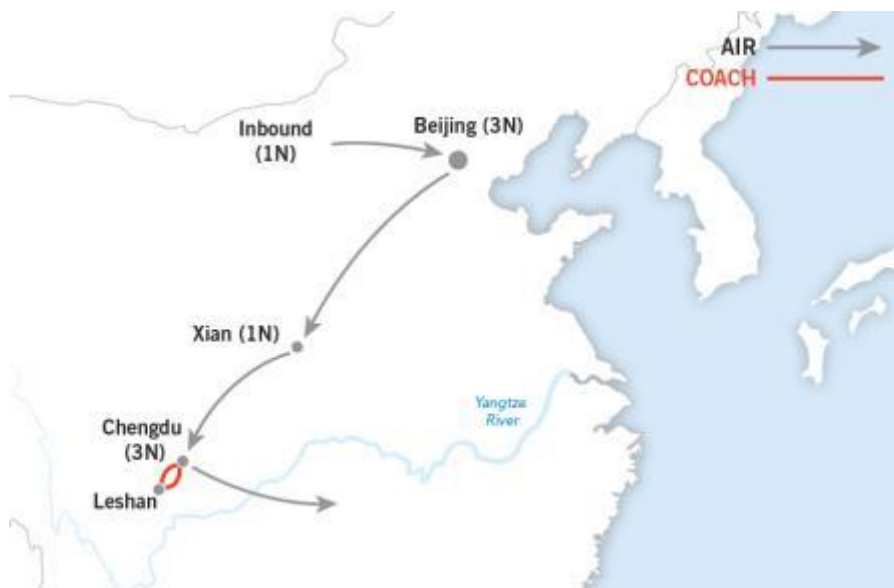




## China Tour Dossier In Pursuit of Pandas

Private Tour | 9 Days | Comfortable Pace



The Tour Dossier 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.

The itinerary of the tour dossier has three distinct sections. The first section is to give you a day outline, giving an overview of each day's activities. The second section provides an overview of any physical activity which may be faced on a day of touring and provide approximate durations of transfers, air travel etc. For moderate and active paced tours, please pay special attention to this. The third section provides a more in depth description of destinations and sights you will visit on each day, including any shopping experiences.

## Private Tours

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures on a more personal fully-inclusive tour.

### In Pursuit of Pandas tour highlights:

- ❖ Forbidden city
- ❖ Great Wall of China
- ❖ Tranquil Summer Palace
- ❖ Enigmatic Warriors, Xian
- ❖ Xian City Wall
- ❖ Lovable Giant Pandas, Chengdu
- ❖ Leshan Buddha

### In Pursuit of Pandas tour inclusions:

- ❖ Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges
- ❖ All accommodation
- ❖ Meals as stated
- ❖ All sightseeing and entrance fees
- ❖ All transportation and transfers
- ❖ English speaking Local Guides
- ❖ Visa fees for UK and EU passport holders
- ❖ Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- ❖ Comprehensive travel guides
- ❖ Safe and secure with ABTA, ATOL and IATA

*The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, meals which have not been provided, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping and early check in or late checkout.*





## Destination profile - China

**China** – China’s civilization is the oldest in the world and has a history dating back over 5,000 years. With 56 ethnic groups, 22 provinces and 8 major dialects, China has a rich and varied culture and way of life and is home to a wealth of tourist sights and cultural relics which entice our guests to return again and again to this exciting destination.

**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. It is important that our guests travel to China with an open mind and a sense of humour.

**Roads in China** - Roads in China have generally been 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. There may be sections of road where the surface may be comparatively bumpy but our drivers will do their utmost to lessen the impact.

**Cuisine in China** - Chinese cuisine is one of the most influential, diverse and flavoursome culinary styles in the world with a legacy stretching back thousands of years. Chinese dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavours. Though Chinese cuisine can vary greatly from Chinese food we get in the UK, it is important to keep an open mind and be adventurous. Please be aware that dishes selected for your meals reflect the cooking styles and signature dishes of the local area you are in.

## Tour Profile – In Pursuit of Pandas

On our ‘In Pursuit of Pandas’ itinerary, you will visit **Beijing, Xian and Chengdu**.

‘In Pursuit of Pandas’ is a **comfortable paced** tour: the easiest pace of tour Wendy Wu Tours offers. As a whole, ‘In Pursuit of Pandas’ requires a reasonable level of fitness. During your tour, there will be sightseeing on foot for a period of time and in some cases for an extended period of time. On the Great Wall of China in Beijing, some of the walking may be at more of an incline. You will need to get on and off the boat at Leshan.

Of course, our 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.



## Itinerary – In Pursuit of Pandas

### Day 1-2: Fly to Beijing

#### Day Outline

Fly overnight to Beijing, the capital of China. On arrival into Beijing on day 2, transfer to your hotel for a 3 night stay. The rest of the day is at leisure.

#### Physical Description

On arrival in Beijing Capital International Airport, be met in the arrival hall by your local guide from Wendy Wu tours. You will then be privately transferred to your hotel. The transfer will take approx. 1 hour.

#### Destination Information

**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.

No Meals Provided

### Day 3: Beijing

#### Day Outline

Walk across the lengths of Tiananmen Square and into the magnificent Forbidden City. Later soak up the harmonious ambience of the Temple of Heaven where you can watch, or take part in, an outdoor dance class. Tonight, eat a traditional Peking duck dinner.

#### Physical Description

Sightseeing at Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City will involve approx. 3-4 hours on foot. You will spend approx. 1 hour on foot at the Temple of Heaven.

*The Forbidden City is closed on Mondays. If this day of touring falls on a Monday, your*

*touring in Beijing will be switched round so that the Forbidden City is visited on an alternative day.*

*Please remember to bring your passport with you when visiting the Forbidden City for security check.*

#### Destination Information

**Tiananmen Square** - Built under the guidance of Chairman Mao Zedong, Tiananmen Square is said to hold a capacity crowd of over one million and is one of the largest public squares in the world. 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** – The Temple of Heaven is one of the most perfect examples of Ming architecture set in amongst a 267 hectare park with four gates set at each point of a compass. The Temple of Heaven was created as a place of worship for the Emperors, who would ask for prosperity, longevity and good harvest for the people. Walking through the park we will see the many groups of local people that gather here every day to sing folk songs, practice Tai Chi and sword dancing, play chess or just come to sit and chat.

**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.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner





## Day 4: Beijing



### Day Outline

Take a walk on the Great Wall of China, appreciating the wall itself and the dramatic scenery. Later, visit the Jade Factory and this afternoon visit the Summer Palace. This evening enjoy a Chinese acrobatic show.

### Physical Description

You will rise early this morning to drive approx. 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, and the heat of the day. Your visit here involves walking from the bus to the first section. After you have been given an introduction to the Great Wall's unique history you will have free time to explore the rest at your own pace. After lunch, drive approx. 1.5 hours to the Summer Palace in the north of the city.

### 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. 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.

**Chinese acrobatics** – Chinese acrobatics incorporates many forms of dramatic art, including acrobatics, contortionism, juggling, plate spinning and many more.

Breakfast and Lunch

## Day 5: Beijing-Xian

### Day Outline

Fly to Xian for a 2 night stay. Walk the parameters of the Xian ancient city wall before enjoying a delicious feast of traditional Shui Jiao dumplings and a performance of Tang Dynasty dancing.

### Physical Description

You will be transferred approx. 1 hour to Beijing Capital International airport for your flight to Xian (flight duration 1 hour 50 minutes). As we will arrive before rooms are likely to be available, you will take a walk on the Xian ancient city walls before you check in.

The local guide will give you time to explore the ancient city walls at your own pace. There are options here to hire a bicycle or an electric cart to drive along the length of the wall. These are offered by private vendors and can be organised at your own expense.

### Destination Information

**Xian** – Xian has long played a pivotal role in China's extensive history and has been a thriving hub for cultural exchange, 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.

**Ancient city walls** – Dating back to the Ming Dynasty in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Xian ancient city wall is one of the best preserved urban fortifications in China. The wall's ideal spot and layout gives visitors a bird's eye view over this fantastic city. Follow the locals' example and take a bike to get an ever more spectacular experience.

**Tang Dynasty Dancing show** – Xian, previously known as Chang'an, was an important cultural and historical centre in not only China but in the known-world. The Tang Dynasty dancing show is an exciting exponent of this prosperous society and keeps alive the splendour of this period.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

## Day 6: Xian to Chengdu



### Day Outline

Spend the morning viewing the formidable ranks of terracotta soldiers and horses. Visit the Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition centre to see smaller models of the warriors being made. Fly to Chengdu.

### Physical Description

The Museum of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses is located more than 1 hour drive outside of Xian. From the bus park to the museum entrance 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

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. 2.5 hours on foot.

### Destination Information

**Terracotta Warriors** – One of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this subterranean necropolis is comprised of over 7,000 soldiers, horses and chariots. The army was built in life-sized form by thousands of workers for the first Emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang, who felt he needed military protection in the afterlife.

**Xian art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Centre** – See smaller versions of the enigmatic Terracotta Warriors being created at the captivating Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition Centre; even purchase your own portable soldier.

**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 Provinces 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.

Breakfast and Lunch

## Day 7: Chengdu

### Day Outline

Travel south of Chengdu to Leshan, where you will 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. Return to Chengdu, stopping at Huanglongxi, a town which has managed to retain the charm of Qing dynasty simplicity. Sample a delicious Sichuan meal this evening.



## Physical Description

Drive approx. 2 hours (138km) to Leshan to see the Grand Buddha carving. From the bus park walk to board the small cruise boat to view the Buddha from the river. Spend at least 1 hour at Leshan before driving back to Chengdu in the afternoon.

## Destination Information



**Leshan Grand Buddha** – The Leshan Buddha was built in the 9<sup>th</sup> 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; no position gives a better view of this structure than from a boat ride along the river.

**Huanglongxi** – Named after the Huanglong River which flows through this historic town, Huanglongxi houses a number of traditional buildings, dating back mainly to the Qing Dynasty. Home to picturesque temples and idyllic water vistas, Huanglongxi is a beauty

spot famous with directors who use the area for its stunning scenery.

**Sichuan Meal** – Sichuan cuisine is famous for its use of Sichuan pepper and chillies. These spices from the area are known for their 'mala' (numb and spicy) flavours, which seem to cool and heat your mouth at the same time. Famous dishes include kungpao chicken, twice-cooked pork and spicy Sichuan hotpot.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

## Day 8: Chengdu



## Day Outline

Today we 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. Visit the Shu Brocade and Embroidery Museum. Later, visit Matchmaker's Corner where you can watch parents search for suitable suitors for their children in People's Park.

## Physical Description

The Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding is located only 18km 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 start and end of each day. Sightseeing involves approx. 1.5 hours on foot. There are electric carts offered by private vendors and can be organised at your own cost. Sightseeing in the afternoon in People's Park will be approx. 1-2 hours.





## 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.

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

**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, and most interesting of all, Matchmaker's Corner, where parents search for suitable boyfriends or girlfriends for their children.

Breakfast and Lunch

## **Day 9: Depart Chengdu**

### Day Outline

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.

Breakfast



## In Pursuit of Pandas Travel Info

**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 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.

**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.

**Accommodation** - All hotels used for private groups have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty please speak to your Local Guide. 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. 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.

Four and five star hotels are also available on private tours. If you would like to upgrade, please speak to one of our reservation consultants.

**Meals** - Some meals are included in our private tours, please see inclusions above. If you would like to travel on a fully inclusive meal basis please speak to Wendy Wu Tours, to arrange this prior to travel. Included meals are 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. For meals not included, local guides will be happy to assist with recommendations on where and what to eat in order to fully appreciate this vastly different cuisine.

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

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

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

**After your booking** - Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard, a travel guide (which includes a suggested packing list) and phrase book, along with your final itinerary and international e-tickets.

**Last updated: 19 Nov 2015**