



*Ultimate China! Travelling a full circle that begins and ends in Beijing, you will discover temples, tombs, palaces and ancient cities, uncovering culture, tradition, religion and local communities along the way. This is China at its very best - it's the full monty!*



**WHAT YOU SEE AND WHAT YOU GET**

**Trip Highlights**

- Beijing - Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, UNESCO listed Emperor's Summer Palace, Silk Alley markets, Cloisonne Factory, Hutong area of Beijing and Chinese Acrobatic Show
- Badaling - UNESCO listed Great Wall of China
- Luoyang – UNESCO listed Longman Caves and stone carvings, White Horse Buddhist Temple, Peony Square activities
- Xi'an - UNESCO listed Terracotta Warriors, Clay warrior workshop, Big Wild Goose Pagoda, City Wall and bike ride, Muslim Quarter, Great Mosque and market.
- Shanghai - Oriental Pearl TV Tower, Jade Buddha Temple, The Bund and Old

Shanghai, Yuyuan Garden, Huang River skyline of Pudong City

- Suzhou - UNESCO listed gardens, Grand Canal and waterways, Silk factory, Humble Administrator's Garden
- Qufu – UNESCO listed Confucius Mansion, temple and forest.
- Bu Yung village – village, homestead and kindergarten
- Jinan – UNESCO listed Mt Tai Shan (Peaceful Mountain). Heaven Street, Cloud Bridge, Jade Emperor's Temple

**What's Included**

- 14 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 2 dinners including a Traditional Peking Duck dinner in Beijing and 2 Hotpot lunches
- 11 nights 3-4 star hotels (basic 2/3 star in Qufu)
- 3 overnight trains (soft sleeper cabin)
- Chinese acrobatic performance
- Rickshaw ride through Beijing's Hutongs
- Xi'an - bike ride on medieval City Wall
- Shanghai - Huangpu River Cruise
- Suzhou - historic Grand Canal cruise
- Touring of Beijing, Badaling, Luoyang, Xi'an, Shanghai, Suzhou, Qufu and Jinan
- Return cable car journey – Mt Tai Shan
- English speaking specialist guides at local sights
- All relevant transfers and transportation
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on day 1 and day 15
- Tour leader escorted for groups of 6 or more
- High speed train journey - Luoyang - Xi'an

**What's Not Included**

- Tipping Kitty: \$90 USD
- Entrance Fees: \$192 USD
- International flights and visa
- Tip for your tour guide. We recommend you allow USD\$3 - 5 per day, per traveller. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture

**DETAILED ITINERARY**

**Day 1 : Beijing**

Saturday. Beijing - Welcome to China and the start of your holiday! Complimentary arrival transfer from the airport to our hotel. If arriving into Terminal 2, please turn right once you've passed customs to reach the pick up point. If arriving into Terminal 3, you will be met just outside of the restricted area.  
**Overnight - Beijing**

**Day 2 : Forbidden City**

Beijing. This morning, we enjoy a Welcome Meeting. Then, it's time to set off and see some of Beijing. We embark on some guided sightseeing of the nation's capital, the host of the 2008 Olympics.

Tiananmen Square partly framed by illustrious Chang-an Avenue is essentially the heart of Beijing. A patriotic vision of grandeur, Tiananmen Square is a square for the public and also home of the mausoleum of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, the Communist father of the Communist People's Republic and the striking Monument to the People's Heroes. Mao's gargantuan mausoleum is an austere behemoth in granite where since his death in 1976, he has lain in state in his crystal coffin. We'll have a stroll on the square, under the watchful eye of the dutiful guards. Perhaps one of Beijing's most famous sights is the Gate of Heavenly Peace. Up above the gate and looking out across to all his people, is a famous colour portrait of Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

The Gate of Heavenly Peace is the main entry point into the Forbidden City. A vision in grandeur with it's imperial yellow roofs and vermilion walls, the Forbidden City, once forbidden to all those except on imperial business until 1911, when the last emperor, Puyi, was turfed off his throne is a city within a city. Beijing was always a walled city but the Forbidden City, seat of the great emperors, was the innermost sanctum of the city. Built between 1406 and 1420, it served as the imperial palace for the Ming and Qing dynasties. We enjoy a guided walk through the city's many temples, grand halls and courtyards. An all-out assault on the eyes, it is said that the 720,000 sq m lavishly constructed Forbidden City boasts 9999 rooms!



Later we take a rickshaw ride through the Hutongs of Beijing, weaving through old back lanes, traditional courtyards and compact houses, gaining a fascinating snapshot of the city's traditional way of life. This evening, we enjoy a Welcome Dinner of Peking Duck at a city restaurant. **Overnight - Beijing (B, D)**

### Day 3 : The Great Wall



Beijing. Some say it can be seen from space, but unless you're a top gun at NASA, perhaps you'll never know. Instead, experience the real deal. Today, we travel beyond Beijing to Badaling, where we can walk (and almost climb on some sections) on the Great Wall. No matter how many pictures you've seen, the Great Wall of China is at once very impressive.

An enduring symbol of Chinese civilisation and genius, the UNESCO protected Great Wall of China was built as a defensive structure. Although the present wall dates mainly from the Ming dynasty, some 20 states and dynasties were involved in its immense construction over a period of 2,000 years and followed different routes and building extensions as required. Snaking some 6700 kms across barren hills, deserts, mountains and plateaux, the now partially ruinous Great Wall stretches east to west in northern China. At one time perhaps nearly 9700 kms long, the wall was garrisoned by nearly 1 million soldiers and featured over 1,000 fortified passes and 10,000 beacon towers.

Today, a visit offers a healthy, if steep and vertiginous walk, made all the more breathtaking by the stunning views. Before returning to the hotel we visit a cloisonne workshop, where we'll see firsthand the production of decorative items utilising the techniques of this practised and ancient craft.

Tonight, an eye boggling Chinese acrobatic performance. Swinging ropes, juggling hoops, spinning plates and human pyramids are just a few tricks these showstoppers pull out! **Overnight - Beijing (B, L)**

### Day 4 : Summer Palace

Beijing - Luoyang. A chance to cross a few palms with silver at Silk Alley markets, where even the most reluctant shoppers manage to walk away with a few desirable bargains!

Set on picturesque Kunming Lake is the Summer Palace. The buildings date back only to the turn of the 20th century, though the site goes back to the

12th century. It is said that the Dowager Empress Cixi liked to travel with a retinue of at least 1,000. Her arrival at the rebuilt Summer Palace in 1905 was met by 458 eunuchs, and her two main meals consisted of some 100 dishes.

Perhaps most famous of all the structures at the Summer Palace is the wonderful Long Corridor, a covered walkway 730m long, and extraordinarily hand-painted with scenes from Chinese history, legend and literature. An unusual is the solid marble boat on Kunming Lake! Tonight, we travel by train to Luoyang. **Overnight - Sleeper Train to Luoyang (B)**

### Day 5 : Longman Grottoes



Luoyang. Today we explore the UNESCO 6th Century Longman Caves etched into the cliffs of the Yi River. The 1300 caves (grottoes) are adorned with 100,000 statues and images of Buddha and his disciples carved during the Northern Wei Dynasty. Later we tour White Horse Temple, the first Buddhist temple in China. **Overnight - Luoyang (B, D)**

### Day 6 : Xi'an

Luoyang - Xi'an. In the wee hours of the morning we set out on foot to Peony Square to watch or partake in a little exercise. Hundreds of Chinese people practise ballroom dancing, performing tai chi, sword fighting and play sports like badminton and bean bag throwing at the break of dawn. After free time we board the new high speed express train to Xi'an (journey time approximately 2 hours). Evening at leisure. **Overnight - Xi'an (B)**

### Day 7 : Terracotta Warriors



Xi'an. Most famous for the Terracotta Warriors, perhaps the find of the 20th century and only just usurped by the discovery of King Tut's gold laden tomb in Egypt, Emperor Qin's Terracotta Warriors comprise more than 7,000 life-sized soldiers which

stand in military formation in excavated pits under the cover of a modern protective hanger. Made of local clay, no two faces are alike, each is said to be an individual portrait.

Emperor Qin's army of 2,200 year old terracotta warriors were discovered in 1974 by local farmers who happened to be digging a well. Previous emperors used to be buried with their slaves but slavery had been abolished. So, to make up for this, Qin had the warriors made to be buried near him to protect him in the afterlife. After exploring the site we visit a workshop where you'll see modern-day crafts people producing terracotta warrior figurines. This evening we offer an optional bolt on, Tang Dynasty dinner and performance with Chang'an music and dance. **Overnight - Xi'an (B, L)**

### Day 8 : Big Wild Goose Pagoda

Xi'an - Shanghai. Today, we tour the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, before enjoying a leisurely bike ride on Xi'an's medieval City Wall and visit the Muslim Quarter. The Big Wild Goose Pagoda is the enduring symbol of Xi'an which was first built in AD652 to hold sutras collected in India by a wandering monk. An incredible sight, the ancient City Wall and moat which dates back to the Ming Dynasty which dates back to the Ming Dynasty, is over 15 km in perimeter. Later we visit the local Muslim Quarter before journeying onward to Shanghai by overnight sleeper train. **Overnight - Sleeper Train to Shanghai (B, L)**

### Day 9 : City tour



Shanghai. Arrive Shanghai and hotel check in. Just the mere mention of 'Shanghai' conjures up mystery, romance and general decadence. Pre 1949, cosmopolitan Shanghai was a magnet for seekers of wealth, idle colonialists, explorers and the dispossessed. The city's oddities were due to the unusual circumstances of the city's existence. Written into the Treaty of Nanjing was the notion of extraterritoriality, which translated as foreign nationals not being bound by Chinese law, but rather by the laws of their own consuls. Basically anything went. Until 1949, foreigners dominated commerce, banking and industry, amassing huge fortunes and transforming the landscape of foreign concessionary sections of Shanghai. Everything went belly up in 1949, when Mao and the communists took to power and swept the good times and rock and roll away rather swiftly. A legacy of these heady times, is Shanghai's Bund where on and around this waterfront promenade



are a vast series of grandiose pre-1949 buildings. After four decades of austerity, economic reforms implemented by Deng Xiaoping, reawakened Shanghai.

Today our sightseeing of Shanghai takes in the awesome Oriental Pearl TV tower, the Jade Buddha Temple, charming Yuyuan Gardens and the Bund and Old City. This evening, enjoy a cruise on the Huangpu River. **Overnight - Shanghai (B)**

## Days 10-11 : Waterways



Shanghai - Suzhou - Shanghai - Qufu. On day 10 we journey to Suzhou by the new high speed train. A sort of oriental Venice, ancient Suzhou is interwoven by a series of striking canals and pretty waterways which feed a series of classical gardens, laid out here since the Song dynasty, a thousand years ago. They are justly famous across China. Suzhou sits very close to the Grand Canal. At 1800km, it is the longest canal on earth and ranks alongside the Great Wall as China's greatest engineering achievement. We enjoy a cruise and visit a silk workshop. The silk trade has flourished here since the Tang dynasty. Later, we return to Shanghai.

There's plenty to see and do in Shanghai and day 11 is free for you to venture to the Old City, French Quarter or opt to shop along the famous Nanjing road. This evening we bunk down in our soft sleeper train cabins en route to Qufu. **Overnight - Shanghai (1) Sleeper Train to Qufu (1) (B:2, L:1)**

## Day 12 : Qufu

Qufu, birthplace of Confucius and home to the Confucius Temple, ranks with Beijing's Forbidden City as a great classic Chinese architectural complex. With 466 rooms and over a kilometre long, the complex was built and dedicated to the descendants of the great sage, who lived here continuously for more than 2,500 years, spanning 77 generations. The grandeur and opulence of the mansion conveys the power and wealth of the mighty Kong clan and their head Yansheng Duke (Confucius' direct male descendant). The clan rose throughout imperial history as the family head was granted increased privileges. With the decline of imperial rule, the end was nigh and in 1940, the last of the family line - Kong Dechend - fled to Taiwan during the Japanese invasion. Not surprisingly, half of Qufu now claims descent from the Kongs.

After visiting the mansion and temple we take a rickshaw ride around the city wall and visit the eerie Confucius forest. The forest is studded with tombs

and graves of Kong family members dating back some centuries. Anyone with the surname Kong can still be buried here today. Evening stroll through the colourful night market. **Overnight - Qufu (B)**

## Day 13 : Bu Yang Village



Qufu - Bu Yang village - Mt Tai Shan - Jinan. A short drive leads us to Bu Yang Village. The principles of Communism and communal work and land ownership are somewhat still in place here. We stop for a light lunch at Mr Peng's (one of the party officials) home. Seated around the family's low to the ground lazy Susan, Mrs Peng serves up local dishes and copious bottles of beer. This is real village life!

A short stroll leads us to the village prep-school, (our Change 4 Children project) we step into the class room to be swarmed by the mass of 5yr olds all vying for our attention. Later we drive to Mt Tai Shan, perhaps the holiest of the five Chinese holy mountains devoted to Taoism. There are more than 6000 steps to the summit, streams of pilgrims take the challenge, we take the cable car. With stunning scenery and many ancient temples dotting the slopes we visit Heaven Street, Cloud Bridge and the Jade Emperor's temple. A short drive to Jinan. **Overnight - Jinan (B, L)**

## Day 14 : Jinan



Jinan - Beijing. Today, we embark on a short city sightseeing tour and enjoy a fabulous Hotpot lunch. Afternoon express train journey to Beijing. **Overnight - Beijing (B, L)**

## Day 15 : Beijing

Saturday. Beijing. Tour ends after breakfast and included onward transfer to airport. (B)

## Beijing

China's capital city, host of the 2008 Olympics, is also China's political, economic and cultural centre. Established in 1045 BC, for 800 years alone it served as the capital of several powerful dynasties. A heady mix of old and new, with stunning sights, excellent shopping at Silk Alley market and the traditional Hutongs, with alleys and courtyards sandwiched together in the old back lanes.

## Forbidden City

Built between 1406 and 1420, The Forbidden City served as the imperial palace for the Ming and Qing dynasties and is said to contain 9999 rooms. Residence of the emperors and focal point of the empire, entry was forbidden to all those, except on imperial business until 1911, when the last emperor, Puyi was overthrown. It is a giant complex, dominated by vast gates, temples, halls and palaces, replete with imperial yellow tiled roofs, surrounded by a protective moat.

## The Great Wall

An enduring symbol of Chinese civilisation and genius, the UNESCO protected Great Wall of China was built as a defensive structure. Some 20 states and dynasties were involved in its immense construction over a period of 2,000 years. Snaking some 6700 kms across barren hills, deserts, mountains and plateaux, the now partially ruinous Great Wall stretches east to west in northern China. At one time, the wall was garrisoned by nearly 1 million soldiers and featured over 1,000 fortified passes and 10,000 beacon towers. Today, a visit offers a healthy, if steep and vertiginous walk on perhaps one of the world's most legendary attractions.

## Terracotta Army - Xi'an

The discovery of Emperor Qin's army of 2,200 year old terracotta warriors was made in 1974 by a local farmer who happened to be digging a well. More than 7,000 life-sized warriors stand in military formation in excavated pits under the cover of a modern protective hanger. Made of local clay, no two faces are alike - each is said to be an individual portrait. Delicate excavation continues on site, where hundreds of warriors remain smashed like eggs, not due to the passage of time but rather a peasant revolt after the emperor's death.

## Shanghai

Pre - 1949, cosmopolitan Shanghai was a magnet for seekers of wealth, idle colonialists, explorers and the dispossessed. A legacy of these heady times, is Shanghai's Bund, where on and around this waterfront promenade, are a vast series of grandiose pre-1949 buildings. After four decades of austerity, economic reforms implemented by Deng Xiaoping reawakened Shanghai. Just across the Huangpu River is the new Shanghai, a high-tech development of sky scrapers, the centre piece of which is the rocket-shaped Oriental Pearl TV tower. Mercedes and BMW cars cruise the neon-lit streets, modern department stores rub shoulders with cool bars and Shanghai is staking it's claim to being China's foremost metropolis.



## Suzhou

Suzhou, a 2,500-year-old cultural city is located in an area of rivers that crisscross the Yangtze River Delta of southeastern China. In the city, boats bob along waterways interwoven with small bridges that run parallel to the streets and traditional houses built along them. Coupled with a stunning collection of UNESCO-listed gardens and famed for its silk, Suzhou is an oriental treasure. Just southeast of Suzhou is the charming Venetian-like town of Zhouzhuang. Surrounded as well as divided by lakes and rivers, various stone bridges offer amazing views of this pretty town that is popular with Chinese artists.

### KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

## Please Note

Collection of entrance fees and tipping kitty is collected in local currency, CNY - Chinese Yuan.

## Visas

### China Visa

Visas are required by all visitors to China. It is essential that a tourist visa is procured prior to travel. We will provide you with an invoice/ itinerary indicating that you are travelling to China on a pre-arranged holiday. Visa forms are also available from us and also supplied upon booking. The visa is valid for entry within 3 months, so you cannot apply any earlier. Please ensure your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of return from China. We also offer a visa service for those residing in the UK, please contact us for information. Visa requirements are subject to change. Visa procurement is also the responsibility of the traveller and not of On The Go Tours.

### Visa for Hong Kong

Most Western visitors to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China do not require a tourist visa issued in advance of travel. Currently, UK nationals can stay up to 180 days. Nationals of Australia, Canada, Eire, most other EU countries, New Zealand and the US do not require a visa for a stay not exceeding 90 days, while holders of RSA passports can remain for up to 30 days. If entering Hong Kong from mainland China and returning to mainland China a multiple Chinese entry visa is required.

### Visa for Tibet

Tibet - If travelling to Tibet, a Tibet Travel Permit is required. The permit will be arranged by our office in China. Please contact On The Go Tours prior to departure for the most up to date Tibetan entry information.

## Climate

In all, China has a great diversity of climates. To sum it up - China experiences hot summers in most parts of the country, very cold winters in the north and comfortable winters in the south! Sep-Oct is warm to hot and dry across the country. Nov-Mar is winter with very cool temps in the north, whilst mild in the south. If combining the north and south, you'll

experience 2 distinct weather patterns. Apr-May - perfect in the north, if a little humid and rainy in the south. Jun-Aug can bring a few showers.

## Health Requirements

It is recommended that you be vaccinated for Tetanus, Polio, Typhoid and Hepatitis A. A Malarial risk exists in remote areas of the south, and Rabies and Meningitis are present in Tibet and remote areas. Vaccination requirements can change so please check with your local health care provider before travel.

## Currency

USD, Euro and other major currencies can be converted into Chinese Yuan (CNY) prior to your departure or upon arrival to China. A number of ATM's are located in the baggage collection area at Beijing Airport should you wish to withdraw cash upon arrival. We recommend you bring a mix of cash and credit/ debit cards for use at ATM's. Exchange rates are subject to fluctuations.

- USD 1 = 6.5 CNY
- GBP 1 = 10 CNY
- AUD 1 = 6.2 CNY
- EURO 1 = 8.6 CNY

Note: In Tibet the Chinese Yuan is the only acceptable form of currency. If bringing foreign currency for exchange USD is best. ATM's and credit card facilities are limited.

## Holiday Money

Funds collected in China for entrance fees and tip kitty (if applicable to your holiday) or optional excursion that you may wish to participate are payable in local currency (CNY).

## Time

China is 8 hours ahead of GMT. The country operates on one time zone, so clocks are set according to Beijing time, meaning, given the size of the country, sunrise and sunset can occur at peculiar times!

## Essential Packing

As light as possible! In China most often portage is not available at railway stations and you will be required to carry your own luggage. Bags with wheels can be a hindrance when climbing several flights of stairs, though are a blessing when walking lengthy distances to reach our awaiting transportation.

- Food in China is very different to your local takeaway !If you prefer western snack food consider bringing a supply.
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swim costume, torch & umbrella for sun or rain.
- Comfortable closed in walking shoes for climbing the Great Wall
- DEET based mosquito repellent & antihistamine cream
- Chinese plugs come in at least 3 designs: 3 prong angle pins similar, though smaller than those used in Australia; 2 prong flat pins (type A) or 2 round pins, European style (type C). To cover all bases, pack a travel adaptor!

- Two spare passport photos & a photocopy of your passport
- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs.

## Arrival Transfers

If your tour or short stay includes an airport arrival transfer (as indicated in the 'What you Get' section of this Go Guide) our arrival procedure is as follows:

Arrive to Beijing International Airport, where after you have attended to customs and immigration formalities, please proceed to the arrival hall. If arriving to Beijing via Terminal 2, when exiting immigration to the arrivals hall, please turn right where our representative will be waiting. If arriving via Terminal 3 you will be met just outside the restricted area.

Please have your tour voucher handy and make it available to our representative who will be waiting for you in the arrivals hall, holding a prominent On The Go Tours logo signboard, ready to escort you to our awaiting transportation and onward to your tour start hotel

If, for any reason you have trouble locating our representative (remember Beijing Airport can be very busy) after waiting 30 minutes in the arrival hall or your flight to China is delayed please call the emergency contact number as stated on your tour voucher.

If travelling on our Eye on Shanghai Short Stay (with arrival via Shanghai Airport) or one of our 'Short Stays' where an airport arrival transfer is included in your holiday, the procedure for meeting you at the airport is the same as those detailed above.

## Toilets/Wahrooms

Public toilets, when found, are usually 'squats' - holes in the ground with footrests at either side and often don't possess a door! The custom is to wash with water from a jug or little pipe attached to the toilet using your left hand. Doesn't appeal? Here are some hints!

- Time yourself with the hotels you are staying at.
- If you are out and about, find the nearest hotel, restaurant, fast food outlet, or toilets at tourist attractions, which all tend to have Western style facilities.
- Ask your tour guide to make a stop.
- Pack a roll of toilet paper and anti-bacterial wipes for your own comfort.

## Travelling By Train

Fast and efficient, China's first rail lines were laid in the 19th century, and today, the government continues to invest heavily in this crucial mode of transport which connects many parts of the country. When travelling during the day, 'soft' seats, that is to say 'upholstered' seats are provided. For overnight travel, clients are accommodated in 'soft class' sleeper cabins. Aboard each wagon are 9 compartments that comprise 4 bunks per compartment. Four people of mixed sex share one compartment. On occasion, dependent upon group size, you may get the opportunity to share with local people on the overnight journey, though sometimes

## Mandarin Sunrise - 15 days



dependent upon how the Chinese Railways Booking Office configure the bookings, the cabin may be filled with four of our passengers. A dining wagon serves reasonably priced Chinese food of the noodles and rice variety, along with snacks and drinks. A very simple menu is published in English. On the Beijing - Xi'an service, there is also a small bar serving drinks including alcohol. Each wagon offers a WC and hand basin facility. At one end, is a Chinese squat-style WC, whilst at the other end is a modern Western-style WC. Cabins are lockable from the inside and luggage is stowed in overhead compartments and under the bottom bunk. Bed linen and slippers are supplied, and often there is a TV mounted on the wall at the end of each bed that may even work. Most channels are broadcast in Mandarin, excluding one English channel, which has little of interest on it!

### Porterage

In China most often porterage is not available at railway stations and you will be required to carry your own luggage. We recommend you pack as light as possible as there can be several flights of stairs and a lengthy walk to our awaiting transportation.