

Iconic China with Yangtze Cruise

Trip Map



 Start Location

 End Location

 Over night

 Visited Location

 Cruise

 Ferry

 Plane

 Train

Day 1 | Arrive Beijing



Welcome to China's sprawling, high flying and innovative capital city, Beijing. With one foot in the future and the other in the past, Beijing is nothing if not unique. An impressive six UNESCO World Heritage sites and a splurge of temples make the city a historian's dream, whilst modern masterpieces like the CCTV Building and the Galaxy Soho ensure Beijing is a city taking its place as one of the front runners in contemporary design. At your hotel, meet up with your Travel Director before getting to know the rest of your travel companions over dinner this evening.

Meals: Dinner

Hotel: Holiday Inn Express Temple of Heaven

Day 2 | Beijing Sightseeing



Today's sightseeing tour will see you dive straight into the magic of Beijing, kicked off in the world's largest public square, Tiananmen Square. Claiming an incredible 440,000 square metres of space and flanked by Soviet style buildings, the square was the brainchild of Chairman Mao and flexes some serious Communist design ideals. Next up, you'll head over to the UNESCO-listed Forbidden City, the largest palace complex in the world featuring courtyards, palaces, pavilions and gardens all ringed by 3.5km of scarlet coloured citadel walls. Take your time exploring this impeccably preserved complex, imagining what life would have been like for the 24 emperors who ruled here during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. This afternoon enjoy some free time at leisure and perhaps explore the enchanting hùtōngs or alleyways that crisscross the city. This evening you could opt to join us for the spectacular 'Legend of Kung Fu' show. Mixing traditional martial arts with modern theatre, watch as Kung Fu artists from all over China display an art form that is utterly synonymous with Chinese culture.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Holiday Inn Express Temple of Heaven

CHOICE OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Legend of Kung Fu Show - If traditional martial arts, acrobatics, Kung Fu dance and modern theatre sounds like you, then you won't want to miss the Kung Fu artists at The Legend of Kung Fu Show. It's the story of a boy who dreams big about being a Kung Fu master. But it's not just about kicks and flips - it's about him facing his fears as he fights through it all in becoming a total champ.

Adult: 410.00 CNY

Day 3 | Beijing and the Great Wall



Widely considered a Top 10 life experience, today's the day you'll be able to tick off 'visiting the Great Wall of China' at Juyongguan on your lifetime to-do list. China's greatest feat of engineering and one of the most famous sights in the world, the wall stretches some 21,000 km from East to West China, snaking its way like a dragon through deserts, grasslands, mountains and plateaus. Walking along this impressive piece of history, be sure to take in the views of the wall winding off into the distance and appreciate the sheer will and determination of the millions who helped to create this incredible fortification, the greatest relic of the Ming Dynasty.

Visit a Jade factory, then enjoy your lunch in a local restaurant. This afternoon, and after some much needed downtime, why not see out your time in Beijing with an optional dinner, a sumptuous banquet of local specialities including Beijing Kao Ya, known as Peking Duck to the rest of the world.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel: Holiday Inn Express Temple of Heaven

CHOICE OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Peking Duck Banquet - Peking Duck and pancakes... is your belly rumbling? No tour to China is complete without it. Peking Duck, or 'Beijing kao ya,' is the most well-known dish in China and has been since the imperial era. Tuck into this famous cuisine of roasted duck accompanied by pancakes and vegetables along with soup, stir fries, rice and salad. Top it all off with a glass of local wine, soft drink or beer. The price shown is in Chinese Yuan Renminbi.

Adult: 410.00 CNY

Day 4 | Beijing - Xi'an



Waking up to a free morning in Beijing, make the most of your final hours here by joining our Choice Experience to the UNESCO listed Temple of Heaven. A vast complex in the old outer city and one of the country's most important Imperial temples, this place is widely considered one of the greatest achievements of traditional Chinese architecture, with a layout that displays the belief that the earth is square and heaven round. This afternoon catch a flight to the historical city of Xi'an. Once home to emperors, warriors and the Chinese elite, Xi'an is the kind of place that keeps historians up at night, imagining what could have been. It's one of the few cities in China that's still managed to hold on to its imposing 12 metre high city walls, and is of course best known as the home of the magnificent Terracotta Army. This evening and with time to yourself, perhaps head out to explore the busy lanes of the Muslim Quarter.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Holiday Inn Express Xi'an Bell Tower

CHOICE OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Visit the Temple of Heaven - Choose to explore the Temple of Heaven - a UNESCO World Heritage Site where Emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties prayed for centuries. Fun fact: this large structure is considered to be a masterpiece of ancient Chinese design. It's laid out to show the belief that heaven is round and the Earth is square. Learn about the symbolic details of the temple buildings and its grand style and the way the locals live. It's a history lesson brought to life.
Adult: 380.00 CNY

798 Art Zone - Step off the Beijing tourist trail and into an extraordinary world of vibrant colour and rich history at the 798 Art Zone. Nestled into the historic buildings of a 50-year-old decommissioned military factory, this location shows off a unique architectural style and insight to the past including an original Bauhaus warehouse. A space for a thriving artistic community to showcase their modern pieces, art lovers will delight at the beautiful galleries, quirky art exhibition spaces, artists' studios, outdoor sculpture installations, boutiques restaurants and bars. The price shown is in Chinese Yuan Renminbi
Adult: 400.00 CNY

Day 5 | Xi'an Sightseeing



We hope you're ready—today's visit to the Terracotta Army is bound to leave you in awe! One of the most remarkable archaeological discoveries in modern history, this vast, life-sized army—thousands strong—was uncovered entirely by chance when local farmers were digging a well. Each warrior, unique in appearance, has silently guarded China's first emperor, Qin Shi Huang, for 2,000 years. You'll learn all about it from your Travel Director before enjoying a local-style lunch. Afterwards, step into China's past with a visit to traditional Yaodong cave dwellings. Carved into hillsides, these homes have sheltered families for countless generations, though this way of life is fading. As part of our MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experiences, this visit helps preserve a way of life that's fast disappearing. Looking for more history? Join a Choice Experience to visit Gao's Grand Courtyard, a 400-year-old Ming Dynasty home with elegant halls, shadow puppet shows, and traditional crafts. This evening, dive deeper into history with a Choice Experience Tang Dynasty show with dinner. Feast on a dumpling banquet before vibrant costumes, dance and music bring the era's rich culture to life.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel: Holiday Inn Express Xi'an Bell Tower

CHOICE OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Gao's Grand Courtyard - Hidden in Xi'an's lively Muslim Quarter, Gao's Grand Courtyard is a 400-year-old gem packed with history and artistic flair. Explore its grand halls, watch a traditional shadow puppet show, then try your hand at calligraphy or paper-cutting — both treasured Chinese crafts. Who knows? You might just uncover your inner artist!
Adult: 370.00 CNY

Tang Dynasty Show with Dinner - Enjoy a sumptuous Tang Imperial Banquet followed by a wonderful performance of ancient music and dance which has graced the region for centuries. The show consists of 5 parts filled with vibrant costumes, colourful dances and traditional music. Under the ruling of the Tang Emperors from 618AD to 907AD, China became the most powerful and prosperous country in the world. During this time the economy, politics and military strength reached an unprecedented level which influenced the culture of its neighbouring countries. It was during this flourishing and peaceful period that exquisite Tang imperial feasts with music and dance emerged and developed. Step back in time and enjoy the delightful hospitality and performances of the Tang Dynasty. The price shown is in Chinese Yuan Renminbi.
Adult: 475.00 CNY

Day 6 | Xi'an - Chongqing - Yangtze River Cruise



Heading for the train station this morning, you'll catch a high-speed train to the next stop on your China tour package, bound for the booming city of Chongqing. As one of the most densely populated cities on earth it's little surprise that Chongqing throbs with life and energy, but the many, many people who live here are welcoming and friendly, and the vision of the city spilling over onto both banks of the Yangtze River is a real sight to behold. Speaking of the Yangtze, catch your first glimpse of the longest river in Asia and the third longest in the world as you arrive here, then after dinner get even better acquainted as you board your river cruise ship, your home for the next three nights.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Hotel: Victoria Isabella

Day 7 | Yangtze River Cruise



Drift along the legendary Yangtze River and soak up the stunning views. Grab a drink, kick back on deck and take in this once-in-a-lifetime experience. Hop off the ship for a visit to Mount Shuanggui near Fengdu. If river conditions change, no stress — you'll have an alternate stop at Shibaozhai, home to an eye-catching wooden pagoda built into the cliffside. Want to uncover more local legends? Two incredible Choice Experiences await. Step into the eerie world of Fengdu's 'Ghost City,' a two-thousand-year-old complex of shrines, temples and monasteries dedicated to the afterlife. Or, for an action-packed evening, experience the Three Kingdoms Show—a dazzling spectacle of equestrian stunts, acrobatics and special effects that brings the legendary battles of the Han, Wu and Ming dynasties to life. After an unforgettable day, return to your ship and continue your Yangtze adventure.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Victoria Isabella

CHOICE OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Fengdu: China's Legendary 'Ghost City' - Explore Fengdu, China's legendary "Ghost City," where creepy demon-carved temples make ancient folklore feel spine-tinglingly real! Sitting high on Mingshan Hill, this spot is packed with Taoist legends, said to be the home of two scholars who levelled up to immortality.

Adult: 320.00 CNY

Romance of the Three Kingdoms Show - Experience the epic Three Kingdoms era in a thrilling open-air show! Watch daring equestrian stunts, acrobatics and vivid performances, brought to life with stunning 3D holograms, music and special effects. This immersive spectacle recreates the legendary battles of the Wei, Shu and Wu kingdoms—it's history like you've never seen it before!

Adult: 320.00 CNY

Day 8 | Yangtze River Cruise



Wake up to another incredible day on the Yangtze. This morning, choose from two Choice Experiences: wander through White Emperor City, where ancient rulers and poets once soaked in epic views of Qutang Gorge, or take on the hike up Chijia Mountain for a jaw-dropping panorama of the Qutang Gorge. Back on board, cruise through Qutang Gorge's towering cliffs, past the misty peaks of Wu Gorge, and into the dramatic landscapes of Xiling Gorge. This afternoon, swap the cruise for a small motorboat and glide along the Goddess Stream, where towering limestone cliffs, covered in lush greenery, give you a whole new, breathtaking view of this mighty river.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Victoria Isabella

CHOICE OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Top of the Three Gorges - Head to the peak of Chijia Mountain for jaw-dropping views of the Yangtze River flowing into the mighty Qutang Gorge. Towering cliffs rise dramatically on either side, narrowing the river to just tens of metres wide. With rushing waters below and endless peaks above, this is nature at its most breathtaking!

Adult: 400.00 CNY

White Emperor City - Sitting high above Qutang Gorge, White Emperor City is straight out of legend! Back in 25 AD, a soldier spotted a white dragon rising from a well and crowned himself the White Emperor. Since then, rulers and poets have been drawn to its epic views, finding inspiration in the misty peaks and winding river below. Stroll through ancient temples, dive into centuries of history, and take in the magic of this mountaintop retreat.

Adult: 320.00 CNY

Day 9 | Yichang - Shanghai



Make an early start this morning and ascend to the top deck of the Yangtze cruise ship to enjoy the views of the vast Three Gorges Dam – the largest dam in the world and a serious labour of love with a production timeline that spanned decades. After disembarkation at Maoping Port there is another great photo opportunity to get shots of the Dam before transferring to Yichang Airport to catch your flight to the stunning city of Shanghai.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Ocean

Day 10 | Shanghai Sightseeing



Diving into all that Shanghai has to offer, this morning's sightseeing tour will start off at The Bund, the city's famous waterfront hub. Once a place of fast paced trading akin to New York's Wall Street, today The Bund is the place to be in Shanghai. All the top restaurants, hotels and shops can be found on this exclusive patch of real estate, where art deco and neoclassical buildings rub shoulders with monolithic skyscrapers. Continuing on to a Silk Factory Outlet where vibrant colours are the aim of the game, you'll then stop off at Shanghai's premium shopping destination, Nanjing Road. Stretching out over 1.5km and housing over 600 businesses, it won't be hard to see why shopping is serious business in Shanghai. Go wild in the stores selling high end couture and vintage finds alike, then this evening perhaps opt to join your fellow travellers on our visit to a daring acrobatics show.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel: Ocean

CHOICE OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Shanghai Acrobatic Show - Circus skills, martial arts and magic... Get ready for an exciting performance by the world-renowned Shanghai Acrobatic Troupe. You'll be on the edge of your seat marvelling at the strength, skill and suppleness of China's famous acrobats as they use traditional folk art to tell historical tales of Shanghai. The price shown is in Chinese Yuan Renminbi.

Adult: 435.00 CNY

Day 11 | Shanghai Free Day



With a full day to explore your way and the last day of your China value tour, be sure to make the most of it! If it's culture you're after, you're in the right place; Shanghai has one of the most revered cultural scenes of any city in the world with a wealth of museums and galleries showcasing contemporary and historical treasures alike. You may choose to take a Choice Experience to the ancient water town of Zhujiajiao with its 36 bridges built during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Or if you prefer to discover the city on your own, you could head to the Old Town for a glimpse of Shanghai of old or visit Yuyuan Garden, a true delight with its shady alcoves and fish filled pools. Eating is a hugely important social activity in China and undoubtedly one of the best ways to experience the culture, so be sure to sample all the wonderful delights that cross your path on your adventures.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Ocean

CHOICE OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

You will have the opportunity to choose between the following two Choice Experiences:

Half-Day Zhujiajiao Experience with Lunch - Get set for a journey to Zhujiajiao, the crown jewel among Shanghai's four ancient towns. Wander past its traditional houses with old fashioned courtyards, rice shops, spice stores and even a Qing

dynasty post office that's been around for over 1,700 years. Hop aboard a paddle boat and glide under its 36 distinct bridges. And don't forget about the food! Zhujiajiao is known for its cuisine—treat yourself to green soy beans, lotus roots, homemade candy and braised pork leg over lunch. It's a flavourful adventure you won't want to miss!

Adult: 585.00 CNY

World Financial Centre and Tianzifang - You've travelled through China's most beautiful natural scenery and ancient attractions - now it's time to marvel at its modern sights. Today is all about exploring Shanghai's coolest destinations. Beginning with a trip to the towering Shanghai World Financial Centre, which boasts unparalleled views of the cityscape from the 100th floor observation deck. At 429m high, the iconic view offers travel photography buffs the chance to capture their perfect shot. Next, a tour of the artsy Tianzifang area will lift your spirits high as you explore vibrant bars and cafes, rummage through eclectic craft shops and immerse yourself in trendy design studios and art galleries.

The price shown is in Chinese Yuan Renminbi

Adult: 745.00 CNY

Day 12 | Depart Shanghai



With memories of ancient kingdoms, serene landscapes, tasty local delicacies and feats of engineering wizardry still fresh in your mind's eye, your incredible adventure through the vast and beautiful land of China will come to an end today. After saying goodbye to your fellow travellers, make your own way to the airport and catch your onward flight to your next destination.

Meals: Breakfast

This document was last updated 2 March 2026.

While all information is correct at the time of publication, occasionally details or timings may differ.

Please refer to our website or speak to your Travel Director for the latest updates.