

2019 China 3-Best-Cities Tours

With site visit for professional development

For tour application form & payment info, send e-mail to: UsChinaEducation@yahoo.com

Beijing -- Xi'an -- Shanghai

Spend 9 days enjoying China's three most fascinating cities. See the Great Wall, Beijing's Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square. Then, proceed to the ancient city of Xi'an, the starting point of the Silk Road and excavation site of the famous Terra Cotta Warriors. Finally, fly from Xi'an to Shanghai, where you stroll along the 19th-century waterfront Bund surrounded by views of this cutting-edge 21st-century metropolis with amazing futuristic architecture.

Three renowned Chinese cities you will visit are:

- **Beijing** -- China's national capital, in North China.
- **Xi'an** -- capital of 10 Chinese dynasties, starting point of the ancient over-land Silk Road, in West China.
- **Shanghai** -- China's leading metropolis & financial center, in Southeast China.

We can also plan site visit, for professional development, to school, college, agency or business in Beijing or Xi'an, to meet with Chinese colleagues, depending on interests & requests by majority members of the group.

Tour package cost Includes:

1. Int'l flights (coach class, from NYC/EWR);
2. China domestic flights (coach class) & high-speed train ride
3. Luxury 4/5 star hotel accommodations in all cities
4. All daily meals as indicated (B, L, D)
5. English-speaking tour guides
6. Admissions to cultural sites & shows as indicated in the itinerary
7. Site visits for professional development
8. Accident-protection insurance for travel in China

2019 Tour Dates:	Prices for 2019 Departure Dates:
1. March 16-24: \$2,798 2. April 20-28: \$2,798 3. May 21-29: \$3,298 4. July 1-9: \$3,398 5. Any other dates of your choice; contact us via email	• \$2,698: February • \$2,798: January, March, April, Nov • \$2,898: October, • \$2,998: September • \$3,298: May • \$3,398: June, July, August, December

Notes:

1. Tour price is for departure from NYC & Newark, NJ. Slight airfare add-on applies to departure from other U.S. cities (about \$80 in most cases; may vary with region). See payment info about upgrade for int'l flights. The price is based on sharing a twin-bedded room at hotels and a minimum of 25 participants travelling. Group members benefit from excellent group rates for included services.
2. Single room supplement: \$550
3. Child (under age of 11) sharing bed with adult: -\$200
4. Extended hotel stay in Beijing/Shanghai: \$180/per night per room

Trip Itinerary (Tentative)

Day 1 Depart the U.S.

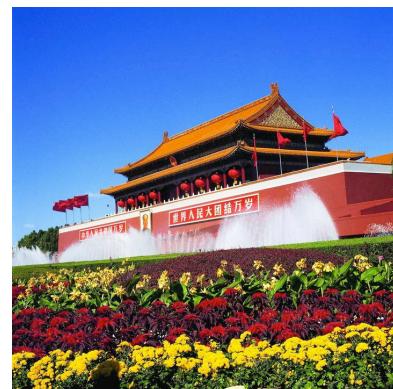
Tour members from different cities of the U.S. depart this morning for Beijing.

Depending on availability of int'l flights, we may arrive in Shanghai first, reversing order of the cities, but the sites and activities on the itinerary will remain same.

If you are not in the Great New York area, the travel agency can book your flights with departure from an airport close to you, and you will just make a connection at another large airport (e.g., Chicago, SFO or LAX) for the flight to China.

We will try to book departures in such a way that all members arrive in China at about the same time.

Soon after the deadline of the first payment, the tour organizer and the travel agency will decide on the airline that can give the best routing for the trans-Pacific flights.



Day 2 Beijing

Wanda Realm Hotel Beijing; Beijing Century Lianhua Hotel;
Wyndham Hotel ★★★★★ or similar class

Upon arrival at Beijing Capital Int'l Airport, our local tour guide will meet you and then transfer you to the hotel. En route to the hotel, enjoy first views of China's capital city.

Your hotel room is available for mid-afternoon check-in if you arrive in the afternoon. The rest of the day is at your own leisure: relax in the hotel or walk around the neighborhood on your own.



Day 3 Beijing (B, L, D)

Today's first highlight, one and half hours away north of the city, is "the Great Wall," which was built over 2,000 years ago by first emperor Qin Shihuangdi across the historical northern borders of China to protect the Chinese Empire against intrusions by various nomadic groups and warlike peoples. It stretches over 3,100 miles.

Astronauts claimed it was the only work of human hands on the globe visible from the moon.

The defensive characteristics of the Great Wall were enhanced by the construction of watchtowers, troop barracks, garrison stations, and signaling towers. Other purposes of the Great Wall included border controls, allowing imposition of duties on goods transported along the Silk Road, regulation or encouragement of trade and control of immigration and emigration. The path of the Great Wall also served as a transportation corridor in ancient times.

After the Great Wall, we have lunch at the Golden Palace where we can also learn about enamel-making at the cloisonné exhibition.

Cloisonné is a unique art form that came to China on the Silk Road (you will see much influence from the Byzantine art and Islamic cultures); it then prospered in Beijing during the Yuan Dynasty (1271 - 1368). Later, artisans improved the coloring process, and created the bright blue that appealed to the Oriental aesthetic sense. It is an amazing place to see!

After lunch, the charter bus takes you back to the city. We will stop by the National Stadium (the Bird's Nest for the 2008 Olympic Games). Many people still remember the spectacular opening ceremony at this stadium that summer.

The design, which originated from the study of Chinese ceramics, implemented steel beams in order to hide supports for the retractable roof, thus giving the stadium the appearance of a bird's nest.

Since the 2008 Olympics, the stadium has been used for soccer games, concerts, and many other sports and arts events. It is also a major tourist attraction.

Time permitting, we may enjoy tea at a traditional Chinese teahouse, and stop at a pearl gallery

Beijing is huge. Moving around in bus today is the best way to see this amazing city, the ancient yet very modern Beijing!

In the evening, you can choose to watch a fascinating live kungfu performance at the famous Red Theatre (admission extra).

Day 4 Beijing (B, L, D)

This morning, we first stroll through historic Tiananmen Square -- the largest public square in the world and the political symbol of the People's Republic of China.

This is a site of great cultural significance. In the north is the dominant Gate of Heavenly Peace. In the center stands the Monument to the People's Heroes (who had died during the wars for the Communist China). The Great Hall of the People and the National Museum of China are on the western and eastern sides of the square.

In recent memory, the square is best known, outside China, as the focal point of the pro-democracy movement that ended tragically on 4 June 1989 with declaration of martial law in Beijing.

To the west is a huge structure that has a distinct Russian/Soviet influence: the Great Hall of the People, a state building used for legislative and ceremonial activities.

The Great Hall is also used for many special events, and for receiving international leaders and dignitaries.

What you have seen at the Tiananmen Square and the Great Hall of the People are modern Chinese political institutions, which are very much based on what you will discover in the old buildings behind. Here, you will see the connection to the tradition of Chinese political culture!

Now, walk across the street to visit the Palace Museum and the Forbidden City. It was the Chinese imperial palace from the Ming Dynasty to the end of the Qing Dynasty.



For almost 500 years, it served as the home of emperors and their households (in earlier times, only members of the Emperor's family were permitted there) as well as the ceremonial and political center of ancient Chinese government before China's feudal system was overthrown at beginning of 20th century.



This huge rectangle complex consists of 980 surviving buildings with 9,999 rooms. We will see the most important and elaborate buildings situated on the central north-south axis, which are the ceremonial center of imperial power, plus the Inner Court (the home and offices for the emperor) and priceless art collections.



Learn from the guide how the design of the Forbidden City, from its overall layout to some smallest details, was meticulously planned to reflect philosophical and religious principles, and above all, to symbolize the majesty of Imperial power.

After lunch, have a short visit to Tong Ren Tang to learn about traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and Chinese health care theory.

Chinese have had their **traditional medicine** for thousands of years. Much of traditional Chinese medicine derived from the same philosophical bases that contributed to the development of Taoism. It is now considered a complementary or alternative medicine in most of the world.

Tong Ren Tang in Beijing is the best place to learn about major theories and practices of traditional Chinese medicine, including diagnosis and treatments, such as yin-yang, herbal medicine, massage, acupuncture, and channel system of the human body.

Have some free time to walk around at the famous Wangfujing Business Area (which used to be the city's only major commercial center prior to 1990).

While in Beijing, we must savor the unique tastes of the authentic Peking Roast Duck at the famous Quanjude Restaurant (along with some Beijing local wine or beer, if you like).

Over the Peking Duck meal, the chef of the restaurant and the tour guide can talk about major schools of Chinese cuisines and their differences, such that you can appreciate what will be presented to you in the other cities.

After dinner, you will enjoy the *Peking Opera* show (casual attire is just fine).

Day 5

Beijing -- Xi'an (B, D)

Xi'an Shangri La Hotel; Grand Barony Xi'an Hotel; Wyndham Hotel; Xi'an Ramada Plaza Hotel ★★★★☆, or similar class



After breakfast, we will transfer to the Beijing West Train Station to take the high-speed bullet train (about 4 & 1/2 hours) to Xi'an.



(Note: it is possible that the group may fly (2 hours) to Xi'an from Beijing, depending on availability and schedule of trains.) On the way to the train station/airport, the chartered bus takes you around on the city expressways for parting views of this city, including important new landmarks of China's CCTV tower and CBD.



This new bullet train is modern. You will be surprised at how fast this train moves (or literally flies). Due to improved glass technology, passengers do not feel the high speed or any discomfort when looking at the scenery outside.



In fact, the train seats are going to be very comfortable, much like business-class on an airplane.



What is more, during the ride across 4 provinces, you'll have a rare opportunity to view the varied scenery of north China's cities, villages & towns, and on-going urbanization.

You can prepare some snack in advance for lunch for the train, or purchase some drinks and snacks (also lunch box) on the train.

Xi'an, as capital of 10 ancient dynasties, is known for its long history, and for its rich culture due to ethnic mix from the Silk Road. As the eastern starting point of the ancient Silk Road, it was visited by Marco Polo.

Many reminders of Xi'an's ancient history are still evident, including the City Wall, the Drum Tower and the Bell Tower, which date from 1384.

Since 1990, Xi'an has re-emerged as an important cultural, industrial and educational center for China's northwest region; also as research and development center for China's space programs.

Other things that make the city famous include its food and art, which you will experience, too.

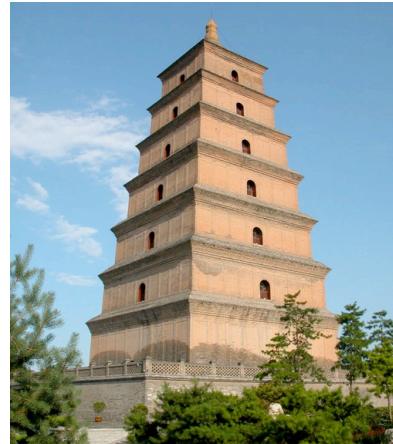
After arrival in Xi'an, the day starts with a visit to one of China's supreme treasures: the Terracotta Warriors and Horses.

The Soldiers of the Qin Dynasty amazed the world when discovered in 1974 by local farmers. Buried with the first emperor over 2,000 years ago and meant to protect him as his bodyguards in the afterlife, the 8,000 life-sized warriors and their steeds are a magnificent sight.

Go on an excursion to the Mausoleum of the first Emperor Qin Shihuangdi (one of China's greatest rulers and the builder of the Great Wall) and to the famous Terracotta Soldiers and Horses Museum.

Of course, if you want, you can purchase some replicas of terracotta warriors and horses in the museum as memories of the trip and as decoration for home or office.

Enjoy the evening at your leisure.



Day 6 Xi'an (B, L)

First, visit the Wild Goose Pagoda Square scenic area, to see the statue of senior monk XuanZang (c. 601-664) who embarked on the Journey to the West and brought Buddhist sutras back to China from India, which marked earliest cultural exchanges between China and the outside world.

We will stop briefly at a local jade store, to see magnificent exhibition of jade art, and to learn about its rich meanings on the Silk Road and in the Chinese culture

The trip to this ancient city is made more meaningful with a stop at Tangbo (Tang Dynasty Art Museum), where you can appreciate unique Chinese art and practice Chinese calligraphy.

We can have site visit for professional development, to meet with Chinese colleagues (if majority members of the tour had requested such visit, and it did not happen in Beijing): a school or college, agency or business. We go with interests & requests by majority members of the group. (Please indicate interest in a statement along with application from.)

Then, go to the Muslim Quarter and the bazaar of Chinese Muslims whose ancestors came in large numbers via the Silk Road and settled in west China; this is a big tourist attraction. The well-preserved ancient City Wall and the Bell Tower are also sights not to be missed there.

In the evening, you will have an opportunity to enjoy dinner on your own; of course, the tour guide can give recommendations for good local food.

Day 7 Xi'an -- Shanghai (B, D)

Regal International East Asia Hotel; Sheraton Shanghai Hongkou Hotel; Crown Plaza Shanghai Fudan Hotel ★★★★, or similar class

Today, you will be transferred to the airport for the flight to Shanghai. After arrival in Shanghai, you will marvel at all those exciting sights in China's most amazing city and its commercial & financial center.

Going with the charter bus for a tour of the city on major sections of its magnificent elevated expressways, you will find, is a very effective way to appreciate highlights and famous landmarks of this beautiful city. You certainly look forward to that.

We will visit the Bund (by the Huangpu River), or Waitan as Chinese call it, once known as the "Wall Street of the Foreign Powers" or "Avenue of All Nations."

Take a stroll on the famous promenade by the river (west side of the Huangpu River), and enjoy the amazing skyline of the new Pudong financial district (on the east side of the Huangpu River). It is so futuristic, and SO surreal!

After dinner, when all lights are up, get on a cruise on the Huangpu River and enjoy fascinating view of this magic city at night.



Day 8 Shanghai (B, L)

Today's activities and site visits are meant to let you enjoy more about Shanghai's today and yesterday.

Go with the charter bus to the other (east) side to the Huangpu River to be in new Pudong financial district. You see those buildings of modernistic architecture the day before and would very much like to get close to them; here you are now!

On the way to the Pudong financial district, we can have a quick stop at the Silk Museum to learn about silk production, silk weaving and silk artifacts, and how it is related to the ancient and new Silk Road.

After lunch, we can stop at a place where to get some final gifts for relatives and friends. Then, spend some time at Shanghai old town Chenghuangmiao (Temple of the City God) or YuYuan Garden, built in 1577. You will have the remaining afternoon as free time during which you can choose to do some of the following:

1. Purchase some gifts for friends and relatives
2. Walk through old neighborhoods in the French Concession area and the high-end shopping district of Huaihai Zhonglu
3. Visit Shanghai Museum (rich in art collections and ceramics) in city center, or Tianzifang art zone in Xujiahui District
4. Take a taxi to the Jewish Refugees' Memorial Center and Synagogue in Hongkou District if you want to learn about the story of Jews in Shanghai during WWII
5. Go to the Museum of the CPC's First Congress (to learn about the story of China's ruling party now and the Cultural Revolution)

After the YuYuan Garden, the bus will take you to Xintiandi:

- An upscale business district in center of the city
- Very unique stylish place—old Shanghai houses with traditional walls & tiles, reconstructed into a tourist attraction that combines the past with the culture of today; the interior embodies a completely different world of international galleries, bars, restaurants, cafes, boutiques, etc.
- Pick a place for dinner on your own

For the last evening in China, you can choose to see an optional acrobatic show—if you are interested, just let the tour guide know in the morning so that the guide can help book it for you.



Day 9

Depart Shanghai for the U.S. (B)

After breakfast in the hotel, you will be transferred to the airport for the flight home (or next destination of your choice). (If your flight is departing in the afternoon, you can relax in the hotel or explore the neighborhood by the hotel.)

You arrive in the U.S. the same day.

If you choose to make a side trip to Hong Kong and/or Japan after the China tour, we can help. Read the part below for your information.

Side Trip to Hong Kong and/or Japan?

If you plan to make a side trip to **Hong Kong**, either before or after the China tour, please note the following:

1. If you choose to go to the Hong Kong before the China tour, you fly from the U.S. to Hong Kong, and then fly from Hong Kong to Beijing where to start the China tour with the group. If you decide to visit Hong Kong after the China tour, that is also fine; at the end of the China tour, you fly from Shanghai to Hong Kong where to spend a few days, and then fly from Hong Kong to the U.S. Just indicate your decision in the tour application form.
2. International flights with arrival in/return from Hong Kong, either way, will cost an extra amount of about \$150 (The final extra amount may vary).
3. U.S. citizens do not need a Hong Kong visa to enter Hong Kong.
4. Flights between Beijing/Shanghai and Hong Kong may cost about \$300 one way.
5. Hotels in Hong Kong are for about \$220 per night. For this side trip, people often choose to have a stay-over of 2-3 days in Hong Kong.
6. The Hong Kong side trip is self-guided, as English is also spoken in Hong Kong.
7. We help you book the flights, and book your hotel if needed. Just let us know in the tour application form.



If you plan to make a side trip to **Japan** either before or after the China tour (and before or after the Hong Kong side trip), please note the following:

1. If you choose to visit Japan during the China tour, here are the options for your international flights:
 - a. You fly from the U.S. to Tokyo (where to spend a few days), and then fly from Tokyo to Beijing (where to start the China tour) and at the end of the China tour, fly from Shanghai to the U.S.
 - i. International flights: U.S. -->Tokyo--> Beijing; Shanghai-->U.S.
 - b. You can visit Japan after the China tour. That is: at the end of the China tour, you fly from Shanghai to Tokyo where to spend a few days before flying from Tokyo to the U.S.
 - i. International flights: U.S.-->Beijing; Shanghai-->Tokyo-->U.S.
2. If you want to visit both Japan and Hong Kong during the China tour, here are the options:
 - a. Fly from the U.S. to Tokyo, and then fly from Tokyo to Hong Kong and Beijing where to start the China tour
 - i. International flights: U.S. -->Tokyo-->Hong Kong-->Beijing; Shanghai--> U.S.
 - b. Visit Japan after the Hong Kong side trip following the China tour; At the end of the China tour, fly from Shanghai to Hong Kong (where to have a few days) and then from Hong Kong to Tokyo where to spend a few days, before flying back from Tokyo to the U.S.
 - i. International flights: U.S. --> Beijing; Shanghai-->Hong Kong-->Tokyo-->U.S.
3. International flights with a stop-over in Japan, either way, may cost an extra amount of about \$350. The actual extra amount may vary.
4. U.S. citizens do not need a Japanese visa to enter Japan.
5. We help you book the flights, and your hotel if needed. Just let us know in the tour application form.

