

Warriors & Dragons - 8 days

go guide

don't leave home without it



A World Of Discovery



Take your little warriors on a Chinese Adventure. Climb the Great Wall, see giant pandas, walk with the ever marching terracotta army in Xi'an and discover modern Shanghai.



WHAT YOU SEE AND WHAT YOU GET

Trip Highlights

- BEIJING - Tiananmen Square, Hutong areas of Beijing, Cloisonne Factory and Chinese Acrobatic Show
- BADALING - UNESCO listed Great Wall of China
- XI'AN- UNESCO listed Terracotta Warriors, Clay warrior workshop, Xi'an city wall bike ride.
- SHANGHAI - The Bund and Old Shanghai, cruise on Huangpu River and free time

What's Included

- 7 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 2 dinners
- 5 nights 3-4 star hotels
- 2 overnight trains (soft sleeper cabin)
- Chinese acrobatic performance

- Rickshaw ride through Beijing's Hutongs
- Xi'an - bike ride on medieval City Wall
- Excursion to Shaanxi Rare Wildlife Rescue and Breeding Centre to see Giant Panda and other animals
- Shanghai - Huangpu River Cruise
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on day 1 and day 8
- Touring of Beijing, Badaling, Xi'an, Shanghai
- Tour leader escorted for groups of 6 or more
- English speaking specialist guides at local sights
- All relevant transfers and transportation
- Maximum group size - 20 persons

What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: Adult \$40 USD/ Child \$25 USD
- Entrance Fees: Adult \$62 USD/ Child \$62 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. Huan ying, welcome to China! Airport arrival transfer and hotel check in. Remainder of the afternoon at leisure. **Overnight - Beijing**

Day 2 : The Great Wall



Some say it can be seen from space, but unless you're a top gun at NASA, you'll probably 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 plateau, 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.

This morning after our group welcome meeting we drive to beyond Beijing to Badaling where we'll walk a small section of this massive masterpiece of human endeavour. Afterwards we enjoy lunch and visit a cloisonne workshop, where we'll see firsthand the production of decorative items utilising the techniques of this practised and ancient craft.

Tonight, after dinner we witness an eye boggling Chinese acrobatic performance. Swinging ropes,

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juggling hoops, spinning plates and human pyramids are just a few tricks these showstoppers pull out! **Overnight - Beijing** (B, L, D)

Day 3 : Forbidden City



Beijing - Xi'an. Today we explore the sites of the nation's capital, both ancient and modern. Established in 1045 BC, for 800 years alone Beijing has served as the capital of several powerful dynasties. 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, which attracts many pleasure seekers wishing to take photos, all 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. Perhaps today, he is looking at a different Beijing, one that is quickly entering the 21st century.

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. After a break for lunch we travel to the Silk Alley markets for a spot of shopping before boarding the overnight sleeper train (4 berth soft sleeper cabin) to Xi'an. **Overnight - Sleeper Train** (B)

Day 4 : Xi'an & Terracotta Warriors



Arrive Xi'an and transfer to hotel. If time allows, opt for a morning dip in the hotels heated swimming pool. 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. 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. The emperor's tumulus (ancient grave mound) is located about a mile away and is said to contain untold treasures. To date, only trial archaeological digs of the main site have been completed.

Afterward exploring archaeological site we visit a workshop where you'll see modern-day crafts people producing terracotta warrior figurines. **Overnight - Xi'an** (B, L)

Day 5 : Giant Pandas



Xi'an - Shanghai. Early this morning we depart on an excursion by road to the Shaanxi Rare Wildlife Rescue and Breeding Centre, a 2 hrs drive from Xi'an.

Originally established as Louguantai wild animal breeding and protection centre, it was the first dedicated crested ibis breeding centre in China. Later it became a shelter for ill or injured Giant Pandas in the region. With an estimate of only 1000 - 3000 Giant Pandas remaining on the planet, the species is one of the world's most endangered mammals. Of these some (less than 20) are based at the Shaanxi wildlife centre with those of maturity taking part in artificial insemination breeding programs. The centre has gained much success recently with 6 year old Lousheng giving birth to two baby cubs (one female and one male) on 18 August 2009.

It is not always possible to see panda at the centre, taking some 14 hours to consume an average of 15 kg of Bamboo requires a lengthy nap afterward,

often taken away from the prying eyes of visitors. Never the less there are plenty of other rare animals to be seen at the centre including golden monkeys, takin, black bears, crested ibis leopards, giant salamanders, white lipped deer, musk deer, vulture and owl. Please note: The centre is emphatically not a wild life park or zoo with a remit to educate the general public. In fact a major part of the centres role is to temporarily house and care for sick and injured animals. Most animals once fit and well, will return to the wild. Some animals are located in the centres forestry reserve, others are housed in concrete pens with a grassy enclosure attached. The housing for some of the animals is not purpose built, as for most, this is only a temporary stay before returning to their natural habitat.

Encircling Xi'an's old city is the 15km in length and 6 metres wide medieval wall. This afternoon we'll take a leisurely bicycle ride along the wall (solo or tandem). Looking down offers delightful views of the city hubbub and daily life. Afterwards we spend some time in the down town area, giving an opportunity to enjoy a western meal if you choose before boarding our overnight sleeper train (4 berth soft sleeper cabin) to Shanghai. **Overnight - Sleeper Train** (B)

Day 6 : Sizzling Shanghai



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 spend the morning at leisure and later this afternoon we take a coach tour along the

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Bund and old Shanghai and a sunset cruise along the Huangpu River. **Overnight - Shanghai (B, D)**

Day 7 : Explore Shanghai



Today offers free time to independently explore. Perhaps visit the Oriental Pearl TV tower, the Jade Buddha Temple, French Quarter or take a more interactive approach and discover Shanghai's Science and Technology Museum with IMAX 3D, IWERKS 4D and space theatres, it's a top spot for kids! **Overnight - Shanghai (B)**

Day 8 : Shanghai

Saturday. It's time to take your little Warriors or Dragons home. Our tour concludes after breakfast, hotel check out is at 12 noon and included departure transfer to the airport. Happy Travels!(B)

Entrance Fees for children

It is possible for Chinese nationals, under the age of 12 years to pay some 20 – 50% less than the Adult (Chinese national) ticket price. To receive the relevant discount children must present a school/student ID card. The Chinese Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs are unable to give us a conclusive response as to whether the same principle applies to entrance fees for Non Chinese National children. The Chinese Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs have confirmed that a reduced rate is available, though the discount will vary from site to site (dependent upon whether the site is operated by national government or provincial government) and that a child's school/ student ID must be shown at the time of purchasing the ticket. If your child does not have a student ID your guide will try their utmost to get discounts where available but this cannot be guaranteed.

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.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

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

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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 portorage 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 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

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