

Classic China Tour with Panda

Trip overview

Immerse yourself in the ultimate fusion of China's mandatory historical icons and its most beloved living treasure. This meticulously curated 12-day journey bridges the gap between China's profound past and its vibrant present, offering a seamless, high-comfort route designed specifically for first-time premium travelers, families, and culture enthusiasts.

Your expedition begins in **Beijing**, the heart of imperial history, where you will stand atop the Great Wall and wander the colossal courtyards of the Forbidden City. Traveling southward via high-speed bullet train, you will unlock the ancient mysteries of **Xi'an**, standing face-to-face with the legendary Terracotta Army.

The undisputed crown jewel of this itinerary awaits in **Chengdu**, the global capital of the Giant Panda. Here, you will gain exclusive insight into panda conservation, watching playful cubs and adults in their naturalistic bamboo habitats, while savoring the city's laid-back teahouse culture and world-renowned culinary scene. Finally, fly to **Shanghai**, where the historic colonial Bund meets the futuristic skyscrapers of Pudong, showcasing the roaring economic heartbeat of modern China.

By balancing expert-guided historical immersion with heartwarming wildlife encounters, this comprehensive tour guarantees a deeply local, hassle-free exploration of China's most celebrated destinations.

- **Durations:** 12 Days
- **Destinations:** Hong Kong - Guilin - Chengdu - Xi'an - Beijing
- **Tour inquiry:** <https://asiachinatour.com/12-day-classic-china-tour-with-panda/>

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Hong Kong — Gateway to the Orient & Skyline Exploration

Welcome to the vibrant metropolis of Hong Kong! Upon walking out of the arrivals hall at Hong Kong International Airport, you will be warmly greeted by your dedicated local guide and professional driver, who will assist with your luggage and escort you to your private vehicle. Enjoy a scenic drive across the majestic Tsing Ma Bridge into the heart of the city for a seamless check-in at your hotel. The remainder of the day is entirely yours to unwind from your flight or begin

independently exploring the lively local neighborhoods, hidden culinary gems, and dazzling neon-lit streets just steps from your lobby.

Meals: None

Professional Travel Tips for Day 1:

Hong Kong International Airport (HKG) is highly efficient, but navigating the massive terminal to the designated tour bus or private car parking zones requires clear coordination, so your guide will text or meet guests precisely at Exit A or B in the arrival hall. To make the arrival experience completely seamless, we highly recommend having your guide assist clients in purchasing a physical or digital Octopus Card at the airport, which serves as the universal contactless payment method for all local public transport, convenience stores, and taxis during their stay. Lastly, standard hotel check-in across Hong Kong is strictly at 14:00 PM or 15:00 PM, so if your clients are arriving on early morning flights, please request a pre-registration or ensure the concierge securely stores their heavy baggage so they can immediately enjoy the city unburdened.

Day 2: Hong Kong — Bespoke Leisure & Cosmopolitan Exploration

After a sumptuous breakfast at your resort, indulge in a completely self-paced day tailored entirely to your personal desires. Begin your morning exploring Hong Kong's premier luxury shopping enclaves, browsing elite collections and high-end fashion houses in districts like Central or Tsim Sha Tsui, widely celebrated as the ultimate trendsetting capitals of Asia.

In the afternoon, enjoy the absolute convenience of Hong Kong's highly refined transit infrastructure to visit its legendary highlights. You can ascend to the prestigious Victoria Peak to gaze down at the majestic harbor view, capture the glamorous cinematic history at the Avenue of Stars on the Kowloon waterfront, or explore the fine architecture and rich cultural heritage of the Wong Tai Sin Temple before an elegant evening at your leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

Professional Travel Tips for Day 2:

For luxury independent travelers who prefer not to use public transit, your guide can arrange a private, on-call chauffeur for the day to ensure door-to-door comfort between shopping complexes and sightseeing spots. If your clients wish to dine at one of Hong Kong's famous Michelin-starred restaurants or premium harbor-view lounges on this free evening, please ensure reservations are secured at least two to four weeks in advance. Additionally, remind guests to hold onto their high-end shopping receipts, as major department stores occasionally offer exclusive VIP lounge access or immediate hotel delivery services for premium international buyers.

Day 3: Hong Kong to Guilin — High-Speed Journey to the Karst Landscapes

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast at your hotel and wrap up any last-minute urban sightseeing during a relaxed morning in the city. Later, take a comfortable private transfer to West Kowloon Station to board your sleek, high-speed bullet train directly to Guilin.

Sit back and relax as the train zips out of the metropolis, completing the scenic journey northward in just over three hours as towering skyscrapers smoothly give way to the iconic, misty limestone karst peaks of Guilin. Upon arrival, your new local guide and driver will be waiting at the arrivals hall to welcome you and transfer you directly to your hotel for a smooth check-in.

Meals: Breakfast

Professional Travel Tips for Day 3:

Moving from Hong Kong to mainland China via the high-speed rail requires navigating the unique "Co-location Arrangement" at West Kowloon Station, where guests will clear both Hong Kong departure customs and Chinese mainland arrival immigration inside the same building. Because of this dual border-crossing process, we strongly recommend that your private driver drops clients off at the station at least 90 minutes before the train's scheduled departure time. Furthermore, remember that high-speed train tickets to Guilin are tied to physical passports and sell out quickly, so ensure your booking team secures these exactly 15 days in advance when the official rail system opens.

Day 4: Guilin to Yangshuo — Majestic Li River Cruise & Traditional Rice Cake Making

Board your comfortable cruise ship this morning for an unforgettable journey downstream along the legendary Li River toward Yangshuo. As you drift down the wide, placid waters, your eyes will feast on a dramatic, picturesque landscape defined by sweeping bamboo groves, peaceful riverside farms, and jagged, sharp-edged limestone hills that rise like broken teeth against the sky. On misty or cloudy days, these colossal karst peaks become draped in low-hanging clouds, creating a mystical paradise that feels as though you are floating through a traditional Chinese ink painting.

This afternoon, step off the tourist path and venture into a nearby traditional village to experience local rural life firsthand. Welcomed into the community, you will join the villagers in a hands-on culinary workshop to learn the multi-step art of pounding and shaping traditional glutinous rice cakes, giving you a delicious and culturally immersive connection to the heritage of Yangshuo before checking in at your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Travel Tips for Day 4:

The classic Li River cruise departs early in the morning between 08:30 AM and 09:30 AM from Mopanshan or Zhujiang Pier, meaning a prompt hotel checkout and departure around 08:00 AM is essential. Because this is a point-to-point journey from Guilin to Yangshuo, your private driver will transport all heavy luggage securely in the vehicle trunk directly to your Yangshuo hotel, allowing guests to board the boat carrying only a light daypack for their camera and sun protection. Lastly, while a standard Chinese buffet or set lunch is included on the 4-star cruise ships, we suggest advising clients that the food is relatively basic, so bringing along a few preferred snacks or enjoying the fresh, local street-side treats during the afternoon village visit is highly recommended.

Day 5: Yangshuo to Chengdu — Idyllic Countryside Biking & High-Speed Rail to Sichuan

Wake up to a beautiful morning in Yangshuo and gear up for an invigorating outdoor adventure through one of China's most iconic pastoral landscapes. Led by your local guide, embark on a scenic one-hour bike ride along peaceful paths winding through lush green rice paddies, quiet orchards, and charming farming hamlets, all framed by dramatic, oddly-shaped limestone hills that thrust sharply into the sky.

Following your cycling excursion, bid farewell to Yangshuo as your private vehicle transfers you comfortably back to the Guilin railway station. Board your smooth high-speed bullet train bound for the vibrant southwestern hub of Chengdu, watching the rural scenery transition into the rolling mountains of Sichuan Province before checking in at your Chengdu hotel for a restful evening.

Meals: Breakfast

Professional Travel Tips for Day 5:

The morning bicycle ride is a leisurely, flat-terrain route suitable for all fitness levels, but we highly recommend ensuring your guide adjusts the bike seat heights and checks the brakes for your clients before setting off. Because this is a transit day involving an approximate 4.5 to 5-hour high-speed train ride from Guilin to Chengdu, coordinating a lunch stop or picking up fresh pastries and fruits in Yangshuo prior to the station transfer is highly recommended, as train food options can be limited. Lastly, since Chengdu is a massive metropolis compared to rural Yangshuo, ensure your incoming Chengdu driver tracks the exact train arrival station (Chengdu East is most common) to guarantee a prompt, air-conditioned pickup at the exit gates.

Day 6: Chengdu — Giant Panda Encounter & Authentic Local Lifestyle

Begin your day with an unforgettable morning at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding. Wander along the shaded, bamboo-lined walkways to see these beloved national treasures at rest and play, and visit the specialized nursery to observe the world-famous, highly successful breeding program firsthand.

In the afternoon, dive into the rhythmic pace of local life at the historic People's Park, a vibrant spiritual haven nestled amidst the bustling downtown. Take a seat at a traditional open-air teahouse to sip authentic green tea, witness the lively social dynamics of the local "marriage market," and even join in the energetic street square dancing. Conclude your cultural immersion with a stroll through the beautifully restored Kuan-Zhai Lanes (Wide and Narrow Alleys) to admire the classic Qing Dynasty architecture and experience the traditional, slow-paced Chengdu lifestyle.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Travel Tips for Day 6:

Giant pandas are most active during their morning feeding time between 08:30 AM and 10:00 AM, after which they tend to sleep through the midday heat, making an early departure from the hotel around 07:30 AM absolutely crucial. The Panda Base requires real-name ticket booking linked to physical passports, so ensure these are secured well in advance and that clients carry their original documents today. While visiting the Heming Teahouse in People's Park, your guide will manage the seating logistics in the often-crowded courtyard, which serves as a perfect, relaxed setting for guests to try local snacks or experience a traditional, gentle Sichuan ear-cleaning service if they are feeling adventurous.

Day 7: Chengdu to Xi'an — Zen Monasteries, Ancient Wine Brewing & High-Speed Rail

Start your morning with a peaceful visit to the historic Wenshu Monastery, a beautifully preserved and active Buddhist temple nestled in the heart of Chengdu. Wander through its lush, green garden courtyards where you can observe practicing monks and devout locals paying their

respects, and take a quiet moment to enjoy a cup of traditional tea or coffee in these serene, silent surroundings. Afterward, step into a remarkable local Rice Wine Museum that has kept its traditional brewing heritage alive for over 600 years without interruption, where you will learn ancient fermentation secrets and taste a complimentary glass of this fragrant historic brew.

For lunch, indulge in a celebratory culinary experience at a highly popular, authentic Sichuan hot pot restaurant, savoring the rich and bold flavors that define Chengdu's world-famous food scene. Following your meal, your private vehicle will transfer you comfortably to the railway station to board a sleek high-speed bullet train bound for the ancient imperial capital of Xi'an. Watch the changing landscapes as you speed north, arriving in the evening for a warm welcome from your new local guide and a smooth transfer directly to your Xi'an hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Travel Tips for Day 7:

The high-speed train journey from Chengdu to Xi'an takes roughly 3 to 4 hours and crosses the majestic Qinling Mountains via an extensive network of tunnels, so remind clients that mobile data connection can be spotty during the transit. Hot pot is a beautifully immersive and leisurely dining experience, but because it involves boiling ingredients tableside, we recommend scheduling lunch no later than 11:30 AM to ensure guests can feast comfortably without feeling rushed before their afternoon train. Lastly, Wenshu Monastery is a deeply revered spiritual site, so please advise travelers to dress respectfully (shoulders and knees covered) and to refrain from taking flash photography inside the active prayer halls where monks are chanting.

Day 8: Xi'an — The Incredible Terracotta Warriors & Ancient City Wall Cycling

Embark on an awe-inspiring morning journey roughly 1.5 hours outside the city to witness the legendary Terracotta Army Museum. Discovered accidentally by local farmers in 1974, this breathtaking UNESCO World Heritage site features an underground army of over 7,000 life-sized clay soldiers, archers, horses, and chariots standing in full battle array, having faithfully guarded the tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Huang since 210 BC. Your exploration includes a visit to the excellent on-site museum and an immersive introductory film that vividly illustrates the history and painstaking excavation of these ancient vaults.

In the afternoon, return to the city center to scale the magnificent Xi'an City Wall, a landmark structure recognized as the oldest, largest, and best-preserved ancient military defense system in China. Take in the fascinating contrast between historical watchtowers and the surrounding modern skyline as you enjoy a memorable bicycle ride along the wide, stone-paved top of the wall before returning to your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Travel Tips for Day 8:

The Terracotta Warriors museum is one of China's most popular attractions, meaning passport details must be submitted well in advance to secure mandatory reservation time slots. To give clients the best viewing experience, your guide will typically lead them in reverse order—starting with Pit 3 and Pit 2 before finishing at the massive Pit 1—which avoids the worst of the tour-group bottleneck. Additionally, biking on the City Wall takes about 1.5 to 2 hours to complete a full loop, so remind guests that the ancient stone pathway is quite bumpy and offers very little shade, making sunscreen, sunglasses, and padded athletic shoes highly recommended.

Day 9: Xi'an to Beijing — Sacred Pagodas, Artisan Crafts & High-Speed Rail to the Capital

Begin your morning with a visit to the magnificent Big Wild Goose Pagoda, an architectural masterpiece built during the Tang Dynasty to house and protect the sacred Buddhist scriptures and relics brought back from India by the legendary monk Xuanzang. After soaking in this profound history, immerse yourself in local creativity along the charming, calligraphy-lined ancient cultural street of Shuyuanmen. Here, you will step into a traditional workshop to meet master artisans and try your hand at a time-honored Chinese craft, choosing to create your own piece of delicate paper cutting, ancient stone rubbing, intricate Chinese knot weaving, or a traditional shadow play puppet.

Following a delicious local lunch, your private vehicle will transfer you to the railway station to board a sleek high-speed bullet train bound for Beijing. Relax in comfort as the train zips across the vast North China Plain, completing the journey in just a few hours. Upon your evening arrival in the capital, your new local guide and driver will welcome you at the gate and provide a seamless transfer to your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Travel Tips for Day 9:

The high-speed bullet train from Xi'an to Beijing takes approximately 4 to 5.5 hours, making it an ideal time for clients to rest, download photos, or enjoy a book. Because the handicraft experience at Shuyuanmen offers four distinct choices (paper cutting, rubbing, Chinese knots, or shadow play), we recommend having your guide ask the clients for their preference the day before so the local artisans can have the specific raw materials and tools perfectly prepped for their arrival. Lastly, make sure clients keep their daypacks light today, as they will need to walk through the expansive plazas surrounding the Big Wild Goose Pagoda before heading straight to the train station.

Day 10: Beijing — Imperial Grandeur of the Forbidden City & Serene Summer Palace

Begin your deep dive into China's imperial history at the monumental Tian'anmen Square, the largest city square in the world, capable of holding up to one million people for grand public celebrations. From there, pass through the imposing meridian gates to enter the legendary Forbidden City. While standard tours only briefly glance at a few areas, your guide will lead you on an exclusive, comprehensive route through 12 carefully selected locations, unlocking the fascinating secrets of its ancient architecture, dynastic history, royal fengshui principles, and priceless art.

Following a delicious local lunch, escape the bustle of the city center for the tranquil imperial gardens of the Summer Palace. Wander through its opulent pavilions and covered corridors before enjoying a deeply relaxing boat cruise across the placid waters of Kunming Lake, taking in the same panoramic view of Longevity Hill once favored by Qing Dynasty emperors.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Travel Tips for Day 10:

The Forbidden City operates under a strict daily visitor cap and sells out weeks in advance, making it absolutely mandatory to secure passport-linked tickets the moment the official booking

window opens. Because Tian'anmen Square and the Forbidden City involve strict security checkpoints, please advise clients to expect security screening queues and to carry their physical passports at all times. To make the day comfortable, ensure guests wear high-quality walking shoes, as navigating this expansive imperial complex involves walking several kilometers over uneven historic stone paving with no public transport inside the palace walls.

Day 11: Beijing — Sacred Temple of Heaven & Majestic Mutianyu Great Wall

Begin your morning with a captivating visit to the Temple of Heaven, widely regarded as the most majestic and culturally significant imperial temple complex in China. Walk through the tranquil pine-lined park where local elders gather for morning exercises, and admire the magnificent Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests, built entirely without a single nail.

Following a satisfying lunch, head north toward the rugged mountains to experience the world-famous Mutianyu section of the Great Wall. Celebrated for its impeccably preserved watchtowers and breathtaking, lush green mountain panoramas, this section offers a truly spectacular vantage point. To maximize your time and energy, a scenic round-trip cable car ride is included to whisk you smoothly up to the ramparts. After an informative introduction by your expert guide, enjoy two full hours of free time to hike, explore the ancient stone battlements, and capture unforgettable photographs at your own pace.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Professional Travel Tips for Day 11:

To beat both the afternoon crowds and the intense midday sun on the mountain ridges, we highly recommend an early morning start at the Temple of Heaven around 08:00 AM, which also allows you to see authentic local life as citizens practice tai chi and calligraphy in the park. The drive to the Mutianyu section takes approximately 1.5 hours from the city center, and your guide will handle the logistics for the shuttle bus and cable car tickets seamlessly. While the round-trip cable car is the most comfortable and stable choice for all ages, adventurous travelers can request a modification to take the open-air chairlift up and a thrilling toboggan slide down from Watchtower 6, which should be coordinated with the guide prior to arrival at the mountain base.

Day 12: Beijing — Farewell to China & Departure

Savor your final breakfast at the hotel and take a moment to reflect on the incredible memories made over the past twelve days. Depending on your flight schedule, enjoy some last-minute souvenir shopping or a relaxed morning stroll through the neighborhood.

At the designated time, your dedicated Beijing tour guide and private driver will meet you in the lobby to assist with your luggage and escort you to the airport for your onward journey. As you head to the gate, we want to say a heartfelt thank you for exploring China with us. We wish you a safe and pleasant flight home, and hope to welcome you back again soon!

Meals: Breakfast

Professional Travel Tips for Day 12:

Beijing is served by two massive international hubs: Beijing Capital International Airport (PEK) in the northeast and the newer Beijing Daxing International Airport (PKX) in the south. Please

double-check your clients' electronic tickets to confirm the exact airport and terminal, as a mix-up can cause significant transit delays. For international departures, we recommend leaving the city center hotel at least 4 hours prior to the scheduled flight time, allowing 1 hour for the drive and a safe 3-hour window to handle international check-in, baggage drop, customs clearance, and exit security checks smoothly.

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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