



Pilgrimage to Tibet

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Visit: Great Wall Retreat · Hanging Monastery · Terra Cotta Warriors & Horses · Potala Palace · Yamdrok Lake · The Bund

Detailed Itinerary

Day 01: Day 1 - Arrive Beijing (-/-/-)

Upon arrival, after clearing immigration and customs you will proceed toward the exit gate of the airport and look for our guide holding a sign with your name, who will then transfer you to the hotel.

Day 02: Day 2 - Beijing (Breakfast, Lunch))

The very first stop of your amazing trip in China is Temple of Heaven, where, as the name indicates, the emperors in Ming (1368 – 1644 AD) & Qing (1636 – 1912 AD) Dynasties used to worship heaven and pray for good harvest. This massive complex is exquisitely laid out with two main groups of buildings, which fully embodies the wisdom of ancient Chinese architects. The guide will deliver a brief orientation about how to appreciate the artistic values of these buildings and then let you wander on your own for a while. Then you will assemble again and proceed towards the exit, and immediately as you step into the outer area of the park, you can see lots of local people doing a variety of morning exercises there. You can either watch them play or come and join them. Get on board your coach again and arrive at Tian'anmen Square in 10-15 minutes. This square is of great political significance since the year 1949, when inauguration ceremony of the founding of People's Republic of China was held here after over 10 years' involvement of the country in World War and civil war. To the east and west of the square stand National Museum of China and The Great Hall of the People, functioning as the meeting place for the full sessions of the Chinese parliament, the National People's Congress. The flag rising and lowering ceremonies every day attract numerous visitors from across the country. Lies to the north of Tian'anmen Square, with Chang'an Avenue spanning between, Forbidden City is somewhere you cannot afford to miss if you've never been there before. It not only represents the supreme level of royal palace throughout the thousands of years' feudal history in China, but also witnesses the enormous prosperity of this ancient empire over 16 and 17th centuries and the absolute power the emperors have been endowed with. The complex comprises over 70 palaces and 9,000 rooms altogether, each of which is uniquely designed and built. Most of them are open to the public and it has seen 6 -8 million visitors from home and abroad every year since 2000. It also serves as a museum housing over 1.5 million antiques. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant that caters to all your special dietary preferences. Your attention will be shifted from royal families to those of common people as you ride a pedicab through Hutong, the oldest existing neighborhoods of residential purposes developed in Ming (1368 – 1644 AD) & Qing (1636 – 1912 AD) Dynasties. There are still a large number of local people living in the courtyard houses among the Hutongs and you will stop to visit one of them and have a leisure conversation with the hostess.

Day 03: Day 3 - Beijing (Breakfast, Lunch)

The guide will meet you earlier today than the previous day in the hotel lobby and escort you on a 2-hour journey to the most unrestored section of the Great Wall – Jinshanling. Ascend along the stone steps to the watch towers, from which you can have an uninterrupted view of the surrounding mountains and the wall itself winding through. You can walk as far as you wish as long as your physical strength allows since the wall measures 10 km in length. At the end of the tour, you will split into two groups: one checking into Dhawa Jinshanling to enjoy the unique overnight experience at the Great Wall retreat and the other transferred back to downtown hotel.

Day 04: Day 4 - Beijing (Breakfast, Lunch)

After two full day tours, you will have a short break to explore the neighborhood on your own (those staying overnight at the Great Wall may continue the discovery of the wall and enjoy the morning tranquility or sunrise.). All group members meet for a lunch and proceed for an afternoon excursion to Summer Palace. The garden was initially built to celebrate the 60th birthday of Emperor Qianlong's mother in 1749. In the following hundreds of years, it has gone through several times of destruction and repair, and was finally open to the public in 1953. Centered around Longevity Hill and Kunming Lake, the entire complex occupies an area of 2.9 square kilometers. Three quarters of the area is covered by water. Numerous architectures are dotted around the garden with its respective function as well. It is acclaimed as 'a masterpiece of Chinese landscape garden design' by UNESCO.

Day 05: Day 5 - Beijing - Datong - Pingyao (Breakfast, Lunch)

You will be transferred to the railway station to catch a morning departure of high speed train from Beijing to Datong. When you arrive after a 2-hour journey, you will meet a new guide and proceed for a morning excursion to Yungang Grottoes. It is a Buddhism-themed masterpiece finished in the early years of 5th Century, when Datong, named Pingcheng at that time, served as the capital city of Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534 AD), a kingdom established by a nomadic tribe. The Buddhist statues are all carved out of the sandstone rocks on the slope of a mountain and each cave houses at least one giant statue and numerous miniatures on the inner wall, all differing from each other and combined to tell Buddhism stories. Next a 1-hour drive takes you to another architectural marvel on a cliff. Built into a cliff overlooking a valley with 60 meters above the ground, Hanging Monastery fully embodies the wisdom and craftsmanship of ancient Chinese architects. The whole structure is supported by 27 oak crossbeams fitted into holes chiseled into the cliffs but they are skillfully hidden in the bedrock. Therefore, it looks like that the temple just hangs in the middle of the cliff with no support from afar. The monastery has a history of 1,500 years. This concludes today's itinerary and you will embark on a 4-hour transfer all the way to Pingyao for overnight.

Day 06: Day 6 - Pingyao - Xi'an (Breakfast, Lunch)

Having been first recognized and recorded in books as early as 800 BC, Pingyao remains the best preserved ancient town out of those built in Ming (1368 – 1644 AD) & Qing (1636 – 1912 AD) Dynasties with a complete city wall as protection. All the architectures keep the original look of how they were in Ming (1368 – 1644 AD) & Qing Dynasties (1636 – 1912 AD) with constant maintenance. Wandering around in this small town, you feel just like you were taken back to hundreds of years ago. There are lots of places to visit and learn about within the town: Confucius Temple, Yamen (government office), Biaoju (providing armed escorting services for precious goods during shipment), Piaohao (providing banking services), just to name a few. The central axis of the town, Ming & Qing Streets, is lined with many shops and vendors and has been the most bustling part of the town since its establishment. After lunch, you will go back to the hotel to pick up your bags and head to the railway station with the escort of the guide and the driver. A 4-hour high speed train takes you to the next destination in your itinerary – Xi'an. Upon your arrival, you should proceed to the

exit, where a guide is waiting to transfer you to the hotel

Day 07: Day 7 - Xi'an (Breakfast, Lunch)

Xi'an has been home to the capital of 13 kingdoms during the feudal period that occupied China for 2,000 years, and the city itself, named Chang An at that time, reached its utmost prosperity when it was the capital of Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD). It is the largest city in Northwest China and has gained its international popularity since the excavation of Terra Cotta Warriors & Horses. The first stop on today's itinerary is Terra Cotta Warriors & Horses, acclaimed as the biggest archeological find of 20th Century worldwide. It represents the supreme level of funerary art throughout the ancient civilization in China as well as in the world. Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China, ordered the building of his mausoleum to be started as soon as he ascended the throne, in the year 246 BC. The project eventually involved 700,000 workers and the warriors, chariots and horses made of terra cotta was designed, moulded and fired to its original sizes, and finally buried with the emperor to protect him in his afterlife. Then you will head back downtown and explore the lively Muslim neighborhoods in the afternoon. The history of this Muslim quarter in Xi'an dates back to Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD), when Muslim merchants came and aggregated in Chang An via Silk Road. This enclave has been constantly expanded during the successive dynasties and half of the Muslim population in Xi'an currently resides here. This is one of the busiest places in Xi'an due to numerous food stands lining along the two sides of the roads within the enclave and the unique culture nurtured by its history.

Day 08: Day 8 - Xi'an - Lhasa (Breakfast, Lunch)

The inner city of Xi'an is completely walled and the wall, known as Xi'an City Wall, stretches over a total length of 14 kilometers in rectangular shape. The wall was first built in the early years of Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644 AD) to mainly serve the purposes of military defense and food storage. The wall fulfilled its function as the local residents took shelter there during the Second World War, when the Japanese carried out air bombings from 1937 to 1940. Having been refurbished and maintained from time to time within hundreds of years, the wall comes to its present existence. Along the top of the wall is a walkway paved with stones and bricks. As you walk on it, you can take in sight of various views of the city. The bicycle rental service is available on the wall and it offers another option of visiting the wall. Your second stop today and the final place to visit in this ancient capital is Big Wild Goose Pagoda. It was built in 652 during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) to hold sutras and figurines of the Buddha that were brought to China from India by the Buddhist translator and traveler Xuanzang. It represents the introduction of Buddhist architecture and culture into China from India and integration into Chinese civilization. You will spend a leisure afternoon at Tangbo Art Museum, where you can browse the works of traditional folk arts, ancient paintings displayed as well as the exhibition of contemporary artists held periodically. You will attend a lecture about Chinese calligraphy and create your own masterpiece there. At the end of the tour, you will be transferred to the airport to catch a late afternoon flight to Lhasa. Upon arrival, you need to pick up your check-in luggage first and proceed to

the exit to find your guide, who is waiting there to transfer you to local hotel for overnight.

Day 09: Day 9 - Lhasa (Breakfast, Lunch)

Your trip in Tibet begins with a pilgrimage to the Potala Palace, an architectural wonder standing on top of Red Hill in the center of Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet Autonomous Region with an altitude of 3,700 meters above sea level. The initial construction of the palace can be dated back to as early as 7th Century and Songtsen Gampo, the king of Tibetan Regime, ordered it to be built as the place where he lived and handled the political affairs. It has then been deserted during the next 800 years since the beginning of 9th Century when the empire collapsed until a restoration program was launched by the 5th Dalai Lama and another palace structure featuring purely white exterior was completed by the year 1648. The Red Palace was laid on top of the existing White Palace in an extension program from 1690 to 1694 and the whole structure remained how it looks like until now. This architectural masterpiece also embodies the commitment of religious beliefs in a region where Buddhism has prospered for more than thousands of years. Next you will proceed to pay a visit to Jokhang Temple, built 1,300 years ago during the period of Tibetan Regime and remaining the most glorious architecture preserved from that time until now. The name of the city – Lhasa evolved from how the temple was originally called in Tibetan language. The main structure of the temple features a 4-storey building with roofs painted in pure gold. It houses numerous exquisite Buddha statues, among which a Sakyamuni statue moulded according to his real body size when he was 12 years old is known to all with tremendous historical and cultural significance. It was brought to China from India, and successively taken to Tibet in 7th Century by Princess Wencheng, who was appointed to marry Songtsen Gampo, the king of Tibetan Regime by the royal court of Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD). The neighbourhood encircling Jokhang Temple is called Barkhor Street, the most lively dwelling and commercial quarters in the center of Lhasa. Initially a street surrounding the temple, it has gradually developed into a community consisting of local houses, government offices, restaurants, hotels, shops, artifact workshops and etc. as numerous disciples came for pilgrimage and settled down in thousands of years. When the dusk falls every day, many pilgrims march on the street and circle the temple in clockwise direction. Today's itinerary concludes with a leisure walk along this street.

Day 10: Day 10 - Lhasa - Yamdrok Lake Lhasa (Breakfast, Lunch)

70 kilometers to the southwest of Lhasa lies a freshwater lake named Yamdrok Lake, covering an area of 675 square kilometers with an elevation of 4,441 meters. It is nestled among snow-capped mountains at the northern foot of Himalayas and fed by numerous small streams. The color of the lake is in emerald from time to time while it is always peaceful on the surface. You will embark on a 2-hour drive in the morning to reach the lake. The elevation soars to 5,030 meters when your car climbs up to Gampala pass, and then a river in emerald color winds through. It looks gradually spectacular when you approach to it. You will be given 2-3 hours to wander around the lake to take pictures and head back to Lhasa before the dusk falls.

Day 11: Day 11 - Lhasa - Shanghai (Breakfast, Lunch)

3 kilometers north of Lhasa at the foot of a hill stand the monastery complex of Sera, with the main buildings featuring the Great Assembly Hall and 3 colleges. The colleges provide a 20-year training programme and the monks will be granted a geshe degree upon completion of this programme. The monastery was built in 1419 during the reign of Emperor Yongle of Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644 AD) and later developed to house over 9,000 monks at one time. The establishment of the monastery was initiated by Jamchen Choje, a disciple of Master Lama Tsongkhapa who founded the Gelukpa Order. Jamchen Choje was later summoned to the royal court and warmly greeted by Emperor Yongle. The 105-volume Buddhism scriptures ‘Kangyur’ written on wood blocks with gold cover engraved in red lacquer was presented to Jamchen Choje by the emperor and has been housed in the monastery until now. Sera Monastery is the only monastery in Tibet where visitors are allowed to witness a Buddhism debate session held on a daily basis among the monks studying in the colleges. The debating tradition supplemented with gestures is exclusive to Sera Monastery. Upon completion of the tour, you will be transferred to the airport to catch an afternoon flight to Shanghai. Immediately as you arrive after a 4-hour flight via Xi'an, you will meet a new guide who will then take you to your hotel.

Day 12: Day 12 - Shanghai (Breakfast, Lunch)

As the most developed city around China, apart from being the international financial hub and largest logistics port for international trade in the world, Shanghai is also the worldwide icon for fashion and lifestyle. Your exploration in this metropolis begins with a visit to Xintiandi, a masterpiece of functional transformation from old dwelling quarter into a business complex home to many boutique hotels, luxury restaurants, art galleries, coffee shops and etc. A chic atmosphere is generated by the contrast between the exterior with its original vintage look and luxury artistic interior of each building. You will proceed with the exploration of the city's past with an excursion to Yuyuan Garden. Owned originally by a government official in Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644 AD), the garden has been built with 20 years' time. The courtyards, houses, ponds, pavilions and etc. are exquisitely laid out to create tiers of sceneries within the garden. The Bund is the best place to exemplify the cultural diversity of this city. It refers to an area running along the western bank of Huangpu River with many historical buildings ever home to various financial institutions operating in China in the middle of 20th Century. The development of this area began in 1844, when it was officially ceded to British administration by the court of Qing Dynasty (1636 – 1912 AD) as a result of the defeat in the First Opium War. It witnessed the history of China being defeated by foreign military power, invaded and finally declaring independence after hundreds of years of flight. Now the Bund is known for the best place for promenade in China as well as in the world. The old buildings on the western bank and the new skyscrapers on the eastern side represent the past and the present Shanghai. You will wind up your full day tour by a scenic drive among the skyscrapers on the other side of Huangpu River. You can access any of them for a panoramic view of the city by paying an additional cost on your own.

Day 13: Day 13 - Shanghai (Breakfast)

Today will be a free day for you to continue exploration, do some shopping or simply take a rest at the hotel. We also offer you a couple of optional tours in case you still prefer to schedule some guided tours today.

Day 14: Day 14 - Depart Shanghai (Breakfast)

You will be picked up from the hotel lobby and transferred to the airport to board your flight to the next destination. This is a private transfer and the pick-up time will be worked out exactly in accordance with your flight time.

Inclusion

Domestic flights Xi'an/Lhasa/Shanghai incl tax on economy class.
High speed trains Beijing/Datong, Pingyao/Xi'an on 1st Class basis.
Superior 4* hotel accommodation at all the destinations in the itinerary incl daily breakfast.
11 to 35-seat van/coach throughout the itinerary for all transfers & day tours.
All admission to the attractions listed in the above itinerary.
Lunches & dinners specified in the above itinerary.
English-speaking local guides.

Exclusion

Chinese visa.
Flight/train/cruise into the first destination & out of the last in the above itinerary.
Personal expense.
Gratuities to the guides, the drivers, the hotel bellboys and etc.

Note

HOTEL & CRUISE ACCOMMODATION

4* With overnight stay at Great Wall:

Novotel Xinqiao Beijing, 3 nights;
Dhawa Jinshanling, 1 night;
Yide Hotel Pingyao, 1 night;
Grand Park Xi'an, 2 nights;
InterContinental Lhasa Paradise, 3 nights;
Central Hotel Shanghai, 3 nights.

5* With overnight stay at Great Wall:

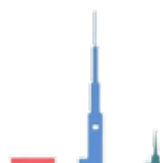
Pan Pacific Beijing, 3 nights;
Dhawa Jinshanling, 1 night;
Jing's Residence Pingyao, 1 night;
Wyndham Grand Xi'an South, 2 nights;
The St. Regis Lhasa Resort, 3 nights;
The Yangtze Boutique Shanghai, 3 nights.

Travel Dates

2020
March 16, 2020

2021
January 04, 2021

2022
January 03, 2022



March 23, 2020	January 11, 2021	January 10, 2022
March 30, 2020	January 18, 2021	January 17, 2022
April 06, 2020	January 25, 2021	January 24, 2022
April 13, 2020	February 01, 2021	January 31, 2022
April 20, 2020	February 08, 2021	February 07, 2022
April 27, 2020	February 15, 2021	February 14, 2022
May 04, 2020	February 22, 2021	February 21, 2022
May 11, 2020	March 01, 2021	February 28, 2022
May 18, 2020	March 08, 2021	March 07, 2022
May 25, 2020	March 15, 2021	March 14, 2022
June 01, 2020	March 22, 2021	
June 08, 2020	March 29, 2021	
June 15, 2020	April 05, 2021	
June 22, 2020	April 12, 2021	
June 29, 2020	April 19, 2021	
July 06, 2020	April 26, 2021	
July 13, 2020	May 03, 2021	
July 20, 2020	May 10, 2021	
July 27, 2020	May 17, 2021	
August 03, 2020	May 24, 2021	
August 10, 2020	May 31, 2021	
August 17, 2020	June 07, 2021	
August 24, 2020	June 14, 2021	
August 31, 2020	June 21, 2021	
September 07, 2020	June 28, 2021	
September 14, 2020	July 05, 2021	
September 21, 2020	July 12, 2021	
September 28, 2020	July 19, 2021	
October 05, 2020	July 26, 2021	
October 12, 2020	August 02, 2021	
October 19, 2020	August 09, 2021	
October 26, 2020	August 16, 2021	
November 02, 2020	August 23, 2021	
November 09, 2020	August 30, 2021	
November 16, 2020	September 06, 2021	
November 23, 2020	September 13, 2021	
November 30, 2020	September 20, 2021	
December 07, 2020	September 27, 2021	
December 14, 2020	October 04, 2021	
December 21, 2020	October 11, 2021	
December 28, 2020	October 18, 2021	
	October 25, 2021	
	November 01, 2021	

November 08, 2021

November 15, 2021

November 22, 2021

November 29, 2021

December 06, 2021

December 13, 2021

December 20, 2021

December 27, 2021

Tour Dates & Pricing

