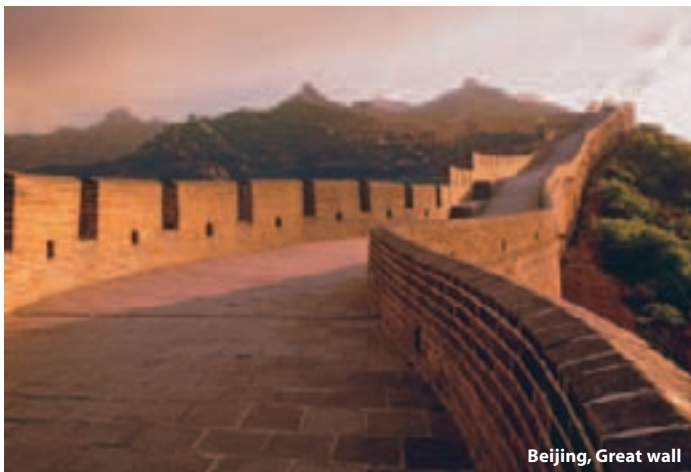


Places you visit



Beijing, Great wall

Day 1: Shanghai

Welcome to Shanghai, China's largest city, which boasts a truly fascinating and diverse history. Today it is one of the world's most important ports and is the gateway to the Yangtze River. After your hotel check-in you have free time to explore the older sections of the city, which stand side by side with the modern metropolis of the financial district.

Day 2: Shanghai

The sights of this city, often referred to as the 'Paris of the East', will be revealed on your morning tour. You will see Old Shanghai and travel along the elegant riverfront promenade, the Bund. After lunch in a local restaurant, see the ancient skill of silk carpet weaving on your tour of a Silk Carpet Workshop. This is followed by a visit to the Shanghai Museum, featuring displays of ceramics, paintings and bronzes. After dinner in a local restaurant, enjoy a Chinese acrobatic performance.

Day 3: Shanghai & Wuhan

Explore Shanghai independently this morning, lunch in a local restaurant then join your flight to Wuhan. This capital of Hubei Province is noted as the most important site of China's Republican Revolution and gateway city to the Yangtze Gorges. Visit the Hubei Provincial Museum with its collection of elaborately decorated bronze bells. The city also boasts the remarkable five-tiered Yellow Crane Tower and the elegant Guiyuan Buddhist Temple. Then you are transferred to your ship, docked close to Wuhan's historic waterfront.

Day 4: Yueyang & Three Gorges

Today, visit an elementary school sponsored by Viking River Cruises in this rural village. You'll be greeted by the children and treated to a performance. Return to your ship for meals and scenic cruising through the spectacular Xiling Gorge. The longest of the Three Gorges is noted for its narrow cliffs and swirling rapids.

Day 5: Three Gorges Dam

Cruise through the morning and enjoy lunch as you continue sailing along Xiling Gorge, the longest of the Three Gorges. Then you tour the Three Gorges Dam, an immense engineering masterpiece. You will learn of the impact it has had on the people of China and the majestic Yangtze River. Return to your ship and sail through the 5-stage locks of the Three Gorges Dam.

Day 6: Three Gorges & Lesser Three Gorges

For the next 240 kms, you'll travel the most scenic stretch of the Yangtze as it forces its way through a spectacular series of limestone ridges known as the Three Gorges. The world-famous Three Gorges are renowned for their dramatic beauty, cultural treasures and religious and historical sites. During breakfast, cruise through Wu (Witches) Gorge before boarding a smaller boat for an excursion through the Lesser Three Gorges. Sail through remarkable canyons flanked by towering mountains where you will see the hanging coffins of the Ba people and the ancient plank road carved into the cliffside. Enjoy lunch at a scenic stop overlooking the Gorges before returning to your ship to sail through Qutang Gorge – the shortest, narrowest and most spectacular of the three large gorges.

Day 7: Shibaozhai

This morning, visit Shibaozhai Temple (Precious Stone Stronghold), a 12-story pavilion built during the Qing Dynasty in 1650. The wooden pagoda is perched on a sheer cliff towering over the Yangtze River. Climb up to the top for breathtaking views of the river below.

Day 8: Chongqing & Xian

After breakfast disembark and take a brief tour of Chongqing, the largest city in western China and an important inland port. Enjoy a visit to the Chongqing Zoo to see the giant pandas and other exotic species. After lunch in a local restaurant, fly to Xian, key city of the Tang Dynasty. From 618 to 907 A.D., this dynasty presided over one of China's most glorious cultural periods. Tonight experience the historic grandeur of the era as you dine surrounded by song and dance.

Day 9: Xian & Beijing

After breakfast tour the mausoleum where Emperor Qin Shi Huang was laid to rest over 2,000 years ago and marvel at the 8,000 life-sized terracotta warriors, archers and infantrymen that were buried with him. Each man and horse is moulded with his own distinct features. Transfer to the airport after lunch, to fly to Beijing, China's former

imperial capital. Check-in to your hotel and use your free time to explore before dinner at the hotel.

Day 10: Beijing

After breakfast travel to the Badaling Hills to see one of the most impressive and best-preserved sections of the Great Wall of China. Walk along its winding pathways and marvel at the excellent views. Lunch in a local restaurant then visit the Sacred Way, a tree-lined avenue guarded by massive sculptures of elephants, lions and camels. Tonight, taste some local specialities at dinner.

Day 11: Beijing

This morning visit Tiananmen Square, a vast area capable of accommodating over 1,000,000 people. It was created by Chairman Mao and is the heart of Beijing. You next tour the Forbidden City, a complex comprising 800 buildings and 9,999 rooms. As you walk its grounds, marvel at the elegant palaces, pavilions, courtyards and gardens within its walls. After lunch in a local restaurant, you visit the Summer Palace, a 700 acre complex of gardens and fascinating buildings. Its Chinese name means 'Garden of Nurtured Harmony' and, frequented by the Imperial Court, it offered seclusion from the bustle of Beijing. Walk through its landscaped grounds, considered to be one of China's finest architectural gardens. This evening you'll be treated to a traditional Peking Duck dinner followed by a performance of Peking Opera, an amazing cultural experience.

Day 12: Beijing

Your tour ends after breakfast when you check-out of your hotel.



Shanghai, Yuyan Gardens