Handicraft Shop. Marvel at the elegantly tiled tomb of Abakh Hoja, built in 1640 to reflect the artistic style of Samarkand.

**Destination Information**

Id Kah Mosque – The largest mosque in China, Id Kah Mosque has over 10,000 worshippers on every Friday.

Tomb of Abakh Hoja – Tomb of Abakh Hoja is renowned as the holiest Muslim site in Xinjiang, China, and is a beautiful example of Islamic architecture, with tiled ceilings and impressive minarets.

Day 22: Kashgar - Urumqi

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, visit the Sunday animal market and the Sunday Bazaar. Please be mindful of your valuables here. Within this riot of textures, vivid colours and traditional dress, you can browse hundreds of stalls selling anything from spices and carpets to boots and blenders. Later, fly 1 hour and 40 minutes to Urumqi.

**Destination Information**

Kashgar Sunday Bazaar – No visitor to Kashgar should miss the world’s largest Sunday Bazaar. Here, you will see many fascinating scenes including huge crowds of donkey carts, horse carriages, animals, and people gathering at this bargain extravaganza.

Urumqi – Urumqi is the capital of Xinjiang Province and was a major hub for trade from the Tang Dynasty all the way to the Qing Dynasty. The city today has a thriving economy.

Day 23: Urumqi

Meals: B, L, D

Today, travel to Tian Chi (Heavenly Lake), formed in a crater atop Bogda Mountain, where yurts nestle on its grassy banks. The journey will take 2-3 hours, changing to the local ‘environmental buses’ where necessary to reach the lake.

You will have the option to take a short cruise on the lake (payable locally). Visit the Kazakh Folk Culture Village and learn about their way of life.

**Destination Information**

Tian Chi – Tian Chi is an alpine lake in Xinjiang, literally translating as ‘Heavenly Lake’. The Lake offers water activities and stunning mountain panoramas.

Day 24: Urumqi – Beijing

Meals: B, L, D

Enjoy a short visit to the Xinjiang Museum which houses collections of costumes, historical relics and mummies. Later, fly 3 and a half hours to Beijing and transfer to your hotel.



Destination Information

Xinjiang Museum – An important centre for the Silk Road, Xinjiang Museum is home to ten halls of treasures, most famously a desert-mummified body and Buddhist frescoes from the Kyzil Thousand Buddha Caves.

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 25: Beijing

Meals: B, L, D

Today, take a walk on the Great Wall of China, appreciating the wall itself and the dramatic scenery. You will rise early this morning to drive approximately 2 hours northwest of the city to the Juyongguan Pass of the Great Wall. The aim of this is to avoid the crowds of tourists who will arrive later in the morning, as well as the heat later in the day. Your visit here involves walking from the bus to the first section.



After 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 where you will be able to buy a small, handcrafted piece.

In the afternoon, visit the Summer Palace, located in the north of Beijing, where you can enjoy idyllic landscapes in traditional Chinese gardens.

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. Jade is said to bring fortune and prosperity to those who wear it. Learn how to spot real jade, watch artisans at work carving this precious stone, and even buy a piece to take home yourself.

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 26: Beijing

Meals: B, L, D

Walk across the lengths of Tiananmen Square into the magnificent Forbidden City. Afterwards, soak up the harmonious ambience of the Temple of Heaven.

Sightseeing will involve approximately 3-4 hours on foot.

This evening dine on Peking duck and watch 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 so 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 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.

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.

Chinese Acrobatics – Chinese Acrobatics incorporates many forms of dramatic art, including acrobatics, contortionism, juggling, and plate spinning, to name a few.

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 27-28: Depart Beijing

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 after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our reservation team to book.



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 Go Beyond Tours, there will be no more than 18 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 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.

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 around 1 to 5 May and 1 to 7 October.

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.

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 even the 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. Most restaurants can provide a fork or spoon if needed. This communal style of dining is an integral part of Chinese culture and a fun, social experience that will also help you to bond with your fellow passengers.

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. Whilst your National Escort will do their best to provide a variety of options, 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*, 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.*

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 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.

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.

TRAVELLING IN XINJIANG PROVINCE:

For security and political reasons, there is an increasing number of checkpoints on journeys through the Xinjiang Province. Please be aware that journey times might therefore be longer than stated in the itinerary to allow for these security checks to be made to documents and personal belongings. At occasions, even seemingly innocuous items such as eyebrow scissors may be confiscated.

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. 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. 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.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

On occasion, your guide will offer optional activities locally if time permits. These can be arranged by your guide and are paid for locally.

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 of under 10 passengers 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 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.

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.

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

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive 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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