



Dreams of Nature

Go Beyond Tour | 23 Days | Physical Level 4

Guilin – Yangshuo – Zhangjiajie – Changsha – Yangtze River Cruise – Leshan
– Emeishan – Nine Villages Valley (Jiuzhaigou) – Chengdu

This scenic tour is ideal for those looking to explore lesser known parts of China and get closer to nature. Indulge your senses with China's most spectacular, mysterious and dramatic natural highlights.

- Explore the fascinating rice terraces
- Relax with a cruise on the Yangtze River
- Walk In the spectacular Nine Villages Valley National Park
- View Zhangjiajie's pinnacles
- Find peace In Buddhist Emeishan
- Come face to face with the loveable giant pandas

TOUR MAP



DREAMS OF NATURE TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Meals as Stated in the itinerary.
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escorts (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Chinese visa fees for Australian passport holders (please see visa section below for further information)
- 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.

GO BEYOND TOUR 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:

- Cycling and walking through classic sites
- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- Off the beaten track destinations
- More evenings at leisure for independent exploration

PHYSICAL LEVEL 4:

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 'Dreams of Nature' is rated as a physical level 4 tour. A good level of fitness is required as you need to be comfortable walking for 2-3 hours and covering longer distances.

- There will be long periods of walking whilst sightseeing, often on steep or uneven ground, especially in the Nine Villages National Park
- You will be required to get on and off the boat in Leshan and on Lake Baofeng without assistance

This tour has been carefully designed to minimise the effects of Altitude Sickness whilst in Mt Emeishan. 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 immediate 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 23 days in duration including overnight international flights in both directions as this is the most likely flight option from Australia. Please note, some flights may depart and arrive on Day 2.

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 2 in Shanghai and end the tour on Day 22 in Chengdu. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure. An informal Welcome Dinner will be held on Day 2 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

Days 1-2: Arrive Shanghai - Guilin

Meals: D

Fly overnight to the cosmopolitan city of Shanghai, also known as the 'Paris of the East' and then take the connecting flight to Guilin, one of southern China's most beautiful cities. On arrival in Guilin, 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. A tour introduction will be held either this evening or the next day. Food and drinks will not be served at this meeting, it is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in China.

**Destination Information**

Guilin – 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: Longji Rice terraces

Meals: B, L

Travel to the iconic Longji Rice Terraces and head out for a 2-3 hour walk through the traditional rural landscapes. There are several viewpoints boasting picture-postcard views of the extensive rice terraces. You will be provided with a packed lunch today. Later, drive 2 hours back to Guilin and spend the remainder of the day at leisure.

**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 4: Guilin - Yangshuo

Meals: B, L, D

Take a relaxed 4-hour cruise along the Li River to the charming village of Yangshuo where you will spend 2 nights. Around every river bend is a view to take your breath away as jagged peaks loom over rural scenes of lush greenery, grazing buffalos and local fishermen. These are small cruise boats usually holding approximately 100 passengers; with an enclosed dining area on the lower deck and an open viewing area on the upper deck. 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 un-spoilt countryside. Usually the boats depart at 9am from the dock located a 1-hour drive from your hotel. However, when the river level is low they depart from further downstream which would mean a longer drive and an earlier check out from your hotel. Disembarking from the cruise, your Local Guide will walk with you to your hotel, approximately a 15-minute walk from the river. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organised at your own cost. Take a walk in the idyllic countryside of Yangshuo this afternoon. There is also an optional hike to Moon Hill, offering beautiful views.

**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 – 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 5: Yangshuo

Meals: B, L

This morning, take part in a traditional Tai Chi class, learning the skills behind this ancient and spiritual exercise. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. There are many optional activities to take part in, including walking, cycling and bamboo river rafting (arranged locally and at extra cost). In the evening, you have the option of enjoying the magical 'Liu Sanjie' show.



Day 6: Yangshuo - Guilin - Zhangjiajie

Meals: B, L, D

Return to Guilin by road, a drive of around 1.5 hours. Spend the afternoon exploring the Reed Flute Caves, admiring the stunning colours of the stalagmites and stalactites. You will take a short walk through the caves, sometimes along damp paths and stairs. It usually takes about 1 hour to complete the route and it is very cool inside. Later, visit the Pearl Factory and learn about the South China pearling industry. Later, take the bullet train to Zhangjiajie.

**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 houses a grotto of multi-coloured stalactites and stalagmites.

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

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 7- 8: Explore Zhangjiajie

Meals: B, L, D

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. Ravines and gorges, streams and waterfalls and a plethora of endangered plants and animal species complete this idyllic scene. Over the next two days, enjoy some beautiful walks, take a cruise on Lake Baofeng and spend time exploring Huanglong Cave, also known as 'Yellow Dragon Cave'. Trek to Jinbian Stream and explore the Ten-Mile Natural Gallery. You will also see the famous Yuanjiajie Avatar Mountain and Emperor Mountain. Travel by road to Changsha.

**Destination Information**

Huanglong Cave – The Huanglong Cave is a karst cave stretching over 120 acres in area. Inside the cave there are waterfalls, rivers, pools and lakes.

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

Jinbian Stream – Called Golden Whip Stream after the 380m high Golden Whip Rock, Jinbian Stream is famous for its pristine water, lush mountains, steep cliffs and serene valley. Exotic plants and rare animals co-exist, and the valley in which it lies is known as one of the most beautiful valleys in the world.

Ten-Mile Natural Gallery – Ten Mile Natural Gallery is a 5.8km long valley with picturesque scenery. Peaks on both sides of the valley form natural sculptures – like a natural art gallery

Changsha - Changsha, the capital city of Hunan Province, China, is a vibrant metropolis steeped in history and surrounded by natural beauty. With its modern skyline, historical landmarks like Yuelu Mountain and Orange Isle, and a thriving culinary scene featuring spicy Hunan cuisine, Changsha offers a perfect blend of ancient charm and contemporary allure. As a bustling cultural, economic, and transportation hub, it captivates visitors with its rich heritage, picturesque landscapes, and a dynamic atmosphere that reflects the city's growth and vitality.

Day 9: Orange Island

Meals: B, L, D

Today at Changsha begin at Hunan Museum, a treasure trove of ancient relics and artworks. Step into history at Yuelu Academy, a hub of learning for centuries, nestled by scenic Mt. Yuelu. In the late afternoon, explore the bamboo and sculpture gardens of Orange Island, where a towering 32-meter statue of Chairman Mao Zedong stands. Later, indulge in the lively Yangfan night market.



Destination Information

Hunan Museum - Built in 1951, The Hunan Museum is a renowned cultural institution located in Changsha, Hunan Province, China. It is a treasure trove of history and art, showcasing a vast collection of artifacts and exhibits that span thousands of years. With its impressive architecture and state-of-the-art facilities, the museum offers visitors an immersive experience into the rich cultural heritage of Hunan. From ancient relics and archaeological discoveries to exquisite artworks and cultural artifacts, the Hunan Museum provides valuable insights into the region's history, traditions, and artistic achievements.

Yuelu Academy - Yuelu Academy, located in Changsha, Hunan Province, China, is a prestigious educational institution with a profound history dating back over a thousand years. Nestled on the slopes of Yuelu Mountain, the academy is not only a symbol of academic excellence but also a place of natural beauty. Its stunning architecture, serene courtyards, and lush surroundings create a tranquil atmosphere conducive to learning and contemplation. As one of the four great ancient academies in China, Yuelu Academy has been a center for Confucian studies, attracting scholars and intellectuals throughout history. Today, it serves as a cultural landmark, housing valuable collections, ancient books, and cultural relics that offer a glimpse into China's scholarly traditions and intellectual heritage.

Orange Island - Orange Island, situated in the heart of Changsha, Hunan Province, China, is a picturesque island renowned for its natural beauty and historical significance. This elongated island stretches along the Xiangjiang River, offering panoramic views of the surrounding landscape. Lush greenery, blooming flowers, and serene walking paths make it a popular destination for leisurely strolls and outdoor activities. The island is also home to several cultural landmarks, including the renowned statue of Mao Zedong, which stands tall as a tribute to the leader's connection to the region. With its tranquil ambiance and historical significance, Orange Island is a delightful retreat where visitors can unwind, explore, and appreciate the harmonious blend of nature and culture.

Day 10: Changsha – Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Take the train for 5 hours to Yichang, you will need to carry your luggage on and off the train. On arrival, transfer 1 hour to your Yangtze River Cruise ship, home for the next 4 nights.



Please note: The Yangtze River cruise section of your itinerary will not be confirmed by the cruise operators until after you commence your tour as it is subject to local river conditions and water levels. Your Local Guide will do their utmost to keep you informed of any changes but cannot guarantee against delays or – in rare cases – cancellations of sections of your itinerary. Shore excursions are subject to change depending on local conditions. A detailed itinerary will be handed out on the vessel each day.

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.

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

Yangtze River – One of the world's great and legendary waterways, this 6,300km river has its origins high up in the snow-covered mountains 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: Three Gorges Dam

Meals: B, L, D

Visit the Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world. Disembark the ship and drive around 20 minutes (the coach is not permitted to stop for photos) to the viewing area above the ship locks where you will be able to truly appreciate the scale of this hydroelectric project. There is also a small museum here and a lookout point. The sightseeing will involve around 1 hour on foot. Return to the ship and sail through Xiling Gorge, the longest and deepest of the three gorges.

**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, and 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 flood control, electricity, navigation, and irrigation.

Day 12: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to smaller vessels for a relaxing excursion through the Shennong Stream gorges, which are narrower than the Three Gorges, but very impressive. Later, as the cruise ship continues upstream, prepare for breathtaking vistas as you pass through Wu and Qutang gorges. Wu gorge is known for its quiet beauty, forest-covered mountains, and sheer cliffs, while Qutang Gorge is the shortest, narrowest, and most dramatic gorge.



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

Destination Information

Shennong Stream – Shennong Stream flows from north to south through stunning deep gorges finally merging with the Yangtze to the east of the mouth of Wu Gorge. The landscape on both banks of this crystal-clear stream is unique and tranquil.

Day 13: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals: B, L, D

Today, visit Mt. ShuangGui, also known 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

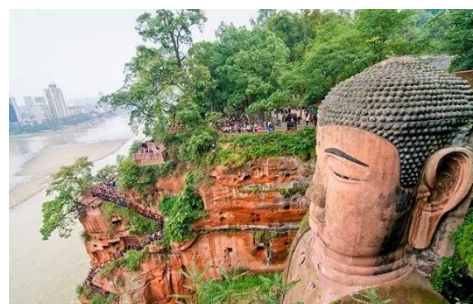
**Destination Information**

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 14: Yangtze River- Leshan -Emeishan

Meals: B, L, D

Check out of your cabin this morning and disembark in Chongqing. From here, take the bullet train to Leshan to see the world’s largest stone-carved Buddhist monument - the Leshan Grand Buddha. Take a short boat ride in front of the statue to grasp the size of this structure. You will spend around 1 hour at Leshan and will need to get on and off the boat. Continue 1 hour to Emeishan to check in for your 2-night stay.

**Destination Information**

Leshan Grand Buddha – The Leshan Buddha was built in the 9th century under the direction of Haitong, a monk who felt the presence of Buddha would help calm the waters below so that shipping vessels could make their journey safely. Amazingly, once the structure was completed, the waters below did calm, some say due to the Buddha’s presence, others to the large amount of rock removed in order to carve the Buddha, which resulted in a current change in the waters. The Buddha remains watching over the waters below.

Day 15: Emeishan

Meals: B, L, D

Spend a full day exploring spiritual Emeishan. There are many pathways to allow an exploration of the steep cliffs, lofty peaks and towering trees.

Daytime highest altitude: 3,100m at Emeishan Peak

Hotel altitude: 500m



Destination Information

Emeishan – One of the Four Sacred Buddhist Mountains of China, Emeishan is located in Sichuan Province and has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1996. Emeishan is home to the first Buddhist temple to be built in China, dating back to the 1st century.

Day 16: Emeishan – Pingle Ancient Town - Chengdu

Meals: B, L

Drive 2 hours to Pingle Ancient Town. Dating back to the Han Dynasty, Pingle was a stopping point on the Tea Horse Road. Take time to walk through its maze of teahouse-lined streets before seeing the forest from above on Jinji Suspended Rope Bridge. Continue to Chengdu for an overnight stay.



Destination Information

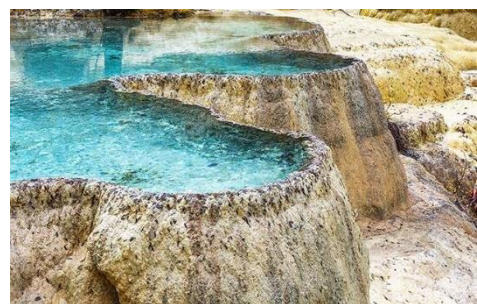
Pingle Ancient Town – Regarded as one of the best ancient towns in Sichuan Province, Pingle Ancient Town dates back to the Han Dynasty and was a stopping point on legendary Silk Road.

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. 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 17: Chengdu – Nine Villages Valley (Jiuzhaigou)

Meals: B, L

Begin the day with a journey on the bullet train to Nine Villages Valley (Jiuzhaigou). Upon arrival, visit the Huanglong Temple and Huanglong pools where you will find hundreds of vivid pools in striking colours, formed by thousands of years of mineral deposit, tumbling gently down through the bright green forests of the Huanglong Valley. There is an option to take a chairlift up both up and down to allow more time for sightseeing at the top; the cost of this is at your own expense. We usually spend around 2-3 hours sightseeing here. This area is at an altitude of 3,500m.



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.

Day 18: Nine Villages Valley

Meals: B, L, D

Enjoy a full day exploring the diverse scenery of splendid Nine Villages Valley, China's most awe-inspiring National Park. You will spend 5 to 6 hours walking including Long Lake, Five Coloured Lake and Nuorilang Falls. Tonight enjoy traditional Lamb cooked on skewers.



Walking today will be approximately 5-6 hours on some uneven and slippery terrain which requires extra care whilst walking. It is strongly advised that you wear sturdy footwear with ankle support if needed.

Destination Information

Nine Villages Valley – Lying in the southwest of China in the Northern Sichuan province, hidden in a national park is the Nine Villages Valley (Jiuzhaigou), home to Nine Tibetan villages scattered throughout a natural wonderland. A national park of ragged peaks, sapphire Lakes, abundant forests and rushing Waterfalls, Nine Villages Valley is considered one of China's most beautiful areas. Covering over 700 square kilometres, the valley is one of China's greatest natural assets, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1992 and a World Biosphere Reserve in 1997.

Day 19: Shuzeng Village

Meals: B, L, D

Visit Shuzheng Village, the largest settlement in the park. Spend some time with a local Tibetan family who will give you an insight into daily life in Nine Villages Valley. A lovely afternoon walk takes you from Rhinoceros Lake, passing Tiger Lake ending at Reed Lake – an excellent way to really appreciate the local scenery. Pass an old watermill and Tibetan prayer flags en route.



Day 20: Nine Villages Valley - Chengdu

Meals: B, L

Transfer to the station and take the bullet train to Chengdu. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

**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. 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 21: Chengdu

Meals: B, D

Today you will visit China's most famous resident, the giant panda. Visit the Panda Conservation Centre where you can learn about China's celebrated bear. See these lovable creatures in surroundings that mirror their natural habitat. It is not guaranteed that you will be able to see the feeding of the younger pandas, as this only happens at the start and end of each day. Sightseeing involves approximately 1.5 hours on foot and there are electric carts offered by private vendors that can be organised at your own cost. Visit People's Park to see the famous Matchmaker's Corner where parents look for suitable suitors for their children. In the evening, dine on typical Sichuanese cuisine.

**Destination Information**

Panda Conservation Centre – With over 80 pandas holding residence, the Chengdu Panda Research Base is equipped with the latest technology and research materials to gain a further understanding in how we can protect the panda and maintain, if not increase, its numbers. The park is set up to resemble the mountain and forest regions in north Sichuan, the original home of the Giant Panda, with extensive bamboo trees and large green spaces. Red Pandas, the Giant Panda's lovable cousin, and flamboyant peacocks too roam the park, making for an interesting mix.

People's Park – People's Park is a pleasant respite from urban Chengdu. Here you can see beautiful golden koi, locals dancing and practicing Tai Chi.

Sichuanese Meal – Sichuanese 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.

Days 22 –23: Depart Chengdu

Meals: B

Any time before your flight is at leisure. After check-out, transfer to the airport for your onward flight, arriving home the following day.

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:

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.

All information with regards to visas will be updated regularly on our website as we find visas process' are changing on regular basis.

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.

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 the 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. Please note that all shore excursions arranged by the cruise are on a shared basis. Due to tightened security process for luggage upon cruise disembarkation, 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.

High-Speed Trains: On this tour, you will take multiple high-speed “bullet” train journey’s. 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.

High-Speed Train Facilities: The second-class seats are in a 3 x 2 seating configuration. Facilities vary from train to train. Most carriages have a western style toilet. Most seats will have a foldable tray table and power socket for charging your electronic devices. There are dining carts on board if you wish to purchase your own additional food.

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.

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 usually 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 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

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 table top. 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.

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.

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 portorage 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.

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.

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