**Highlights of China & Tibet**

**12 days | Beijing to Lhasa**

**Exploring Beijing’s grand Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City and the scenic Great Wall at Badaling and Juyongguan Pass, Xi’an’s warriors and mighty medieval fortress, the Giant Pandas of Chengdu before continuing to the roof of the world, Tibet - a spiritual land that has exerted its magnetic pull over travellers for centuries.**

**HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS**

**Trip Highlights**
- Beijing - Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City and the scenic Great Wall
- Badaling and Juyongguan - 2 UNESCO listed sections of Great Wall of China
- Xi’an - UNESCO - listed Terracotta Warriors, Clay warrior workshop, Big Wild Goose Pagoda, City Wall and bike ride, Muslim Quarter.
- Lhasa – Potala Palace, Norbulinka Palace, Jokhang Temple, Drepung Monastery, Sera Monastery, Barkhor Bazaar, Yamdrok Lake, Kamba-la pass
- Chengdu – visit the famous Panda Conservation centre and get up and close with China’s national symbol
- Leshan – marvel at the iconic stone Buddha standing over 71 meters tall
- Wenshu Monastery - built during the Qing Dynasty

**What’s Included**
- 11 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 2 dinners (1 is a Peking Duck dinner in Beijing)
- 10 nights 3 - 4 star hotels
- 1 overnight train: Beijing - Xi’an (4-berth soft sleeper cabin):
- Chinese Acrobatic Performance
- 1 Economy class flight: Chengdu - Lhasa
- High speed train: Xi’an - Chengdu
- Rickshaw ride through the Hutong area of Beijing
- Xi’an - bike ride on medieval City Wall
- 4x4 drive to Yamdrok Lake
- Touring of Beijing, Badaling, Juyongguan, Chengdu, Xi’an and Lhasa
- Tour Guide escorted for groups of 6 or more (days 1 - 6)
- English speaking specialist guides at local sights and for sightseeing in Tibet
- Beijing Capital Airport arrival transfer on day 1 and departure transfer day 12 from Lhasa Airport
- All relevant transfers and transportation in private vehicles
- Tibet Travel Permit (given to you in China)

**What’s Not Included**
- Tipping Kitty: USD$80-90pp, paid in local currency
- Entrance Fees: USD$170-190pp, paid in local currency
- International flights and visa
- Tip for your tour guide is not included in the Tip Kitty. We suggest USD$3-5 per day, per traveller for a job well done, however the amount is up to you

**ITINERARY**

**Day 1 : Huan ying**
Saturday. Huan ying, welcome to China and the start of your holiday! Airport arrival transfer from Beijing Capital Airport to your hotel for check-in. The remainder of the day offers free time for you to independently explore this astonishing city. **Overnight - Beijing**

**Day 2 : Tiananmen Square & Forbidden City**
Today we explore the heart of Beijing - Tiananmen Square where Chairman Mao’s tomb and various monuments to the people are located. Dominating the city’s heart is the Forbidden City, a centre of power for five centuries and seat of the emperors. Entering through the Gate of Heavenly Peace (replete with Chairman Mao’s portrait), we enjoy a guided tour of the old city, within the imperial city. This evening, we enjoy an
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eye boggling Chinese acrobatic performance. Swinging ropes, juggling hoops, spinning plates and human pyramids are just a few tricks these show stoppers pull out followed by a Welcome Dinner of Peking Duck.

Overnight - Beijing (B, D)

Day 3: Great Wall of China

After a free morning to further explore the city, we drive beyond Beijing to Badaling, to walk a section of the famous Great Wall. Built in the Ming Dynasty, a 6m wide pathway makes a formidable defence, following the highest contours of a steep range of hills. This evening we spend the night at our quaint hotel near Juyongguan Pass, which offers views of the Great Wall.

Overnight - Juyongguan Pass (B)

Day 4: Morning at the Great Wall

Beijing - Xi’an. We rise early this morning and head (5 min bus drive) to the Great Wall at Juyongguan Pass when it opens to beat the crowds. We have time to enjoy and explore the wall before visiting a Jade Carving Centre to learn about this ornamental rock and its importance in Chinese culture. After lunch we head back to Beijing. Free time is offered in the cavernous Pearl Market - an Aladdin’s Cave of clothing, jewellery and electronic gadgets, before travelling by express soft sleeper train to Xi’an in Shaanxi Province.

Overnight - Sleeper Train (B, L)

Day 5: Terracotta Warriors

Arrive Xi’an. This morning we visit the Terracotta Warrior archaeological site. Standing in battle-ready formation and numbering into the thousands, the Terracotta Army is Xian’s most popular sight and was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987, 13 years after the army was discovered. Built by local craftsman during the 3rd century BC for emperor Qinshihuang, the life-sized warriors and horses were designed to offer protection in the afterlife. After we visit to a clay workshop specialising in making replica figurines of the Terracotta Warriors, followed by the Muslim Quarter. Tonight, we welcome you to join the optional Tang Dynasty Show, which includes dinner, a traditional performance and transfers (bookable locally).

Overnight - Xi’an (B, L)

Day 6: City Wall Bike Ride

Xi’an – Chengdu. This morning we enjoy a bike ride atop the Xi’an City Wall (electric car option available). Dating back to 1370 the 12m-high walls are some of the few remaining urban fortifications still standing in China today and after extensive restorations the City Walls offer ample opportunities from which to explore Xian. We then visit one of Xian’s most iconic landmarks, the Big Wild Goose Pagoda. Late this afternoon we take a high speed train to Chengdu. Reaching speeds of up to 300km per hour the journey is an experience in itself!

Overnight - Chengdu (B, L)

Day 7: Great Panda Research Base

Today’s highlight is the famous Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding. Opened in 1993 it is fast becoming one of China’s must see places. The centre has been created to help and imitate the pandas’ natural habitat in order that they might have the best possible environment for rearing and breeding. Later we visit the Wenshu Monastery, built during the Qing Dynasty. The temple is a hidden gem with few tourists visiting and a stop must be made at the delightful teahouse located inside the temple grounds which serves a fine cup of green tea and some of the best vegetarian food in the city. The evening is spent at leisure. On most nights Sichuan Opera is performed at the Shufengyayun Theatre and tickets can be booked locally or in advance.

Overnight - Chengdu (B)

Day 8: UNESCO Great Buddha of Leshan

Driving to Leshan our morning is spent exploring the UNESCO World Heritage Listed Dafo (Great Buddha), which is carved into the red sandstone face of Lingyun Hill overlooking the treacherous confluence of the Min, Qingyi and Dadu rivers below it. Dafo has huge 8m feet, his ears droop 7m, his shoulders span 28m and his nose measures a whopping 5.6m! Evening at leisure.

Overnight - Chengdu (B, L)

Day 9: Potala Palace

Chengdu - Lhasa. Spend the morning at leisure before our noon flight to Lhasa (please note this is an unescorted flight). Upon arrival to Tibet you will drive (aprox 1.5 hours) to the fabled city of Lhasa. Once we reach our destination we kick off our sightseeing with a visit to Lhasa’s most enduring image, the Potala Palace - the winter home of the Dalai Lamas and a masterpiece in design. The Dalai Lama’s Summer palace, Norbulingka, is our next place of pilgrimage. However, it is the Jokhang Temple which will be the most enlightening stop of the day. The holiest
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One of Tibet's 3 holy lakes, nomadic tents, pilgrims prostrating and children hunting with sling shots on the stony beaches make this something you are likely to have never experienced before. Rising back into these vivid and rugged mountains we head back to Lhasa, looking for hoards of Yak along the way. **Overnight - Lhasa** (B)

**Day 10 : Drepung Monastery**

Our exploration of Lhasa continues today as we take the short journey to the 15th century Drepung Monastery. Formerly one of the central monasteries of Tibet it was torn asunder during the Cultural Revolution and continues to rebuild is walls and status today. Just north of Lhasa is the Sera Monastery, still a working retreat 600 years after its foundation as a main teaching monastery and one of the three great Gelukpa universities once housing more than 5500 monks. You will see young novices learning scriptures in the Debating Garden and being rewarded for a correct answer with a resounding hand-clap from their master. Returning to Lhasa we will experience the Barkhor markets which surround the Jokhang temple and sell all things Tibetan. **Overnight - Lhasa** (B, D)

**Day 11 : Yamdrok Lake**

An early morning start as we drive out toward the Himalayas. From Lhasa, itself at 3500m, we travel over the Kamba-La pass and reach 4794m above sea level. As we journey along the winding road, weaving our way through the rocky mountains and valleys, in the far distance on a very clear day it maybe possible to catch a glimpse of the High Himalayan Peaks of Everest and Lhotse.

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**Day 12 : Lhasa**

Wednesday. Hotel check out and included onward transfer to airport. (B)

**HOTELS**

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

**Holiday Inn Temple of Heaven**

The Beijing Holiday Inn Temple of Heaven is an elegant and comfortable hotel with well-furnished and spacious rooms. Practical in design, the guestrooms feature internet access and the hotel also boasts a range of restaurants and bars, as well as an indoor swimming pool. Located just a 10 minute walk from the Temple of Heaven, the hotel is the perfect base from which to explore this fascinating city.

**Holiday Inn Express Beijing Minzuyuan**

Located just a stones throw from the Beitucheng Subway station, with access to Line 10 & Line 8, the Holiday Inn Express Beijing Minzuyuan is a perfect base to explore the many amazing highlights of Beijing. Within walking distance of the hotel you'll find the famous Birds Nest Olympic Stadium. The hotel boasts a stylish restaurant offering breakfast, lunch and dinner.

**Grand Dynasty Culture Hotel**

Located a stone's throw away from the Ancient City Wall and Islamic Mosque, is the Grand Dynasty Culture Hotel. The hotel offers modern comforts in the heart of the city. Each air-conditioned guestroom features WiFi, a minibar and satellite TV. There is an onsite restaurant which serves a daily buffet or a la carte breakfast as well as a variety of Asian and Western dishes. During free time, guests can enjoy a relaxing massage or work out in the fitness centre.

**Holiday Inn Express West Gate**

The newly opened Holiday Inn Express West Gate is a bright and modern hotel in downtown Chengdu. Guest rooms are clean and stylish with excellent amenities. Wi-Fi is available and complimentary wired internet is available in all rooms. Breakfast is served buffet style in the restaurant with a delicious array of Western and Chinese dishes. There is also an onsite bar available for refreshing beverages. Located in the north of Chengdu and a 20 minute walk from Baiguolin Subway Station.
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Yak Hotel
In the heart of the old part of Lhasa, the Yak Hotel offers clean comfortable accommodation decorated in a classic Tibetan style. Guest rooms are simply furnished with authentic Tibetan artwork and decent amenities - including local tea - great for warming up with after a day's activities. The hotel also boasts a roof top terrace where you can sit and relax and admire stunning view of the Potala Palace! Well located just a short walk from the Jokhang Temple and Ani Tsankhung.

PRICES / DATES 2022

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PRICES / DATES INFO

Departure dates noted with a ‘G’ are guaranteed to operate. All other departure dates are guaranteed with a minimum of 4 persons. Prices shown are per person when there are 2 persons sharing a room. The 'Single supplement' is compulsory for solo travellers or if your booking party cannot reach the minimum of 2 persons in a room and the amount needs to be added to the per person price. The single supplement offers the comfort of your own room and is also available to any other person wanting their own room.

PRICES / DATES 2021

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