



## Chinese New Year

Discovery Tour | 10 Days | Moderate

Hong Kong – Xian – Beijing

Chinese New Year is the world's biggest festival and there is no better place to experience it than the great cities of China. Immerse yourself in Chinese culture and celebrate this special time of year like the local do; with fireworks, family festivities and temple fairs.

- Experience Hong Kong New Year Parade
- Enjoy the fireworks over Victoria Harbour
- Explore the dazzling Lantern Festival in Xian
- Discover the wonders of Longqing Gorge Ice and Snow Festival
- Sip champagne on the Great Wall of China



### A Chinese New Year tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Meals as stated on 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, meals not stated in the itinerary, insurance of any kind, tipping and early check in or late checkout. These are all payable locally.*

### Discovery Tours:

Designed for those who wish to be further immersed in the authentic charm of Asia; our Discovery Tours include more cultural and active experiences. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience. Our Discovery tours include:

- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- More evenings at leisure for independent exploration

### Moderate Tours:

'Chinese New Year' 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
- You will be required to get on and off the boat on Victoria Harbour without assistance

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.

## Itinerary – Chinese New Year

### Days 1-2: Hong Kong

Meals included: Dinner

Fly overnight to Hong Kong, the ultimate east-meets-west destination. On arrival, be met by your guide and transfer 1 hour to your hotel. This evening, visit a beautiful Chinese New Year flower market in Victoria Park and dine on a sumptuous New Year's Eve celebration dinner of Chinese cuisine.



#### Destination Information

**Hong Kong** - Nestled in the Pearl River Estuary, Hong Kong is the personification of culture blend. Influenced by Chinese and British traditions, way of life and habits, Hong Kong has emerged from being a small fishing community to one of the leading financial districts and richest cities in the world. With its deep water harbour, stunning mountain vistas and urban glamour, Hong Kong is a buzzing blend of excitement and mystery.

**Victoria Park Chinese New Year Flower Market** – Located in Hong Kong Island's beautiful spacious Victoria Park, the Chinese New Year Flower Market is a buzzing sight of rows of stalls selling a myriad of flowers in celebration of the New Year.

### Day 3: Hong Kong

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today is New Year's Day! Start as many Chinese do and receive your Hong Bao (red envelope) with a small amount of Hong Kong Dollars, a wish of good luck and fortune for the New Year. Continue your day of festivities with a visit to Wong Tai Sin Temple, one of Hong Kong's most revered Taoist temples and Chi Lin Nunnery, a Buddhist temple complex located on Diamond Hill in Kowloon, you will spend approximately 3 hours sightseeing. This evening have an early dinner before watching a mesmerising and colourful parade of lions, dancers and lights march through Kowloon's popular Tsim Sha Tsui district. The Chinese New Year parade begins at 8pm this evening and will last approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes. You will have assigned seats for the parade.

#### Destination Information

**Wong Tai Sin Temple** – Dedicated to the Great Immortal Wong, known for his healing power, the Wong Tai Sin Temple is a Taoist Temple dating back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is located on beautiful Lion Rock on the north side of Kowloon.

**Chi Lin Nunnery** – Dating back to the 1930s, the Chi Lin Nunnery is a large Buddhist complex built entirely of wood without the use of nails. Inside the temple, there are statues of Buddha, Guanyin and Bodhisattvas.

**Chinese New Year Parade** – One of the most exciting parades throughout China, the Hong Kong Chinese New Year Parade features colourful floats, lively dragons and musicians, all bringing the crowds into the New Year.

## Day 4: Hong Kong

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning head to beachside for some leisurely sightseeing at Stanley Market where there are many opportunities to browse the local wares. Next, take the famous 5 minute Peak Tram up Victoria Peak, Hong Kong Island's highest point and the ultimate location for panoramic vistas over Victoria Harbour and the Hong Kong skyline. Enjoy some free time for dinner before taking a boat out on Victoria Harbour this evening to watch an unforgettable firework display over Hong Kong's most famous skyscrapers. This evening you will disembark from Hong Kong port at approximately 18:30. The fireworks will begin at 20:00 and last approximately 20 minutes. Please note there are no wheelchair facilities to get on and off the boat for the firework display.



### Destination Information

**Stanley Market** – Located on the south side of Hong Kong Island in the district of Stanley, Stanley Market is an open-air market within walking distance of the stunning beach. Take the opportunity to shop for bargains with items ranging from clothes to Chinese trinkets.

**Victoria Peak** – Sit on the west side of Hong Kong Island, Victoria Peak offers stunning panoramas of the Hong Kong skyline and the Victoria Harbour – truly the best viewing point on Hong Kong Island.

**Chinese New Year Fireworks** – There is no better location than Victoria Harbour to enjoy the spectacular Chinese New Year fireworks display. Watch as colourful flower-shaped explosions light up the sky above the iconic Hong Kong skyline.

## Day 5: Hong Kong - Xian

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

This morning, fly 2 and a half hours to Xian, China's ancient capital. On arrival transfer 1 hour to your hotel for check in before taking part in a dumpling demonstration this afternoon, an important ritual of the Chinese New Year celebrations, as well as delicious. Later, stroll for around 2 hours through the candescent Chinese lanterns at the Tang Paradise Scenic Area, home of the city's Lantern Festival.



### 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 fare, Xian is a must see destination.

**Chinese Dumplings** – Chinese dumplings, known as jiaozi, are a common dish of the Chinese New Year celebrations. Usually, families stay up till midnight making these delicious treats. Usually, a coin is hidden in one of the dumplings; he who finds it is said to have a lucky and fortunate new year.

**Lantern Festival** – Dating back to the Han Dynasty, the Lantern Festival is a very important aspect of the Chinese New Year. Lanterns come in all shapes and sizes, including those shaped like animals. The lantern is supposed to represent letting go of our past lives and getting new ones.

## Day 6: Xian

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Drive 1 hour to spend the morning viewing the formidable ranks of terracotta soldiers and horses. 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 approximately 2 and half hours on foot. Visit the Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition centre to see smaller models of the warriors being made. Later explore the exotic and industrious Muslim Quarter, Xian's Islamic centre and take a stroll on the Ancient city walls.

### 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 Shihuang, 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.

**Muslim Quarter** – The Muslim Quarter is the hub of Xian's Islamic community and is home to many stalls selling a myriad of snack foods, a trove of silks and fabrics, and delightful oriental knick-knacks.

**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.

## Day 7: Xian – Beijing

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Transfer to the airport and fly 1 hour and 50 minutes to Beijing, the capital of China. This afternoon spend 2-3 hours visiting Ditan Temple or Longtan for the annual temple fair where bright, red lanterns are lined in rows above. This evening, dine on succulent Peking duck, a favourite of the emperors.



### 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.

**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 8: Beijing

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning, head 2 hours northwest of the city to the Badaling Section of the Great Wall of China, arguably China's most iconic and world-famous sight. Toast your trip with a glass of champagne as you gaze over stunning countryside panoramas and the walk snaking through the greenery. Continue 50 minutes to picturesque Longqing Gorge, home of the Ice and Snow Festival where sculptures of animals, plants and more are created out of ice and snow. Return 2 and a half hours to Beijing.

### 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.

## Day 9: Beijing

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Walk across the lengths of Tiananmen Square and into the magnificent Forbidden City, former Royal Seat of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Admire the stunning palatial scenery and gold tinted roofs of the red-hued palaces. Visit a Pearl Museum, and this afternoon, meet with a local family who you will join in making paper decorations and Chinese calligraphy in celebration of the Chinese New Year.

### 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.

## Day 10: Depart Beijing

Meals included: Breakfast

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.



## Chinese New Year 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.

### Evenings at Leisure:

Due to the more intrepid nature of our Discovery clients, and to give you more flexibility and choice when travelling on selected Discovery 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 hotel. 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).

### 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 typically 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 are 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 those with medical reasons can be quite difficult to explain. While our ground partners will do everything, they can 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!

## 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. All



group tour hotels 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 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 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.



## 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 each city, 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 29 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.

## 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.

## 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 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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