

15 Days China Land & Water Small Group Tour:

Chongqing, Pandas & Yangtze Cruise

Tour Code: GT-031

Travel Route: Beijing - Xian - Chengdu - Chongqing - Yangtze River Cruise - Shanghai

Features: Capital, Ancient Capital, Imperial Heritage, Panda, Mountain City, Yangtze River Cruise, Skyscraper

Tour Type: Maximum 16 travelers, guaranteed departures

Guide & Driver: English-speaking guide, experienced driver with an air-conditioned vehicle

Accommodation: 14 nights at good 3-star hotels

Itinerary Day by Day

Day 1 Arrival in Beijing | Airport Pick-up and Hotel Check-in

Nihao! Welcome to Beijing! Our local staff will meet you at the airport or station for a private escort to your hotel. Feel free to relax, recover from jet lag, or explore the surrounding area for the rest of the day. Enjoy your first night in China's magnificent historic capital!

Get to Beijing:

Beijing is well-connected by **Daxing (PKX)** and **Capital (PEK)** airports, serving major hubs like Hong Kong and Shanghai. For a faster land-based option, use the **high-speed rail network**. Travel times to the capital include Xi'an or Shanghai (4-6 hrs), Zhengzhou (2.5-3 hours), Wuhan (4-5 hours), Harbin (5-5.5 hours), etc.

Day 2 Beijing City Tour | Tian'anmen Square, Forbidden City (Closed on Mondays), Jingshan Park, Summer Palace

Spend an entire day exploring the historic center of Beijing. You'll visit famous landmarks that highlight the city's imperial past and wander through stunning royal gardens.

After breakfast, visit **Tiananmen Square**, the world's largest public square. Rich in modern history, this iconic site is a symbol of China and the ideal place to photograph Tiananmen Gate, the world-famous backdrop featured every single day on the national CCTV News broadcast.

Then, cross the square to enter the **Forbidden City**, the world's largest palace and a UNESCO World Heritage treasure. Formerly home to 24 emperors, it showcases 500 years of imperial history. Walk the central axis to see ancient architecture before heading to Jingshan Park. A brief climb offers spectacular panoramic views of the sprawling palace complex and the towering skyscrapers of modern Beijing.

Next, drive to the **Summer Palace**, a beautiful former imperial retreat. As a masterpiece of landscape design, its stunning temples and bridges are a joy to explore. Enjoy a leisurely walk to admire the royal architecture and peaceful views.

Note:

1. Wear comfortable footwear for Jingshan Park. The walk to the summit viewpoint is optional and can be decided based on your physical comfort.
2. Forbidden City closes every Monday. For Monday tours, we provide an alternative visit to Temple of Heaven or Prince Gong's Mansion.

Day 3 Beijing Great Wall Tour | Mutianyu Great Wall, Glimpse of Bird's Nest & Water Cube

After breakfast, travel northwest to the **Mutianyu Great Wall**, famous for its 23 Ming watchtowers and peaceful atmosphere. After a **cable car** ride to tower 14, explore the scenic western path. If you're feeling active, hike to the 20th watchtower for sweeping panoramic views of the ancient fortifications. This is the ultimate way to experience the majestic beauty and fulfill your Great Wall aspirations.

After this once-in-a-lifetime trip, go back to Beijing to take photos of the **Bird's Nest and Water Cube**. These famous buildings were built for the 2008 Olympics and were also used for the 2022 Winter Games.

Return to your hotel and have a good rest tonight.

Day 4 Beijing to Xian by High Speed Train | Giant Wild Goose Pagoda, Muslim Quarter

After breakfast, take a **high-speed train to Xi'an** (4.5–5.5 hours), the historic capital of 13 dynasties. Upon arrival, meet your private driver at the station exit for a comfortable escort to your hotel. Enjoy your first evening in this ancient cultural hub.

Spend your afternoon at the **Giant Wild Goose Pagoda**, located inside the peaceful Da Ci'en Temple. This famous seven-story tower was built back in AD 652 to store the sacred Buddhist texts that the monk Xuan Zang brought back from India. His incredible journey actually inspired the classic story Journey to the West.

Afterward, stroll through **Muslim Quarter**, a lively 500-meter area that is the center of life for the local Hui community. You can try some famous street food. Make sure to grab a Roujiamo (Chinese burger), some Yangrou Paomo, or a bowl of those famous Biangbiang noodles.

Day 5 Xian City Tour | Terracotta Warriors, Ancient Wall, Bell Tower (or Drum Tower)

After breakfast, travel 40km to **Terracotta Army Museum**. Created by Emperor Qin Shihuang, this archaeological wonder features 8,000 life-size statues. Visit Pit 1 to see 6,000 soldiers and horses, then explore Pit 2's complex battle formations, including archers and chariots. These masterpieces showcase the ancient military precision designed to protect the Emperor's eternal afterlife.

Next, head to the **Ancient City Wall**, one of China's best-preserved fortifications. You can take a relaxed stroll along the massive structure, passing watchtowers and the moat. From the top, you'll get a great look at the unique contrast between the ancient architecture and the modern skyline of Xi'an.

Later, visit the **Bell Tower** or **Drum Tower**, a 600-year-old Ming Dynasty landmark. It looks amazing when it's illuminated at night, showing off the mix of ancient history and the modern city. Afterward, head to the Bell & Drum Tower Square to enjoy the local nightlife.

Day 6 Xian to Chengdu by High Speed Train | Chengdu Train Station Pick-up and Hotel Check-in

Today, you'll catch a **high-speed train to Chengdu**, which takes about **3–4 hours**. Once you arrive, our local staff will meet you at the station exit for a private transfer to your downtown hotel. Enjoy a free afternoon exploring this relaxed city, famous for pandas and spicy Sichuan food.

Day 7 Chengdu Classic Tour | Chengdu Panda Base, Sanxingdui Museum, Jinli Old Street (or Plan B: City Tour in Peak Season)

Today, fulfill your panda dream at the **Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding**, the world's largest facility for captive pandas. You'll see them playing and eating, and maybe even spot newborn cubs in the nurseries. Don't forget to visit the adorable red pandas and explore the Panda Museum secrets.

Note: We suggest arriving early, since the pandas are much more active during the cooler morning hours.

This afternoon, take an hour's drive to the **Sanxingdui Site Museum**. It's a world-class archaeological treasure where you'll discover the 3,000-year-old Ancient Shu Kingdom. You can't miss the Bronze Sacred Tree or the famous Vertical-eyed Mask. The Gold Scepter and early pottery are also on display, all showing off an incredible civilization that totally changed the history of the Sichuan region.

Conclude your day at **Jinli Old Street**, a 1,800-year-old landmark reflecting the Shu Kingdom's heritage. Renowned for its traditional architecture and lively energy, this stone-paved landmark offers an ideal setting to sample authentic Sichuan snacks, browse handmade crafts, and experience the rich cultural atmosphere and vibrant street life of historic Chengdu.

Plan B: Chengdu Downtown City Tour (No Sanxingdui Museum)

Sanxingdui Museum tickets are limited during peak times. If they are unavailable, your itinerary will be updated to include a full-day Chengdu city tour instead.

This alternative route includes: **Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding → Chengdu Museum → Kuanzhai Alley → Renmin Park**

Day 8 Chengdu to Chongqing by High Speed Train | Liziba Metro, Kuixing Building, Jiefangbei, Hot Pot Dinner, Hongya Cave, Qiansimen Bridge

Take a **morning high-speed train** from **Chengdu to Chongqing** (approx. 1–2 hours). Welcome to the **"Mountain City,"** an architectural marvel and one of the most dynamic urban centers in Southwest China.

Next, join your guide and head over to the famous **Liziba Metro Station**. It's the spot where you can see that incredible sight of a train traveling right through a residential building! This unique piece of engineering has turned Line 2 into a huge local landmark. We'll make sure to hit the viewing platform so you can get a great look.

Next, head to **Kuixing Building**, an icon capturing Chongqing's "8D cyberpunk" energy. It's also a sacred site for Qing Dynasty scholars. You'll walk onto a normal ground-level plaza, only to look down and realize you're actually standing 22 stories up.

Later, head to **Jiefangbei**, where you can snap the classic "Hello Chongqing" photo. This 27.5-meter tower isn't just a beautiful landmark; it was built in 1940 to honor the city's bravery during WWII. It even features a built-in time capsule at its base, preserving historical treasures from the day it was founded.

It's time for a group **hot pot dinner!** Since you're in the city that is the authentic birthplace of this dish, it's the perfect spot to test your spice tolerance.

Next, explore **Hongya Cave**, an extraordinary complex of traditional stilted buildings overlooking the Jialing River. Distinguished by its wooden diaojiaolou architecture, this vibrant site offers a picturesque riverside.

As evening falls, for an unparalleled perspective, venture onto the red **Qiansimen Bridge**. This vantage point offers the quintessential bird's-eye view of Chongqing's glowing architectural marvels.

After that, return to your hotel in Chongqing downtown area.

Day 9 Chongqing - Wulong - Chongqing | Three Natural Bridges (Sightseeing Bus & Elevator Included), Glass Observation Deck

After breakfast, discover the Wulong Karst National Geological Park (2.5-hour drive), a UNESCO-listed marvel famous for its **Three Natural Bridges**. This epic landscape—featured in

the Transformers franchise—is a must-see for anyone seeking dramatic karst formations and cinematic views.

Go to the **glass observation deck** for a 280-meter-high view. Then, take the **sightseeing elevator** to the bottom of the deep gorge. Start your visit:

Begin at **Tianlong Bridge**, the park's most majestic limestone gateway, before discovering the Tianfu Official Post, an exquisite historic retreat nestled within the gorge.

Continue to **Qinglong Bridge**, an elegant karst formation perfect for travel photography amidst lush forests. Finally, immerse yourself in the mysterious atmosphere of **Heilong Bridge**, where a tranquil stream winds gracefully beneath a towering rock canopy, completing your unforgettable karst journey.

Note:

1. **Footwear:** Wear good walking shoes for the steep stairs and natural ground.
2. **Hydration:** Bring enough water and small snacks so you don't get tired.
3. **Photography:** Use a wide-angle lens for big photos and a waterproof bag for your camera.
4. **Clothing:** Wear layers of clothes and bring a raincoat for the cool and wet weather in the canyon.

Stay overnight in downtown Chongqing.

Day 10 Board Yangtze Cruise

Today, you will be escorted to Chongqing Chaotianmen Port for embarkation. After checking into your Yangtze cruise, enjoy the afternoon at your leisure exploring the vibrant riverfront area. Your sophisticated cruise experience officially commences at 21:00.

Remarks:

1. **Call for Pier Info:** Confirm your departure pier by calling the ship 24 hours in advance or on the morning of your cruise.
2. **Estimated Times:** All listed times are approximate and subject to change based on weather and navigation conditions.
3. **Variable Factors:** Departure piers and times may vary depending on water levels, seasonal shifts, and local weather.

Notice for Transferring from Chongqing to Fengdu to Board the Cruise:

If extreme water levels occur, a cruise-arranged bus will transport you from Chongqing to Fengdu (approx. 2.5 hours) for boarding. This is most likely in March, April, July, or August. Our travel consultants will monitor the situation and provide advance notice regarding any transfer logistics.

Day 11 Yangtze River Cruise | Shore Excursion to Fengdu Ghost City or Similar

Today, your cruise will move quietly along the **Yangtze River**. You can wake up late and see the beautiful river in the soft sunshine. Eat your buffet breakfast and start your day! The cruise has many special activities. You can go on a trip to see old Chinese sites or stay on the ship to relax and learn about Chinese culture.

In the morning, follow your local English-speaking guide to visit **Fengdu Ghost City**. This place has many old temples and memorials. You can learn famous stories about the underworld and see different kinds of Chinese ghosts and demons.

Or, you can take an **optional trip to Shibaozhai Pagoda** for an extra fee. It is one of the eight most amazing buildings in the world. You can climb the 12-story red wooden tower to see a great view of the Yangtze River.

Note:

The itinerary above is for your reference. Some attractions and trips might be a little different depending on the cruise company. We will help you pick the best cruise for your special needs and interests.

Day 12 Yangtze River Cruise | Three Gorges & Shennv Stream or Similar

Today, you have a full day to see the beautiful **Three Gorges**. First, you will sail through **Qutang Gorge**, which is famous for its high cliffs and the amazing Kui Gate. Next, you will go through **Wu Gorge**, which is very quiet and pretty. Finally, you will see **Xiling Gorge**, known for its rough water and rugged rocks. You can listen to the guide's stories and enjoy the breathtaking views from the ship.

This afternoon, take a relaxing trip to **Shennv Stream**. You will change to a smaller boat to go down the quiet river. This lets you see the high mountains and old hanging coffins on the rocks. If you want, you can sing and dance with the local Tujia guide to learn about their special culture.

Tonight, you will go to the **Captain's Farewell Party** with the other guests. You will have a nice dinner together and celebrate the end of your wonderful trip.

Note:

This reference itinerary is subject to minor adjustments based on the cruise provider. Available shore excursions and daily schedules vary by ship. We will assist you in evaluating the options to ensure you book the most suitable cruise.

Day 13 Yangtze River Cruise to Yichang & High Speed Train to Shanghai, Shanghai Train Station Pick-up & Hotel Check-in

After breakfast, you will check out and get off the ship at Maoping Port. Today you will see the **Three Gorges Dam**, the biggest water project in China. You can see the huge dam and the

ship locks. The dam is very big; it is 181 meters high and 2,335 meters long across the Yangtze River.

Optional experience: You can choose to go through the world's biggest ship lift. It is like a giant elevator for your boat at the Three Gorges Dam. This is a new and exciting way for travelers to see the huge dam very closely from the water level.

After you visit the dam, you will take a tourist bus to the **Yichang Three Gorges Center Cruise Terminal** at about 12:30 or 13:00. This afternoon, you will go to the train station to take a **high-speed train to Shanghai**. The trip takes about 6 to 7 hours. When you arrive, your driver will meet you and take you directly to your hotel in downtown Shanghai.

Note:

1. **Check-out:** Please check out at the front desk and leave your bags there. The cruise company will take your luggage to the Three Gorges Tourist Center for you.
2. **Dam Visit:** If you only see the Three Gorges Dam, you will get to Yichang at about 12:30.
3. **Ship Lift:** If you choose the extra Ship Lift trip, you will arrive in Yichang at about 13:30.

Day 14 Shanghai City Tour | Shanghai Tower, Shanghai Museum, Yu Garden & Bazaar, Nanjing Road & The Bund

Today, you will see why people call this Shanghai the "Paris of the East." You will learn about its famous history and beautiful style.

First, go to Pudong to see the famous Lujiazui buildings. You will go up the **Shanghai Tower**, which is the second-tallest building in the world. The elevator is very fast and goes 64 km/h. From the 118th floor, you can see a beautiful view of the whole city. You can look down at the Jin Mao Tower and see all of Shanghai.

Later, go to the **Shanghai Museum**. The building looks like an old "bronze ding" and shows the idea of "round sky and square earth." It has 120,000 old things from 5,000 years of Chinese art. In the Bronze and Ceramics Hall, you can see the 3,000-year-old Da Ke Ding and the musical Bianzhong bells.

Next, see **Yu Garden**, a quiet and old place in the center of the city. You will like the beautiful Chinese statues and the traditional garden style. After that, go to the busy Yuyuan Bazaar nearby. It is a good place to eat tasty street food and buy special handmade gifts.

After that, walk down **Nanjing Road**. It is a busy pedestrian street with many famous shops and old buildings. Finish your afternoon at **the Bund**, the most famous place in Shanghai. You can see a group of 52 historic buildings along the water.

Note:

1. On Mondays, the Shanghai Museum and Yu Garden are closed. On these days, you will visit the Shanghai Museum East and the City God Temple instead.

2. In the busy season, it is sometimes hard to get tickets for the Shanghai Museum. If this happens, your guide will take you to the Shanghai Museum East Branch.

Day 15 Departure from Shanghai | Hotel Check-out and Airport See-off

Your **15 Days China Group Tour** is finished today. You can have free time in Shanghai until it is time to leave. We will take you to the airport or the train station for your flight or train.

If you want to see **more places in Asia** after your trip, we can help you plan more travel.

Please **tell us your ideas**, and we will organize a longer trip for you instead of sending you home right away.

Thank you for traveling with Asia Odyssey Travel on your China tour. We enjoyed hosting your journey and look forward to assisting you with any future Asian travel plans you may have.

What's Included & What's Excluded

- The above price is based on a group tour for 2 people sharing one Standard Room with Two Single Beds in 3-star hotels.
- Price varies depending on travel date, group size, hotel class, program in your itinerary and possible fluctuation of currency exchange rate.

What's Included:

- Drivers & air-conditioned vehicles
- Professional licensed English-speaking local guide
- Hotel accommodation with breakfasts (3-star standard)
- Transportation listed in the itinerary
- Admission tickets, activities, meals listed in the itinerary
- Accident insurance
- Our service from tour planning, handling, operational and finishing your trip

What's Excluded:

- International airfares
- Entry Visa fees
- Personal expenses
- Single Room Supplement
- Recommended optional activities
- Arrival/departure flights or train on the first and last day
- Tips or gratuities for guides and drivers