

Beijing to Shanghai Express

9 days | Beijing to Shanghai



SEMI INDEPENDENT: This whistle stop tour of China uncovers some of China's bustling cities and stunning landscapes. From watching the sun rise along the world-renowned Great Wall to the capitals most iconic imperial sites; from the breath-taking scenery in Hangzhou, to the incredible Shanghai skyline.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Beijing – roam the streets of China's fascinating capital independently. Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, Silk Alley markets, Hutong area of Beijing, Chinese Acrobatic Show
- Great Wall of China – hike to unrestored sections of the wall, set up camp on a deserted section and watch the sunrise on one of the Wonders of the World
- Mandarin Challenge – enjoy Mandarin lessons with your guides and a lesson with professional teachers in a local language school
- Hangzhou – enjoy scenic boat trip on the West Lake

- Shanghai – explore China's biggest city independently. The Bund, People's Square, former French Concession
- KTV – sing your heart out in some of China's beloved KTV rooms (optional)
- ZhuJiaJiao - Travel to the Italian Venice of China (optional)
- Nine Creeks – hike to the spectacular waterscape in Misty Forest

What's Included

- 6 nights hostel accommodation, 1-night camping & 1-night sleeper train (6 berth sleeper cabins)
- Basic Mandarin lessons with your tour leader & lesson at Mandarin Garden Chinese School
- All relevant transfers and transportation using public transport
- Train tickets from Denqing – Shanghai
- Local guides for scheduled sightseeing in Beijing, Hangzhou and Shanghai. Unescorted travel between cities
- Hiking along unrestored parts of The Great Wall of China

What's Not Included

- International flights and visa.
- Food and drink not listed in the itinerary, laundry, items of a personal nature
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : The Great Wall

Welcome to China! Kick off your China tour in the afternoon as we head off to an unmissable attraction - The Great Wall of China! We go to a deserted section of the Wall, where we will have the place to ourselves! Hike along this wonder of the world as the sun sets, before pitching up our tents for a night of stories by the fire and our first Mandarin lesson.

Overnight - Camping on Great Wall

Days 2-3 : Beijing



Wake up the next morning for what will be one of the most memorable sunrises of our lives. Afterwards return to Beijing where we have the next two days are at leisure to explore the Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City (60RMB), the Temple of Heaven (40RMB). There is also the option to visit the Olympic Bird's Nest Stadium or enjoy the incredible Beijing Acrobatics Show (140RMB). For dinner

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we've got the opportunity to taste one of Beijing's signature dishes: famous Peking Roast Duck (approx 70RMB). **Overnight - Beijing**

Day 4 : Beijing to Hangzhou

Morning at leisure for some last minute sightseeing. In the late afternoon we bid farewell to our trip leader board our night train to Hangzhou, famed as China's most beautiful city.

Journey time: Beijing - Hangzhou 19:30 - 08:30 (approx 13 hours) Overnight - Sleeper Train

Day 5 : West Lake

Arrive in Hangzhou where we're transferred by minibus to our accommodation and meet our new local guide. After getting settled, head to West Lake where we enjoy a relaxing boat tour to the Lesser Yinzhou Isle, spotting the temples and pagodas as we cruise along and take in the beautiful scenery before heading back to dry land. In need of a history fix? Why not pay a visit to the China National Tea Museum or the National Silk Museum, and learn about two of the most important trades in this country's history.

This afternoon we put on our walking shoes as we venture on a hike up Jiuyao Mountain to catch a spectacular sunset over West Lake from our vantage point at the top. After working up an appetite, make our way back to the city centre where we can enjoy a group dinner (not included). Fancy a bit more exploring? Pay a visit to Hangzhou Old Town and wander through the streets, the waterfront is beautifully lit up at night.

Overnight - Hangzhou

Days 6-8 : Hangzhou to Shanghai

Hangzhou - Shanghai. After a hearty breakfast at the hostel we're ready for today's activities. Transfer out of the city to and into the luscious Misty Forest for a morning hike in the Nine Creeks area. We head back to the hostel to freshen up and grab some lunch (not included). Then, take a private transfer to

Hangzhou Station where we'll hop on board the train to bustling Shanghai! After a short 2-hour journey we arrive in one of the world's most developed cities. Meet your guide and experience the wonders of the Shanghai metro as you make your way to the hostel.

On day 7 we take a local ferry cross the famous Huangpu river from East to the West of The Bund and discover Tianzifang (40RMB), a local artisan's lane set in an old-style residential area in the heart of Shanghai. Explore the more futuristic side of the city when you've embark on a walking tour down Nanjing Road (the world's busiest shopping street) and take a walking tour down the Bund, where we will get the best view of Shanghai's stunning skyline. In the evenings, take advantage of Shanghai's hedonistic bar scene and experience the largest bar crawl in China – the Drunken Dragon Pub Crawl (Approx 180RMB-200RMB). Alternatively, spend your evening in a more sophisticated manner, sipping champagne in a hot tub on the rooftop of a skyscraper, overlooking Shanghai's dazzling nightlife below (100RMB).

Day 8 is at leisure to further explore Shanghai.

Journey time: Deqing - Shanghai 15:12-17:00 (approx 1 hour 45 mins) Overnight - Shanghai

Day 9 : Shanghai

Learn about China's modern history on a walk around the former French Concession, which includes a visit to the Propaganda History Museum, the only one of its kind! Return to collect our bags and bid farewell to the group. Departure transfers can be arranged upon request. We would be delighted to help you extend your stay in Shanghai and book more nights for you if you're still not quite ready to head home.

Please note: This tour finishes in Shanghai at 6pm

Our partners

This tour is operated in conjunction with our trusted partner and you will join travellers

who booked through different operators, not solely On The Go.

The sightseeing group may vary in size from 2 – 22 persons.

Joining Arrangements

Please note arrival transfers are not included and you will need to make your own way to the hostel on day 1 to meet your tour guide & group.

Meeting Point: Spring Time Hostel

Spring time hostel
Dongsì W St, Dongsì, Fengtai, Beijing Shi
China, 100006
Tel: (+86) 10 6528 7277

Meeting Time: 10am

Emergency contact: (+86) 216150 3200 or (+86) 158 0074 0761

It is very important that you're not late. We will not be spending the night at the meeting hostel, and this is solely a meeting point. After meeting the group and your guide, you then make your way to a local farm for lunch and onto the Great Wall for an overnight camping experience along the Wall.

Accommodation

The accommodation on this tour is hostel dorm room accommodation. All rooms are clean, air-conditioned (or have fans) and offer internet and washing machines as well as bar and lounging facilities onsite. This accommodation is generally suited for travellers on a budget and looking to meet new people. There is an option to upgrade to private rooms for an additional fee.

All accommodation is included from the arrival day until check out time on the final day of the tour however there is an option to extend your stay and book additional post night accommodation.

Camping at the Great Wall

If we arrive by night-train in Beijing we'll first head to the hostel in Beijing where we got time to fresh up, explore the hostel-area and do some shopping for our trip to the wall. We will store our big luggage in Beijing and only

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take a small bag for camping with us to the wall.

What to bring:

- Snacks for on the wall. We will have late lunch at the farm house close to the wall, but there is no dinner or breakfast at the wall. Also no snacks are sold at the farm house.

Drinks for on the wall (beers & water can be bought at the farm house next to the wall as well)

- Warm clothes (as it can be cold at night. The trip leader will inform them about the weather forecast though. Usually in summer it's not cold)
- Raincoat (depending on weather forecast)
- Mosquito spray, sunscreen
- Toilet roll
- Hand Sanitiser

Sleeping bags, isolation mattresses (very thin) & tents are provided.

Please note: We consider this a wild camping style trip where there are no toilet facilities or ablutions. Guests can use a secluded section of the wall, which will be cleaned by a local company when we leave. Please bring hand sanitiser and toilet roll with you.

From the farm house it's a 5-minute bus ride + 45 minute hike uphill to the camp site. To hike up we need to carry our small bags + camping equipment with us. Usually there's plenty of time so if we need more time to hike up it's not a problem.

We will only camp between 1st of May & 30th of September. Before or after these dates it will be too cold at the wall. During camping season, we will cancel camping when: the temperatures are too low at night, big rain and/or thunderstorms are predicted. Usually we inform pax 2 days in advance about the latest forecasts and make the final decision on "camping day" before 10 AM.

If we don't camp, we will stay at another part of the wall at a hostel. There is a local restaurant close to the hostel which serves dinner. The hostel also has a bar, karaoke room so we don't need to bring snacks with us. However, no breakfast is included at the

hotel and snacks will need to be purchased in Beijing.

Guides & Groups

This is a semi-independent tour and you will travel from place to place unaccompanied on public transport and meet the local guide at each new destination that will conduct your sightseeing arrangements in this location.

Our longest group tour in China is our Essential China Adventure 18 day tour. All other group tours that we offer are sectors of this larger tour. As such on your holiday you may have travellers join you part way through your tour or end their holiday when you continue on.

Time keeping

Punctuality is very important throughout the tour and you will usually be given a time to meet your tour leader and the rest of the group in reception. In the event that you miss the meeting time you will have to make your own way to where the group are, this will be at your own expense.

Delays can occur on the trips, although they are rare we recommend you do not book onward travel too close to the end of the tour to allow time for delays. We take no responsibility for any missed flights or additional expenses if the group arrives late to the departure city.

Food & Drink

Food in China is very cheap. We advise you to budget 80 RMB per day for food in great local restaurants your Adventure Leader will take you to which we know are safe and tasty. If you want to eat cheaper than this, you can by eating more simple dishes like fried rice/noodles which come in at less than 10 RMB per meal.

As an example of prices of everyday items:

- Small bottle water- 2 RMB
- Basic Chinese meal- 35 RMB
- Drink in a night club- 70 RMB
- Beer in a restaurant/hostel 10-20 RMB
- Coke- 6 RMB

- Taxi- 10 minutes- 20 RMB (taxi prices vary depending on the city, but are very cheap compared to Europe/North America)

Shopping

China is a virtual Aladdin's Cave. Government-run Friendship Stores in almost all cities stock a range of fixed-price souvenirs and handicrafts and can offer a reasonable idea of what is acceptable in terms of quality and price. After a visit to the Friendship Store, visit private stores, craft shops and local department stores. However, the best shopping is often at public markets. If you see something you want, buy it when you see it - prices don't vary greatly, but selection can vary from location to location.

Top buys include silk products, embroidery, Chinese calligraphy and paintings, ceramics, jade and stone carvings, lacquer ware, Chinese tea, Cloisonne, Mao reproduction propaganda souvenirs such as the famous 'Red Book', caps and buttons, personalised ink seals and clothing of every kind. Markets in Beijing and Shanghai commonly sell top quality ski jackets and leisure attire by big name brands. Additionally, copied goods such as handbags, watches and shoes are available in plentiful supply in these markets. Ethnic crafts are a speciality in some regions including Xi'an and Kunming. If wishing to buy antiques, proceed with caution. It's highly likely that the antique will be a skilful reproduction. However, if it is the real deal, you'll need paperwork the Chinese Administrative Department of Cultural Relics which must then accompany the article being exported.

IMPORTANT: Set your budget and don't be swayed, remember the caveat – 'Let the buyer beware'. Any purchases made whilst on holiday with us, irrespective of whether the store is recommended by us or other, are at your own discretion. Please make sure that you are completely happy with the product you are purchasing and the delivery arrangements (we would recommend you take away with you any purchases rather than rely on shipping services). On The Go cannot be held responsible or accountable for items

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bought in country or shipping arrangements. Proceed with caution

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

China Country Guide

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. 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.

If you're a resident of the UK and would like someone to handle your visa application for you then we recommend CIBTvisas. Please visit <http://www.cibtvisas.co.uk/onthego> for more information.

Visa for Hong Kong

Most Western visitors to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HK SAR) 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.

The information above is not applicable for the Beijing and Shanghai Visa Free Tours

NOTE: Visa requirements are subject to change, please check with your embassy before booking this trip.

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 & Water

You should seek medical advice before travelling to China from your local health practitioner and ensure that you receive all of the appropriate vaccinations. As a guide it is recommended that you be vaccinated for Tetanus and Polio, if you haven't had a booster in the last ten years. Food and waterborne diseases are more common, so we recommend vaccinations for Typhoid (valid 3 years) and Hepatitis A (validity varies). There is a malarial risk in remote southern areas of China, so do check the current situation before travelling.

As tap water is not safe to drink in China, only drink bottled mineral water which is readily available from hotels, shops and restaurants. Make sure bottled water is sealed.

Currency

The currency of China is the Chinese Yuan.

Pound Sterling, US Dollars, Euro and other major currencies can be exchanged in China. Exchange facilities are available at various bureau de changes and banks in major towns have ATMs or it is possible to get some before you leave home. It's advisable to request bank notes in smaller denominations, as it can sometimes be hard to get change from large notes and smaller notes are handy for smaller purchases and gratuities.

Traveller's Cheques are not recommended as they're often difficult to exchange and incur high fees.

Time & Voltage

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! Voltage is 220v, 50Hz AC. Chinese plugs come in many designs: 3-pronged angle pins as used in Australia; 3-pronged round pins as used in Hong Kong; 2-pronged flat pins as used in the USA; or 2 round narrow pins as used in Europe. To cover all bases, pack a travel adaptor!

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. If travelling in early spring we recommend you pack warm clothes, layering works best this time of year.

- Food in China is very different and arguably better than your local takeaway! If you prefer western snack food, consider bringing a supply
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swim costume, basic torch/ flash light & 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 many 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
- Plastic poncho to go over your jacket. Whilst site-seeing, you can be in the rain for an extended period and even a rain jacket can get soaked. You can purchase a cheap one locally, but we suggest taking one

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from home of a better quality that doesn't
rip easily

PLEASE NOTE: If your tour includes an internal flight, that most airlines have a 20kg baggage limit.

Toilets/Washrooms

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 accommodations 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

Media Restrictions

There are restrictions on all media, including social media and free press throughout China. Whilst on holiday you will have limited access to social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Google Plus. There is also limited international calling options, so please check with your local provider before leaving home, to source the best roaming or online options to keep in regular contact with family and friends during your travels.

It's not like home!

Travel to far - flung corners of the earth involves lifestyles and conditions that are sometimes very different from what you are used to back home. You must come prepared to cope with unusual situations, local inadequacies and unpredictable events as and when they occur. Foreign travel is definitely not suitable for people who expect or demand everything to go exactly as planned. With the greatest respect and in the interest of your ultimate enjoyment you must understand this. Things can and do change in foreign countries.

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