

# Nature

## **26 Days**

### ***Fully Inclusive from the UK***

*Discover the most beautiful sights of China on a tour dedicated to nature. From the swirling mists of Mt Huang and the dramatic pinnacles of Zhangjiajie to the impressive Huangguoshu Falls and the spectacular Li River. Complete your tour with a visit to the beautiful alpine scenery of Nine Villages Valley.*

#### **FULLY INCLUSIVE**

Price includes international flights, departure taxes, current fuel surcharges, domestic transportation, accommodation, all meals, daily tours, entrance fees, guides and visa fees for UK passport holders.

#### **YOUR TOUR DOSSIER**

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with the other pre-departure information provided by Wendy Wu Tours including the tour itinerary as described in our brochure and/or website. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour.

If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the length of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation for our more adventurous tours; they will be explained here.

All passengers must read this document to ensure the itinerary is suitable for their interests and physical capabilities. This is not your final itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sights visited.

#### **Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours**

China continues to amaze, fascinate and thrill our passengers, many of whom have travelled to one country in Asia with us, then another, year after year. We urge you to keep in mind all the rewards, as well as challenges of travelling in a country with a history, culture and attitude so unlike your own.

A typical day's sightseeing may include the bustle and noise of a city street, sights and smells of a local market and interacting with the locals. Travelling in China requires patience and potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout China, so your local guides or National Escort will be indispensable during your trip.

We have found that our passengers who embark with a sense of humour and adventure, who accept that things do not always go to plan, are those who find their experience most rewarding.

This tour is slightly strenuous and active as it includes several days where long periods of sightseeing on foot including some hiking and climbing of steps will be necessary. Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course our local guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for passengers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you do have mobility difficulties, please contact us for our range of private tours which are more flexible and can better cater for individual needs.

To fully participate in this tour, you must be able to:

- Walk, sometimes for long distances, and sometimes over uneven surfaces without assistance
- Complete some long days of touring with minimal breaks
- Climb steps sometimes without handrails
- Step on/off coaches without assistance
- Dis/embark between moving pontoons, docks and boats, sometimes without handrails or assistance

The more difficult aspects of this itinerary include the areas of high altitude in Changhai (Long Lake) and Huanglong which are situated in Nine Villages Valley.

This trip involves 1 overnight train journey which is in first class soft sleeper compartments where each cabin consists of four berths (sharing). There are also 2 daytime rail journeys using soft seat class.

This itinerary visits areas which are popular with domestic Chinese tourists, but not yet known by international tourists. Facilities for much of this tour typically cater for Chinese people and this could mean the hotels serve few if any western dishes for breakfast. Chinese breakfast dishes include cold vegetable and pickle dishes, bean curd noodles, soups, congee (a rice porridge), steamed buns with pork or sweet red bean and green tea. You may also be served fruit, a fried egg, or toast – although the bread tends to be very sweet. Black tea and coffee are not always served, but can be requested. Fresh milk is not generally available. Other meals (lunch and dinner) could include dishes of local style, meaning there may be bones or fat in meat and fish.

Although China is developing quickly, it still lacks international standards of civil infrastructure and therefore tourist facilities. For example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade; concepts of personal responsibility are different to those in the UK. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in the UK. However, all of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense as well as refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort/Local Guides.

## **Altitude**

This itinerary visits the following areas of high altitude:

1. Changhai (Long Lake) in the Nine Villages Valley. Sightseeing is at an altitude of 3,100m [10,170ft]. Please note that the place where you will be staying overnight is not at high altitude.
2. Huanglong located between the Nine Villages Valley and Mao County. Sightseeing is at 3,500m [11,483ft].

If you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your Doctor before undertaking this itinerary.

## **Days 1-2: UK/Shanghai**

You will be met at Shanghai's Pudong Airport in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all the other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer (1 hr drive) to your hotel. A tour introduction will be held at the hotel later today or tomorrow. There will not be food or drinks served at this meeting; it is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in China.

## **Day 3: Shanghai**

Enjoy a full day of sightseeing in central Shanghai involving approx 3-4 hrs on foot. Beware of your valuables while in the Old Town (Yuan Bazaar) as it is very crowded.

## **Day 4: Shanghai/Mt Huang**

Enjoy the morning at leisure. This afternoon, explore the Xintiandi area of Shanghai. Sightseeing here is easy and involves approx 1 hr on foot. We then head to the train station and board the overnight train to Mt. Huang which departs in the evening and takes approx 16 hrs (approx 680km).

## **Day 5: Mt Huang**

Arrive at the train station in the early morning and transfer to a restaurant to have breakfast. Then transfer to your hotel in Tunxi (Mt Huang City), where you can leave your main luggage in storage, taking only an overnight bag to Mt Huang.

Transfer a further 1.5 hrs to the cable car station and catch the cable car to the summit (10 mins ride). Walk from here to the hotel and leave your bags as rooms may not be ready until midday. Sightseeing this afternoon involves some steps and at least 3 hrs on foot over uneven and damp surfaces. You will be able to explore at your own pace – anyone who does not wish to walk as far as other group members will be able to return to the hotel.

*NB: You will need to carry your overnight bag from the cable car to hotel on Mt Huang. You will need to take all medications, clothing, toiletries etc that you will need. The weather here is very changeable and usually foggy, so you will need a rain jacket and a jumper/cardigan. All hotels are of 3 star standards or above, however Mt Huang has a very wet and foggy climate and can cause bed linen to feel damp.*

**Day 6: Mt. Huang/Tunxi**

Further sightseeing around the summit, involving at least 2 hrs on foot. Return by cable car and travel by coach to the hotel for an overnight stay. After lunch, there will be some easy sightseeing in the city.

*NB: Your tickets for the cable car descent will be booked in advance to avoid the crowds however, particularly in bad weather, VIPs and government groups can take priority in the queue and occasionally cause delays.*

**Day 7: Tunxi/Changsha**

Drive 3 hrs (approx 240km) on the new expressway towards Hangzhou with lunch at a local restaurant. Transfer directly to Hangzhou Airport. Fly to Changsha (flight duration 1 hr) and transfer to your hotel.

**Day 8: Changsha/Zhangjiajie**

Drive to Mawangdui to visit the West Han Dynasty Tombs – easy sightseeing here. Drive approx 4.5 hrs (160km) to Zhangjiajie and check-in at the hotel.

**Days 9-10: Zhangjiajie**

On days 9 and 10, sightseeing involves the coach dropping off our group at the entrance to the National Park and then exploring on foot. Anyone who does not wish to keep up with the pace of the rest of the group will be able to return to the coach to rest. On day 9 there is up to 4 hrs and on day 10 at least 2.5 hrs on foot over uneven ground and some steps.

**Day 11: Zhangjiajie/Changsha**

Drive approx 5 hrs back to Changsha then check in to the hotel.

**Day 12: Changsha/Guiyang**

This morning is at leisure before transferring to the airport for the afternoon flight to Guiyang (approx 1 hr). Drive 40 mins to the hotel and check-in.

**Day 13: Guiyang/Zhengyuan**

Transfer to the station for your scenic train ride (soft seat class) to Zhengyuan. This journey usually takes 5 hrs and arrives in time for a late lunch. Easy sightseeing this afternoon is at Green Dragon Cave.

**Day 14: Tiexi day tour**

Transfer (30 mins drive) to Tiexi for sightseeing which involves 3 hrs walking. It can get very hot here so you will return to your hotel for lunch and to rest in the heat of the day. Later this afternoon, there will be easy sightseeing involving 2-3 hrs on foot.

**Day 15: Zhengyuan/Guiyang**

Transfer (40 mins drive) to Wuyang and cruise on the river before returning to Zhengyuan for lunch. Transfer to the station for your afternoon train to Guiyang. This train usually takes 5 hrs (over 270km) and is expected to arrive at 9pm, so a simple meal will be arranged for you on the train. Transfer (30 mins drive) to the hotel and check-in.

**Day 16: Guiyang/Guilin**

Drive 2.5 hrs (135km) to Huangguoshu Waterfall and enjoy easy sightseeing here. Return to Guiyang for dinner before transferring to the airport for your evening flight to Guilin (flight duration 1 hr). Transfer (20 mins drive) to the hotel and check-in.

*NB: You will be staying in Yangshuo for a single night before returning to Guilin. We recommend you leave your main luggage in safe storage at our hotel in Guilin; taking only a small, overnight bag with you for days 17 & 18.*

**Day 17: Li River Cruise/Yangshuo**

We take a 3 hr cruise from Guilin to the small town of Yangshuo. A simple meal will be served onboard (usually before midday at "Chinese lunch time"). These are small cruise boats, usually holding approx 100 passengers; with an enclosed dining area on the lower deck and an open viewing area on the upper deck. As it is so 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 unspoilt countryside. Usually the boats depart at 9am, from a dock 1 hr drive from your hotel. However when the river level is low they depart from further downstream which would mean a longer drive and an earlier check-out from your hotel. Disembarking from the cruise, your Local Guide will walk with you to your hotel, approx 15 mins walk from the river. Electric carts offered by private vendors can be organised at your own cost.

**Day 18: Yangshuo/Guilin**

Enjoy easy sightseeing this morning before driving 1 hr back to Guilin (65km). Transfer to the hotel and check-in.

**Day 19: Guilin/Chengdu**

Visit the Reed Flute Caves and take a short walk through the caves, sometimes along damp paths and stairs. It usually takes about an hour to complete the route, and is very cool inside. Also visit Mt Diecai; a low, karst mountain with 450 steps. We usually spend 1.5 hrs here. Transfer to the airport for your afternoon flight to Chengdu (flight duration 1.5 hrs). Transfer (20 mins drive) to the hotel and check-in.

**Day 20: Chengdu/Nine Villages Valley**

Morning transfer to the airport to board a domestic flight to Jiuzhaigou (Nine Villages Valley). Transfer to the hotel located at the entrance of the National Park and stay two nights.

**Day 21: Nine Villages Valley**

The National Park authorities have introduced an 'environmental vehicle' which is aimed at reducing the pollution by vehicles in the area. Your group will receive an entrance pass and a voucher for this transport. The vehicles run between the different sites at regular times, and this will mean you will be sharing these vehicles with people from other tourist groups. Your Local Guide will remain with you. Today's sightseeing involves at least 4 hrs on foot – with a maximum altitude at Changhai (Long Lake) Lake at 3,100m.

*NB: There is only one restaurant within the National Park, which will cater to all the tourist groups in the park on any given day so it can get very crowded and noisy.*

**Day 22: Nine Villages Valley/Huanglong/Chengdu**

Most of the driving today is on sealed, winding mountain roads. This morning, drive 3 hrs (130km) to Huanglong. There is now a cable car here and it is possible to take the 10 min ride both up and down, allowing more time for sightseeing at the top of the waterfall. The cost of the cable car is at your own expense. We usually spend over 2 hrs sightseeing here and this area is at an altitude of 3,500m. After lunch at a nearby restaurant, transfer to the airport for the return flight to Chengdu.

**Day 23: Chengdu**

The Panda Reserve is located only 10km from the city centre. It is not guaranteed that you will be able to see the feeding of the younger pandas, as this only happens at the start and end of each day. Sightseeing here involves approx 1.5 hrs on foot. There are electric carts offered by private vendors and these can be organised at your own cost. Afterwards, drive 1-2 hrs to the Sanxingdui Museum in Guanghan, where we spend 1.5 hrs.

**Day 24: Chengdu**

Drive 1.5hrs (55km) on a mountainous road to visit the Dujiangyan Irrigation Project. Easy sightseeing here with about 1.5 hrs walking.

**Day 25: Depart Chengdu**

Transfer to Chengdu Airport for your overnight flight to the UK via Hong Kong.

**Day 26: UK**

Arrive home.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

### **Group Size**

This tour will operate with a National Escort with a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 28 passengers.

### **Itinerary Changes**

Order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

The schedules of the domestic airlines in China are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them.

Roads in China have generally been improved over recent years, but some road construction and/or weather conditions may still lengthen the driving times.

NB: Times and distances listed in this Tour Dossier are approximate.

### **Insurance**

It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance covering at least circumstances leading to the cancellation of your booking and providing sufficient medical cover for illness or injury and repatriation while overseas.

You must provide us with the name of your insurers and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

### **Tipping**

As with most countries, tipping is a way of life in China. For our passengers' convenience we ask for a compulsory amount to be paid at the beginning of our group tours to cover tipping for guides, drivers, restaurant staff etc.

Tipping amounts can be found in our brochure and/or website. Exact tipping amounts will be stated in your final documentation pack.

### **Additional Information**

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, your final documentation pack will include a travel guide, suggested packing list and a phrase book.

Please refer to the Wendy Wu Tours brochure and/or website for details on departure dates, prices, itineraries and inclusions. Please also refer to the brochure for full booking conditions.