



## *Treasures of Travel*

### *Treasures of China Tour, 2023* *~ 18 days/ 16 nights ~*

Imagine one tour that offers some great treasures of the country with a civilization stretching back continuously some five thousand years, this is Treasures of China; learn more about friendly people who had been pioneers in so many of the world's inventions throughout the history.

#### *Day 1*

Depart the USA.

#### *Day 2 ~ Beijing*

After your arrival in Beijing and going through the airport formalities, you will be met by local guide and **transferred** to the hotel.

Although the area southwest of Beijing was inhabited by early humans some 500,000 years ago the earliest recorded settlements in the Chinese historical sources date from 1045 BC. It emerged as a cultural and political force that would shape the destiny of China only with the 13<sup>th</sup> century Mongol occupation of China. The city's name Beijing (Northern Peace) dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> century when the first Ming emperor Hongwu renamed it. During the Ming rule Beijing was considerably expanded. Later with the Manchus invasion the Qing dynasty was established. The city changed hands with some foreign or domestic forces, the last time it happened in 1949 when the Peoples' Liberation Army entered Beijing and soon it was declared 'Peoples Republic' by Mao Zedong.

#### *Day 3 ~ Beijing*

This morning we will start the sightseeing tour of Beijing with a visit to **Tiananmen Square** -the world's biggest public square and **the Forbidden City** which is the largest and best-preserved cluster of ancient buildings in China and was home to two dynasties of emperors, the Ming and the Qing. We will have lunch in the **Hutongs**, followed by a walking tour of the Hutong old neighborhood (dating back about one thousand years, these are neighborhoods of narrow, twisting streets where passageways connect to courtyards of traditional compact homes) to see how people lived in Beijing for hundreds of years and some still do. Free time to rest and adjust to time difference.

### *Day 4 ~ Beijing*

Today our first stop will be at **the Great Wall at Mutianyu** which has the cable car in both directions. Mutianyu's 2.5km (1.55 mile) stretch of the Wall allows you to walk for more than an hour as you explore 22 watchtowers and the valley on both sides of the Wall. After lunch we will return to the city to visit **the Lama Temple**, this is Beijing's most colorful temple, with beautiful rooftops, stunning frescoes, magnificent decorative arches, tapestries, incredible carpentry and a great pair of Chinese lions, most importantly known for the 5 storey tall Buddha carved from one tree trunk. This is the most renowned Tibetan Buddhist temple outside Tibet.

### *Day 5 ~ Beijing*

The first site we will tour today is **the Summer Palace**; this is where the royalty came to escape the unbearable summer heat which roasted the Forbidden City. We will drive by the Olympic Games site on the way there. Next we will head to **the Temple of Heaven**, set in 267-hectare park with a gate at each point of the compass, it originally functioned as a vast stage of solemn rites performed by the Son of Heaven, who came here to pray for good harvests, peoples sins and seek divine clearance. Before dinner we will walk through the **Rainbow Market**, and end our day at the former Garden Home of Prince Li, Dazhaimen Restaurant of Family Bai with a traditional Chinese dinner.

### *Day 6 ~ Beijing ~ Xian*

In the morning we will visit Prince **Gong's Mansion** of the Qing Dynasty. After lunch you will be taken to the airport for your afternoon **flight to Xian**. In Xian you will be **met by local guide** and **transferred to** your hotel in the central area.

### *Day 7 ~ Xian*

Our day will start with a visit to the **Old Muslim Quarter** and the **Gao Family Mansion** which is over 400 years old. Next we will tour the **Shaanxi Provincial Museum**. After lunch we will head to the famous **Army of Terra Cotta Warriors** site, which is a collection of terracotta sculptures depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China. It is a form of funerary art buried with the emperor in 210–209 BC and its purpose was to protect the emperor in his afterlife. The site was discovered in 1974 by local farmers digging a well. The figures include warriors, chariots and horses, as well as other terracotta non-military figures which include officials, acrobats, strongmen and musicians.

This evening we will enjoy the famous **Tang Dynasty Dinner and Show**.

### *Day 8 ~ Xian ~ Chengdu*

In the morning we will visit **Xuexi Alley**, which in the heyday of the majestic Tang Dynasty (618-907), was home to merchants and tradesmen from home and abroad. Across the country, it was dubbed "Foreign Trade Street," or sometimes "Diplomacy Avenue." Xuexi Alley was also regarded as the starting point of the Silk Road, the transcontinental cobweb of trade routes that linked the ancient world from China to Rome. Next we will tour the **Big Wild Goose Pagoda** - original pagoda was built in 652 AD with only five stories but it has been restored and added to many times; before transferring to the airport, if time permits we will stop at the Yangling Mausoleum - the joint mausoleum of Emperor Jingdi and Empress Wang, his consort which is

over 2,500 years old; located near the airport. Upon your arrival in Chengdu you will be **met by local guide** and **transferred** to your hotel. A local Sichuan dinner will be featured this evening.

### *Day 9 ~ Chengdu*

Our first stop of the day will be at the **Giant Panda Breeding Research Base** in the morning, as this is time when the Pandas are most active. After lunch we will tour **Yellow Dragon Creek Village** which is a UNESCO site, kept exactly the way it was built over 200 years ago. It has a beautiful setting on the river and is great place to walk around and enjoy its atmosphere. A special performance of the **Sichuan Opera** known for the Face Changing will end our evening after dinner.

### *Day 10 ~ Chengdu ~ Guilin*

Today's sightseeing in Chengdu includes a **boat ride to Leshan** which is the home to the Leshan Giant Buddha, the largest stone-carved Buddha in the world, which was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1996. After touring the site and the temple grounds, we will get back to the city, and you will be transferred to the airport for your **flight to Guilin**. Upon arrival in Guilin you will be **met by local guide** and **taken to the hotel**.

### *Day 11 ~ Guilin*

In the morning we will head to **Seven Star Park**, named so because of the seven peaks of the surrounding mountains, to enjoy the beautiful scenery, as well as to see the local people doing their exercises and for the possibility of joining them if you wish so. Our next stop will be in ancient **Daxu village** to discover traditional local lifestyle by strolling through its stone streets, passing courtyards and Ming Dynasty-era bridges; on the way visiting some of the home workshops to see the local people at work. We will tour and stop in the **market** for lunch before returning to the city and visiting **Reed Flute Cave**, Guilin's one of the most interesting attractions for over 1,200 years, which is over 180 million years old. Reed Flute Cave is filled with a large number of stalactites, stalagmites and rock formations in all sorts of weird and wonderful shapes.

After dinner we will take a **boat ride on the 5 City Lakes** to enjoy beautifully illuminated Pagodas along the shores, as well as observe fishermen fishing with their birds.

### *Day 12 ~ Guilin ~ Yangshuo*

Driving through the countryside will get us to the boat dock where you will board the **Li River Cruise**, from Guilin to Yangshuo, which is one of the most beautiful parts of China. Gorgeous Karst peaks will give you surprises at each bend of the limpid river. You will see water buffalo patrol the fields, peasants reap rice paddies, school kids and fisherman float by on bamboo rafts on the way. With its breathtaking scenery and taste of life far removed from metropolis, the Li River Cruise is the centerpiece of any trip to this part of the country. Once you arrive in Yangshuo, you will be transferred to your hotel.

\*The special river show, "Impression Sanjie Liu" is performed here each night with over 900 local people. It is optional since it may be cancelled if the weather is poor. Please ask your guide about tickets.

### *Day 13 ~ Yangshuo*

Today you will have a free day at your leisure to involve yourself in the activities you please. You may take it easy and enjoy this wonderful small town at slow pace; or there is Biking and Bamboo rafting available if you like. Please ask your guide about many other activity options, including great shopping opportunity. (No dinner)

### *Day 14 ~ Yangshuo ~ Guilin ~ Shanghai*

The guide will inform you about what time you will be **transferred** to the Guilin Airport for your **flight to Shanghai**. Upon your arrival in Shanghai you will be **met by local guide** and **transferred** to the hotel in the central area. If you feel like exploring little bit of Shanghai this evening, you could take a walk along Bund and Nanjing Roads, or it could be done other time while in Shanghai. The Bund, is a famous waterfront and regarded as the symbol of Shanghai for hundreds of years, the most famous and attractive sight which is at the west side of the Bund are the 26 various buildings of different architectural styles. Nanjing Road is the main shopping street of Shanghai, and one of the busiest in the world.

### *Day 15 ~ Shanghai*

We will start the sightseeing of Shanghai with a visit to the **Yu Garden** in the Old Area of the city to experience the #1 Garden in China. Note the 250-year-old Tea House on the crooked bridge leading to the Garden. After lunch we will head to tour the **Jade Buddha Temple** founded in 1882 with two jade Buddha statues imported to Shanghai from Burma/Myanmar by sea and a smaller reclining Buddha representing Buddha's death. The temple now also contains a much larger reclining Buddha made of marble, donated from Singapore. Next will be the **French Quarter**, once designated for the French, nowadays it is extremely popular shopping and dining area, with the tree-lined avenues and their many Tudor mansions it still retains an air of the "Paris of the East".. In the evening the dinner will be followed by the famous Shanghai Acrobats Show.

### *Day 16 ~ Shanghai ~ Jin Xi ~ Suzhou*

In the morning we will have a bus ride to **JinXi**, a relaxing little place nestled along the riverbanks, one of the small old villages that once were the summer homes of officials from Shanghai during the Qing Dynasty. You may enjoy lunch on your own choice at any of the small family restaurants along the canal. In the evening we will arrive in Suzhou and check in at the hotel for overnight.

### *Day 17 ~ Suzhou ~ Shanghai*

Suzhou is known for its Silk and fantastic Gardens. We will explore one of them called the **Humble Administrator's Garden** known as the #2 Garden in all China. We will also make a visit to #1 **Silk factory** to see how silk is processed, as well as enjoy a wonderful live Silk Fashion show. Note the wonderful Silk Comforters being made by hand. The second half of the day will be dedicated to touring the Garden of the **Nets and Tiger Hill Park** which is home to the large Pagoda built in 1492 while our country was being discovered. We will end the day with

a stop at QianTang Cha Ren tea house for some late afternoon snack and tea before returning to the hotel.

### *Day 18 ~ Shanghai ~ Home*

You will be transferred to the airport for your departure flight home.

### *Departure Dates: Based on 18 days/16 nights*

April 12 ~ 29

September 10 ~ 27

### *Tour Price China portion using local guides:*

\$3,900 per person in double room based on 10-12 guests traveling together

\$ 1,200 Single supplement

### *Services Included:*

- Accommodation for 16 nights at selected 4 and 5 star hotels
- All breakfasts
- All dinners **except on free day, on day 13**
- Two small bottles of water per day/per guest
- All transfers
- Leshan boat ride
- Five City Lake boat ride
- Li River Cruise
- All entry fees to the sites mentioned in **bold**
- Local guides
- 4 domestic flights (Beijing-Xian/Xian-Chengdu/Chengdu-Guilin/Guilin-Shanghai)
- Complete information package with itinerary, travel and visa information, and luggage tags