Glories of China

Exploring Shanghai, Guilin, Yangshuo, Xi’an, and Beijing

14 Days / 12 Nights

October 5-18, 2012
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China is a land of history and refinement unparalleled in the world. Attentive visitors are immersed in a sea of visual and cultural experiences unlike any other they may have had elsewhere. Each geographic area in China teems with its own identity as an energetic variation on the great theme of Chinese civilization. You will be amazed at how regions differ vastly yet express similar values and ideas.

This journey begins in Shanghai, China’s most populous city and economic powerhouse. The European Bund still retains the glamour of the colonial era; modern western pubs and bars and boutiques scatter all around the center of Shanghai. Visit the traditional Yuyuan Garden and spend some time exploring Shanghai Museum, the best in China. A day excursion to Wuzhen will definitely be a very exciting experience for all participants to learn about and appreciate the rural life and culture in the Yangzi River delta.

Flying to Guilin, the south China region of picturesque karsts mountains rising from rice paddies. This is one of the most idyllic landscapes of China, and your cruise down the Li River to Yangshuo will reveal its beauties at each bend of the river. Your exploration in the countryside around the county town of Yangshuo will be both enchanting and memorable.

Your itinerary also includes Xi’an, once the largest city in the world. Visit and explore the Terracotta Warriors Museum in homage to Qinshihuang. It is considered China’s preeminent archaeological discovery. Tour other important historic sites in the ancient Tang Dynasty capital.

The last stop of your tour is Beijing, political and cultural center of the country. Enjoy an exploration of the beauty of the imperial city and meetings with urban Chinese residents. Discover the splendor of China’s glorious past: the Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven, and Great Wall; also witness the dynamic and ever-changing life pace in today’s capital of China.

Fly home from Beijing or continue on to Hong Kong for an extension.
Itinerary Summary

Oct 05   depart  Fly from North America gateway cities to Shanghai, China

Oct 06  Shanghai  arrive in Shanghai today, met by your guide at the airport and transfer to Renaissance Shanghai Yu Garden Hotel (deluxe room) in the city center; enjoy an Evening Group Reception and Cocktail Party.

Oct 07  Shanghai  Breakfast in hotel; begin your full day exploration of Shanghai at the Bund - mile long promenade lined with colonial buildings constructed in late 19th and early 20th centuries; then tour Yuyuan Garden and the Old Town Center; after lunch, visit Shanghai Museum, Xintiandi Area, and French Concession including Fuxing Park; return to hotel for a rest before going out to enjoy a welcome Shanghai Cuisine Dinner Banquet in a local character restaurant.  <B-L-D>

Oct 08  Shanghai  Breakfast in hotel; full day excursion to visit Wuzhen including a boat ride on the Grand Canal and lunch in a local village restaurant; return to the city in late afternoon; go to enjoy the famous local delicacy “steamed soup dumpling” for dinner in the century-old Nanxiang Xiaolongbao Restaurant before getting on a night cruise on the Huangpu River.  <B-L-D>

Oct 09   Guilin  Early breakfast in hotel; transfer to airport and fly FM9333 (0830-1040) to Guilin; met and transfer to visit Elephant Trunk Hill; after lunch, transfer to hotel for check-in and your relaxation; then go to hotel conference room for your first lecture (3:30pm-7:30pm).  Evening enjoy a dinner with international food in a local café; Guilin Bravo Hotel (deluxe room in the new 5-star wing).  <B-L-D>

Oct 10   Yangshuo  Breakfast in hotel; enjoy a Li River Cruise by a chartered boat with buffet lunch on board; disembark at Yangshuo town pier; check in our riverside hotel; free time for exploring West Street Market; after a Local Cuisine Dinner, enjoy the stunning Impression Liusanjie Show in VIP seats of the theater on the riverbank; Green Lotus Hotel (deluxe room).  <B-L-D>

Oct 11  Yangshuo  Breakfast in hotel; explore the beautiful countryside of Yangshuo - hike by rice fields and on Moon Hill, Yulong River Bamboo Raft floating (optional & pay on spot), watch cormorant fishing, and visit local village; return to hotel for your second lecture (4pm-8pm); go to a local restaurant for dinner.  <B-L-D>

Oct 12   Xi’an  Breakfast in hotel; transfer to Guilin Airport and fly MU2330 (1130-1315; lunch onboard) to Xi’an; transfer to hotel for refreshing and then go to visit Ancient City Wall, Great Mosque and Muslim Market; enjoy a Special Dumpling Dinner followed by a colorful Tang Style Stage Show featuring traditional music dancing; Golden Flower Hotel by Shangri-La (deluxe room).  <B-D>
Oct 13  Xi’an  Breakfast in hotel; take an morning excursion to the Terracotta Warriors Museum; return to the city and lunch in a local restaurant; visit the Big Goose Pagoda and then return to hotel for your third lecture (3:30pm-7:30pm); transfer to Wenhaoshifu Restaurant for a delicious Local Cuisine Dinner.  <B-L-D>

Oct 14  ➔ Beijing  Breakfast in hotel; transfer to airport and fly MU211 (1215-1415; lunch onbaord) to Beijing; met by your guide at the airport and transfer to your hotel for relaxation; enjoy dinner in a local restaurant before going to an exciting Acrobatic Show in theater; Beijing Marriott Hotel City Wall (deluxe room).  <B-D>

Oct 15  Beijing  Breakfast in hotel; start the exploration of Beijing from a traditional ’hutong’ neighborhood with a pedi-cab ride through narrow alleyways; also visit a courtyard home; then drive to Tiananmen Square for a visit and take photos in front of the “Egg”-National Performing Arts Center; have a set menu light lunch at the Capital M, an upscale western restaurant by Tiananmen Square.

   Afternoon visit to Forbidden City – imperial palaces of the Ming and Qing Dynasties; finish the tour by having a panorama view of the whole imperial city from the hilltop of Jingshan Park; transfer back to the hotel for refreshing before going to a Peking Duck Dinner this evening.  <B-L-D>

Oct 16  Beijing  Breakfast in hotel; take an morning excursion (1.5 hrs drive) to the Great Wall at Mutianyu (round-trip cable car); stop by a mountain village for lunch; return to the city with photo stop at the Olympic Park for views of the Bird’s Nest and the Water Tube; balance of the day if free for your own exploration/shopping; dinner is on your own.  <B-L>

Oct 17  Beijing  Breakfast in hotel; visit Temple of Heaven and a lively city market in the morning; have a noodle lunch combined with the noodle making show in a decent local restaurant; afternoon visit Summer Palace with a boat ride on Kunming Lake; enjoy an Imperial Cuisine Dinner in a former imperial garden restaurant before returning to hotel.  <B-L-D>

Oct 18  ➔ return  Breakfast in hotel; transfer to the airport and fly home or continue your travel to Hong Kong for an extension tour.  <B>