

IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

10 NIGHTS
FROM
£2,385

*See the Best of China -
Beijing, Xian,
Chengdu and
Shanghai, including
Giant Pandas.*



This private Classic China Tour covers Beijing, Xian, Chengdu & Shanghai and is a great option for a first time tour of China where time is relatively short but where the iconic sights are a must.

Flying between destinations means being able to make the most of the time to experience the iconic sights of China.

All touring is done accompanied by a private guide, not in a group, which means your schedule is flexible and can be adjusted entirely for you.

As with all of our China Tours, this one can be tailored to suit your interests & budget so just let us know your preferences.



IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

Day 1: Beijing

Overnight flight from the UK to Beijing.

Day 2: Beijing

On arrival you will be met and transferred to your chosen hotel in Beijing.

An interesting way to spend the evening is to take a stroll down Wangfujing Street, one of the most famous shopping streets in China where international brand outlets stand close to traditional exotic street food stalls.

Overnight: Beijing

Meals: Breakfast included





With iconic sights such as the Great Wall, Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace and the Temple of Heaven, it is no wonder that Beijing tops most people's lists on a tour of China...

IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

Day 3: Beijing

Enjoy a full day privately guided tour of Beijing.

Visit Tiananmen Square and prepare to be overwhelmed by the sheer size of one of the world's largest public squares. Pass several monuments, including Chairman Mao's mausoleum on the way to the entrance the Forbidden City.

The Forbidden City was completed in 1420, and was home to 24 emperors, the last of which left Beijing in 1924.

Stroll through what is arguably the best-preserved example of classical Chinese architecture in the world.

Enjoy an easy walk up Jingshan Hill, for a bird's-eye view of the Forbidden City.

Finally, recapture the feeling of Beijing's past from the wooden seat of a traditional rickshaw, and visit a local family's courtyard home along the way during a tour of Beijing's traditional Hutong district.

Overnight: Beijing

Meals: Breakfast included



IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

Day 4: The Great Wall

The Great Wall of China is the longest man-made structure in the world.

Explore the much quieter Mutianyu section of the Great Wall, which was first begun in the Northern Qi Dynasty (550-557) and finished in the 17th century.

The 2.5-kilometre stretch of the Wall allows you to walk along its storied length for over an hour and visit twenty-two watchtowers, should you so choose.

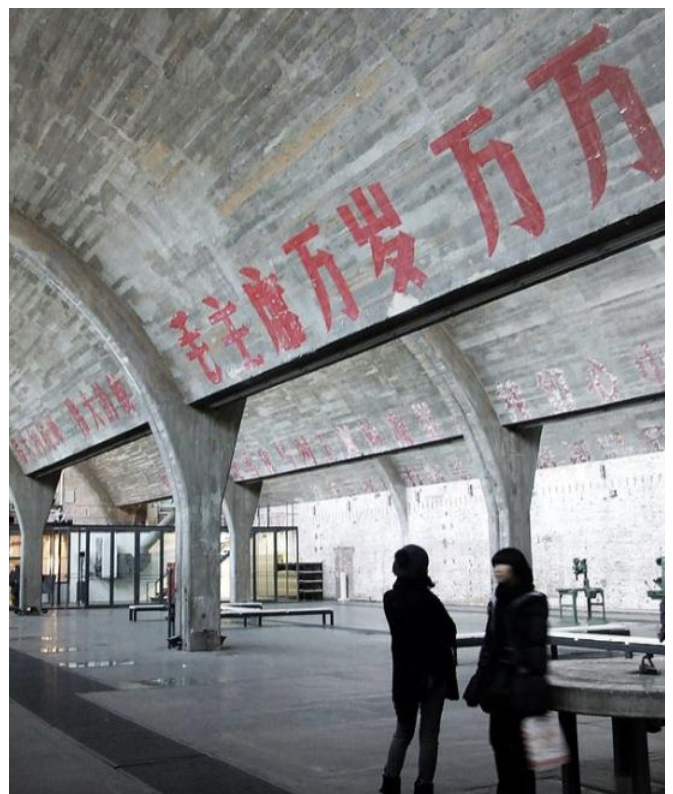
Also enjoy a cable car ride to the top.

Once a complex that manufactured electronics, Factory Number 798 was divided, rented out, and converted into galleries, artist studios, design companies, restaurants and bars at the turn of the 20th century.

Pay a visit to this art district of Beijing where Maoist slogans still adorn the walls, to experience a different side of Beijing.

Overnight: Beijing

Meals: Breakfast included



IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

Day 5: Beijing - Xian

Enjoy a morning tour to Beijing's Summer Palace.

The Summer Palace is one of the largest and most well-preserved imperial gardens in the world.

In the 18th century, Emperor Qianlong enlarged and embellished it, only to abandon it a few years later.

The grounds today are stunning, as is the lovely Kunming Lake, which occupies more than three quarters of the total area.

Enjoy a boat ride before walking the Long Corridor, a 728-metre hall featuring 8,000 paintings collected by the Emperor during his travels around the country.

Return to your hotel to freshen up and have some lunch (not included).

Check out of your hotel and enjoy an afternoon tour of the Temple of Heaven.



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Day 5 cont: Beijing - Xian

This tranquil park where the Temple of Heaven is located is a favourite stop for visitors to Beijing, as it provides an authentic look into local life - it's a great place to people watch.

On any given day, you're likely to see enthusiastic groups of locals practicing Tai Chi, playing traditional instruments or singing Peking Opera.

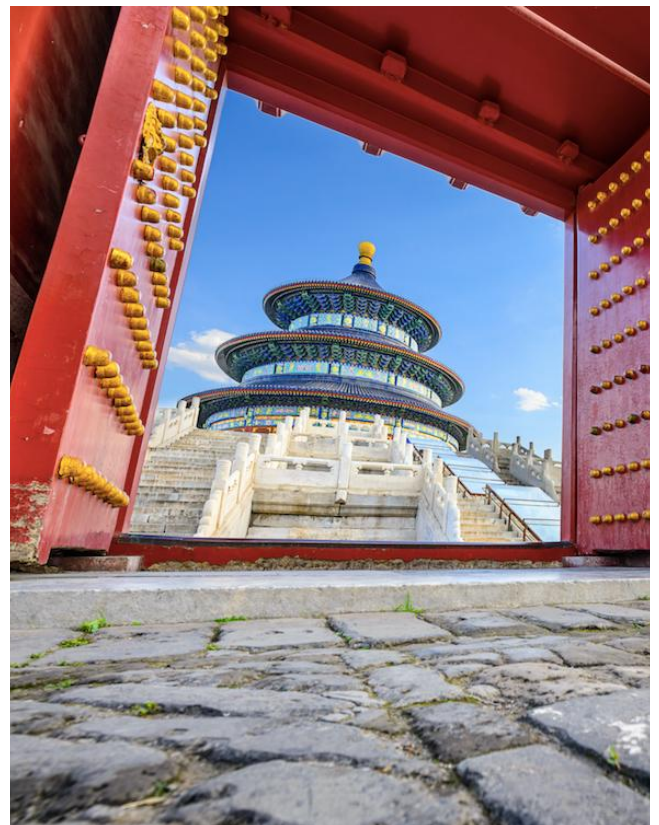
The grounds consist of a sequence of buildings and altars set in beautiful groves of cypress trees.

Learn more about the fascinating history behind this massive, circular structure and see local life unfold before your eyes in this very special visit to the Temple of Heaven.

Afterwards, transfer to the airport for your evening flight to Xian, where you will be met and transferred to your chosen hotel.

Overnight: Xian

Meals: Breakfast included



*Explore the magnificent
city walls of Xian.*



Visit the city of Xian, see the famous Terracotta Warriors and explore this famous city at the start of the great Silk Road, famous for its colourful Old Quarter & grand pagodas...

IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

Day 6: Xian

Enjoy a full day tour to the Terracotta Warriors.

One of the world's greatest archaeological finds, the Terracotta Warriors were discovered quite by chance in 1974 by a group of peasants digging a well outside of Xian.

These sculptures of soldiers, chariots and horses were funerary statues made to accompany China's first emperor to the afterlife over 2,100 years ago.

Legend has it that it took 100,000 men 38 years to create the soldiers, which all vary in rank, posture, height, uniform and facial features.

Spend the morning on a visit to the Terracotta Warriors and after lunch transfer back to Xian.

Enjoy the rest of the day in Xian on your own.

Overnight: Xian
Meals: Breakfast included



IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

Day 7: Xian

Today enjoy a full day tour of Old Xian.

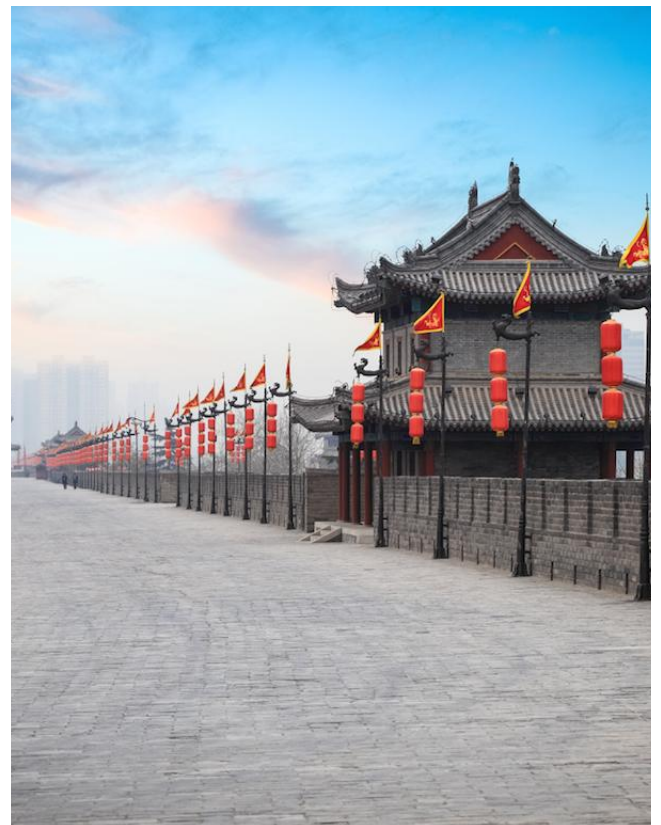
The city walls of Xian are some of the oldest and best preserved in all of China, dating back to the 2nd century BC, when Xian was the capital of the country.

The existing walls were completed in 1370, and are about 14 km in length and are still surrounded by a deep moat to this day.

The Small Wild Goose Pagoda was built in 707 and was named after the already existing Big Wild Goose Pagoda, due to its remarkable likeness.

In the lower level of the pagoda, explore the precious artifacts and historical objects housed inside the Xian Museum.

Enjoy a traditional Dumpling lunch at De Fa Chang and head on to see the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, built in 652 AD during the Tang dynasty and housing some of the most important Buddhist figurines in China.



IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS



Day 7 cont: Xian

Xian's Hui ethnic group trace their roots back to Persian and Arabic traders, who settled here at the eastern end of the Silk Road.

Stroll through this unique and fascinating area of the city, and see how Central Asia has influenced the development of Mainland China.

Visit the Great Mosque and the 300-year-old Gaoyue Song Folk House where you can enjoy a local shadow puppet show.

Overnight: Xian

Meals: Breakfast included



Day 8: Xian - Chengdu

This morning transfer to the airport for your flight to Chengdu where you will be met and transferred to your chosen hotel.

In the afternoon enjoy a tour of ancient Chengdu.

IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

Day 8 cont: Chengdu

Stroll down the picturesque Jinli Pedestrian Street which was once the commercial heart of the ancient Sichuan kingdom, and has been fully restored in the traditional style of the region.

Here, you can sample local delicacies and bargain for local arts and crafts, or simply sit at a café and people watch along this picturesque, bustling, and cheerful street.

Visit Wu Hou Temple which was built in honor of the Marquis of Wu, an outstanding military strategist during the Three Kingdoms era (220-280 AD).

Finally, find peace of mind at the peaceful Wenshu Temple, a large and generally very quiet Buddhist monastery.

Small ponds and lightly used buildings offer spots for visitors to sit down and relax, and every now and then, watch as a robed monk scurries past.

Overnight: Chengdu

Meals: Breakfast included



IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS



Day 9: Chengdu

This morning visit Chengdu's famous Panda Conservation Centre.

The national animal of China is also one of the most endangered species in the world and there is nowhere better on earth to see these special creatures than at the research centre near Chengdu.

The centre closely mimics the giant panda's natural habitat and covers a vast area.

Meander through the winding pathways and catch the bears at sleep and at play.

If you're lucky, a baby panda or two will just have been born, and you can visit them in the panda nursery.

Return to Chengdu and check out of your hotel

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Shanghai where you will be met and transferred to your chosen hotel with the rest of the day at leisure.

Overnight: Shanghai

Meals: Breakfast included



Shanghai is China's most dynamic and commercial city with some of the world's tallest buildings.



Shanghai is China's economic power house – where China is most blatantly heading full tilt into the new millennium. Monumental new skyscrapers, glittering department stores, buzzing nightlife – it's all happening in Shanghai, making it China's most exciting city by far...

IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

Day 10: Shanghai

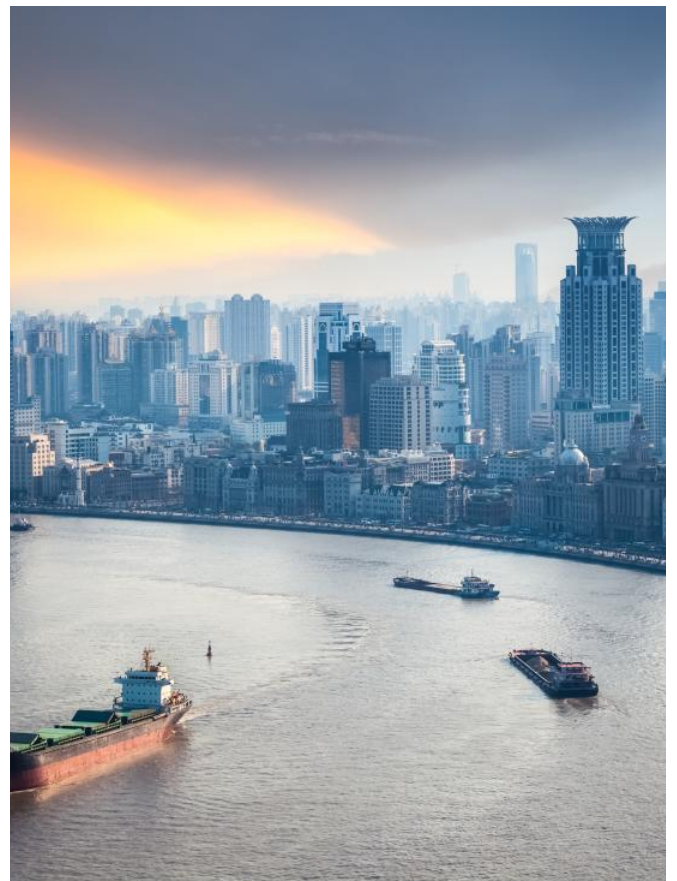
Enjoy a full day tour of Shanghai, visiting some of the most important landmarks and locations in Shanghai, including the Jade Buddha Temple, the Bund, Yu Yuan Gardens, Shanghai Old Street, the French Concession and Xintiandi.

The Jade Buddha Temple is an active temple, with 70 resident monks, and the centerpiece is a sitting Buddha carved out of white jade and encrusted with jewels, measuring over two metres tall and rumoured to weigh over 1000 kilograms.

From the Jade Buddha, head over to the Yu Yuan Gardens, a classic creation of the Ming Dynasty.

Nearby is Shanghai Old Street which had its origins in the Qing Dynasty.

After a Shanghainese lunch at a local restaurant, visit the Bund, Shanghai's waterfront, known for its grand display of colonial-era architecture and the wonderful views of both sides of the Huangpu River.



IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS



Day 10 cont: Shanghai

Visit Xintiandi, a stylish nightlife district with many boutiques, pubs, and restaurants and on to Shanghai's Art District. Xintiandi is a good place to return to for dinner this evening.

Finally visit the Shikumen Open House Museum, a well-preserved Shikumen house from the 1920's that displays furniture and articles for daily use during that time.

Overnight: Shanghai

Meals: Breakfast & Lunch included



Day 11: Shanghai - Suzhou

Today enjoy a full day in Suzhou. You will be collected from your hotel by your driver and guide for a private excursion to Suzhou, one of China's famous water towns.

Visit the Garden of the Master of the Nets, the smallest of the Suzhou residential gardens, yet the most impressive because of its use of space and the feeling of tranquility and harmony that it instills on visitors.

IN PURSUIT OF PANDAS

Day 11 cont: Shanghai

After lunch visit the Suzhou Institute of Embroidery and see some of the most valuable pieces of embroidery ever made, including several priceless court gowns.

Finally visit the superb Suzhou Museum, itself an architectural masterpiece, containing over 15,000 ancient pieces in its collection, including paintings, ceramics & calligraphy.

Overnight: Shanghai

Meals: Breakfast & Lunch included

Day 12: Shanghai - UK

Transfer to the airport for your flight back to the UK.

Day 13: UK

Arrive back in the UK (or on day 12 depending on flight schedule).



A Journey Into China

Travelling to China

China's development in the last two decades has been nothing short of astonishing and travel to China has opened up considerably.

This private Classic China Tour covers Beijing, Xian, Chengdu & Shanghai and can be tailored to suit your interests & budget.

Begin your Classic China Journey in Beijing with Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven, Summer Palace, a cyclo tour of the Hutong District and a spectacular visit to a quieter section of the Great Wall.

Fly to Xian, at the start of the Silk Road and see the Terracotta Warriors and explore the magnificent City Walls and the Old Muslim Quarter.

Your Classic China journey continues in Chengdu, a historic Chinese city, much modernised and just a few km from the Giant Panda Research Base where you will see these beautiful animals.

Your China journey culminates in Shanghai, China's most commercial city, with echoes of the British colonial era alongside some of the world's tallest buildings.

Finally visit Suzhou, one of China's famous old water towns, with its willow-lined canals and superb gardens and museum.

For those with more time, a visit to Hong Kong is easily added to this trip or perhaps a stop in Guilins to see the magnificent limestone scenery.

Accommodation in China ranges from uber-luxurious to far more simple local style hotels. Although China is dominated by larger hotels catering to big groups, we try to suggest more boutique style hotels in most of our itineraries but the choice of accommodation for your trip can be totally guided by you.

Beijing in particular has a good selection of traditional courtyard style hotels which can be a great way to experience something of the ambience of old-style China. Rooms are usually set around a small courtyard, with 4 poster beds and traditional Chinese furnishings.

The Nuo Hotel in Beijing is a great option for a bit of luxury with great value.



China is the fourth largest country in the world and covers an enormous area. China's aviation industry has grown enormously over the last 2 decades and flying is an excellent way of travelling around China. The advent of Low Cost airlines and fares has made flying even better value in recent years.

China also has an increasingly comprehensive high-quality high-speed rail network making rail travel an attractive option, particularly between Shanghai, Beijing and Xian. The fastest train in the world is the Maglev service from Shanghai Airport into the city, travelling at 460 km-h.



Spring and Autumn can be excellent times of year to visit China with temperatures more reasonable in Beijing, Shanghai and Xian. Winters can be very cold in Beijing, Chengdu and Xian and July and August can be hot, humid and rainy in Shanghai.

A visa is required for all UK passport holders travelling to China. These can be obtained easily and in a few days from the Chinese Visa Service Centre in London via post or in person - we can assist by providing details.

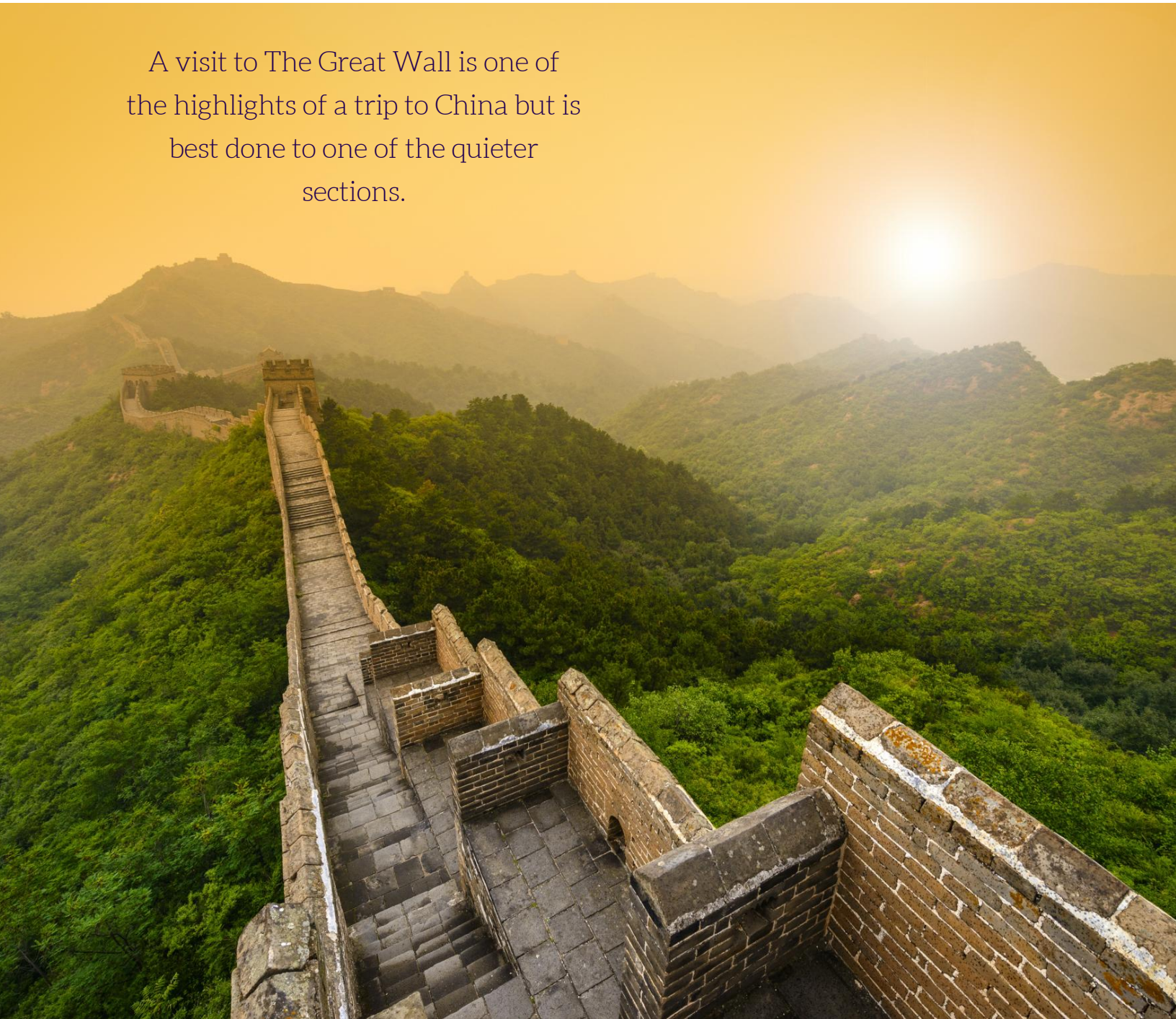


Beijing is considered as perhaps the highlight of a journey to China.

We suggest consider staying in one of Beijing's traditional courtyard style hotels, at least for one night in order to experience something of the old-style of Beijing.

When visiting the Great Wall it's important to consider which part of the wall to visit. Mutianyu is the grandest and most well-restored section (normally our preferred option). Jinshanling is ideal for hikers whilst Badaling is great if you prefer jostling through the scrum of 1000's of local visitors!

A visit to The Great Wall is one of the highlights of a trip to China but is best done to one of the quieter sections.



EXTEND YOUR TRIP



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HARBOUR

ADD ON HONG KONG

3 nights from
£345 pp

Hong Kong is one of Asia's most exciting and vibrant cities with bustling street markets, towering skyscrapers and shopping and restaurants galore.

Built around one of the world's great harbours (Hong Kong means 'fragrant harbour'), Hong Kong is compact enough to allow visitors to get around quickly, from the shopping malls of Hong Kong Island to the soaring heights of Victoria Peak or the markets of Kowloon.

Surprisingly Hong Kong offers plenty of opportunity to get active, including hiking on some of the outer islands. Hong Kong is a great option for a family stopover, with plenty to keep the Kids enthralled, including popular Ocean Park.

DATES & PRICES

Travel Dates Guide Price

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Jun, Sep - Dec: from £2,385 pp
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Jan - May: from £2,555 pp

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Please contact us for confirmed prices as prices are all subject to change, dates and availability. Remember that all of our China Holidays can be tailored to suit your interests and dates.

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