

8-Day Xiamen and Chaoshan Dual City Adventure

Trip overview

This 8-day private journey combines the coastal charm of Minnan (Southern Fujian), the architectural marvels of Fujian Tulou, and the rich culinary and folk culture of Chaoshan (Teochew-Shantou). Starting from the "Garden on the Sea" city of Xiamen, you will venture deep into Nanjing to explore UNESCO-listed Fujian Tulou earth buildings, travel across provinces to Shantou and Chaozhou for world-renowned food and intangible cultural heritage, and return to Xiamen for a memorable departure.

- **Durations:** 8 Days
- **Destinations:** Xiamen - Shantou - Chaozhou - Nanjing - Xiamen
- **Tour inquiry:** <https://asiachinatour.com/8-day-xiamen-and-chaoshan-dual-city-adventure/>

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Xiamen — Coastal Charm, Zen Temple & Artistic Alleys

Welcome to the beautiful island city of Xiamen! Upon walking out of the arrivals hall, you will be warmly greeted by your expert local guide and driver, who will escort you to your private vehicle to kick off your exploration right away. Your first stop is the ancient South Putuo Temple, a revered Tang Dynasty Buddhist sanctuary where you can admire the magnificent monastic architecture and peaceful lotus ponds.

Next, glide above the city on the Zhongshan Park Cableway (Bell and Drum Cableway) for a leisurely, bird's-eye view of Xiamen's modern skyline juxtaposed against the timeless red-brick roofs of Gulangyu Island. Conclude your afternoon at Zengcuo'an, a vibrant seaside fishing village turned bohemian art hub; wander through its maze of charming alleys filled with quirky boutiques, art galleries, and enticing street food stalls, before your private transfer brings you to your hotel for a smooth check-in.

Professional Travel Tips for Day 1:

To ensure a smooth transition from the airport, please coordinate flight details in advance so the driver can park at the nearest terminal sub-gate, and keep in mind that South Putuo Temple

requires a free digital reservation which your guide should secure ahead of time to avoid long entry queues. Since the Zhongshan Park Cableway features open-air, two-seater cabins, please advise clients to pack a sun hat and sunscreen in their daypacks, and note that the ride may be temporarily suspended during sudden coastal thunderstorms or high winds for passenger safety. Lastly, Zengcuo'an is incredibly bustling and famous for its local seafood snacks, so it serves as the perfect spot for guests arriving on morning flights to enjoy a casual, immersive lunch, though those with sensitive stomachs should stick to cooked-to-order delicacies like oyster omelets.

Day 2: Xiamen to Shantou — High-Speed Rail & The Cultural Tapestry of Chaoshan

Meals: Breakfast

Morning: After enjoying breakfast at your hotel, take a comfortable private transfer to the railway station to board your high-speed bullet train to Chaoshan. Upon arrival, your dedicated local guide and driver will warmly welcome you, ensuring a seamless and exciting entry into Shantou, the cultural heart of the Chaoshan region.

Afternoon: Your exploration begins at the grand Chaoshan Historical and Cultural Expo Center, a magnificent modern landmark where you will delve into the region's rich heritage, from the unique Teochew dialect and traditional master crafts to world-renowned local cuisine and operatic history. The definitive highlight of this visit is a spectacular, 30-minute live performance of the Chaoshan Yingge Dance, a powerful and dynamic folk art filled with synchronized hammer strikes and martial arts movements that echo vibrantly throughout the exhibition hall. Afterward, uncover the nostalgic charm of Shantou Ancient Town on a guided walking tour through its beautifully preserved treaty-port streets, where you will stroll through the fan-shaped alleys of the iconic Small Park area, visit the venerable Tianhou Palace and the historically resonant Laoma Palace Stage, admire the classic Western architecture of the historic Post Office Building, and view the striking facade of the Opening Port Exhibition Hall before heading to your hotel.

Professional Travel Tips for Day 2:

The high-speed rail journey from Xiamen to Chaoshan is a short 1.5-hour ride, but because the Chaoshan Station serves multiple cities and can be exceptionally busy, ensuring guests keep their physical passports handy will dramatically speed up their exit through the automated turnstiles where their new guide will be waiting. Please note that the spectacular Yingge Dance at the Expo Center operates on a strict, fixed daily schedule, so your guide should coordinate the morning train departure time carefully to guarantee arrival at the exhibition hall at least 15 minutes before the performance begins. Finally, Shantou is universally celebrated as one of China's ultimate culinary capitals, so we highly recommend having your guide arrange an authentic Chaoshan beef hotpot or a traditional Teochew goose dinner in the Small Park area to give your clients an unforgettable introduction to the local food scene.

Day 3: Shantou to Nan'ao Island — Island Crossing, Maritime History & Coastal Landmarks

Meals: Breakfast

Morning: After breakfast, embark on a scenic drive across the spectacular Nan'ao Bridge, where you will enjoy panoramic views of the vast sea and rolling coastline as you transition to the island. Your first stop is the Zongbingfu (Chief Military Headquarter), a fascinating Ming and Qing

Dynasty fortress turned museum that uncovers the island's strategic maritime defense history. Afterward, explore the iconic 'Gate of Nature' at the Tropic of Cancer Square, celebrating China's only Tropic of Cancer landmark tower built on an island.

Afternoon: Head to the pristine shores of Qing'ao Bay, often referred to as the 'Oriental Hawaii' of the region, where you can take a leisurely walk along the crescent-shaped sandy beach, gaze at the endless blue horizon, and let the refreshing sea breeze wash over you. Conclude your island loop with a stop at the Sancongya Lighthouse, Nan'ao's most picturesque coastal landmark, where its distinctive red-and-white stripes set against the deep blue ocean provide the perfect backdrop for unforgettable photographs before returning to the mainland.

Professional Travel Tips for Day 3:

Crossing the 11-kilometer Nan'ao Bridge offers stunning views, but please note that the bridge enforces strict speed limits and can experience heavy traffic bottlenecks on weekends and holidays, so an early morning departure around 08:00 is highly recommended to ensure a smooth, crowd-free entry onto the island. When planning the afternoon seaside activities, please remind clients that while Qing'ao Bay is excellent for wading and beach walks, public swimming zones have strict seasonal operating hours and safety flags that must be respected. Lastly, the island's coastal roads are exceptionally scenic but winding, so advising guests who are prone to motion sickness to take appropriate precautions beforehand will ensure they fully enjoy the day's overland loop.

Day 4: Shantou to Chaozhou — Living History, Temple Artistry & Gongfu Tea

Meals: Breakfast

Morning: After breakfast, enjoy a comfortable private drive from Shantou to the ancient city of Chaozhou, as your expert guide shares fascinating insights into the region's deep cultural roots. Upon arrival, step back in time at the magnificent Guangji (Xiangzi) Bridge and its grand counterpart, the Guangji Gate Tower. You will stand in awe of this medieval engineering marvel, famous for its unique combination of solid stone piers and a central, movable pontoon bridge made of wooden boats that open for waterway access, all topped by elegant, interconnected pavilions offering sweeping river views. Next, delve into the spiritual heart of the city at Kaiyuan Temple, a grand Tang Dynasty sanctuary showcasing centuries of architectural evolution, intricate wood and stone carvings, and masterfully preserved Buddhist artistry within the towering Mahavira Hall.

Afternoon: Immerse yourself in the elegant rhythm of local life at the historic Zaiyang Tea House, where you will experience a traditional Chaozhou Gongfu Cha (tea ceremony) and sip premium local oolong tea while being captivated by a live performance of Teochew Opera, traditional string music, or folk singing. Afterward, embark on an enticing walking foodie expedition down the celebrated Paifang Street (Archway Street). Let your taste buds guide you through the historic arcade streets as you sample legendary local flavors, including crispy Teochew spring rolls, aromatic braised goose, and unique *Kueh Chee* rice sheets, all paired with a refreshing glass of fresh local orange juice before your private transfer escorts you back to your hotel.

Professional Travel Tips for Day 4:

The drive from Shantou to Chaozhou takes around an hour, but we highly recommend arriving at the Hanjiang River banks by 09:30 to catch the spectacular view of Guangji Bridge before it gets crowded, and please note that the central pontoon section is dismantled every late afternoon for river shipping traffic, so morning visits are essential for guests to walk completely across. When planning the afternoon visit to Zaiyang Tea House, your guide should reserve a table close to the

central courtyard stage in advance, as seating fills up rapidly during peak hours when the local operatic performances are scheduled. Lastly, Paifang Street is an outdoor, pedestrian-only zone consisting of 22 beautifully restored stone archways, so clients should wear comfortable walking shoes, and because snack vendors generally operate on a cash-free or small-change basis, having the guide assist with mobile payments or carrying small bills will make the culinary walk completely seamless.

Day 5: Chaozhou to Xiamen — The Architectural Timelessness of Longhu Village

Meals: Breakfast

Morning: After enjoying breakfast at your hotel, step away from the bustling city streets to discover Longhu Ancient Village, a hidden historical gem often celebrated as an open-air museum of Chaoshan heritage. You will immerse yourself in the village's unique layout—modeled after the ancient imperial capital—as you wander past grand ancestral halls and residential courtyards dating from the Song to the Qing dynasties, all beautifully adorned with elaborate woodcarvings, stone reliefs, and vibrant local porcelain paintings.

Afternoon: Following your village exploration, your private vehicle will transfer you to the railway station to board a smooth, high-speed bullet train bound for the coast. Upon arrival back in Xiamen, your dedicated local tour guide and driver will be waiting at the arrivals hall to welcome you back and provide a comfortable private transfer directly to your hotel for a hassle-free check-in.

Professional Travel Tips for Day 5:

Longhu Ancient Village is exceptionally authentic and mostly uncommercialized, meaning its historic stone alleys are narrow and uneven, so please advise clients to wear sturdy walking shoes and note that public restrooms inside the village are basic. To optimize the day's transition, we recommend booking a late-morning or early-afternoon train out of Chaoshan, which allows guests to explore the village during the cooler morning hours without having to rush their lunch before boarding. Lastly, because the Chaoshan station is located roughly midway between Chaozhou and Shantou, your guide will manage the luggage logistics smoothly, ensuring all bags remain securely in the vehicle trunk while clients enjoy their morning walking tour.

Day 6: Xiamen — The Colonial Grandeur & Coastal Gardens of Gulangyu Island

Meals: Breakfast

Morning: After breakfast, cross the harbor on a scenic ferry ride to the UNESCO-listed Gulangyu Island for an unforgettable day trip accompanied by your guide. Your island exploration begins with a stroll to the picturesque, film-famous "Most Beautiful Corner" to capture classic photographs of its vintage, vine-draped brick architecture, followed by a visit to the Gulangyu Organ Art Center, China's largest museum dedicated exclusively to these grand instruments. Next, board an efficient, non-stop electric tram that glides past scenic landmarks like Yanweishan Park, Neicuo'ao Wharf, and Gulang Villa, bringing you smoothly to the entrance of Shuzhuang Garden. You will explore this exquisite seaside residence, where the ocean is cleverly integrated into the garden's classical design, offering serene vistas from its winding pathways and the renowned Forty-Four Bridge.

Afternoon: Climb to the summit of Sunlight Rock, the highest point on the island, to soak in unparalleled, 360-degree panoramic views of Gulangyu's red-roofed villas, the Xiamen city skyline, and the expansive sea. Afterward, head to the bustling Longtou Road Snack Street, where you can enjoy a leisurely lunch at your own expense, sampling legendary local treats like oyster omelets and peanut soup. Conclude your day with a private tour of Hi Heaven (Haitiantanggou), the island's largest residential complex that showcases a magnificent blend of traditional Southern Fujian styles and Western colonial architecture; here, you will admire the intricate craftsmanship and enjoy a traditional Minnan puppet show before taking the tram back to the pier for your return ferry and hotel transfer.

Professional Travel Tips for Day 6:

Ferry tickets for foreign passport holders departing from the Xiamen International Cruise Center to Gulangyu are strictly bound to fixed time slots and sell out rapidly weeks in advance, so your agency must pre-book these online with exact passport details. Please note that vehicles are completely banned on Gulangyu Island, meaning that while the included internal electric tram safely handles the longer transits between major sights, guests will still do a substantial amount of uphill walking, especially the steep stone steps leading up to Sunlight Rock's viewing platform. Lastly, if your clients are sensitive to crowds, we highly recommend timing the Hi Heaven puppet show visit in the early afternoon, which naturally allows them to watch the performance in a much more peaceful environment while the large tour groups are gathered at the restaurants.

Day 7: Xiamen to Nanjing — Ancient Hakka Tulou Earth Buildings & Stream-Side Village

Meals: Breakfast

Morning: After enjoying breakfast at your hotel, set out on a fascinating one-day journey from Xiamen to Nanjing County to discover the architectural wonders of the Hakka people. Your morning begins in the picturesque Yunshuiyao Ancient Town, a tranquil, stream-side settlement where towering, centuries-old banyan trees, ancient waterwheels, and stone paths create a living landscape painting. Here, you will step inside the remarkable Hegui Building, an ingenious five-story square *tulou* earthen fortress that was incredibly constructed over a soft swampland yet has stood perfectly stable for centuries thanks to a pine-wood raft foundation.

Afternoon: Continue your exploration at the nearby Huaiyuan Building, universally celebrated as the most refined and exquisite round *tulou* due to its flawless internal symmetry, beautifully preserved family school, and masterfully detailed woodcarvings. Afterward, travel deeper into the countryside to witness the magnificent Hekeng Tulou Cluster, a spectacular UNESCO World Heritage site where 13 diverse earthen fortresses are uniquely arranged across the valley in a pattern resembling the Big Dipper constellation. Soak in the breathtaking panoramic views of this ancient fortress community before your private vehicle provides a comfortable return drive back to your Xiamen hotel.

Professional Travel Tips for Day 7:

The overland drive from Xiamen to the Nanjing Tulou area takes approximately 2.5 hours each way, so we highly recommend departing the hotel lobby by 07:30 to maximize daylight and ensure guests arrive at Yunshuiyao before the heavy influx of regional tour buses. Please advise clients that exploring these historical sites involves walking on traditional cobblestone paths and climbing narrow, steep wooden staircases inside the earth buildings, making sturdy walking shoes with non-slip soles absolutely essential. Additionally, because the local Hakka families still reside inside these UNESCO monuments, your guide will ensure a respectful visit, and if your guests are

tea lovers, they can enjoy an authentic, complimentary tasting of local Pianzihuang or Tieguanyin tea right inside the tulou courtyards.

Day 8: Xiamen Departure — Final Coastal Stroll & Onward Journey

Meals: Breakfast

Enjoy a relaxed breakfast at your hotel and savor your final morning in this beautiful garden city by the sea. Depending on your flight schedule, you can take advantage of your remaining free time for some last-minute independent exploration, perhaps strolling along the nearby coastal boardwalks or picking up local souvenirs. When it is time to depart, your dedicated private guide and driver will meet you at the hotel lobby to provide a smooth, comfortable transfer to the airport or railway station for your onward journey home.

Professional Travel Tips for Day 8:

To ensure a completely stress-free departure, we highly recommend scheduling the hotel lobby pickup exactly 2.5 hours prior to domestic flights or 3.5 hours prior to international flights departing from Xiamen Gaoqi International Airport (XMN). Please remind clients that hotel check-out is typically required by 12:00 PM, but the concierge desk can securely hold all heavy luggage for free if they wish to explore the city unburdened during the morning. Finally, ensure the guide double-checks the outbound flight status and the specific terminal (Terminal 3 or Terminal 4) before departure, as a terminal mix-up at Xiamen Airport can cause unnecessary delays for the guests.

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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