

A close-up photograph of a giant panda sitting on a tree branch. The panda is looking towards the camera with a calm expression. Its black and white fur is clearly visible. The background is a lush green forest with out-of-focus trees and foliage.

CHINA



*Travellers from all over the world visit China to soak up its unparalleled cultural attractions, although many are surprised to discover how modern it has become. Of course, the ancient with all its traditions and splendour is still there in abundance, but nowadays it sits alongside the new creating startling, and often surreal, contrasts right across the country. China is far from being just a holiday destination - it is a traveller's paradise and one of life's truly great adventures.*

## WHY VISIT CHINA?

There's no other experience like it! From pulsating cities to remote rural areas, from the man-made wonder of the Great Wall to startlingly beautiful natural landscapes, China is a diverse and beguiling land.

Located in the north of the country China's capital, Beijing, is often the starting point for visitors. Beijing has an abundance of history, culture, elaborate architecture and magnificent sights including infamous Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven and the Summer Palace. The legendary Great Wall is not to be missed and starts east of Beijing before snaking its way west for several thousand miles.

Uncover China's long history in the former capital, Xi'an. Once the starting point of the Silk Road and a melting pot of cultures and religions, as well as home to emperors, merchants and warriors, it's the incredible underground army of 7,000 terracotta warriors that lure many visitors here.

Whilst Beijing is the capital, cosmopolitan Shanghai is China's largest city and evolving at a rapid pace. Well known for its fine arts, entertainment and crafts as well as being an important cultural centre, it's a dynamic city with an exhilarating pace. Make sure you visit the Garden of Joy (Yu Yuan), the Jade Buddha Temple and take a stroll along the "Bund" road which runs along the busy Huangpu River. Nearby are the charming water towns of Suzhou and Hangzhou, renowned for their classical gardens and beautiful scenery.

To truly experience China's stunning landscapes take a cruise along the mighty Yangtze River, said to be the cradle of Chinese civilisation. Flowing for some 4,000 miles it snakes from remote mountains and arid plains through canyon gorges to fertile regions of connecting lakes and waterways. More of China's natural beauty and panoramic landscapes can also be found along the Li River which meanders through a landscape of limestone hills between the towns of Guilin and Yangshuo.

Further south is Yunnan province, both geographically and culturally close to Tibet and home to the atmospheric old town of Lijiang, which nestles beneath the Jade Dragon Mountains. A visit to the province of Sichuan in the south west is the place to catch a glimpse of China's most iconic animal, the giant panda, at the Chengdu Panda Breeding and Research Centre.

Endlessly quirky and full of contradictions, China has a new adventure around every corner.



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# PLANNING YOUR HOLIDAY



Great Wall of China

## CREATE YOUR PERFECT HOLIDAY

### It's the perfect destination for...

Suitable for all those who like to get out and about and explore. Given China's overwhelming size, the easiest way to see it is with a tour and our carefully selected escorted tours offer a broad range of exciting itineraries for those looking to explore the history, culture and scenery of this remarkable country. Most of our featured tours are escorted group tours, but these can be enjoyed on a private basis on request, or alternatively shorter side trips to Beijing, Xi'an and Shanghai are available (see page 163).

### Classic China

The cities of Beijing, Xi'an and Shanghai may only provide a glimpse of this colossal country, but do showcase some of the iconic sights. We consider our China Essential tour (see page 160) to offer a perfect taste of China on a short but sweet, culture-filled journey. There are also options to extend and embark on a Yangtze cruise, for the simply magical experience of gliding by the majestic vistas of forested mountains and gorges; or visit Chengdu for a close up view of giant pandas. Alternatively, consider our Smart Choice independent tour option, which combines Hong Kong, Beijing and Xi'an (see page 159), all bucket-list destinations that you'll remember forever.

### Explore more...

For those wishing to delve deeper into the heart of China, lengthier tours are available. Maybe drink in the strikingly beautiful landscape of Guilin; soak up the rather surreal karst landscape of Yangshuo; enjoy the historical sights and stunning scenery of Lijiang or perhaps explore the waterways of ancient Suzhou.

### China and beyond

Most travellers choosing to visit China will probably opt to do just that rather than combine with other destinations. Given its diversity and size we'd usually not suggest otherwise, however if you are looking for something a little different then Hong Kong is within easy reach as are the beautiful beaches of neighbouring Asian countries. Alternatively, you may wish to consider a stopover in the Middle East before returning home.



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### The prices

All prices shown are based on the best value travel dates in low season. Further details relating to our tours can be found below.

### Getting there

Beijing is approximately 10 hours by non-stop flight from the UK, whilst Shanghai is approximately 12 hours flying time.

### Best time to go

The climate is wide ranging as you may expect from such a vast country. Normally the most comfortable seasons of the year are spring and autumn. Summer (June to end of August) can be extremely hot and winter can be incredibly cold, especially in the north.

**SMART CHOICE** indirect flights, which involve a change of plane, can often save money.

## ENHANCE YOUR STAY *Excursions perfectly enhance your holiday and offer excellent value. Prices are per person.*

### Great Wall & Ming Tombs from £135



This full day tour from Beijing begins with a walk along a section of the magnificent Great Wall. Catch a glimpse of rural China as you then travel onwards to the Ming Tombs, the burial site of 13 emperors of the Ming Dynasty. The approach to the tombs, the Imperial Way, is lined by larger than life stone figures of animals, soldiers and mythical figures. Lunch is included.

### Shanghai City Tour from £155



This full day tour from Shanghai begins at the Shanghai Museum which is one of the best in the country. Continue to the Yu Garden, a traditional compact Chinese garden, and the Huxingting Tea House. You will also take a walk in the old city around Yu Garden to experience the local life and market. Lunch is included at a local Chinese restaurant.

### Xi'an City Tour from £135



On this full day tour from Xi'an travel outside the city to see some of China's, and the world's, most important sites including the incredible Terracotta Warriors. In addition, you will visit the Banpo Neolithic Museum which dates back to about 4,500 BC. Returning to the city visit the Large Goose Pagoda which was built in AD648 by the third emperor of the Tang dynasty, Gao Zong. Lunch is included at a local Chinese restaurant.



Forbidden City, Beijing

## HONG KONG & CHINA

### INDEPENDENT TOUR

9 nights from  
**£2199**

world-famous sights • excursions included in each city • ancient culture

SMART CHOICE

Hong Kong 4 nights ~ Beijing 3 nights ~ Xi'an 2 nights

**SMART CHOICE** - full of bucket-list destinations that you will remember forever.

**Day 1:** Fly to Hong Kong.

**Day 2 Hong Kong:** On arrival you will be met and transferred to your centrally situated hotel, which is within walking distance of lively Nathan Road and the markets of Kowloon. The remainder of the day is at leisure to relax or begin your explorations in this wonderful city. Full of unexpected sights of traditional culture mixed with twenty first century commercialism, Hong Kong is guaranteed to enthrall and never disappoints.

**Day 3 Hong Kong:** Enjoy a half day city tour of Hong Kong Island which includes Aberdeen Harbour, Repulse Bay and the panoramic view from atop Victoria Peak, the highest point on Hong Kong Island. After the tour you are free to sightsee at your leisure or perhaps discover the chic shopping districts of Wanchai or Causeway Bay? This evening, head to the harbour for the nightly Symphony of Lights show, when coloured lights, laser beams and searchlights perform in an unforgettable spectacle synchronised to music and narration.

**Days 4-5 Hong Kong:** Two further days at leisure to explore. Be sure to hop on the iconic Star Ferry for a bargain historic ride across Victoria Harbour. If time allows, visit the outlying islands of Lamma and Lantau, renowned for their seafood restaurants.

**Day 6 Hong Kong/Beijing:** Transfer to the airport and fly onwards to the Chinese capital, Beijing. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel.

**Day 7 Beijing:** A full day of sightseeing begins with a visit to the imposing Great Wall with the chance to walk along a section of this colossal structure. After lunch catch a glimpse of rural China as you travel onwards to the Ming Tombs, the burial site of 13 emperors of the Ming Dynasty. The approach to the tombs, the Imperial Way, is lined by larger than life stone figures of animals, soldiers and mythical figures.

**Day 8 Beijing:** A day to explore at leisure. Sights not to be missed include Tiananmen Square, the largest city square in the world; the magnificent Forbidden City, which has more than 8,000 houses and palaces; the Temple of Heaven and the beautiful Summer Palace. Exploration of the centuries-old lanes and courtyard houses in the Hutong neighbourhoods is also recommended while more modern landmarks include the Bird's Nest and Cube stadiums from the 2008 Olympic Games.

**Day 9 Beijing/Xi'an:** Transfer to the airport for your onward flight to the city of Xi'an. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel and the remainder of the day is at leisure.

**Day 10 Xi'an:** Visit the site of the terracotta warriors, where 7,000 life-sized figures and horses guard Emperor Qin Shihuang's tomb. It is one of the most significant archaeological excavations of the 20th century and a sight not to be missed by any visitor to China. In addition you will visit the Banpo Neolithic Museum which features exhibits dating back to about 4,500BC. As well as the archaeological village site, which clearly shows the houses, storage areas and the cemetery, there are a number of exhibits including several well-preserved mummies. Returning to Xi'an visit the Large Goose Pagoda which was built in AD648 by the third emperor of the Tang Dynasty.

**Day 11 Xi'an:** Your tour concludes with a transfer to the airport.

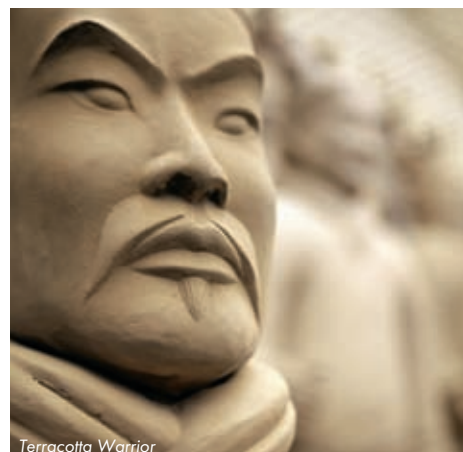
### ENHANCE YOUR STAY

#### Upgrades and extras available

In each city our tour is based on centrally located accommodation, but should you require a little more comfort or space, upgraded rooms are available at a supplement. Additional sightseeing excursions can also be pre-booked in each city. Please ask for details and prices.



Hong Kong Harbour



Terracotta Warrior

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Departures:** Daily.

**Accommodation:** 3★plus Cityview, Hong Kong; 4★ Novotel Beijing Xinqiao, Beijing; 4★ Mercure Xi'an on Renmin Square, Xi'an.

**Meals:** Room only in Hong Kong. Breakfast in Beijing and Xi'an.

**Tour price:** The price shown is based on the best value travel dates in low season and includes international flights, onward domestic flights, private transfers, 4★ accommodation and sightseeing as stated.

additional sightseeing excursions can be pre-booked



Yu Yuan Gardens, Shanghai



Kunming Lake



Chengdu Research Centre

## CHINA ESSENTIAL ESCORTED COACH TOUR

8 nights from  
**£2048**

unforgettable scenery • terracotta warriors • optional extensions to see pandas or cruise the Yangtze

Beijing 3 nights ~ Xi'an 2 nights ~ Shanghai 3 nights

**Day 1:** Fly to Beijing.

**Day 2 Beijing:** On arrival you will be transferred to your hotel.

**Day 3 Beijing:** This morning visit the Temple of Heaven, where the Ming and Qing emperors worshipped, and whilst there observe the tradition of practising Tai Chi in the courtyard. Continue to Tiananmen Square for a stroll before visiting the Forbidden City.

**Day 4 Beijing:** Begin with a visit to the Great Wall at Mutianyu, one of the best-preserved parts of the wall, which offers all round stunning views and a less crowded atmosphere. In the evening enjoy a sumptuous Peking Duck dinner, a traditional delicacy and a culinary must in Beijing!

**Day 5 Beijing/Xi'an:** This morning visit the Summer Palace which has a grand collection of lakes, gardens and palaces. Afterwards enjoy a relaxing boat ride on beautiful Kunming Lake before a stop at the Bird's Nest Stadium and Water Cube. Continue to the Hutongs for a more personal insight into the everyday life of traditional Beijing citizens. Transfer to the airport for a flight to Xi'an.

**Day 6 Xi'an:** Today you will visit the Terracotta Warriors, a stunning collection of ten thousand life size statues of the Chinese army made over two thousand years ago, yet preserved almost perfectly. This will be followed by a visit to the ancient city wall in Xi'an, the most complete city wall surviving in China and can be enjoyed either on foot or by bike. This evening enjoy a Tang Dynasty Show, a colourful performance of traditional music and dance.

**Day 7 Xi'an/Shanghai:** Begin with a visit to the Shaanxi Museum, which houses over 250,000 artefacts including treasures from many periods of China's history before. This is followed by a visit to the Small Wild Goose Pagoda before visiting the Muslim Quarter to see local life in the community. Continue to the airport for your flight to Shanghai.

**Day 8 Shanghai:** The first attraction of the day is the centuries old Yu Yuan Gardens, home to beautiful pavilions, corridors, streams, courtyards and flowers. Continue to the Jade Buddha Temple to see impressive temples, both historical and modern, sporting large, intricate sculptures of Buddha. After viewing the Shanghai Museum, visit the waterfront Bund before enjoying breathtaking views of the city from the top of Shanghai's World Financial Centre.

**Day 9:** Travel to the scenic city of Suzhou, known as the "Venice of the East". After viewing attractive gardens enjoy a cruise on the Grand Canal then continue to a local silk mill and finally visit the Panmen Gate, estimated to be around 2,500 years old. Return to Shanghai.

**Day 10 Shanghai:** Your tour concludes with a transfer to the airport for your onward journey.

## CHINA ESSENTIAL & PANDA ESCORTED COACH TOUR

10 nights from **£2398**

As the China Essential itinerary, with the addition of 2 nights in Chengdu between Xi'an and Shanghai. During your stay in Chengdu visit the Chengdu Panda Breeding and Research Centre for a chance to see these adorable animals.

## CHINA ESSENTIAL & CRUISE ESCORTED COACH TOUR & CRUISE

11 nights from **£2648**

As the China Essential itinerary, with a 3 night, 5 star Yangtze River Cruise between stays in Xi'an and Shanghai.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Departures:** Tours depart on fixed dates and are operated by China Links Travel. Please ask for details.

**Accommodation:** 4★ hotels are used on each tour. Please ask for details. Yangtze River Cruise is aboard 5★ Victoria Cruise.

**Meals:** All meals (excluding beverages) are included.

**Group size:** China Links offer small group tours (guaranteed departures) up to a maximum of 20 people.

**Tour prices:** The prices shown are based on the best value travel dates in low season and include return international flights from the UK, onward internal flights throughout the tours, transfers and sightseeing by coach, services of an English speaking guide, entrance fees and accommodation in tour hotels. Private tours and upgraded accommodation available at a supplement.

**Visas:** Visas are required, but the cost is included in the price and China Links Travel organise these prior to departure. Passengers will be required to send their passports for the visa to be obtained.

**Guides & tipping:** Groups of 10 people or more will be provided with the services of a Tour Manager who will accompany the tour throughout in combination with local city guides. For your convenience, a compulsory amount to cover tips for guides, drivers and porters will be collected from you by your guide at the start of the tour (generally around £4 per person per day).



Shanghai

## CHINA HIGHLIGHTS

ESCORTED COACH TOUR

14 nights from  
**£2998**

heritage • scenic waterways • vibrant cities

**Beijing** 3 nights ~ **Xi'an** 2 nights ~ **Guilin** 1 night ~ **Yangshuo** 2 nights ~ **Chongqing** 1 night ~ **Yangtze River cruise** 3 nights ~ **Shanghai** 2 nights

**Day 1:** Fly to Beijing.

**Day 2 Beijing:** Upon arrival you will be transferred to your hotel.

**Days 3-6 Beijing & Xi'an:** As days 3-6 of China Essential itinerary.

**Day 7 Xi'an/Guilin:** Visit the artefacts of the Shaanxi Museum and see the Small Wild Goose Pagoda before flying to Guilin.

**Day 8 Guilin/Yangshuo:** Transfer to the Li River for a four hour cruise with rural scenes and towering limestone peaks. Afternoon arrival in Yangshuo before an evening cormorant fishing show.

**Day 9 Yangshuo:** Day at leisure. In the afternoon there is an optional walk or cycle ride to explore the countryside. This evening, perhaps enjoy an optional "Impressions of Liu Sanjie" show, staged on the Li River (additional expense).

**Day 10 Yangshuo/Chongqing:** Visit the Reed Flute Caves, a remarkable collection of colourfully illuminated stalactites and stalagmites. Continue to Fubo Hill and Elephant Trunk Hill for panoramic countryside views. This afternoon fly to Chongqing.

**Day 11 Chongqing/Yangtze River Cruise:** Visit adorable pandas at the local zoo, then visit a market before boarding your ship for the start of your cruise along the majestic Yangtze River.

**Days 12-13 Yangtze River Cruise:** Enjoy the beautiful river scenery before a shore excursion to Shibaozhai, "The Pearl of the Yangtze" and on day two travel by small motorboat through the tranquil Goddess Stream.

**Day 14 Yangtze River Cruise/Shanghai:** Visit the Three Gorges Dam, the world's largest power station site. Disembark at Yichang and fly to Shanghai.

**Day 15 Shanghai:** Today's attractions include Yu Yuan Gardens, the Jade Buddha Temple, the Shanghai Museum, the Bund and breathtaking views from atop the World Financial Centre.

**Day 16 Shanghai:** Transfer to the airport for your onward journey.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Departures:** Tour departs on fixed dates and is operated by China Links Travel. Please ask for details.

**Accommodation:** 4★ hotels throughout each tour. Please ask for details. Yangtze River Cruise is aboard 5★ Victoria Cruise.

**Meals:** All meals (excluding beverages) except day 9 when lunch is not included.

**Group size:** China Links offer small group tours (guaranteed departures) up to a maximum of 20 people.

**Tour prices:** The prices shown are based on the best value travel dates in low season and include return international flights from the UK, onward internal flights, transfers and sightseeing by coach, services of an English speaking guide, entrance fees and accommodation. Private tours and upgraded accommodation available at a supplement.

**Visas:** Visas are required, but the cost is included in the price and China Links Travel organise these prior to departure. Passengers will be required to send their passports for the visa to be obtained.

**Guides & tipping:** Groups of 10 people or more will be provided with the services of a Tour Manager who will accompany the tour throughout in combination with local city guides. For your convenience, a compulsory amount to cover tips for guides, drivers and portage will be collected from you by your guide at the start of the tour (generally around £4 per person per day).



The Great Buddha of Leshan

## CHINA RAIL DISCOVERY

ESCORTED COACH & RAIL TOUR

14 nights from  
**£2798**

historic cities • bullet trains • Yangtze cruise

**Beijing** 3 nights ~ **Xi'an** 2 nights ~ **Chengdu** 2 nights ~ **Yangtze River cruise** 3 nights ~ **Shanghai** 4 nights

**Day 1:** Fly to Beijing.

**Day 2 Beijing:** On arrival you will be transferred to your hotel.

**Days 3-4 Beijing:** As days 3-4 of China Essential itinerary.

**Day 5 Beijing/Xi'an:** Visit the Summer Palace before a relaxing boat ride on beautiful Kunming Lake. Continue to the Birds Nest Stadium, Water Cube and the Hutongs. Finally, you will catch a bullet train to Xi'an (approx 5½ hours).

**Day 6 Xi'an:** Visit the stunning Terracotta Warriors, then explore the ancient city wall and this evening enjoy a Tang dynasty show.

**Day 7 Xi'an/Chengdu:** See the Shaanxi Museum artefacts and then visit the Small Wild Goose Pagoda. Continue to the Muslim Quarter before a transfer to the airport and flight to Chengdu.

**Day 8 Chengdu:** A full day excursion to the magnificent Leshan Buddha a 233-foot tall stone statue, built during the Tang Dynasty. The Buddha is carved out of a cliff face that lies at the confluence of the Minjiang, Dadu and Qingyi rivers near the city of Leshan, and it is the largest stone Buddha in the world. You will also visit the ancient town of Huanglongxi.

**Day 9 Chengdu/Yangtze River Cruise:** At the Chengdu Panda Breeding and Research Centre see that natural habitats created for rearing and breeding pandas. Transfer to the station for a bullet train to Chongqing (approx 2 hours). Transfer to the ship.

**Days 10-11 Yangtze River Cruise:** As days 12-13 of China Highlights itinerary.

**Day 12 Yangtze River Cruise/Shanghai:** Visit the Three Gorges Dam. Disembark at Yichang then travel by bullet train to Shanghai (approx 8 hours).

**Day 13 Zhujiajiao:** Begin with a visit to Zhujiajiao, an ancient water town. Continue to see Ming and Qing Dynasty bridges, along with the Ma Family garden before returning to Shanghai.

**Day 14 Suzhou:** Travel to this scenic city and see its attractive gardens before an enjoyable cruise on the striking Grand Canal.

**Day 15 Shanghai:** As day 15 of China Highlights.

**Day 16 Shanghai:** Transfer to the airport for your onward journey.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Departures:** Tour departs on fixed dates and is operated by China Links Travel. Please ask for details.

**Accommodation:** 4★ hotels throughout each tour. Please ask for details. Yangtze River Cruise is aboard 5★ Victoria Cruise.

**Meals:** All meals (excluding beverages) except days 5, 12 & 13 when dinner is not included.

**Group size:** China Links offer small group tours (guaranteed departures) up to a maximum of 20 people.

**Tour prices:** The price shown is based on the best value travel dates in low season and includes return international flights from the UK, onward internal flights, rail travel, transfers and sightseeing by coach, services of an English speaking guide, entrance fees and accommodation. Private tours and upgraded accommodation available at a supplement.

**Visas:** Visas are required, but the cost is included in the price and China Links Travel organise these prior to departure. Passengers will be required to send their passports for the visa to be obtained.

**Guides & tipping:** Groups of 10 people or more will be provided with the services of a Tour Manager who will accompany the tour throughout in combination with local city guides. For your convenience, a compulsory amount to cover tips for guides, drivers and portage will be collected from you by your guide at the start of the tour (generally around £4 per person per day).



Guilin



Shanghai



Tuisi Garden, Suzhou

## BEAUTY OF CHINA ESCORTED COACH TOUR

20 nights from  
**£3598**

Yangtze River • spectacular diverse landscapes • vibrant cities with historic sights

Beijing 3 nights ~ Xi'an 2 nights ~ Guilin 1 night ~ Yangshuo 2 nights ~ Chengdu 2 nights ~ Lijiang 3 nights ~ Yangtze River Cruise 3 nights ~ Shanghai 4 nights

**Day 1:** Fly to Beijing.

**Day 2 Beijing:** Upon arrival you will be transferred to your hotel.

**Day 3 Beijing:** Sightseeing includes the unique Temple of Heaven, Tiananmen Square and the treasure-filled Forbidden City.

**Day 4 Beijing:** Travel to Mutianyu to visit the Great Wall. This evening enjoy a sumptuous Peking Duck dinner.

**Day 5 Beijing/Xi'an:** Visit the Summer Palace; enjoy a leisurely boat ride along Kunming Lake; stop at the Bird's Nest Stadium and Water Cube. Continue to the Hutongs (alleyways) then fly to Xi'an.

**Day 6 Xi'an:** Visit the stunning Terracotta Army Warriors before an evening Shui Jiao dumpling meal and Tang Dynasty dancing.

**Day 7 Xi'an/Guilin:** Visit the renowned Shaanxi Museum before walking along the ancient City Wall. Fly to Guilin.

**Day 8 Guilin/Yangshuo:** Cruise the stunning Li River admiring the beautiful limestone hills, tranquil fishing scenes and scenic villages. This evening see a cormorant fishing show in Yangshuo.

**Day 9 Yangshuo:** At leisure to explore, or if you prefer join an optional cooking class in the morning and an optional cycling or walking tour around the village in the afternoon (extra expense).

**Day 10 Yangshuo/Chengdu:** Visit the Reed Flute Caves' collection of illuminated stalactites and stalagmites. Proceed to Fubo Hill and Elephant Trunk Hill for panoramic views. Fly to Chengdu.

**Day 11 Chengdu:** Travel to the magnificent 233 foot tall Leshan Buddha, which is carved out of a cliff face. Before returning to Chengdu you will also visit the ancient town of Huanglongxi.

**Day 12 Chengdu/Lijiang:** Head to the Chengdu Panda Breeding and Research Centre to meet the adorable giant pandas. This is one of the largest giant panda reserves in the world, with natural habitats created to provide the best possible environment. Fly to Lijiang

**Day 13 Lijiang:** Visit picturesque Black Dragon Pool before a short walk of the Old Town of Lijiang. Drive to the dramatic Tiger Leaping Gorge, which is one of the deepest in the world.

**Day 14 Lijiang:** Visit Jade Dragon Snow Mountain and take a cable car half way up the mountain. Later, visit Baisha Naxi minority village then explore Lijiang Old Town at your leisure.

**Day 15 Lijiang/Yangtze River Cruise:** Depart Lijiang this afternoon and fly to Chongqing to board your cruise ship and begin your journey along the majestic Yangtze River.

**Days 16-17 Yangtze River Cruise:** Spend time relaxing and taking in the scenic views as the ship meanders along the river. Highlights include a shore excursion to Shibaozhai, with its impressive wooden pagoda appropriately named "The Pearl of the Yangtze". Continue by small motorboat through the tranquil Goddess Stream to marvel at the soaring limestone cliffs rising sheer from the water.

**Day 18 Yangtze River Cruise/Shanghai:** Visit the incredible Three Gorges Dam before reaching Yichang at noon and disembark. Transfer to the airport for your flight to Shanghai.

**Day 19 Suzhou:** Travel to scenic Suzhou, known as the "Venice of the East". Its attractive gardens are renowned for their remarkable history and skilled horticulturists. Cruise on the striking Grand Canal and visit a local silk mill.

**Day 20 Shanghai:** Begin at the beautiful Yu Yuan Gardens, then continue to the Jade Buddha Temple to see impressive temples housing intricate Buddha sculptures. After the Shanghai Museum, visit the Bund before breathtaking city views from atop Shanghai's tallest building, the World Financial Centre.

**Day 21 Zhujiqiao:** Travel to the ancient water town of Zhujiqiao. Continue to see the Ming and Qing Dynasty bridges, two ancient and historic buildings, and the Ma Family Garden. Return to Shanghai and afternoon at leisure.

**Day 22 Shanghai:** Your tour concludes with a transfer to the airport.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Departures:** Tours depart on fixed dates and are operated by China Links Travel. Please ask for details.

**Accommodation:** 4★ hotels are used on each tour. Please ask for details. Yangtze River Cruise is aboard 5★ Victoria Cruise.

**Meals:** All meals (excluding beverages) are included except days 14 and 21 when dinner is not included and day 9 and 15 when lunch is not included.

**Group size:** China Links offer small group tours (guaranteed departures) up to a maximum of 20 people.

**Tour prices:** The prices shown are based on the best value travel dates in low season and include return international flights from the UK, onward internal flights throughout the tours, transfers and

sightseeing by coach, services of an English speaking guide, entrance fees and accommodation in tour hotels. Private tours and upgraded accommodation options are available at a supplement.

**Visas:** Visas are required and included in tour cost for UK passport holders. Please ask for further details.

**Guides & tipping:** Groups of 10 people or more will be provided with the services of a Tour Manager who will accompany you throughout the tour in combination with the local guides in each city. For your convenience, a compulsory amount to cover tips for guides, drivers and porters will be collected from you by your guide at the start of the tour. This is generally around £4 per person per day.



Forbidden City, Beijing



The Great Wall

## BEIJING INDEPENDENT TOUR

3 nights from  
**£385**

city sights • Great Wall of China • culture

Beijing 3 nights

**Day 1 Beijing:** You will be met at Beijing airport and transferred to the centrally located Novotel Beijing Xinqiao Hotel.

**Day 2 Beijing:** A full day of sightseeing begins with a visit to the imposing Great Wall with the chance to walk along a section of this colossal structure. After lunch continue to the sacred Ming Tombs, burial grounds to 13 of the 16 Ming emperors.

**Day 3 Beijing:** Today you are free to explore at leisure. Iconic sights not to be missed include Tiananmen Square, the largest city square in the world; the Forbidden City which has more than 8,000 houses and palaces, the Summer Palace and Temple of Heaven. Exploration of the centuries-old lanes and courtyard houses in the Hutongs is also recommended for a real-life link to China's fascinating past.

**Day 4 Beijing:** Return transfer to Beijing airport where your tour concludes.

## NOVOTEL BEIJING XINQIAO

☆☆☆☆

Centrally situated within walking distance of Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City and Wangfujing shopping area this 700 room hotel provides a convenient base for a stay in the Chinese capital. For added convenience, and further city exploration, the Chongwenmen subway station is directly in front of the hotel while for shopping enthusiasts the New World Shopping Mall is just across the street. Leisure options include a fitness centre, sauna, massages and a tennis court. The hotel also boasts five restaurants which include international, regional and Japanese options as well as a bar with snacks also available. The well-appointed rooms are both comfortable and spacious with light wood furnishings, a comfortable seating area and also offer the unique feature of natural hot spring water on tap!

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Departures:** Daily.

**Accommodation:** In standard rooms at Novotel Beijing Xinqiao which have air-conditioning, bath or shower, safe, free WiFi and natural hot spring water.

**Meals:** Room only. Lunch is included on day 2.

**Tour price:** The price shown is based on the best value travel dates in low season and includes return private transfers between the airport and hotel, 3 nights accommodation and sightseeing as outlined on day 2.



Terracotta Warriors

## XI'AN INDEPENDENT TOUR

2 nights from  
**£299**

ancient treasures • Terracotta Army • pagodas

Xi'an 2 nights

**Day 1 Xi'an:** You will be met at Xi'an airport and transferred to the well-appointed Mercure Xi'an on Renmin Square.

**Day 2 Xi'an:** Today you will visit the site of the Terracotta Warriors, where 7,000 life-sized figures and horses guard Emperor Qin Shihuang's tomb. It is one of the most significant archaeological excavations of the 20th century and a sight not to be missed by any visitor to China. In addition you will visit the Banpo Neolithic Museum which features exhibits dating back to about 4,500BC. As well as the village, which clearly shows the houses, storage areas and the cemetery, there are a number of exhibits including several well-preserved mummies. Returning to Xi'an visit the Large Goose Pagoda which was built in AD648 by the third emperor of the Tang Dynasty.

**Day 3 Xi'an:** Return transfer to Xi'an airport where your tour concludes.

## MERCURE XI'AN ON RENMIN SQUARE

☆☆☆☆

Ideally located on historical Renmin Square in the heart of the commercial and government district, this comfortable, elegantly-appointed hotel is also minutes away from shopping centres and the cultural sights. 103 rooms including 24 suites, combine comfort and style and are all equipped with modern essentials, including free WIFI. The restaurant, which is only open for breakfast, features the choice of a full buffet featuring continental and American, Japanese and Chinese cuisine. The city offers a plentiful array of restaurants, particularly around the Bell and Drum Towers.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Departures:** Daily.

**Accommodation:** In classic rooms at Mercure Xi'an on Renmin Square which have air-conditioning, shower, mini bar and safe.

**Meals:** Breakfast. Lunch also included on day 2.

**Tour price:** The price shown is based on the best value travel dates in low season and includes return private transfers between the airport and hotel, 2 nights accommodation and sightseeing as outlined on day 2.



The Bund, Shanghai

## SHANGHAI INDEPENDENT TOUR

3 nights from  
**£499**

ancient culture • vibrant city • shopping

Shanghai 3 nights

**Day 1 Shanghai:** You will be met at Shanghai airport and transferred to the centrally located Sofitel Shanghai Hyland.

**Day 2 Shanghai:** Shanghai is an intoxicating blend of ancient culture and a modern progressive city and today you will see the city highlights during a full day sightseeing tour. You will have the opportunity to stroll along The Bund beside Shanghai's riverfront; visit the fascinating Shanghai Museum or see the enchanting Yu Yuan Garden, a classic creation from the Ming Dynasty.

**Day 3 Shanghai:** A full day at leisure for sightseeing or shopping. Perhaps spend further time at the Shanghai Museum, people watch along The Bund or visit the many shops on Nanjing Road.

**Day 4 Shanghai:** Return transfer to Shanghai airport where your tour concludes.

## SOFITEL SHANGHAI HYLAND

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Residing on China's most famous pedestrian shopping street, Nanjing Road, the Sofitel Shanghai Hyland perfectly blends French hospitality, graceful Chinese touches and elegant design. Within walking distance of many city attractions, including the Bund and People's Square, adjacent metro stations also ensure that all of the city is easily accessible. Offering 383 impeccably designed guest rooms with all modern amenities the hotel also features two restaurants with a choice of international and regional cuisine, a bar, gym, spa and free WiFi.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Departures:** Daily.

**Accommodation:** In superior rooms at Sofitel Hyland which have air-conditioning, bath/shower, mini bar and safe.

**Meals:** Breakfast. Lunch also included on day 2.

**Tour price:** The price shown is based on the best value travel dates in low season and includes return private transfers between the airport and hotel, 3 nights accommodation and sightseeing as outlined on day 2.