



## Sichuan Explorer

14 Days

**Fully Inclusive from the UK**

The Sichuan Province is the natural habitat of one of the world's endangered species – the panda. We observe these magnificent creatures at the famous Panda Reserve in Chengdu as well as admire the Grand Buddha in Leshan. We also visit Mt Emei, Buddhist Dazhu and beautiful Nine Villages Valley.

*This tour reaches a maximum altitude of 3,500m at Huanglong Temple.*

### 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

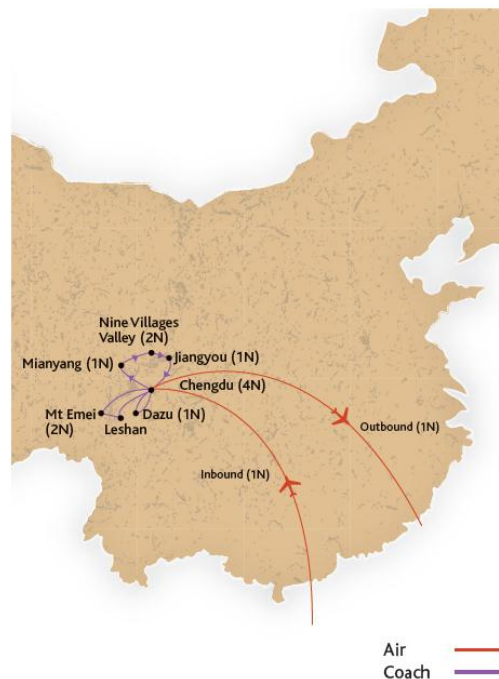
### Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

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.



### 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.

## Sichuan Explorer- Active Paced Tour

These tours can involve long periods of sightseeing on foot, climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats, and are physically more demanding. Some easy trekking may be involved, as well as travel to remote areas and areas of high altitude, reaching up to 5,000m. These tours could involve long days of driving and overnight train journeys. These programmes require a good level of fitness.

Sightseeing may involve walking and/or travelling over rough roads for extended periods. 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.

The more difficult aspects of this itinerary involve areas of high altitude and very long driving distances along mountain roads. You will be exploring quite remote areas of China, which are popular with Chinese domestic tourists, but not yet known by international tourists. Tourist infrastructure is not as developed as the more popularly visited east/north of China.

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

### Days 1-2 UK/Chengdu

On day 2, you will be met at Chengdu 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 drive approx. 1.5hrs to your hotel. There is no sightseeing today. This evening a tour introduction will be held in the hotel. 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: Chengdu/Dazu

Drive approx. 3-4hrs (260km) to Beishan (North Hill) outside Dazu. Sightseeing here involves climbing some steps. Spend approx. 2hrs here then continue a short distance to Dazu for an overnight stay.

### Day 4: Dazu/Chengdu

Visit the Baoding carvings (Treasured Summit Hill) a short distance (15km) from Dazu. Sightseeing here involves steps and approx. 2hrs on foot. This afternoon drive back to Chengdu.

### Day 5: Chengdu/Leshan/Mt Emei

Drive approx. 2.5hrs (137km) to Leshan. From the bus park, we walk to board the small cruise boat to view the Grand Buddha from the river. Spend approx. 2hrs at Leshan before driving approx. 1hr to Mt Emei, arriving in the late afternoon and check-in at the hotel.

### Day 6: Mt Emei

We will need to change to a public bus to access the Mt Emei Reserve this morning, travelling with other tourists. Drive approx. 2hrs up a winding, mountainous road to the chairlift, and then catch the chairlift for 10mins up to the Golden Summit (altitude 3077m). Sightseeing here involves approx. 2hrs on foot over uneven ground and climbing some steps. Return to the hotel in the evening.

*NB: The weather here is very changeable and often wet, so you will need a rain jacket.*

### Day 7: Mt Emei/Chengdu

Drive back to Chengdu today, approx. 2.5hrs (160km). There is no sightseeing today.

### Day 8: Chengdu/Mianyang

The Panda Reserve is located only 10km from the city centre. It is not guaranteed that you will be able to see the feeding of the younger pandas, as this only happens at the very start and end of each day. Sightseeing here involves approx. 1.5hrs on foot. There are electric carts offered by private vendors and can be organised at your cost. Afterwards, drive approx. 1hr (55km) to the Sanxingdui Museum in Guanghan, where we spend approx. 1.5hrs. We then continue to Mianyang for an overnight stay, which is a further driving distance of approx. 45mins (65km).

### Day 9: Mianyang/Nine Villages Valley

Drive approx. 8hrs (337km) to the Nine Villages Valley and check into hotel at the entrance of the Nat. Park for two nights.

### Day 10: Nine Villages Valley

The National Park authorities have introduced an 'environmental vehicle' which is aimed at reducing the pollution by vehicles in the area. Your group will receive an entrance pass and a voucher for this transport. The vehicles run between the different sites at regular times, and this will mean you will be sharing these vehicles with people from other tourist groups. Your Wendy Wu Tours guides will remain with you. Today's sightseeing involves approx. 4hrs on foot – with an area of altitude at Changhai (Long or King) Lake at 3,100m.

*NB: There is only one restaurant within the National Park, which will cater to all the tourist groups in the park on any given day. It can therefore get very crowded and noisy.*

### Day 11: Nine Villages Valley/ Jianguyou

Drive along the steep, mountainous ridge of the National Park to Huanglong, which is just outside the National Park. This distance is approx. 3hrs (130km) of driving. Most of the drive is on sealed and winding mountain roads. There is now a cable car here and it is possible to take the 10mins ride both up and down, allowing more time for sightseeing at the top of the waterfall. The cost of the cable car is at your own expense. We usually spend approx. 2hrs sightseeing here, there are some steps and this area is at an altitude of 3,500m. Afterwards drive approx. 4.5hrs (200 km) to the rural area of Jianguyou for an overnight stay.

**Day 12: Jianguyou/Chengdu**

Drive approx. 3hrs back to Chengdu (166km) and transfer to your hotel for one night.

**Day 13: Depart Chengdu**

Transfer from your hotel to Chengdu International Airport for your overnight flight to the UK. Depending on your chosen airline, you will arrive home later today or on Day 14.

**Day 14: UK**

Arrive home.

**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 Chengdu on Day 2. On Day 13, you will checkout from your Chengdu 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.

**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:

- **Traffic / Road Construction** - roads in this region have generally been improved over recent years, but road or weather conditions may still lengthen driving times. Road construction work in China usually encompasses an enormous section of road - not a couple of kilometres as you would be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in this dossier are approximate.

**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.

**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.

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**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 assure 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** - This itinerary visits areas which are popular with domestic Chinese tourists, but not widely known by international tourists. Facilities throughout the Nine Villages Valley and surrounds cater predominantly for Chinese people and this usually means 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, it is recommended that you bring milk and cereal supplies / or muesli bars from home, or purchase them in Chengdu. Other meals (lunch and dinner) could include dishes of local style, meaning there may be bones or fat in meat and fish.

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

**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.

**Altitude** - This itinerary visits the following areas of high altitude:

- Changhai (Long Lake) in the Nine Villages Valley. Sightseeing is at an altitude of 3,100m [10,170ft]. Please note that the place where you will be staying overnight is not at high altitude.
- Huanglong located between the Nine Villages Valley and Mao County. Sightseeing is at 3,500m [11,483ft].
- Mt Emei. Sightseeing is at 3077m [10,095ft].

If you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your Doctor before undertaking this itinerary.

**Optional Extras** - Optional tours may be offered during the tour, time permitting. These will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide. The cost can range from 100 - 300 Yuan in price, so please allow extra money if you feel you may participate in any extra activities, such as the Kungfu evening show in Beijing, a light show in Yangshuo or the maglev train journey in Shanghai.

### **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 etickets.

Last Updated June 2011