



HIGHLIGHTS OF CHINA

Explore the fascinating enigma that is China. Peel back the layers of history in and around Beijing, where the Great Wall and Tiananmen Square will take your breath away.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Small Ship Cruising, Suggested Itineraries



China, Asia



15 days from AU\$15,830 pp



Private

Journey Overview

Explore the fascinating enigma that is China. Peel back the layers of history in and around Beijing, where the Great Wall and Tiananmen Square will take your breath away. Gaze skywards in futuristic Shanghai. Unravel the mysteries of the ancient city of Xian, home to the Terracotta Warriors and a pulsating Muslim quarter. And find serenity as you cruise along the Yangtze.

Journey Highlights

- Experience China's greatest cultural sites including the Great Wall of China, Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven
- Glimpse traditional Beijing life in a maze of hutongs
- Witness Xian's intriguing Terracotta Warriors
- Venture off the beaten track to the ancient walled city of Pingyao
- Savour the natural grandeur of the Three Gorges on a relaxing Yangtze River cruise
- Sip Hangzhou's world-famous Longjing tea at an idyllic tea plantation
- Be spellbound by acrobatics in the hyper-modern metropolis of Shanghai



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Beijing

Step into the vibrant, iconic and ever-surprising world of Beijing. Drop your bags and get ready to explore three millennia of fascinating architecture and culture.

The Peninsula Beijing (Superior Suite)

Day 2: Beijing

Start your city discovery at the Temple of Heaven. Walk in the footsteps of past emperors and their royal processions to arrive at the magical landmark. There's no better place to enjoy the most traditionally Chinese of morning activities, tai chi. Watch or take part in your own private lesson with a local master (optional). Wander through the lively Pearl Market (also known as Hongqiao Market) and marvel at stalls filled with everything from pearls to silk pyjamas. Continue to the Forbidden City, built during the Ming Dynasty and recognised as the centre of the world for nearly 500 years. Today, as the National Palace Museum, it invites you to lose yourself in the largest collection of Chinese artworks and artefacts in the world. Cross to Tiananmen Square, an unmistakable statement of power from the founding fathers of the People's Republic. Soak in the atmosphere on one of the world's most famous and forbidding public plazas, flanked by Soviet-inspired architecture and Mao's Mausoleum.

The Peninsula Beijing (Superior Suite) | Meals: BL

Day 3: Beijing

Witness one of the great man-made wonders of the world: The Great Wall. Stretching almost 4,000 miles from the western desert to the eastern coast, this structure is a triumph of engineering and a direct link with the legendary emperors of China's past. Venture to the Mutianyu site and leave the crowds behind as you scale the steps for sweeping views of the wall snaking through the Yan Mountains.

Continue back to Beijing, past the 2008 Summer Olympic sites. Then, trace the history of old Beijing as you ride through a labyrinth of lanes and alleys, known as 'hutongs', on the back of a pedicab. In one of the few hutongs that survived the drastic remodelling for the 2008 Olympics, step inside the home of a local family for a rare glimpse into bygone Beijing.

The Peninsula Beijing (Superior Suite) / Meals: BL

Day 4: Beijing - Pingyao

Travel by train to China's only surviving ancient walled city, Pingyao. Nestled amongst dusty curio shops and bustling restaurants, find your home at Jing's Residence. Now a beautiful boutique hotel, the home was built 260 years ago by a wealthy Qing Dynasty silk merchant. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure or explore this most intriguing UNESCO World Heritage town.

Jing's Residence (Courtyard Room) / Meals: BD

Day 5: Pingyao

Step back in time into ancient China. Climb the city wall built in 1370 under the reign of Emperor Hongwu. See the Ancient Opera Stages and Daoist Temple – one of the many temples that dot the city landscape. Meet a local family and see one of the hundreds of Ming and Qing dynasty courtyards where people live much as they did in the time of emperors. Back on the main street, stop at the First Draft Bank of China (Rishengchang), the birthplace of modern Chinese banking. The branch has been immaculately conserved, right down to the counting rooms, silver vaults and opium dens where VIP clients were entertained.

Jing's Residence (Courtyard Room) / Meals: BLD

Day 6: Pingyao - Xian

Travel by train to Xian and head to the Han Yang Ling Museum to discover a treasure trove of artefacts dating back to the early Western Han dynasty. Step outside to witness ongoing archaeological works in the excavation pits, which reveal new insights into China's seemingly never-ending past. Arrive at your lodgings and spend the remainder of the afternoon at leisure.

The Ritz-Carlton Xian (Club Floor Room) | Meals: B

Day 7: Xian

Venture into Lintong County to Xian, the first capital of unified China. Witness the wonder of the Terracotta Warriors, an astonishing symbol of imperial might. Buried for 2,000 years until a group of farmers stumbled upon them in 1974, the Terracotta Army of Qin Shi Huang is one of the world's greatest archaeological finds. Continue on to the City Wall, a surviving symbol of Xian's infallible ancient military defence system. Wander through the vibrant Muslim Quarter to the Great Mosque, the largest and best preserved of the early mosques in China.

The Ritz-Carlton Xian (Club Floor Room) | Meals:BL

Day 8: Xian - Chongqing

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Chongqing Jiangbei. Head to Chongqing Zoo and meet the world-famous pandas, a Chinese national treasure and one of the rarest animals in the *world*. Learn more about the unique Chinese culture in the Huguang Guild Hall, an impressive complex of halls built as a meeting place for immigrants from the provinces of Hunan, Hubei, Guangdong and Guangxi. Later, board the Yangtze Explorer for your cruise along the world's third-longest river. Settle into your sumptuous cabin before meeting your fellow guests in the Explorer Bar. Bask in the night-time cityscape of Chongqing as you sail deeper into the Three Gorges region of the mighty Yangtze River.

Yangzi Explorer (Deluxe Cabin Xiling Deck) | Meals: BLD

Day 9: Cruising the Yangtze River

Explore the Yangtze, your way. Uncover a secret project hidden in the mountains of Fuling. Hidden for 50 years, the 816 Underground Project is the world's largest artificial military cave. Alternatively, venture deep into the White Crane Ridge Underwater Museum. See the intricate ancient rock carvings, unique flora and fauna of the Yangtze River. Then, stop at the local market to sample delicacies, including Fuling's famous pickles. After a day exploring, there's no better place to re-charge than back on your cruiser enjoying the personalised service in complete comfort.

Yangzi Explorer (Deluxe Cabin Xiling Deck) / Meals: BLD

Day 10: Cruising the Yangtze River

Today is all about the spectacular Three Gorges. Wind through the canyons of Wu Gorge, known as "witches gorge" for its depth and twisting nature, and between the dramatic limestone cliffs of the narrow Qutang Gorge. Later, drift along the crystal-clear waters and forested slopes of Shennong Stream during a ride in a traditional sampan. As the boat gently floats through this stunning riverine gorge, spy hanging coffins stowed high within the limestone cliffs – evidence of early settlements. Pause at a traditional trackers village for a fascinating glimpse into the traditional rural Chinese community. Back onboard, enjoy a farewell feast of Chinese delicacies and watch the world go by.

Yangzi Explorer (Deluxe Cabin Xiling Deck) / Meals: BLD

Day 11: Yichang - Shanghai

Meander through Xiling, the longest gorge, to the vast Three Gorges Dam and enjoy a tour of the site and exhibition centre. A massive feat of engineering, at over two kilometres in length, the dam is the world's largest hydroelectric power station in terms of capacity and energy generation. After your tour, bid farewell to the Yangtze and journey to Yichang city. Descend into the Three Travellers' Cave, a magical limestone cave named for three celebrities in Tang Dynasty, who visited the caves in 819 and composed poems to mark the occasion. Enjoy the serenity of the Riverside Park before transferring to Yichang Airport for your flight to Shanghai.

The Peninsula Shanghai (Deluxe River Room) / Meals: BL

Day 12: Shanghai

Welcome to the China of tomorrow. Join your expert guide for a revealing tour of the city's diverse neighbourhoods. Promenade along the Bund, taking in its historic architecture and famed skyline. Navigate the tree-lined avenues of the French Concession, with charming facades and outdoor cafes attesting to Shanghai's reputation as "Paris of the East". Bask in the wonders of the Old Town, set around the exquisite Yu Garden, and lose yourself in the warren of alleys and lanes.

The Peninsula Shanghai (Deluxe River Room) / Meals: B

Day 13: Shanghai - Hangzhou - Shanghai

Transfer to the train station for your journey to Hangzhou, one of China's seven ancient capitals. Join your guide to see first-hand why the city was described by explorer Marco Polo as "the city of heaven". Discover the birthplace of Dragon Well (Longjing) tea, the most famous of Chinese green teas. Visit the plantation and learn the art of tea making in a traditional tea ceremony. Then, board a private boat to glide over West Lake. Drink in this paradise of temples, pagodas, pavilions, gardens, and ornamental trees and you'll soon understand why it's been a great source of inspiration for artists, poets and philosophers throughout Chinese history. Move on to the heart of the ancient city and browse teahouses, calligraphy boutiques and silk stores in the charming Qinghefang Street. Visit one of the oldest and largest traditional Chinese medicine pharmacies, before returning by train to Shanghai.

The Peninsula Shanghai (Deluxe River Room) / Meals: BL

Day 14: Shanghai

A change of pace from urban Shanghai as you're transported to Zhujiajiao, an ancient water town known as the Venice of Shanghai. Only 45 minutes west of central Shanghai, this enthralling river town seems a world apart from the modern megacity. Wander the tiny stone-paved lanes and stop awhile to take in the regal stone bridges arching over waterways lined with carefully-preserved homes and courtyards from the Qing and Ming Dynasties. Explore historic enterprises, including a soy sauce factory, rice commissary and traditional Chinese herbal pharmacy. Head north of the old town to Kehzi Yuan, once amongst the largest private family gardens in China, for some quiet contemplation before your final private boat ride down the pearlescent streams. Return to Shanghai for an afternoon at leisure. This evening, take your seat for the Shanghai Acrobatics Circus and watch in jaw-dropping awe as the world-famous troupe performs daring acts.

The Peninsula Shanghai (Deluxe River Room) / Meals: BL

Day 15: Depart Shanghai

Complete your Shanghai experience with a trip on the Maglev Train. The world's fastest Rail to Airport link, the train is powered by magnetic levitation technology with the train reaching a top speed of 430 kilometres per hour.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

The Peninsula Beijing



A landmark building with an ideal location near Wangfujing pedestrian street, The Peninsula Beijing exudes an atmosphere of luxury living, exemplified by the highest standards of service and flawless attention to detail.

Behind the imposing, traditional Chinese styled exterior, subtle Chinese influences enhance every room and suite. All are spacious and decorated in soothing greys and whites with elegantly streamlined furniture, sleek white marble bathrooms, and modern electronic systems with fingertip controls.

The overall feel throughout the hotel is one of opulence and lavish indulgence – from the restaurants and bars to the apartment style rooms and suites. It is widely accepted as the premier 5-star hotel in the city.

Why we like it

- Centrally located, The Peninsula is ideally located as a base from which to explore the city centre
- Two elegant restaurants offer a choice of traditional Cantonese cuisine and Asian fare
- The Peninsula Spa by ESPA offers a wide range of treatments in a serene setting
- The hotel has an indoor heated pool
- Other facilities include bars and lounges, a fitness centre, steam rooms, saunas and the most prestigious shopping arcade in Beijing

Jing's Residence



The Jing's Residence has been beautifully restored and is located in the ancient walled city of Pingyao surrounded by curio shops and bustling restaurants offer clients a true insight into northern Chinese history and culture.

The Jing's Residence offers high quality service and peaceful rooms and suites to relax in after a day exploring the old town. There are 12 courtyard rooms, five courtyard suites and one magnificent master suite offering spacious living accommodation.

The restaurant offers traditional and international cuisine private romantic meals can be arranged. The architecture of the Jing's Residence is magnificent and an outside seating area has been created so that one can sit and relax while reading, drinking tea, or soaking up the historical atmosphere of Pingyao.

Jing's Residence offers a variety of activities and they can be tailor made just for your stay, such as paper cutting, shoe making, noodle making classes and massage lessons.

Why we like it

- A small boutique hotel housed in the renovated mansion of a wealthy Qing dynasty silk merchant
- Atmospheric courtyard style architecture in the heart of the old town typical of northern China
- Savour a traditional Chinese hot pot that boasts a history of more than 1,000 years

Yangzi Explorer



Highlights:

Recently refurbished, the elegant Yangzi Explorer sets a new standard in luxury river cruising, with 3 and 4 night cruises between Chongqing and Yichang. The most celebrated stretch of the Yangzi is the spectacular Three Gorges where A&K uniquely tailors shore excursions. Highlights include the mountainous region of Fuling where fascinating touring options include the secret 815 Underground Project and the White Crane Ridge Underwater Museum. The crystal-clear waters and forested slopes of Shennong Stream are experienced during a ride in a traditional sampan. Qutang Gorge is famous for its rolling waters and dramatic cliffs, while Wu is characterised by majestic forest-crowned peaks. Xiling, the longest, finishes at the vast Three Gorges Dam with a tour of the site and exhibition centre. Friendly and intimate on board service creates an atmosphere more private club than cruise ship.

The Cabins

Offering 38 cabins, 24 suites and four themed suites over four decks, the ship boasts the largest and best appointed cabins on the river. Each has floor-to-ceiling picture windows, a private balcony and en suite bathroom.

DELUXE Cabins (31m²)



These 38 ensuite cabins are the largest entry level of their kind on the Yangtze River. Stylish, and with their own private balconies, each is fully equipped with satellite TV, electronic safe, minibar and fridge.

SUITE Cabins (39m²)



These 20 suites have an indoor seating area and a private balcony with table and chairs. They're spacious enough to accommodate a third person, and they include a free laundry service as well as access to the suite lounge for unlimited drinks and snacks.

MANDARIN & JADE SUITES (81m²)

CELESTIAL & IMPERIAL SUITES (110m²)



These four suites are the largest on the ship. Dressed in traditional Chinese décor, these sumptuous, spacious suites have separate bedroom and living areas and as well as uninterrupted views of screensaver-worthy landscapes as the ship sails its course.

Additional perks to this luxury accommodation include room service, in-suite private dining, sparkling wine, a fruit bowl replenished daily, and afternoon tea imaginatively presented in a birdcage.

Daily Activity

Complementing the natural beauty of the river is a rich programme of shore excursions and shipboard activities which highlight the wealth of China's cultural traditions as well as the river's history and ecology. Tai Chi classes, Chinese cooking and silk embroidery are just some of the diversions available. In between activities, the Huang Ding Spa beckons. There's also a fitness centre, sauna and beauty salon.

Luxury On Board

Dining is a delight with a team of internationally trained chefs dishing up innovative à la carte menus featuring Chinese and continental cuisine served with complimentary house wines and other refreshments at lunch and dinner. The ship boasts the highest crew to passenger ratio on the river of 1:1 delivering exceptional personalised service.

Families

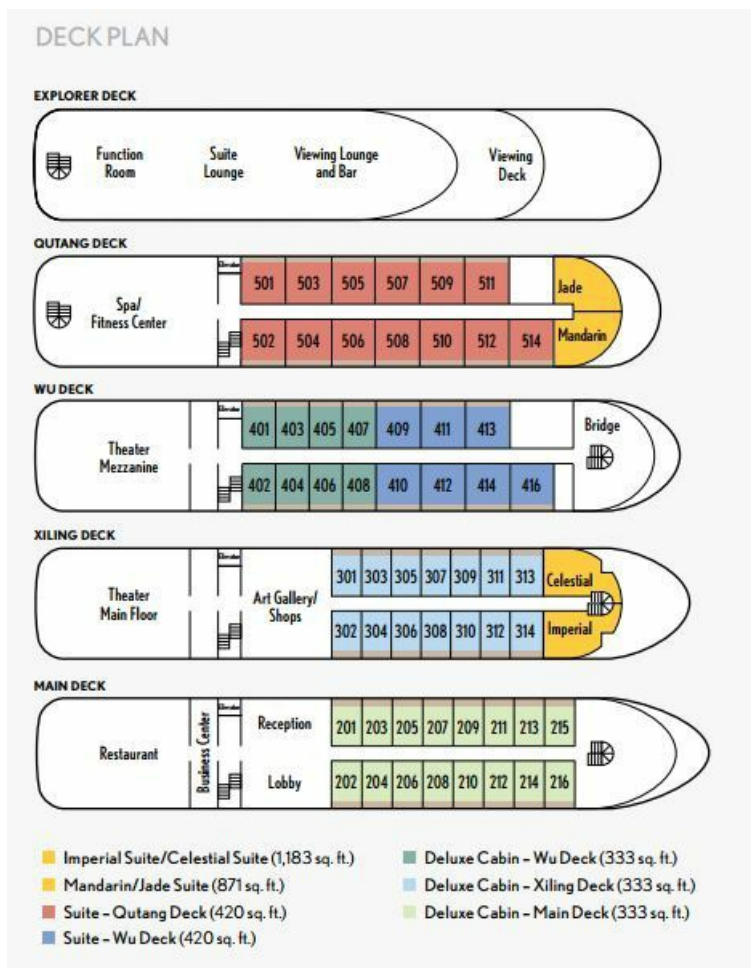
The specially tailored 'Summer River Camp' welcomes families on four night cruises, upstream from Yichang to Chongqing, with exciting activities planned to keep all entertained. There is Chinese Opera mask painting, paper folding, cooking, kite making, movie nights and early morning Tai Chi.

Facts

- Launch year: 2008
- Length: 91.5m
- Beam: 16.4m
- Draught: 2.8m
- Passengers : 124

What's Included

- All three meals during full sailing days and breakfast on day of disembarkation
- Beverages with meals including house wine, local beer, soft drinks and water
- Entrance fees as part of scheduled sightseeing
- Pre-arranged entertainment and on-board activities



The Peninsula Shanghai



The Peninsula Shanghai offers 235 supremely comfortable and stylish rooms and suites. Each room takes inspiration from the Art Deco period and Shanghai's Golden Age, when the city was known as the 'Paris of the East', and blends traditional Peninsula standards of luxury and state-of-the-art technology with historical references. Raising dining expectations to new levels, the hotel boasts a selection of five restaurants and bars including the Michelin starred Sir Elly's restaurant.

With street access and its own entrance from the Lobby, The Peninsula arcade features 25 leading luxury fashion and jewellery brands. The hotel is also just minutes from the heart of Shanghai's exciting shopping district Nanjing Lu. After a day of exploring, unwind at The Peninsula Spa by ESPA, a luxurious haven for body and mind, complete with 25-metre indoor swimming pool, fitness centre, seven treatment rooms, two VIP suites, heat experiences and highly trained therapists.

Why we like it

- Centrally located fronting the world-famous Bund offering glittering city views across the river to the spectacular Pudong skyline
- A modern take on traditional Art Deco
- World-wide reputation for quality accommodation and service
- Michelin-starred Chinese Restaurant

Abercrombie & Kent

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