



China & Spiritual Tibet

Exclusive Tour | 18 Days | Moderate

Beijing - Xian - Lhasa - Chengdu - Yangtze River Cruise - Shanghai

Experience the inherent spirituality and natural grandeur of Tibet alongside China's most renowned and awe-inspiring sights; blending unique culture, majestic landscapes and modern wonders.

- Sip champagne on the Great Wall
- Witness the monks of Sera Monastery debating
- Learn to make Tibetan dumplings
- Meet the Giant pandas in Chengdu
- Cruise down the mighty Yangtze River
- Explore the vibrant city of Shanghai



China & Spiritual Tibet tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- 5* accommodation throughout
- Meals as stated in the itinerary
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) and 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, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.

Exclusive Tours:

These tours have been meticulously designed with the more discerning traveller in mind. Our deluxe journeys through Asia feature distinctive and exclusive experiences which bring the region to life. Our exclusive collection tours include:

- Champagne moments
- Unique experiences
- Small group sizes
- UK chauffeur transfers
- Porter service to and from your hotel rooms
- A mid tour Laundry service

Moderate Tours:

'China & Spiritual Tibet' is a **Moderate** tour. This means that the itinerary requires a good level of fitness.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time
- On the Great Wall of China in Beijing, some of the walking will be at an incline
- Whilst in Lhasa, you will be at an altitude of 3,700m. All passengers should rest and stay well hydrated to acclimatise to the higher altitude.
- You will be required to get on and off the boats along your Yangtze River cruise

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.

Luxury Hotels:

We have handpicked luxury hotels throughout China in the best possible locations for our Exclusive tours meaning you will experience 5-star comfort throughout. On your 'China & Spiritual Tibet' tour you will be staying in the following hotels:

- **Beijing** - Regent Beijing Wangfujing
- **Xian** – Hilton Xian
- **Lhasa** – Shangri La
- **Chengdu** - Ritz Carlton
- **Shanghai** - Fairmont Peace



Century Cruises:

On 'China & Spiritual Tibet' you will spend 3 nights cruising on the Century Paragon or Century Legend down the mighty Yangtze river. Century cruises have one of the newest fleets on the river and are well known for providing an exceptional experience; with a passenger to crew ratio of 2:1 the service on-board is both attentive and conscientious.

Your spacious cabin will have panoramic sliding glass doors and a private balcony for admiring the spectacular scenery as you float by. Each room has a seating area, television and an en-suite bathroom with a shower and bath tub.

Whilst on board you can expect to enjoy a mix of Chinese and western cuisine from buffet style breakfasts and lunches to luxurious evening banquets. Each ship also offers a range of on board activities and entertainment such as Tai Chi, ethnic dance shows, and cooking classes; as well as shore excursions to fascinating and enticing spots along the banks of the Yangtze River. When you are not taking in the spectacular views from the sun deck you will be able to make use of the peaceful library or 24 hour internet cafe.



Itinerary – China & Spiritual Tibet

Days 1-2: Beijing

Travel by chauffeured transfer to the airport for your overnight flight to Beijing, the capital of China. You will be met 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 1 hour to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure. A tour introduction will be held in the hotel either this evening or the next. 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

Beijing - Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. With its unequalled wealth of history, Beijing served as the centre for the many different empires and cultures that ruled China and has been the heart of politics and society throughout its long history. The ancient monuments, the stories of days gone by as well as the dynamic and modern city Beijing has become today, make it a destination not to be missed.

Day 3: Beijing

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Begin your day with a relaxing 45 minute Tai Chi lesson with a master in the idyllic location of the Temple of Heaven Park. Walk through the length of Tiananmen Square before entering the former royal centre of the Forbidden City, home of the Ming and Qing emperors for over 500 years. Whilst here, admire the trove of imperial jewellery, homewares and art at the Treasure Hall. Touring will include approximately 5 to 6 hours of sightseeing, you will spend most of your time at Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City walking. This evening dine at iconic Quanjude on Peking duck, a favourite delicacy of the Chinese emperors.



Please note: The Forbidden City is closed on Mondays. If this day of touring falls on a Monday, your touring in Beijing will be switched round so that the Forbidden City is visited on an alternative day.

Destination Information

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.

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.

Peking duck – A favourite of the Emperor’s court and the upper class elite during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), Peking duck quickly spread throughout Chinese society to become a national favourite and a symbol of China.

Day 4: The Great Wall

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Today we will rise early to beat the crowds and drive approximately 2 hours to China’s most iconic and magnificent sight, the Great Wall of China. We will head to the Mutianyu Section where we will toast your trip with a glass of champagne. There is a cable car at this section of the wall to take you up the side of the hill, you will be given approximately 2 hours to explore. Visit the Jade Museum before returning to Beijing where you will take a 40 minute rickshaw ride through the warren-like hutongs before mastering the skills of calligraphy. Spend the evening in the lively Houhai area which is home to many dining options and bars.



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 Museum – Learn about one of China’s most symbolic and important materials: jade, at this comprehensive factory. Understand how to tell if jade is real or fake and watch artisans at work, carving this emerald stone into works of art.

Hutongs – The Mongol rulers of Beijing established this style of housing in the 13th century as tenancy for the growing population of the city. Hutongs were designed to reflect the Chinese system of Fengshui with 4 hutongs joining together to make a courtyard in the middle, known as Siheyuan. In more recent times, the hutong suburbs were in jeopardy of disappearing, but a fierce debate between developers and those who fought to protect the architecture and the hutong way of life diminished the threat.

Day 5: Beijing – Xian

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning you transfer approximately 1 hour to Beijing airport for your 2 hour flight to Xian. Later stroll on the beautifully preserved 14th century city walls that enclose Xian's old town. 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. This evening there will be an option to see a performance of traditional Tang Dynasty dancing.



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 14th 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.

Day 6: Terracotta Warriors

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Spend the morning viewing the enigmatic ranks of the life-sized Terracotta Warriors with an expert guide. The Museum of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses is located approximately 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 will take about 2 and a half hours to explore. Later meet one of the discoverers of these enigmatic soldiers who will describe his unbelievable discovery and visit the Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition centre to see smaller models of the warriors being made. This evening watch a traditional dumpling demonstration before dining on this delicious cuisine.



Destination Information

Terracotta Warriors – One of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century, this unearthed terracotta army is comprised of over 7,000 soldiers, horses and chariots. The army was built in life-sized form by thousands of workers and designed by Emperor Qin Shi Huang to defend himself in the afterlife.

Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition 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.

Day 7: Xian – Lhasa

Meals included: Breakfast

Fly 3 hours to Lhasa, the capital of spiritual Tibet. The afternoon is at leisure to help acclimatise to the altitude.

Please note Lhasa is at an altitude of 3,700M. All passengers should rest and stay well hydrated to acclimatise to the higher altitude.



Destination Information

Lhasa – Historically and spiritually a centre for Buddhism, Lhasa is home to many culturally significant sights, including the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple and the Norbulingka Summer Palace. Set on the Tibetan Plateau, Lhasa is one of the highest cities in the world, reaching heights of 3,700m.

Day 8: Lhasa

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning take part in a Thangka Workshop, a traditional Buddhist style of painting. Next visit the Sera Monastery, a renowned seat of Buddhist learning and witness the monks debating. Enjoy an evening at leisure. Please be sensitive whilst at the temple as religion is an extremely sensitive topic in China. This is not a chance to converse with the monks, you will be able watch the monks debating between themselves and learning scriptures.



Destination Information

Thangka Painting – The sacred art of thangka painting dates back to the 7th century, traditionally the paintings are not only valued for their aesthetic beauty but for their help in meditational practices.

Sera Monastery – The Sera Monastery is one of the ‘Great Three’ monasteries in Tibet located 5km outside of Lhasa. Although its monk population is rather small, there is still a bustle of activity, especially in the morning and late afternoon, when you can see debates on religious theory.

Day 9: Lhasa

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning visit the iconic palace of Potala, the largest monastery in the world. Sitting atop Red Mountain, the Potala Palace is painted in a traditional Tibetan blend of deep red and stark white. At the Potala Palace there are over 1000 steps. A small torch can be helpful to make your surroundings clearer. Wander around the Barkhor to see traditionally dressed locals, stalls of religious trinkets and prostrating pilgrims. Inside the Jokhang Temple, the sacred centre of Tibetan Buddhism, the



devotion is palpable as queues of people worship in the flickering light of yak butter candles. Sightseeing at the Jokhang Temple will also involve climbing many steps and walking over uneven surfaces in dim light. Later learn how to make the local dish of Momo dumplings.

Destination Information

Potala Palace – The former winter residence of the Dalai Lama, the Potala Palace has long been a symbol of Tibetan Buddhism, and struggles between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government. Abandoned by the Buddhist spiritual leader in 1950, the Potala Palace now acts as a museum of old treasures and intricate shrines.

Barkhor – Encircling the Jokhang Temple, the Barkhor is a cluster of narrow streets that acts as a circuit of pilgrimage for Buddhists round the Jokhang. There are many stalls here where you can peruse for Tibetan trinkets, religious relics and exquisite jewellery.

Jokhang Temple – Considered the most important and sacred temple in Tibet, the Jokhang Temple is located amongst Barkhor and dates back to the 7th century. The architecture is a simple blend of Indian, Chinese and Nepalese designs and is a mix of stunning colours both inside and out.

Day 10: Lhasa

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Drive 2 hours to through the stunning landscapes to Yamdrok Lake, a fresh water lake high in the mountains, where you can enjoy a leisurely walk. On the return to Lhasa you will visit a local family to learn more about Tibetan culture.



Destination Information

Yamdrok Lake – One of the three sacred lakes of Tibet, Yamdrok is a freshwater lake with magnificent turquoise waters. The Lake is thought to be able to help the Tibetans find the reincarnated soul of the Dalai Lama.

Day 11: Lhasa - Chengdu

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Transfer to the airport for your 2 hour flight to Chengdu. The afternoon will be at leisure to explore independently.

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 12: Chengdu

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will visit China's most famous resident, the Giant Panda at the Panda Conservation Centre, where you can learn about China's celebrated bear. 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 and half hours on foot and there are electric carts offered by private vendors and can be organised at your own cost. Later visit Matchmaker's Corner where you can watch parents search for suitable suitors for their children and visit a traditional tea house. This evening dine on a traditional Sichuan Hot Pot Dinner.



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.

Sichuan Hot Pot – 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.

Day 13: Chengdu – Yangtze River Cruise

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Drive 4 hours to Chongqing where you will stroll through Ciqikou, a historic district full of traditional architecture. Enjoy dinner before boarding your luxurious Yangtze River cruise vessel this evening. Your spacious cabin will provide a peaceful sanctuary – with a private balcony and panoramic glass windows so you are always able to admire the scenery floating by.



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.

Further note: 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 dollars per person however this amount can vary and for security reasons, it is not always possible to disembark at all ports of call.

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 mountain of Tanggula in the south western 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 14: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

If you would like to take part, start the day with a Tai Chi session, there will also be an optional excursion to Fengdu Ghost City. This afternoon visit the Shibaozhai Temple, an 18th century architectural marvel. This small temple was built at the top of a nine-storey pavilion clinging to the sheer south bank near Qutang Gorge. Disembark from the ship to the dock close to the pavilion's entrance. Sightseeing here involves climbing the nine storeys inside the building, you will be off the ship for 2 hours. This evening the captain will hold a welcome party before dinner.



Destination Information

Shibaozhai - is a nine storey temple, named after the hill on which it stands. Dating back to the 18th century, the Shibaozhai temple was built during the Xianfeng Emperor's reign and is an example of Buddhist architecture. The temple is said to have been constructed without the use of nails.

Day 15: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Prepare for breathtaking vistas as the ship passes through Wu and Qutang gorges. Switching to smaller vessels take a relaxing trip on the Lesser Three Gorges Stream or Equally impressive Shennong Stream, cruising through the beautiful and narrow gorges for approximately 15km. Many protected species make the stunning peaks their home, including monkeys, mountain goats, deer and wild boar. There will also be an optional excursion to The White Emperor City today and a range of on board activities to take part in.



Destination Information

Lesser Three Gorges - On both sides impressive stone cliffs are interspersed with surrounding rural scenery and forested areas. The Lesser Three Gorges refers to the three separate valleys of the Daning River, namely "Dragon-Gate Gorge", "Misty Gorge" and "Emerald Gorge".

Shennong Stream - This crystal clear stream flows from north to south through stunning deep gorges finally merging with the Yangtze to the east of the mouth of Wu Gorge.

Day 16: Yangtze River Cruise

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Visit the Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world. Disembark the ship and drive approximately 20 minutes passing through the surrounding areas (the coach is not permitted to stop for photos) and will drop your group off at the viewing area above the ship locks to truly appreciate the scale of this hydroelectric project. There is a small museum and a lookout, the sightseeing will involve around 1 hour on foot. You will then continue upstream, passing through the Xiling Gorge, our boat must negotiate the five-tiered Three Gorges Dam ship lock. Check-out of your cabin, disembark the ship in Yichang and continue your journey to the airport for your 2 hour flight to Shanghai.

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. The Three Gorges Dam 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 the purpose of flood control, electricity, navigation, and irrigation.

Shanghai - Once known as the 'Paris of the East', Shanghai is now one of Asia's most influential cities. Prior to communist arrival in 1949, Shanghai was a city with European-style mansions and was the most important trading port in Asia. Today it presents a blend of cultures; the modern and the traditional, along with the European and oriental. Modern skyscrapers intermingle with 1920s 'shikumen' buildings. This combination is what attracts millions of visitors each year.

Day 17: Shanghai

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's explorations include the peaceful Yu Gardens and the atmospheric alleys of the old town. Admire the magnificent colonial architecture that lines the Huangpu River with a stroll along the Bund before visiting a Silk Museum. Discover the antiquities of the impressive Shanghai Museum before dining on delicious Shanghainese cuisine at Shunfeng. Sightseeing today involves a full day of touring around the centre of the city with 4 hours on foot. This evening, head to the Jinmao Tower's Cloud 9 bar for a farewell cocktail overlooking the Huangpu River.



Destination Information

Yu Gardens - The Yu Gardens is seen as one of the most perfect examples of Chinese garden style. Built by the Ming-era governor, Pan Yunduan, as a retirement gift for his father, the Yu Gardens is home to exquisite jade rock, goldfish-filled ponds and stunning, tranquil pavilions.

The Bund - Recognised as Shanghai's former 'Wall Street', the Bund is home to an impressive collection of buildings from the early trade houses of the 1850s to the glamorous Art Deco modernism of the 1920s. Originally the home of the foreign population of Shanghai, the Bund's architecture has inherited much western influence and is a stark contrast to the Pudong skyline, sitting across the Huangpu River.

Shanghai Museum - One of the most esteemed and acclaimed museums in China, the Shanghai Museum is a comprehensive collection of the Middle Kingdom's millennia old history. Sprawled over five floors, one could spend half, if not a full day exploring. The shape of the museum was designed to resemble a Chinese vessel, known as a Ding.

Day 18: Depart Shanghai

Meals included: Breakfast

Any time before your flight is at leisure. After check out, transfer to the airport for your onward flight. You will arrive on the same day or following day back into the UK. On arrival at the airport in the UK, be met by your airport chauffeur who will transfer you back home.

China & Spiritual Tibet Travel Information

Visas

A visa is required for entry into China. A standard visa processing service is included in your tour cost for UK and EU passport holders. 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 £60 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. These details will be available to your national escort should they be required. 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.

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.

We have included most of your breakfast and lunch meals throughout your itinerary and some evening meals. For these included meals we have arranged for you to dine in not only high-end restaurants, but those that allow customers to experience and taste the real flavours of the local area. For those evening meals which are not included, this gives you the opportunity to select your own dining experience, allowing you to immerse in the local culture or take advantage of your hotels' many restaurant options.

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 those with 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!

Evenings at Leisure

To give you more flexibility and choice when travelling on selected Exclusive tours; we have carefully balanced special highlight meals with evenings at leisure so that you can explore the many culinary delights that China has to offer. Alternatively, you can use this time to enjoy the facilities of your luxurious accommodation. Your National Escort will be happy to provide you with advice about good places to eat, and assist in the booking of transportation to get you there (at your own expense).

Accommodation

As the 'China & Spiritual Tibet' tour is part of our Exclusive Collection, you will be staying in international 5* accommodation throughout your tour. We have provided time in your itinerary to have the opportunity to experience the facilities of your accommodation, or relax, allowing you to get the most out of the hotel experience. On this tour you will spend 3 nights aboard a cruise ship on the Yangtze River, the ships we use feature fully air conditioned, deluxe cabins with large windows leading out onto private balconies. All cabins have private bathrooms.

Transport

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our Exclusive Collection for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. 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.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

Cruise ships: You will be cruising on the Century Paragon or Century Legend; each ship offers a mixture of Chinese and western cuisine, a range of entertainment and a spacious sun deck with Panoramic views. There will be a laundry service provided on board; the laundry service is for 15 items per person (excluding suits, tuxedos, ties, scarfs, evening dresses and overcoats). Please note that the cruise ship and all shore excursions arranged by the cruise are on a shared basis.

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.

Chinese 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 on 28th January 2017 and 16th February 2018. Golden Week public holidays fall annually between 1-3 May and 1-7 October.

Optional activities

A list of optional activities and approximate costs will be provided with your final documents. These can be arranged by your guide and are paid for locally.

Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs; so in some cities, we will visit a museum or exhibition 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.

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 16 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling. The minimum age of customers on this tour is 18 years old.

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.

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.

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 approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

Itinerary changes

It is our intention is 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 will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

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