



## Ancient China

18 Days

Fully Inclusive from the UK

Combine Beijing and Shanghai with a visit to four ancient imperial capitals as well as the wonderfully preserved UNESCO listed town of Pingyao. Discover the roots of Chinese Buddhism at Wutaishan, the Longmen Grottoes in Yuoyang and the Hanging Monastery they will be explained here, in Datong. We also witness a Kung Fu demonstration by the famous Shaolin Monks.

### Fully Inclusive price includes:

- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- All meals (excluding drinks)
- Touring with Guides and entrance fees
- Visa fees for UK passport holders



## Your Tour Dossier

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with the other pre-departure information provided by Wendy Wu Tours including the tour itinerary as described in our brochure and/or website. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour.

If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the length of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation; they will be explained here.

All passengers must read this document to ensure the itinerary is suitable for their interests and physical capabilities. This is not your final itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.

## Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

China continues to amaze, fascinate and thrill our passengers, many of whom have travelled to one country in Asia with us, then another, year after year. We urge you to keep in mind all the rewards, as well as challenges of travelling in a country with a history, culture and attitude so unlike your own.

A typical day's sightseeing may include the bustle and noise of a city street, sights and smells of a local market and interacting with the locals. Travelling in China requires patience and potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout China, so your local guides or National Escort will be indispensable during your trip.

Almost everything will be different to what you may be used to. We have found that our passengers who embark with a sense of humour and adventure, who accept that things do not always go to plan, are those who find their experience most rewarding. It is essential that all passengers recognize the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they may encounter in some areas.

Book now on **0844 499 3899** visit [www.wendywutours.co.uk](http://www.wendywutours.co.uk) or see your preferred travel agent.

## Ancient China - Medium Paced Tour

These tours are not strenuous but do require higher levels of fitness. A typical tour may include longer periods of sightseeing on foot, climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats will be necessary. These tours may involve longer periods of driving; sometimes on poorly maintained roads, and overnight train journeys; as well as some easy hiking. Some Medium Paced Tours may involve several days at altitude.

Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course our 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. If you do have mobility difficulties, please contact us for our range of private tours which are more flexible and can better cater for individual needs.

NB: Please note that times and distances listed in the tour dossier are approximate.

### Days 1-2 UK/Beijing

On day 2, you will be met at Beijing International airport in the arrivals 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 approx. 1hr to your hotel. There is no sightseeing today. A tour introduction will be held in the hotel later today or tomorrow morning. There will not be food or drinks served at this meeting, it is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in China.

### Day 3: Beijing

Sightseeing in central Beijing involves approx. 3-4hrs on foot during the morning to see Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City. Visiting Mao's Mausoleum is subject to the length of the queue, as so many domestic tourists visit every day. There is easy sightseeing this afternoon, which involves a rickshaw ride through the Hutong district of Beijing.

### Day 4: Beijing

We rise early this morning to drive approx. 1.5hrs (50 km) northwest of the city to the Great Wall. The aim of this is to avoid the crowds of tourists who will arrive later in the morning, and the heat of the day. Visiting the Wall involves walking a steep path approx. 200m 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 the rest at your own pace. This afternoon, visit the Temple of Heaven which involves approx. 2hrs on foot.

### Day 5: Beijing

Drive approx. 1hr to the Summer Palace in the north of the city. The palace is set over an extensive park and man-made lake complex and there is approx. 2-3hrs sightseeing on foot involved at this site. You will then have the opportunity of 'shopping time' at Silk Markets.

### Day 6: Beijing/Datong

Transfer to Beijing West Railway Station and board the train to Datong. This journey usually takes approx. 6-7hrs (over 360km). Transfer to your hotel to check-in. There is no sightseeing today.

### Day 7: Datong/Wutaishan

Drive approx. 30mins (15km) to Yungang Caves and Grottoes. Visiting the caves involves climbing some steps and walking 1km. We will spend approx. 2hrs here before lunch. Drive approx. 2hrs (80km) on a winding, mountainous road to the Hanging Monastery, where sightseeing involves approx.

40mins on foot. Continue driving approx. 4hrs to Wutaishan and check-in to hotel.

### Day 8: Wutaishan/Taiyuan

This morning, visit nearby Wutaishan (Five Terraced Mountain). Sightseeing here involves climbing some steps to see some of the temples and views along the way. This afternoon, drive approx. 4.5hrs (240km) to Taiyuan, arriving in the late afternoon. There is no sightseeing this afternoon.

### Day 9: Taiyuan/Pingyao

This morning sightseeing around Taiyuan involves approx. 3hrs on foot. Drive approx. 2hrs (100km) to Pingyao. At the outskirts of the Pingyao Old Town area you will need to transfer to an 'environmental vehicle' which is aimed at reducing the pollution by vehicles in the area to your hotel and check-in.

### Day 10: Pingyao/Xian

Sightseeing through different historic sites within the Old Town area involves approx. 4hrs of easy walking, with a break for lunch. Later, transfer to Chengde Railway Station and board the overnight sleeper train to Xian – usually a 10hr journey (650km).

### Day 11: Xian

You will arrive at Xian Railway Station early this morning and transfer to your hotel, where you can have breakfast and freshen up. Sightseeing at the Little Wild Goose Pagoda, Shaanxi Museum and Muslim Quarter involves approx. 2.5hrs on foot. Beware of your valuables while browsing the Muslim Quarter's alley market stalls.

*NB: Check-out time in China is midday so your group's rooms are unlikely to be available. This morning you will commence sightseeing and return to hotel later to rest and freshen up.*

### Day 12: Xian

The Museum of the Terracotta Warriors is located just over 1hr drive from Xian. From the bus park to the Museum entrance is a 15mins walk, usually without any shade. 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 Museum exit to Bus Park. Within the Museum area the warriors can be seen in 3 different "pits", which are active archaeological digs. The site is large and, towards the summer months, can be hot outside. Sightseeing here involves approx. 2.5hrs on foot. This afternoon we visit the City Walls where you will need to walk up the steps onto the wall. The Local Guide will give you time to explore at

your own pace. There are options here to hire a bicycle or an electric cart to drive along the length of the walls. These are offered by private vendors and can be organised at your own cost.

#### **Day 13: Xian/Luoyang**

Transfer to Xian Railway Station and board the morning train to Luoyang. This journey takes approx. 6hrs. Transfer to your hotel and check-in. There is no sightseeing today.

#### **Day 14: Luoyang**

Drive approx. 30mins (12km) to Longman Grottoes. Sightseeing here involves climbing some uneven steps and being on your feet for approx. 2hrs. After lunch, drive approx. 1.5hrs (80km) to the Shaolin Temple and Pagoda Forests. We spend approx. 2.5hrs on foot here.

#### **Day 15: Luoyang/Shanghai**

Drive approx. 2hrs (80km) to a lookout point over the Yellow River and spend 1.5hrs here. Continue driving approx. 2hrs to Zhengzhou Airport for your evening flight to Shanghai (flight duration 1.5hrs). On arrival at Hongqiao (Shanghai's domestic airport), transfer approx. 30mins to your hotel and check-in.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **Before You Leave**

**Itinerary Changes** - The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in China are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Roads in China have generally been improved over recent years, but some road construction and/or weather conditions may still lengthen the driving times.

**Visas** - A visa is required for entry into China. A standard visa processing service is included in your tour cost. We will require your passport, completed visa application form, and 1 passport photo, taken within the last 6 months, to process your visa. We will require all this information 8 weeks prior to departure. As per our standard visa processing service, we will have your passport for at least 4 weeks. Any passports and visa applications that require an express 2 week service, or that are received in our office less than 6 weeks prior to departure will incur a £50 per passport express fee.

In rare cases, you may be required to provide further information or documentation to the Chinese embassy and or be required to attend an interview at the embassy in London. If this is the case we will notify you as soon as possible.

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 Public Security Bureau. If you are staying in a hotel, registration is done on your behalf as part of the check-in process.

**Vaccinations and Your Health** - We recommend that you contact either your local GP or a travel doctor for advice on vaccinations and travel health. [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) is a comprehensive website that you may also find useful.

**Climate** - Please refer to our website or brochure for detailed temperature charts.

**Insurance** - It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

#### **Day 16: Shanghai**

Enjoy a full day of Sightseeing in central Shanghai involving approx. 3-4hrs on foot. Beware of your valuables while in the Old Town (Yuan Bazaar) as it is very crowded.

#### **Day 17: Shanghai**

Enjoy a full day of sightseeing, involving approx. 3hrs on foot.

#### **Day 18: Depart Shanghai**

Transfer from your hotel to Shanghai Airport for your flight to the UK. Depending on your chosen airline, some flights to the UK will arrive the same day, whereas others will arrive the following day.

#### **Land Only**

If you are travelling on a land only basis, then you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel in Beijing on Day 2. On Day 18, you will checkout from your Shanghai hotel, and continue as per your own arrangements.

Please refer to the Wendy Wu Tours brochure and/or website for details on departure dates, prices, itineraries, inclusions and tour extensions available as well as full booking conditions.

## What to Expect on Tour

**Development** - Although China is developing quickly, it still lacks international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. For example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade; concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in the UK. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in the UK. However, 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 as well as refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort/Local Guides.

**Group Size** – All our group tours are guaranteed to run subject to a minimum number of 8 travellers and a National Escort will accompany each group of over 10. The maximum group size varies depending on the tour, but is usually no more than 28 passengers.

**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 UK and China. 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.

**Meals** - All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout China.

This itinerary visits areas which are popular with domestic Chinese tourists, but not yet known by international tourists. Facilities from Datong to Pingyao typically cater for Chinese people and this could mean the hotels serve few if any western dishes for breakfast. 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 the UK. 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 Beijing.

**Rail Journeys** - This tour involves one overnight train journey which is in first class soft sleeper compartments where each cabin consists of four berths (sharing). There are also two scenic daytime rail journeys using soft seat class.

**Tipping** - As with most countries, tipping is a way of life in China. For our passengers' convenience we ask for a compulsory amount to be paid at the beginning of our group tours to cover tipping for guides, drivers, restaurant staff etc. Approximate tipping amounts can be found in our brochure and/or website; however exact tipping amounts will be stated in your final documentation pack.

**Optional Extras** - Our tours are planned to be as fully inclusive as possible. However, from time-to-time your National Escort or Local Guide may suggest optional tours/sightseeing in addition to the standard sightseeing planned for that city. Such options are at an additional cost, with prices ranging 100-300 Yuan per person (payable in local currency). If you do not wish to take part in any optional extras, you will have the option of enjoying some free time at leisure or to return to the hotel.

## 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, help sheet, and a China travel guide. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard, suggested packing list and a phrase book, along with your final itinerary and international tickets.

Last Updated June 2011