

14-Day China's Cultural & Natural Highlights Tour

Trip overview

Unveil the multi-faceted spirit of China on this ultimate 14-day journey, meticulously curated to balance timeless imperial heritage with breathtaking natural wonders. Your adventure begins in the southern culinary and cultural hub of **Guangzhou**, before whisking you away to the futuristic skyline and historic colonial alleyways of **Shanghai**. From there, journey into China's imperial heart in **Beijing** to walk the Forbidden City and the majestic Great Wall, then head to **Xi'an** to stand face-to-face with the ancient Terracotta Army. Finally, trading cityscapes for dramatic nature, you will immerse yourself in the otherworldly, mist-shrouded sandstone pillars of **Zhangjiajie**—the real-world inspiration for the movie *Avatar*.

With seamless private transfers, high-speed rail experiences, and handpicked local guides, this comprehensive itinerary offers a premium, hassle-free encounter with the very best of China's past, present, and unparalleled natural beauty.

- **Durations:** 14 Days
- **Destinations:** Guangzhou - Shanghai - Beijing - Xian - Zhangjiajie - Guangzhou
- **Tour inquiry:** <https://asiachinatour.com/14-day-china-highlights-tour/>

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Guangzhou

Your private guide and driver will greet you warmly at Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport (or Railway Station) holding a personalized name sign, followed by a seamless, private transfer to your hand-picked hotel in a comfortable, smoke-free vehicle for a relaxing start to your journey.

Expert Tips for Day 1:

Since international flights often arrive in the afternoon or evening, we recommend keeping this day flexible with no fixed sightseeing. To elevate the guest experience right from the start, consider recommending a relaxing night cruise on the Pearl River or a taste of authentic Cantonese dim sum near the hotel if they have extra energy.

Day 2: Guangzhou — A Blend of New & Old

After a morning breakfast, begin your day at the Chen Clan Ancestral Hall to appreciate its traditional Guangdong-style architecture, renowned for its delicate craftsmanship, historical carvings, and intricate folk art. Next, walk through the historic Shamian Island, a former British and French concession on the Pearl River that now serves as a vibrant destination filled with well-preserved colonial architecture. In the afternoon, explore the old Xiguan neighborhood on a guided foodie tour to sample authentic Cantonese specialties and visit Yongqing Fang, which includes a stop at Bruce Lee's ancestral home. Conclude your evening by ascending the Canton Tower to the 108th-floor Star Observation Deck, enjoying unparalleled, breathtaking 360-degree vistas of the city skyline.

Expert Tips for Day 2:

This is a highly rewarding but fast-paced itinerary blending intense walking with a late-night finish. To ensure a seamless flow, we highly recommend booking the Canton Tower tickets well in advance, targeting a slot just before sunset (around 5:30 PM–6:30 PM) so guests can experience the city in both daylight and its spectacular night lights. Additionally, since the afternoon involves a food tour, advise clients to pace themselves during lunch, as the authentic snacks in Xiguan are incredibly filling.

Day 3: Guangzhou — Shanghai

After breakfast, your private guide and driver will transfer you to the airport for your flight to Shanghai, where a local guide will warmly welcome you upon arrival. In the afternoon, escape the urban bustle at Zhujiajiao Water Town, where you can stroll across ancient stone bridges, explore winding waterways, and enjoy a traditional gondola boat ride.

Expert Tips for Day 3:

Since this day involves an intercity flight, we highly recommend booking a morning departure (around 9:00 AM–10:00 AM) to maximize afternoon sightseeing. Zhujiajiao looks stunning in the late afternoon light, and arriving by 2:30 PM allows guests to enjoy a relaxed boat ride before the tour groups depart, providing a much quieter, more premium experience.

Day 4: Shanghai — From Tower to Tradition

After breakfast, ascend to the observation deck of the Shanghai Tower, the city's tallest skyscraper, via the world's fastest elevator to enjoy a panoramic, bird's-eye view of the metropolis and the Oriental Pearl TV Tower below. Next, step into Yu Garden, a peaceful classical oasis nestled amidst modern high-rises, to discover its intricate architecture and the intriguing history of its original owner. In the afternoon, stroll through the elegant Former French Concession to admire its stylish, century-old buildings and learn about their colonial past. Conclude your day with a walk along the Bund to witness Shanghai's historic skyline, followed by a visit to Nanjing Road, a bustling pedestrian street alive with local snacks and vibrant energy.

Expert Tips for Day 4:

This itinerary covers Shanghai's ultimate highlights but involves significant walking across different

districts. To avoid midday crowds and long queue times, we highly recommend scheduling the Shanghai Tower first thing in the morning when visibility is often clearest. For the evening, consider arranging the walk along the Bund right after dinner, as the historic buildings illuminate spectacularly at 7:00 PM, offering the most iconic photo opportunities for your guests.

Day 5: Shanghai — Beijing

Enjoy a relaxing morning at your leisure until your private guide and driver transfer you to Shanghai Hongqiao Railway Station for your high-speed train journey to Beijing. Welcome to China's imperial capital! Upon your arrival at the Beijing railway station, your dedicated local guide and driver will be waiting to provide a seamless private transfer to your hotel, ensuring a smooth and comfortable check-in.

Expert Tips for Day 5:

The high-speed train ride takes about 4.5 to 5 hours, making this primarily a travel day. To maximize comfort, we highly recommend booking First Class or Business Class seats for your clients, as the extra legroom and quieter cabins elevate the long journey. Since the train arrives in the late afternoon, this evening is perfect for arranging a classic Beijing Roast Duck welcome dinner near the hotel to kick off their capital experience.

Day 6: Beijing — The Heart of Imperial Beijing

After breakfast, witness the grandeur of Tian'anmen Square and the magnificent Tian'anmen Gate, standing as historic testaments to China's imperial past. Next, step into the Forbidden City, the magnificent imperial palace where 24 emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties once reigned, to uncover the fascinating stories of their lives and legacies. Following your palace exploration, indulge in an authentic Beijing roast duck lunch at a celebrated, time-honored restaurant, a true institution of this iconic dish. Conclude your afternoon by exploring an old hutong neighborhood, including a private visit with a local family to gain a unique, firsthand perspective on the area's rich history and traditional lifestyle.

Expert Tips for Day 6:

This is a high-demand day with strict security and capacity limits. Both Tian'anmen Square and the Forbidden City require passport-name reservations up to 7 days in advance, and slots sell out instantly, so securing these tickets early is critical. Since the Forbidden City involves extensive walking on stone pavements with virtually no shade, advise guests to wear comfortable walking shoes and bring sun protection, especially during the summer months.

Day 7: Beijing — The Wall in Time

After breakfast, witness the splendor of the Temple of Heaven, taking in the iconic Circular Mound Altar, the acoustically fascinating Echo Wall, and the awe-inspiring Imperial Vault of Heaven. Next, transfer to the majestic Mutianyu Great Wall to experience its breathtaking views and beautifully restored fortifications firsthand. Soar to a panoramic vantage point via the cable car, and from there, hike along the iconic section between the 14th and 23rd watchtowers—often lauded as the most scenic and rewarding stretch of the wall, offering unparalleled vistas of the

surrounding landscape.

Expert Tips for Day 7:

Combining the Temple of Heaven and the Great Wall makes for a visually stunning but physically demanding day. To stay ahead of the traffic and crowds, we highly recommend arriving at the Temple of Heaven by 8:00 AM when the park is alive with locals practicing Tai Chi, which adds immense cultural value for guests. For the Great Wall portion, advise your clients to take the cable car up and down to save time and energy for the actual watchtower hike, and always pack windproof layers as the temperature at the wall can drop significantly in the afternoon.

Day 8: Beijing — Xi'an

After breakfast, stroll through the magnificent Summer Palace, once a tranquil summer retreat for emperors. Wander along the world's longest painted corridor and take a leisurely boat ride across the serene waters of Kunming Lake, enjoying a relaxing morning before your departure. Afterward, enjoy a comfortable private transfer to Beijing West Railway Station to board your high-speed train to Xi'an. Upon your arrival in the ancient capital, your dedicated local guide and driver will warmly welcome you and provide a seamless, direct transfer to your hotel.

Expert Tips for Day 8:

The bullet train from Beijing to Xi'an takes roughly 4.5 to 5.5 hours, making pacing crucial for this transition day. We highly recommend scheduling the Summer Palace visit early at 8:30 AM to catch the morning mist over Kunming Lake and avoid the peak midday crowds. Additionally, ensure the private transfer departs for Beijing West Railway Station at least 1.5 hours before train departure, as it is one of the largest and busiest stations in China, requiring extra time for security and passport checks.

Day 9: Xi'an — Encounter Terracotta Warriors

After breakfast, enjoy a private drive with your guide to the world-renowned Terracotta Warriors and Horses Museum. Enter the museum complex via a scenic tram ride to witness the three captivating pits that display the incredible underground military force of Emperor Qin Shi Huang. Next, take a tram through the Lishan Garden section to explore its unique outer pits, including the Pit of Hundred Entertainers, the Pit of Civil Officials, and the Bronze Chariot and Horse Museum. For a truly immersive highlight, enjoy a premium, up-close view of the first restored warriors, learn their exact restoration stories, handle authentic Qin Dynasty relics, and participate in a hands-on restoration experience. In the afternoon, return to the city to experience breathtaking panoramic views from the Ancient City Wall, a testament to China's best-preserved ancient military engineering. Conclude your day by wandering through the vibrant Muslim Quarter, where the tantalizing aromas of street food mingle with the bustling energy of local markets, offering a perfect opportunity to sample unique local delicacies.

Expert Tips for Day 9:

This is a flagship day of the tour, packed with high-value cultural experiences. The Terracotta Warriors site is massive and located about an hour outside the city; we highly recommend scheduling the departure for 8:00 AM to beat the massive tour bus crowds and ensure a premium

environment for the hands-on restoration experience. For the Ancient City Wall in the late afternoon, advise clients that renting a bicycle to ride along the top is the absolute best way to experience it, offering a fantastic perspective of the city just as the walls begin to light up around sunset.

Day 10: Xi'an — Zhangjiajie

After breakfast, discover the Small Wild Goose Pagoda, a historic architectural marvel built during the Tang Dynasty, and explore its serene grounds within the ancient Jianfu Temple complex. Next, dive deeper into the region's imperial legacy at the Xi'an Museum, which showcases a rich assortment of artifacts from multiple dynasties, including delicate pottery, classical calligraphy, and traditional paintings. Following your morning tour, your private guide and driver will transfer you to the airport for your afternoon flight to Zhangjiajie. Upon arrival amidst the dramatic landscapes of Zhangjiajie, a local guide and driver will warmly welcome you at the airport and provide a seamless private transfer to your hotel.

Expert Tips for Day 10:

Moving from the ancient cityscapes of Xi'an to the natural wonders of Zhangjiajie marks a major transition in the itinerary. Since direct flights to Zhangjiajie often operate on limited schedules or late afternoon slots, we recommend using this morning for a relaxed, unhurried exploration of the Small Wild Goose Pagoda, which is significantly quieter and more peaceful than its larger counterpart. Advise your clients to pack a light jacket or fleece in their carry-on bags, as the mountain climate in Zhangjiajie can feel considerably cooler and more humid upon arrival than the dry plains of Xi'an.

Day 11: Zhangjiajie — Be in the Avatar World

After breakfast, discover the iconic landscapes of Tianzi Mountain, utilizing the scenic cable car and shuttle bus rides to reach the summit, where you will enjoy an impressive view of thousands of sandstone peaks spreading out beneath you. Marvel at famous formations such as Yubi Peak and the historic Tianzi Pavilion. Next, experience a thrilling ride on the world's highest outdoor elevator, the Bailong Elevator, which ascends to the breathtaking Yuanjiajie Scenic Area in just two minutes. Once at the top, stand in awe of the otherworldly Hallelujah Mountain (Nantian Yizhu)—the inspiration for the movie Avatar—and walk across the magnificent "World's No. 1 Bridge" before returning to your hotel.

Expert Tips for Day 11:

This is a peak visual highlight of the entire China tour, but it is heavily dependent on weather conditions and crowd management. Mountain mist can roll in quickly; if it is too dense, views from Yuanjiajie may be completely obstructed, so keeping a flexible timing window with the guide is key. To ensure a premium experience and avoid waiting in multi-hour lines for the Bailong Elevator and park shuttle buses, an early departure from the hotel (around 7:30 AM) is absolutely mandatory, especially during peak travel seasons.

Day 12: Zhangjiajie — Discover the Grand Canyon

After breakfast, embark on an exhilarating adventure through Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon, beginning your trek through "A Strip of Sky," a dramatic, narrow cliff pathway that accommodates only one person at a time. Next, ascend the "Sky Ladder," a wooden walkway intricately carved into the cliffside, to take in breathtaking panoramic views of the canyon below. Continue your journey by experiencing the world-famous Glass Bridge—the longest and highest glass-bottomed pedestrian bridge in the world—offering a thrilling, transparent walk 300 meters above the canyon floor (alternative paths are available for guests who prefer to bypass the bridge). Conclude your day with a visit to the magnificent Yellow Dragon Cave, where you will admire towering stalagmites and enjoy a serene cruise along its mystical underground river.

Expert Tips for Day 12:

The Glass Bridge has exceptionally strict security regulations to protect the glass surface. Guests are strictly prohibited from bringing cameras, power banks, thermos bottles, or large bags onto the bridge; only passports, wallets, and mobile phones are permitted, so ensure your guide handles luggage storage before entry. Additionally, the transition from the humid, open-air canyon to the naturally chilled underground environment of Yellow Dragon Cave (which stays around 16°C year-round) can cause sudden temperature shocks, so advising clients to carry a light sweater or jacket is highly recommended.

Day 13: Zhangjiajie — Experience Tianmen Mountain

After breakfast, ascend the legendary Tianmen Mountain on the world's longest cableway, enjoying panoramic, bird's-eye views of the winding mountain roads below. Upon reaching the summit, challenge your limits on the thrilling 60-meter glass skywalk, suspended 1,430 meters above the breathtaking valley floor. Next, take the efficient mountain escalator network down to witness the awe-inspiring Tianmen Cave, a towering natural karst arch that serves as a magnificent gateway to the sky. Conclude your day with a serene, low-altitude contrast by exploring the scenic Golden Whip Stream, where you can stroll alongside crystalline waters, lush greenery, and cascading streams.

Expert Tips for Day 13:

*Tianmen Mountain uses a strict multi-route ticketing system (Line A, B, or C), which dictates whether guests take the cableway or the express shuttle bus up or down. To ensure the most premium and seamless experience, we highly recommend booking **Line A (Cableway Up, Express Bus/Escalator Down)** well in advance, as it offers the most dramatic, uncompromised views without repetitive backtracking. Additionally, please remind guests that while the summit is high and exhilarating, the visit to Golden Whip Stream at the base involves a complete change in microclimate and terrain, requiring a quick transition back to standard, supportive trekking footwear.*

Day 14: Zhangjiajie — Guangzhou Departure

Enjoy a leisurely morning at your resort until your private driver and guide escort you to the railway station for your high-speed train journey back to Guangzhou. Upon your arrival in Guangzhou, your local guide will be waiting at the station to meet you and provide a seamless,

private transfer to Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, ensuring you arrive with ample time for your check-in and onward flight home.

Expert Tips for Day 14:

Logistics and timing are everything on this final departure day, as it involves a multi-modal transit (train to flight). We highly recommend booking a morning high-speed train from Zhangjiajie to Guangzhou (approx. 5 to 5.5 hours) to ensure a safe buffer for your international flight. Advise clients to keep their passports easily accessible throughout the day, as they will need them for train boarding, station exits, and airport check-in. To minimize hassle, coordinate closely with the Guangzhou driver to ensure the vehicle is staged at the designated station exit for a lightning-fast transfer to the terminal.

Booking Policy

Cancellation Policy

Cancellation by Customer

- Cancellation received before 60 days: FREE of charge
- Cancellation received from 30 days to 59 days prior arrival date: 20% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 15 days to 29 days prior arrival date: 40% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 7 days to 14 days prior arrival date: 70% of total rate
- Cancellation received less than 7 days prior arrival date or No show: 100% of total rate

Children Policy

The rate for children applicable for one child sharing a twin or double cabin with two adults.

- For infant (<04 years old): Free of Charge
- 04 - 11 years old without bed: 50% adult rate
- 04 - 11 years old with extra bed: 75% adult rate
- Above 11 years old with extra bed: 100% adult rate

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