



CHINA ITINERARY

“YOU FOCUS ON THE FUN, WE FOCUS ON THE FOOD”

CHINA GLUTEN FREE

15 DAY ITINERARY

China has been on everyone's bucket list forever. And, up until now, for the gluten free traveler this has been a dream that one thought could never come true. Gluten Free Travel–Us, in collaboration with Wendy Wu Tours, is delighted to present an amazing China experience that includes keeping you “food safe”. This particular journey has been a work in progress for a number of months. We had to make certain that the hotels we choose have the knowledge and experience to keep our very special travelers healthy. The cruise on the Yangtze River needed to assure us that they could provide all the meals necessary. We have already had celiac passengers who took this trip and remained healthy—returning to the US with nothing but great memories! And, now we are delighted to present this you! Please keep in mind, you will not be eating from street vendors nor stopping in restaurants along the way. The Chinese cuisine is not inherently gluten free AND the greater population really has little knowledge of gluten intolerance or celiac disease. We are able to offer this to the Gluten Free traveler based upon following our itinerary and staying and eating where we specifically know is safe. Below you will find our suggested itinerary that can be planned for your specific dates and altered to fit your interests and passions. We can make it shorter, if you have less time. We can extend your stay in any city, if you wish additional time. Again, we choose the hotels and where you can eat. The rest is up to you!

WONDERS OF CHINA PRIVATE TOUR – GLUTEN FREE

City Descriptions

Beijing

Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China and the nation's most important center for economy, education and international trade. With its unequalled wealth of history, Beijing served as the center for the many different empires and cultures that ruled China and has been the heart of politics and society throughout its long history. The ancient monuments and the stories of days gone by make this dynamic and modern city a destination not to be missed.

Xian

Xian, which means Western Peace, is located on the banks of the Yellow River and has a history dating back to 1000BC. It once rivaled great cities such as Constantinople and Rome in size, culture and development and was also the starting point for the famous trade route, the Silk Road, a caravan passageway which carried not only silks, ceramics and spices but also led to an exchange of cultures, technologies and ideas. Buddhism brought from India during the Tang Dynasty (618-907AD) was perhaps one of the most influential of the religions to travel along this famed road into Xian

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[Chongqing](#)

Chongqing, a city perched on the steep hills overlooking the confluence of the Jialing and the Yangtze rivers. It is the chief industrial center of south western China, producing approximately one fifth of Sichuan's industrial output. Chongqing has been reshaped by the Three Gorges Dam Project, which now allows larger sea-going vessels to sail all the way upriver to China's most famous waterfront mountain city.

[Guilin](#)

Founded in the Qin Dynasty, it is renowned for the unique beauty of the mountains that fringe it. Guilin developed as a trading town due to the building of the Ling Canal which links the important Pearl and Yangtze River systems.

[Yangshuo](#)

The main attraction is the stunning limestone karsts that tower above the river creating a magical landscape of mountains and water. The unique and natural beauty of this region has for centuries been an inspiration to Chinese artists and poets alike.

[Shanghai](#)

Once known as the Paris of the East, Shanghai has emerged, yet again, as one of Asia's most influential cities. Prior to communist arrival in 1949, Shanghai was a city with European-style mansions and was the most important trading port in Asia. With communism came the radical reconstruction of society which put an end to Western and outside influences. During the height of this Cultural Revolution, Shanghai became a city of hatred and spite among the families and friends residing there, turning them against one another. This story famously is recounted in the book Life and Death in Shanghai by Nien Chang. Today you will find that Shanghai is a buzzing contemporary metropolis with history, style and vibrancy.

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Will follow on the next page.

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Day 1: Arrive Beijing

Upon arrival in Beijing, you are welcomed in the arrivals hall by your Wendy Wu representative and transferred to your hotel. The remainder of the day is at your leisure.

Day 2: Beijing

This morning you will walk through the expanse of Tiananmen Square, where you will pass Chairman Mao's Mausoleum. Built on Mao Zedong's orders, Tiananmen Square is said to hold a capacity crowd of over one million.

Next you will walk through the outer gates of the Imperial Forbidden City, the sacred center of the Chinese empire for 500 years and home to both the Ming and Qing dynasties. You will walk through this royal complex from the south gate at Tiananmen, named Gate of Heavenly Peace, through to the north gate at Shennwumen, named Gate of Divine Might. You can explore the outer courts, the courtyards and the private residences within the Forbidden City.



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From here you visit the 15th century Temple of Heaven, one of the more perfect examples of Ming architecture set in among a 660 acre park with four gates set at each point of a compass. While walking through the park you will see the many groups of local people that gather here every day to sing folk songs, practice tai chi and sword dancing, play chess or just come to sit and chat.

Afterwards you will take a rickshaw ride through the old Hutong area where your guide will explain the intricacy of traditional Chinese architecture, the influence of Feng Shui and the sense of community created in the area. It was the Mongol rulers of Beijing that established this style of housing. Hutong was their word for the narrow alleyways between each house. In more recent times the Hutong suburbs were in jeopardy of disappearing but a fierce debate between developers and those who fought to protect the architecture and the Hutong way of life diminished the threat.



Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included.

Day 3: Beijing

You will rise early this morning for your full-day tour to the Juyongguan Pass section of the Great Wall. It is often quoted in Beijing that you have not been to China until you have climbed the Great Wall. Stretching from the Shanhaiguan Pass on the east coast to the Gobi Desert in the west, it is more than 4,000 miles long. Walk along the wall, admire the panoramic views and reflect on the immensity of the material and labor required for its construction.



After lunch, you will visit the Jade Factory. Later, you'll be driven to the Summer Palace, a retreat for emperors during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the most notorious of which is Empress Dowager Cixi.

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Popularly known as the dragon lady, the empress spent money reserved to commission a modern navy on embellishment of the royal garden. However, she did restore the large marble boat that sits at the edge of the beautiful Kunming Lake, which occupies three quarters of the park's expanse. The palace is set over an extensive park and man-made lake complex.



Your evening entertainment is a fascinating Chinese acrobatic performance, where you will see gravity-defying acrobatics, contortionists, juggling, plate spinning acts and more.

Breakfast and lunch are included

Day 4: Beijing to Xian



Today you will be transferred to the airport where you will board your flight from Beijing to Xian. Upon arrival into this historical city, you will be met by your Wendy Wu representative and transferred to your hotel.

This afternoon you will visit the renowned Shaanxi Provincial Museum, which is home to thousands of priceless cultural relics from past dynasties.

Breakfast and lunch are included

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Day 5: Xian



Start your full-day tour with a visit to the famous UNESCO World Heritage listed Terracotta Warriors and Horses, located about an hour outside of Xian. This is one of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century, this unearthed terracotta army is comprised of over 7,000 soldiers, horses and chariots. The army was built in life-sized form by thousands of workers and designed by the self-proclaimed Emperor Qin Shi Huang to defend himself in his afterlife. The word China derived from his name and he is acclaimed by Chinese historians to have unified the rival lands of China into a single empire after defeating his enemy states and standardizing the systems of currency, writing and measurement. Upon arrival, you will walk 15 minutes from the parking area to the museums entrance. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organized at your own cost. There is no electric cart available for the return from the museum exit to the parking area. Within the museum area, the warriors can be seen in three different pits, which are active archaeological digs.

On your return to Xian you will stop at the Xian Art Ceramics and Lacquer Exhibition where replicas of the warriors are made before visiting the Ancient City Wall, a 500-year-old barricade built to protect the city. Standing the test of time, it is one of the only walls in China to remain intact.

You will be required to walk up stairs to access the City Wall, where your Local Guide will give you time to explore at your own pace. There are options here to hire a bicycle or an electric cart to drive along the length of the wall.



Later you will stroll through the lively Muslim Quarter, exploring the many narrow laneways of the interesting Islamic food markets.

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Day 6: Xian to Wuhan - Yangtze River Cruise Embarkation

This morning you will fly to Wuhan and then transfer to Wuhan railway station to board your 1st class seat fast train to the city of Yichang where you will board your Yangtze River cruise vessel.



You will be taking an amazing journey up China's Yangtze River, which is undeniably one of the world's great and legendary waterways. This 3,900 mile river has its origins high up in the snow covered mountain of Tanggula Shan in the south western Qinghai Tibet Plateau and runs into the ocean at Shanghai. It is estimated that this river has more than 10 percent of the world's population living along its banks.

Note: Shore excursions are subject to change depending on local conditions. Detailed daily itineraries will be handed out on the vessel each day. At certain times of the year after heavy rain

(normally between May and June) some cruises on the Yangtze River require passengers to stay the first night in a hotel, as water levels may be too high for the cruise vessels to reach their embarkation point on time. This may only affect one or two departures throughout the year and if your tour is affected, your Local Guide will brief you on the details as soon as they have been officially notified by the cruise company. We stress that no sightseeing activities will be missed but simply a night normally spent on the cruise vessel may be replaced with a night in a hotel.

Breakfast and lunch are included.

Day 7 is on the next page.

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Day 7: Yangtze River Cruise

This morning you will visit the site of the Three Gorges Dam. Commenced in 1994 and completed in 2009, the Three Gorges Dam is the largest water conservancy project ever undertaken. The Dam is located near Sandouping, which is in the middle of the Xiling Gorge, the longest of the Three Gorges. The Three Gorges Dam is 7,660 feet long, 600 feet high, 60 feet wide on the top and 430 feet wide at the bottom. The dam has raised the river to a level of 575 feet above sea level, creating a 372 mile long reservoir, with 1.5 million people relocated. The building of this huge dam was for the purpose of flood control, electricity, navigation and irrigation.



Later today, you will pass through the Xiling Gorge, once the most treacherous stretch of the Yangtze which has now been tamed by the new dam. Further upstream you reach the larger Wu Gorge, before finally sailing through the narrow and dramatic Qutang Gorge.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included.

Day 8: Yangtze River Cruise

Today's program may include a shore excursion to the Goddess Stream, which will take you off ship for approximately 3 hours. From Badong you will sail through Wu Gorge, at a length of 25 miles, with cliffs so sheer the sun barely penetrates to the river below.



Here you will enjoy an excursion heading up the Goddess Stream, entering a series of narrow gorges with steep cliffs and lush scenery. You will transfer between the ship and a smaller ferry to travel up the Goddess Stream tributary (approximately 20 minutes). You will then transfer from the ferry onto the small peapod rowboats to experience the tradition of the local boatmen or trackers.

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Goddess Stream, also known as Shennv Xi in Chinese, flows from the southern bank of the Yangtze opposite Goddess Peak. You will board a smaller craft for a ride of about 9 miles each way to view the beauty of its narrow gorges. Once just a stream, the Three Gorges Dam raised the water level to 230-330 feet in depth, depending on the season. Surrounded by beautiful peaks, this region also has many protected species. Keep a look out you may be lucky enough to spot monkeys, mountain goats, deer or boar. The area is also famous for its tea, named Longevity Tea or Mountain Tea.



Shennong Stream

Note: Alternatively at the Lesser Three Gorges, a change in conditions or water levels may mean you are unable to cruise to Goddess Stream. An alternative program may consist of an excursion to the Daning River or the Shennong Stream.

Daning River

Further upriver you will arrive at one of the tributaries of the Yangtze River, Daning River. Here you will enjoy an excursion heading up Daning River to enter a series of narrow gorges with steep cliffs and lush scenery.

Higher water levels mean you can now travel further upstream to unspoiled villages or if river levels allow, you will hop into small pea pod boats at Shennong Stream. Here you can see the cut stone of the trackers path high on the sheer walls. Gain knowledge about the history of the trackers, the men who while walking along those paths, dragged enormous junk ships along the Yangtze for centuries.

When you return to the cruise vessel, you continue cruising through the shortest, but the most dramatic of the Three Gorges, Qutang Gorge.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included

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Day 9: Yangtze River Cruise

Fengdu is an ancient ghost city on the banks of the Yangtze River. Fengdu, the original and supposedly haunted ghost town is themed on numerous legends and folktales. Here you will visit the temples dedicated to the underworld and heaven. You can also participate in several tests and tasks to help predict your future, fidelity and fortune. To access the temples, you will disembark the ship via a pontoon and walkway. There is a free passenger cart which can carry 10-12 people up at a time and takes about 3 to 5 minutes each way (this is a temporary measure until the construction of an elevator from the port to Fengdu is complete). From here you will need to walk the rest of the way up the stairs. There are about 150-200 large steps, without handrails.



Alternatively, you may visit Shibaozhai Temple, a 12-story temple built in the 18th century on the northern bank of the Yangtze River and is an architectural marvel, having been built without nails.

Here you will disembark from the ship close to the pavilion's entrance. Sightseeing here involves climbing the 12 stories inside the building.

Upon returning to the cruise vessel, continue cruising overnight.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included

Day 10: Disembark Cruise - Chongqing to Guilin

Disembark from the cruise this morning in Chongqing. Visit the Panda House at the Chongqing Zoo, before transferring to the airport for your flight to Guilin, one of China's most stunning and panoramic cities.



Upon arrival into this picturesque town you will be met by your Wendy Wu representative and transferred to your hotel. This afternoon you will visit the Reed Flute Caves, named so because of the clumps of slender reed once

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Breakfast and lunch are included

Day 11: Guilin to Yangshuo

Take a leisurely 3 hour cruise along the beautiful Li River today and travel to the town of Yangshuo, passing tranquil farming and fishing scenes and picturesque villages.



A simple lunch box will be provided to take with you on board the Li River cruise. These are small cruise boats, usually holding approximately 100 passengers with an enclosed dining area on the lower deck and an open viewing area on the upper deck. As the cruise along the Li River is popular, there are generally many boats at the docks. Please be reassured that the cruise itself will be scenic and relaxing as the boats cruise past unspoiled countryside.

Upon arrival into Yangshuo, you will disembark from the cruise and your Local Guide will walk with you to your hotel. The walk is approximately 15 minutes from the river. There are electric carts offered by private vendors which can be organized at your own expense.

Yangshuo is a small, scenic riverside town surrounded by Karst Mountains and beautiful scenery and is very popular with tourists. The rest of the day is free at your leisure to enjoy the cafes, shops and restaurants in Yangshuo.

Breakfast and lunch are included

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Day 12: Yangshuo

This morning you will be driven to explore the beautiful rural countryside around Yangshuo. Here you will take a leisurely stroll to discover the lifestyle of the villagers and witness how the locals farm. Afterwards you will return to your hotel and enjoy this afternoon at your own leisure to relax and explore the cobblestone streets and simply take in the natural scenery.

Breakfast and lunch are included.



Day 13: Yangshuo to Shanghai



Today you will transfer to Guilin Airport, where you will board your flight to Shanghai. Upon arrival you will be met at the airport you will be met by your Wendy Wu representative and transferred to your hotel.

Sightseeing this afternoon involves a leisurely walking to view the superb antiquities and fine arts at the Shanghai Museum and wander the surrounds of the neighboring People's Square.

Breakfast and lunch are included.

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Day 14: Shanghai

This morning you will visit the Old Town (Yuan Bazaar) of Shanghai, where cobbled streets are lined with traditional shops selling herbal medicines, handicrafts, Chinese tea and a variety of tantalizing snacks. Take a relaxing walk through moon gates and latticed pavilions in the peaceful Yu Gardens, the inspiration for willow patterned china.



Afterwards you will explore the historical riverfront area known as the Bund. Recognized as Shanghai's former Wall Street, the Bund is home to an impressive collection of buildings from the early trade houses of the 1850s to the glamorous Art Deco modernism of the 1920s.

You will also visit a local Silk Factory before continuing on to explore Xintiandi. This area was once a dilapidated strip of shikumen buildings, a mixture of English-styled terraces and traditional Chinese courtyard houses. This style of housing is unique to Shanghai, and was originally designed for the many Chinese workers that flooded the city in the early 1900s. The area was later purchased by film star Jackie Chan who restored the buildings.



You will then head across the great Nanpu Bridge to the Pudong District, a region that was put aside in 1990 for redevelopment to entice foreign investment to modernize and drive the city into the 21st century. With forward planning, the city avoided infrastructure and transport problems that other Asian cities faced.

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In the evening you will enjoy a cruise on the spectacular Huangpu River to view the picturesque nightscape of this exciting city.

Breakfast and lunch are included.

Day 15: Depart Shanghai

Today your private tour arrangements end. Transfer to the airport to board your onward flight.

Breakfast is included

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