

BEST OF CHINA WITH YANGTZE CRUISE 15 Days 1 Country 6 Cities

CHINA'S EXQUISITE NATURAL SPLENDOUR TAKES CENTRE STAGE ON THIS EPIC JOURNEY FROM THE CITYSCAPES OF BEIJING TO XI'AN'S TERRACOTTA WARRIORS, SHANGHAI TO THE MEANDERING YANGTZE RIVER.



THE ITINERARY

Day 1 ARRIVE BEIJING (3 NIGHTS)

Journey to the "Northern Capital" - a land of emperors, epic monuments and the cultural heart of China. On arrival in Beijing, you'll be transferred to your hotel where you can relax before meeting your Travel Director for a Welcome Reception drink and local appetisers.

- ★ Hotel - Novotel Peace
- ★ Included Meals - Welcome Reception

Day 2 BEIJING AND THE GREAT WALL

Visit the iconic Great Wall of China at Juyongguan this morning - its stone ramparts and walls snaking thousands of miles into the distance to defend the empire against nomadic invaders since 5th century B.C. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure and this evening for dinner indulge in a Regional Dinner of succulent Peking Duck - a must during any visit to Beijing.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Regional Dinner

Day 3 BEIJING SIGHTSEEING

Surround yourself with the grandeur of Beijing's landmark Great Hall of the People, Qianmen Gate and the mausoleum of Mao Zedong as you walk through one of the world's largest public areas, Tiananmen Square. Delve into China's imperial heritage, passing the south gate into the frozen-in-time Forbidden City - once home to emperors and their households and today a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After lunch, indulge in a relaxing foot massage at the Foot Reflexology Centre to ease you into an evening at leisure or consider joining an Optional Experience.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Lunch

Day 4 BEIJING - XI'AN (2 NIGHTS)

Navigate the ancient alleyways of the courtyard Hutong residences, weaving through lively neighbourhoods on the back of a traditional rickshaw. Stop at the home of a local family where you'll 'Connect With Locals', enjoying a 'Be My Guest' lunch of traditional Chinese cuisine, then visit a nearby tea house. Here, you'll delve into the art of chayu, joining a 'Local Specialist' who'll share first-hand the age-old ritual of tea-making. Leave Beijing behind, bound for Xi'an, an ancient departure point on the Silk Road.

- ★ Hotel - Wyndham Grand Xi'an South
- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Be My Guest

Day 5 XI'AN SIGHTSEEING

Engage with the children and teachers of a local primary school (during term-time) where you will learn a few words of Chinese and 'Make a Difference' by donating much-needed supplies. Next, descend into the subterranean tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Huang to view his legendary army of Terracotta Warriors and Horses, followed by a delicious traditional meal of Chinese noodles. Your final stop today is to a Jade factory where you'll admire the favoured stone of emperors, more precious to the Chinese people than gold.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Lunch

Day 6 XI'AN - CHENGDU (3 NIGHTS)

This morning, your choice of activities gives you an opportunity to join a 'Local Specialist' in their T'ai Chi practice or embark on a cycle tour around part of the ancient City Wall of Xi'an. Get stuck in to the ancient art of dumpling making next, with an opportunity to sample the juicy results for lunch, then transfer to the railway station for your high-speed bullet train trip to Chengdu. On arrival in the hometown of the giant panda, you'll check in to your hotel and savour the leisurely pace of local life on your terms.

- ★ Hotel - Crowne Plaza
- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Lunch

Day 7 CHENGDU SIGHTSEEING

Witness the ground-breaking work being done by the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding this morning. Join a 'Local Specialist' and learn how you 'Make A Difference' with your visit to this non-profit research breeding facility which rescues and protects the endangered giant panda, of which fewer than 2,000 remain.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Lunch

Day 8 CHENGDU SIGHTSEEING

Indulge in the bold and spicy flavours of local cuisine as you 'Dive Into Culture' and learn about regional cooking practices at the Museum of Sichuan Cuisine. Learn how to crush chilli into powder using a Qing Dynasty pestle and mortar, then view ancient kitchenware, books and manuscripts faithfully recording the history of Sichuan culinary cultures. Immerse yourself in the intoxicating scents wafting through Restaurant Alley then, pay tribute to the Kitchen God before attempting to create your own culinary magic with the guidance of a local chef. Stomach and soul sated after a delicious encounter with Chengdu, you'll have an afternoon to relax, explore further or perhaps take the opportunity to do some shopping.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Lunch

Day 9 CHENGDU - CHONGQING - YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (3 NIGHTS)

Rub shoulders with the locals during a visit to People's Park with its beautiful Chinese gardens, lake and tea houses. Gain insights into the day-to-day lives of the locals who spend their free time in tranquil surrounds indulging in a leisurely game of mah-jong, a quiet nap or neck massage. Venture to lively Jinli Old Street next, crossing beneath the imposing archway into a world of intricate handicraft, paintings and calligraphy. Stroll along the narrow street whose façades were modelled on the architectural style of a traditional old town in western Sichuan Province, then transfer to the railway station for a high-speed bullet train ride to Chongqing. Here, you'll enjoy a city orientation tour with dinner before boarding your Yangtze River Cruise.

- ★ Hotel - Victoria Jenna cruise ship
- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Regional Dinner

Day 10 YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE

Disembark this morning for a short visit to Shibaozhai to admire its 12-storey cliff-top temple, built in the 19th century. Stretch your legs and climb up to the temple, tackling the red pavilion which leans against the side of the steep peak, now an island due to the rising waters of the Three Gorges Dam. Return to the Yangtze, cruising to Fengdu's 'Ghost City' to explore the mystical shrines, temples and monasteries that are dedicated to the afterlife.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11 YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE

Connect with your exquisite natural surrounds as you cruise gently down the Yangtze to the imposing Three Gorges. Squeeze through the narrow Qutang Gorge, admiring its dramatic vistas, before your journey takes you through Wu Gorge, renowned for its quiet beauty, forest-clad mountains, and cliffs so sheer the sun barely penetrates their precipices and finally, Xiling Gorge. A small motor boat will ferry you through the magical landscape of the Goddess Stream, a tributary of the Yangtze - its limestone cliffs covered in greenery provide a tranquil backdrop for your relaxing encounter with this mighty river.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12 YICHANG - SHANGHAI (3 NIGHTS)

View the engineering marvel that is the world's largest hydroelectric project, the Three Gorges Dam, before disembarking your cruise ship and transferring to the airport for your flight to Shanghai. Upon arrival into China's biggest city, check into your hotel and spend the remainder of the day at leisure.

- ★ Hotel - The Kunlun JingAn
- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast

Day 13 SHANGHAI SIGHTSEEING

Shanghai's famous 'Bund' waterfront is the first stop on a day of sightseeing with a 'Local Specialist'. Admire the ornate neoclassical colonial buildings and skyscrapers that have sprung up from this former marshland, then 'Dive Into Culture' during a visit to a silk museum. Embrace the tranquillity of the famous Yu Garden next, with its pavilions, halls, rockeries, ponds and cloisters. Then, enjoy some free time for a local lunch of soup dumplings perhaps and shopping in the Old Town, a treasure trove of winding streets and vibrant markets that was once enclosed by the ancient walled city of Shanghai. Our final stop this afternoon is a visit to the Jade Buddha Temple, built in 1928 after the original temple was destroyed during the revolution that overthrew the Qing Dynasty. Admire the beauty of its precious jade Buddha statues made out of crystal-clear white jade, before you settle into an evening performance by the world-renowned Shanghai Acrobatic Troupe.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast

Day 14 SHANGHAI SIGHTSEEING

Ascend to the 88-storey Jinmao Tower for panoramic views of the skyscrapers that loom over the most populous city on earth. Then embark on a walking tour with a 'Local Specialist' through the Shanghai French Concession, for an exhilarating encounter with the opulent age of French colonial China. Wander through the narrow alleyways, past elegant villas and apartments dating back to the early 1900s when the territory was proclaimed a French settlement. Later this morning, you'll see where the First Conference of the Communist Party took place in Xin Tian Di, whose charming antique façades hide a 21st century world of bars, cafés, boutiques and theme restaurants. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure, letting the sights and sounds of Shanghai infuse every sense or consider joining an Optional Experience. Say a fond farewell to newfound friends this evening during a Farewell Dinner.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast, Farewell Dinner

Day 15 DEPART SHANGHAI

Our epic encounter with China at its end, take a transfer to the airport for your onward flight.

- ★ Included Meals – Breakfast

ABOUT THIS TRIP

What's included

- **14 NIGHTS** Accommodation
- **28 MEALS** 14 Breakfast, 9 Lunches (Including Be My Guest), 5 Dinners
- **ON-TRIP TRANSPORT** Land transportation included. Where applicable, Intra-air between cities are not included.

The Trafalgar difference

- **CONNECT WITH LOCALS** Visit and have lunch with a local family in their home in one of Beijing's hutongs and gain a fascinating behind-the-scenes glimpse into their lifestyle. (Day 4)
- **DIVE INTO CULTURE** Indulge in a foot massage at the Foot Reflexology Centre (Day 3). Discover the traditions and techniques of dumpling making, indulging in an opportunity to sample them (Day 6). Learn about Sichuan cuisine at a cooking class in Chengdu and taste some of your creations (Day 8).
- **MAKE A DIFFERENCE** In Xi'an, you'll get to know the students and teachers at a local primary school and find out how your visit helps support their education in the local community (Day 5). Visit the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding and learn how your visit contributes to their conservation efforts. (Day 7)
- **LOCAL SPECIALISTS** in Xi'an (Day 4), Chengdu (Day 6 & 7) and Shanghai (Day 13 & 14)

Sightseeing highlights

- **CITY TOUR** of Beijing, Xi'an, Chengdu, Shanghai
- **VISIT** the Great Wall of China, Tiananmen Square and Forbidden City in Beijing, the Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an, the 'Bund' waterfront, the Jade Buddha Temple and Jinmao Tower in Shanghai
- **SEE** local people practicing T'ai Chi in the morning, the Shanghai Acrobats.
- **CRUISE** the Yangtze River

Travel highlights

Specific transfer information can be found here:

- ✓ Audio Headsets for flexible sightseeing
- ✓ Daily breakfast and an average of 50% of evening meals
- ✓ Luxury air-conditioned coach or alternative transportation (such as rail journeys)
- ✓ Cherry-picked hotels all tried and trusted
- ✓ Handcrafted Highlights
- ✓ Optional Experiences and free time
- ✓ All portorage and restaurant gratuities
- ✓ Must-see sightseeing and surprise extras
- ✓ An expert Travel Director and separate Driver
- ✓ All hotel tips, charges and local taxes
- ✓ Airport transfers on the first and last day of your guided holiday