

Icons of China



GREAT WALL OF CHINA

CHINA IS A VAST and diverse land – where ancient history is juxtaposed against rapid modern development. China, one of the last bastions of communism, intrigues the visitor with its complex culture and entices travellers with its astonishing array of historic sites. From the immense Great Wall to the incredible Terracotta Warriors at Xian, discovered less than 40 years ago. We also visit the breathtaking landscapes of Guilin on the Lijiang River; travel to Kunming and its spectacular Stone Forest; see the Giant Pandas at Chongqing; enjoy a three night luxury cruise through the Three Gorges of the Yangtze River; experience the remarkable sights of Beijing; and immerse yourself in the dynamic city of Shanghai. All air travel is aboard our all Business Class Private Jet and the tour is limited to just 44 guests. We stay in some of China's best hotels including The Peninsula Hotel in Beijing and Shanghai. Join The Captain's Choice Tour on this exclusive journey through the wonders of China.



TERRACOTTA WARRIORS

TRAVEL DATES

11 September – 28 September 2011 (18 Days)

DAY 1: SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER
Australia – Guilin (China)

JOIN YOUR PRIVATE JET in Melbourne this morning and relax onboard with a glass of French Champagne or a fine wine. Please talk to us about connecting flights from your home city. Upon arrival in Guilin we transfer to the luxurious Shangri-la Hotel. Deluxe River View rooms have been reserved for your two night stay.

DAY 2: MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER
Cruise the Lijiang River

Today we take a cruise up the spectacular Lijiang River to the town of Yangshuo. We witness the domed karst formations for which this area is famous.

Enjoy the breathtaking landscapes as we sail upstream, stopping at several villages with time to explore and stroll through the markets. Enjoy a tour of Yangshuo before returning to Guilin for a Welcome Reception and Dinner.

DAY 3:
TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER
Guilin – Kunming

► *Early risers can take part in a Tai Chi demonstration within the gardens of our hotel.*

► *This morning you may like to visit Guilin Yuzi Paradise, a large park located in the unique and unspoiled natural surroundings of Guilin. The park features displays of cavern art and contemporary sculpture.*

Later this morning we visit the 600,000

year old Yudi Lan (Reed Flute) Cave before transferring to the airport for the short flight aboard our Private Jet to Kunming.

We visit the famous Flowers and Birds Market in Jingxing Street before checking in to the comfortable but not elaborate Green Lake Hotel.

► *Tonight is your first dine-around dinner, select from a variety of restaurants and dine from the a la carte menu.*

DAY 4: WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER
Stone Forest

Today we visit the Stone Forest, regarded as having 'the most fantastic scenery under heaven'. The massive collection of grey limestone pillars, split by rain and eroded to their present fanciful shapes, cover a huge area southeast of Kunming. There are small and large stone structures in the shape of pagodas, walls, swords, animals and vertically carved, fantastically shaped limestone pillars. There are numerous stone peaks, rock pillars, stone flowers, rock flows, lakes and waterfalls. The Sani people inhabit the area and produce numerous handicrafts.

► *Enjoy another dine-around dinner this evening.*



STONE FOREST

DAY 5:
THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER
Kunming – Chongqing

Enjoy a leisurely morning before our flight to Chongqing. Upon arrival we visit the Giant Pandas in their two hectare Panda House, this experience is sure to be a highlight. Later today we join the deluxe 'Yangzi Explorer' for a spectacular three night cruise through the Three Gorges of the Yangtze River. This afternoon we cruise downstream toward Yichang.



FORBIDDEN CITY, BEIJING

DAY 6: FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

Fengdu

► Choose from a visit to Fengdu, a charming river village noted for its elaborate Taoist Temple and bustling markets; or travel to Wanzhou for a unique glimpse into one of China's remote communities. At Wanzhou you will have the opportunity to mingle with the locals and see how school children receive their early education.

DAY 7: SATURDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

Three Gorges

Early this morning our ship will enter the Qutang Gorge through the majestic Kui Men cliffs. The two imposing cliffs each resemble a towering door into some otherworldly destination. Next is Wu Gorge, noted for the sheer, looming appearance of the numerous peaks that mark this portion of the Yangtze River.

We disembark from the ship at Badong and board local longboats (sampans) poled by Tujia boatmen. Enter Bamboo Gorge, a small branch of the Yangtze River, aboard your sampan. The scenery here is unrivalled – crystalline waters, rich forest and towering rock formations.

Return to the 'Yangzi Explorer' and relax on your private balcony whilst enjoying the views of the Xiling Gorge as we pass through the Yellow Ox Gorge (Huang Niu Xi). Here the river widens and sweeps under the Huangling Temple, which stands amid



- Coach
- Cruise
- Private Jet

groves of orange and pomelo trees.

This evening we navigate our way down through the ship locks of the extensive Three Gorges Dam.

DAY 8: SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

Yichang – Xian

This morning we visit the Three Gorges Dam Project, a remarkable man made feat. We continue our cruise through the Eastern Xiling Gorge to Yichang. We disembark and drive to Wuhan to rejoin our all Business Class Private Jet for the flight to Xian.

Upon arrival in Xian we visit the Xian City Wall for a special City Wall Welcome Ceremony at the North Gate. Later we check in to the luxurious Sofitel Xian on

Renmin Square, where Executive Rooms are booked to ensure your comfort during our three night stay.

► Tonight select from a choice of restaurants within our hotel or located in the local area.

DAY 9: MONDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

Xian

Over the last 2,000 years Xian has seen the rise and fall of numerous Chinese Dynasties. The monuments and archaeological sights of the city and surrounding plain are a reminder that once Xian was a booming metropolis, vying with

Rome, and later Constantinople, for the title of the 'Greatest City in the World'. This morning we will visit the Shaanxi Provincial Museum, formerly the Temple of Confucius, housing a fine collection devoted largely to the history of the Silk Route. The Forest of Steles, the heaviest collection of books in the world, comprising 2,000 large engraved stone tablets from the Han Dynasty is particularly impressive.

After a special Dim Sum lunch at De Fa Chang Dumpling Restaurant we visit the Wild Goose Pagoda, built in 648 AD during the Tang Dynasty. Our day of incredible sightseeing concludes with a walk through the Muslim Quarter and Great Mosque.

This evening we are invited to attend a special Tang Dynasty Dinner and Show.



PANDAS

DAY 10:
TUESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

Xian –
Terracotta Warriors

Only a few decades ago peasants discovered the incredible collection of Terracotta Warriors outside Xian.

The 6,000 terracotta figures of rows and rows of warriors and horses are one of the great discoveries of recent times.

The Terracotta Warriors are a highlight of any visit to China and we visit this incredible site this morning.

After lunch we drive on to Banpo Neolithic Village, dating from 4,500 BC. These incredible remains were discovered in 1953 on the eastern bank of the Chan River.

Enjoy some free time this afternoon to discover more of the city independently or enjoy the facilities of our hotel.

► Dine-around dinner – enjoy a relaxing evening and choose from a selection of our hotel's restaurants.

DAY 11: WEDNESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER
Xian – Beijing

We have a free morning before transferring to the airport for our flight to Beijing. Enjoy lunch and fine wines from the comfort of your Business Class seat.

On arrival we will check in to the world renowned Peninsula Hotel. There will be time for a quick refresh before departing for a special reception and fine dining at the China Club. Situated on Xirong Xian Lane in a quiet hutong near the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square the restaurant is set within a 16th century royal palace and specialises in Cantonese, Shanghainese and Sichuanese haute cuisine.

DAY 12: THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER
Beijing

Today we take a full day tour of Beijing. We drive to the Great Wall of China and take a walk atop of the wall, then experience the spine tingling feeling of walking across historic Tiananmen Square. We also visit the Forbidden City, formerly the Imperial Palace. We enjoy lunch at a classic Chinese restaurant.

▶ You may wish to join a guided rickshaw tour of Old Beijing's narrow hutongs (laneways).

▶ Early this evening you may wish to visit Shichahai Lake, where we board wooden, lantern-lit boats powered by a single oarsman. In the middle of the lake we light candles in paper boats and set them afloat in the water.

▶ Choose from a selection of restaurants at our hotel for a dine-around dinner this evening.



TIANANMEN SQUARE

DAY 13: FRIDAY 23 SEPTEMBER
Beijing

▶ The ancient art of Tai Chi is practiced throughout China and this morning you are invited to join a beginner's lesson.

▶ Today is yours to do as you wish – choose from a tour to the Summer Palace and a visit to the Temple of Heaven; take a cooking class followed by lunching on the delights of your efforts; or join a full day excursion to the Mutianyu Great Wall. The Mutianyu Wall winds 2.2km through high mountains and ridges. You will have the opportunity to ride the cable car, swooping you up and down the scenic mountain. At lunchtime we will be treated to a compelling talk from the English speaking world's foremost authority on the Great Wall, David Spindler.

▶ This evening enjoy another dine-around dinner – including a special Peking Duck restaurant option.

DAY 14: SATURDAY 24 SEPTEMBER
Beijing – Shanghai

▶ Enjoy a relaxing morning; embark on a guided shopping safari through the markets and specialty shops of Beijing.

Early this afternoon we rejoin our Private Jet and fly to Shanghai for a three night stay at Shanghai's newest luxury hotel, The Peninsula, where your room is booked to guarantee a view of the river and The Bund area.

Our sumptuous hotel enjoys the best location in Shanghai, near the thousands of shops on Nanjing Road.

On arrival we take the Shanghai Maglev Train, the world's fastest train, for a 7 minute, 33 km trip from the airport to this incredible city.

This evening we enjoy fine dining at a top quality local restaurant.

DAY 15:
SUNDAY 25 SEPTEMBER
Shanghai

This morning we explore Shanghai including a visit to the 400 year old Yu Garden, a place of peace and comfort in the bustling heart of Shanghai. We will also visit the modern Shanghai Museum, the French Concession area and the Bund.

▶ After lunch enjoy a free afternoon to stroll past the historic European style buildings on the Bund; or join a personalised shopping tour – where a small group visits shops of particular interest to individuals.

▶ This evening you may like to dine at our luxurious hotel or at one of the many nearby restaurants.

DAY 16: MONDAY 26 SEPTEMBER
Shanghai

▶ Today choose from a free day or a range of complimentary options.

You may like to get involved with the local culture and visit the Children's Palace, where local students practice the arts.

Visit the ancient Chinese canal town of



SUZHOU

Zhujiajiao, dating back to the Ming and Qing Dynasties. At Zhujiajiao we learn about the ancient art of Chinese Calligraphy at the Yipu Garden and Silk Embroidery museum.

Take a full day tour to the serene city of Suzhou, renowned for its picturesque gardens and its location on the Grand Canal. We visit the Master of the Nets Garden and the Suzhou Museum, as well as other sights.

This evening we enjoy a Farewell Dinner at the world renowned 'M on the Bund' restaurant.

DAY 17: TUESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER
Depart Shanghai

This morning you may like to do some last minute shopping or relax at our hotel. Early this afternoon we transfer to the airport for our flight back to Australia.

DAY 18: WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER
Arrive Australia

We arrive in Melbourne mid morning. Please let our team know if you would like us to obtain flights to return you to your home city.

TOUR COST

Based on twin share – per person, in Deluxe Cabin aboard 'Yangzi Explorer', from Melbourne in Australian Dollars. Prices from other cities are available on request.

BUSINESS CLASS.....\$27,990

SINGLE ROOM SUPPLEMENT.....\$2,995

Price includes Deluxe Cabin (Xiling Deck) aboard 'Yangzi Explorer'.
Upgrades to suites are available at additional cost, please enquire for deck plan and costs.

Please enquire for prices and schedules to/from Melbourne from other cities or about embarking and disembarking the tour in Darwin.

Single rooms are available at a supplement or we will allocate two single travellers of the same gender to a room without any additional cost.