7 Days Yangtze River Cruise Tour from Shanghai(Upstream)

Trip overview

Unveil the perfectly balanced contrast of modern engineering and timeless imperial landscapes on this grand **7-Day Shanghai and Yangtze River Cruise Tour**. Crafted for travelers seeking an authentic immersion into China's urban innovation and majestic natural scenery, this itinerary seamlessly connects China's most cosmopolitan financial hub with a relaxed upstream luxury river cruise through the world-famous Three Gorges.

Your journey begins in **Shanghai**, where East meets West along the historic waterfront. Customize your city discovery between two tailored routes: explore classic highlights like the ancient Ming Dynasty **Yu Garden**, **Shanghai Museum**, and the 632-meter-tall **Shanghai Tower**, or dive into the future with smart-city innovation experiences featuring autonomous self-driving robotaxis and panoramic river vistas from **Shanghai Baiyulan Plaza**.

Board a sleek **high-speed bullet train** across eastern China's picturesque countryside to Yichang, the gateway to the Yangtze. Here, embark on a **5-star luxury cruise vessel** for a 4-night upstream voyage to Chongqing. Marvel at the immense scale of the **Three Gorges Dam**—with the option to sail directly through the world's largest vertical ship elevator. As your ship glides through the dramatic precipitous cliffs of **Xiling, Wuxia, and Qutang Gorges**, board local tender boats to explore the pristine, emerald waters of **Shennv (Goddess) Stream** and uncover ancient cliff-hanging coffins.

En route, immerse yourself in local folklore and Taoist heritage at **Fengdu Ghost City** or opt to climb the legendary 12-story timber **Shibaozhai Pagoda**. Conclude your epic river journey disembarking in the vibrant mountain city of **Chongqing**, perfectly positioned for seamless onward flights or high-speed rail connections across China.

- **Durations:** 7 Days
- **Destinations:** Shanghai - Chongqing
- **Tour inquiry:** https://asiachinatour.com/7-day-shanghai-to-yangtze-river-cruise-tour/

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Shanghai — Pick-up Service & Hotel Check-in

Welcome to Shanghai, China's dynamic global financial center and a captivating metropolis where timeless Chinese heritage meets modern Western architectural influences. Upon clearing customs and retrieving your luggage at the airport or train station exit, your private English-speaking tour guide and driver will warmly greet you with a personalized sign and assist with your luggage for a comfortable transfer to your luxury hotel in downtown Shanghai.

Afternoon / Evening: After checking in, take the remainder of the day to unwind, relax from your flight, and prepare for your upcoming exploration of Shanghai. If you wish to begin exploring immediately, feel free to ask your guide for personalized recommendations regarding nearby walking streets, local cafes, or dining spots within walking distance of your hotel.

Meals: On your own

Accommodation: Hotel in Shanghai

Expert Arrival & Transit Insights:
Shanghai is served by two major aviation hubs: Shanghai Pudong International Airport (PVG), located 45 km (approx. 45–60 minutes) east of the city center, which handles the majority of long-haul international flights; and Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport (SHA) / Hongqiao Railway Station, located 18 km (approx. 30–40 minutes) west, which primarily serves domestic flights and high-speed rail connections. Your private guide and driver will track your incoming flight or train schedule in real time to ensure a seamless meet-and-greet right at the arrival exit, eliminating any transit delays or navigation stress.

Day 2: Shanghai City Immersion — Choose Classic Heritage or Future Metropolis

Select between two tailored day routes exploring either Shanghai's rich cultural legacy or its cutting-edge smart-city innovations:

Route Option A: Classic Shanghai Heritage & Skyscrapers

Morning: Meet your private guide and driver in the hotel lobby to begin your tour at the Shanghai Museum on People's Square. Designed in the shape of an ancient ding vessel symbolizing the traditional Chinese concept of "round sky, square earth," the museum houses over 120,000 precious cultural relics. Explore the world-renowned bronze and ceramics galleries to admire masterworks like the 3,000-year-old Da Ke Ding and the Bianzhong of Marquis Su of Jin.

Next, visit Yu Garden, an iconic 16th-century Ming Dynasty classical garden in the heart of the historic district. Stroll across arched bridges, past koi ponds, ornate rockeries, and dragon-carved walls. Afterwards, explore the surrounding Yuyuan Bazaar to browse traditional handicrafts and local delicacies.

Afternoon: Take a walk along Nanjing Road Pedestrian Street, Shanghai's premier shopping boulevard lined with boutiques and grand department stores. Continue directly to The Bund, the iconic 1.5-kilometer waterfront promenade showcasing 52 preserved colonial buildings reflecting various global architectural styles.

Then your tour at The Bund, the premier waterfront promenade featuring 52 preserved colonial buildings in various international architectural styles. Watch the evening lights turn on across the Huangpu River while taking in views of the Pudong skyline across the water.

Conclude your day across the Huangpu River in Lujiazui at Shanghai Tower, China's tallest skyscraper (632 m). Board one of the world's fastest elevators up to the Top of Shanghai Observation Deck on the 118th floor (546 m) for sweeping 360-degree panoramic views across the city skyline.

Route Option B: Modern High-Tech & Smart City Experience
Morning: Dedicate 2.5 to 3 hours to exploring Shanghai's smart-city innovations through interactive high-tech experiences. Operate quadrupedal robot dogs and experience autonomous urban mobility aboard a self-driving robotaxi.

Midday: Head to the North Bund to ascend "The Stage" observation deck atop Shanghai Baiyulan Plaza (Sinar Mas Plaza). Rising 320 meters above the river, this vantage point offers uncrowded 360-degree views directly facing the Lujiazui towers and historic Bund waterfront.

Afternoon: Transition from future tech to traditional heritage at Yu Garden to experience Ming Dynasty garden design, followed by an evening stroll along The Bund to admire the illuminated city lights.

Optional Experience Add-Ons:

18-Fold Xiaolongbao Masterclass: Learn the craft of rolling dough, filling, and pleating authentic Shanghai soup dumplings from a master chef with English instruction.

Traditional Medicine & Herbal Craft: Visit the historic Tong Han Chun Tang pharmacy to discover Chinese herbal medicine traditions and craft customized herbal sachets.

Dusk Skyline Cocktails: Savor signature evening cocktails at a high-altitude rooftop lounge as twilight settles over the Huangpu River.

Golden Hour Huangpu River Cruise: Board a luxury evening cruise to sail past the illuminated historic monuments of The Bund and modern Lujiazui skyscrapers.

Meals: Breakfast, Local Shanghai Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel in Shanghai

Expert Touring & Timing Insights:
When selecting Route A, booking timed admission tickets for the Shanghai Tower observation deck avoids peak lines during afternoon golden hour. Shanghai Museum requires advance reservation using passport details, which your guide will manage prior to arrival. For travelers opting for Route B's autonomous robotaxi experience, local traffic regulations restrict autonomous vehicles to designated smart-city trial zones, so your private driver will coordinate seamlessly between high-tech demonstration hubs and central sightseeing locations.

Day 3: High-Speed Train to Yichang & Yangtze River Cruise Embarkation

Morning: Enjoy breakfast and check out of your hotel. Meet your private guide and driver in the lobby for a direct transfer to **Shanghai Hongqiao Railway Station**. Board your comfortable high-speed bullet train bound for **Yichang**, the gateway to the Yangtze River's historic Three Gorges region. Sit back in first-class seating and watch the changing landscape transition from Eastern China's urban coastal plains to the lush hills and river basins of Hubei province during the 6.5-hour rail journey.

Afternoon / Evening: Upon arrival at Yichang East Railway Station, your local guide will meet you on the platform exit. Your guide will escort you to the cruise company's complimentary shuttle terminal at the station for the direct transfer to **Maoping Port**, the primary embarkation pier for Yangtze River cruises. Board your luxury cruise vessel, complete check-in procedures, and settle into your balcony cabin as the ship prepares to set sail along the majestic Yangtze River.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Onboard Yangtze River Luxury Cruise Vessel

Expert Boarding & Rail Insights:
The complimentary cruise shuttle service from Yichang East Railway Station to Maoping Port operates between 5:30 PM and 8:00 PM. High-speed train arrivals are precisely scheduled to match this window. Because Yangtze River embarkation piers and boarding times can fluctuate based on seasonal water levels, dam lock operations, and local weather conditions, your travel consultant and guide will reconfirm real-time boarding logistics on the morning of departure to ensure a smooth, worry-free transit to your ship.

Day 4: Yangtze River Cruise — Three Gorges Dam & Captain's Welcome Party

Morning: Wake up to the serene scenery of the Yangtze River as your vessel glides through Hubei province. After a buffet breakfast, step ashore for a guided tour of the monumental Three Gorges Dam Site, the world's largest hydroelectric engineering marvel. Rising 181 meters high and spanning 2,335 meters across the river, the dam is a triumph of modern engineering. Visit the viewing platforms at Jar Hill (Tanziling) to gain an elevated perspective of the massive spillway, five-stage ship locks, and expansive reservoir backwaters.

(**Optional Upgrade Experience:** Sail directly through the Three Gorges Dam Ship Lift—the largest and most technically complex vertical ship elevator in the world. Experience the sensation of your vessel being lifted or lowered 113 meters in a giant water-filled chamber, offering an up-close look at the dam's inner workings).

Midday / Afternoon: Return onboard for a buffet lunch as the cruise ship sets sail into the scenic stretches of the river. Take advantage of onboard cultural activities, including lectures on Yangtze River history, traditional tai chi practice on the sun deck, or Chinese calligraphy demonstrations.

(**Optional Shore Excursion:** Visit the Tribe of the Three Gorges, a picturesque cultural sanctuary nestled along Xiling Gorge. Explore the Brook-side Village, Mountain Village, and Village on the Water, where local Tujia ethnic traditions, cormorant fishing, and heritage architecture are preserved amidst emerald waters).

Evening: Dress up for the elegant Captain's Welcome Reception & Dinner, where you will meet the ship's captain and crew for a formal welcome toast followed by a multi-course dinner. Conclude your evening with an entertaining live cultural performance put on by the ship's crew in the main lounge.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Onboard Yangtze River Luxury Cruise Vessel

Expert Cruise & Excursion Insights:
Today's shore excursion to the Three Gorges Dam involves moderate walking and stair climbing

up to viewing decks, so comfortable walking shoes are highly recommended. Electric shuttle carts are available on-site for guest convenience. Participation in optional excursions—such as the Three Gorges Dam Ship Lift or the Tribe of the Three Gorges—can be arranged directly with the ship's cruise director upon embarkation. The dress code for the Captain's Welcome Party is smart casual.

Day 5: Yangtze River Cruise — Three Gorges Scenic Navigation & Shennv Stream Excursion

Morning: Rise early to witness the majestic natural scenery as your cruise vessel sails through the heart of the Three Gorges region. Sail through Xiling Gorge, historic for its winding channels and dramatic karst cliffs, before entering the serene and misty reaches of Wuxia Gorge (Wu Gorge). Surrounded by towering, sheer green peaks, enjoy live commentary from your onboard river guide as you pass beneath the famed Twelve Peaks of Wushan, including the legendary Goddess Peak (Shennv Feng). Midday: Arrive at Wushan County and disembark onto smaller local wooden tenders for a tranquil excursion into Shennv Stream (Goddess Stream). Navigate deep into this pristine, narrow tributary canyon flanked by towering emerald cliffs. Look closely up at the sheer limestone faces to spot ancient cliff-hanging coffins (xuanguan)—mysterious ancient burial relics of the Ba culture. During the ride, enjoy cheerful folk songs, dances, and local legends presented by your Tujia ethnic river guides.

Midday: Arrive at Wushan County and disembark onto smaller local wooden tenders for a tranquil excursion into Shennv Stream (Goddess Stream). Navigate deep into this pristine, narrow tributary canyon flanked by towering emerald cliffs. Look closely up at the sheer limestone faces to spot ancient cliff-hanging coffins (xuanguan)—mysterious ancient burial relics of the Ba culture. During the ride, enjoy cheerful folk songs, dances, and local legends presented by your Tujia ethnic river guides.

Afternoon: Return to your main cruise ship to navigate through Qutang Gorge, the shortest yet most precipitous and dramatic of the Three Gorges. Marvel at Kuimen Gate, where towering limestone cliffs squeeze the Yangtze into a narrow, roaring canyon—a world-famous scene immortalized on the reverse side of the Chinese 10-Yuan banknote. (**Optional Shore Excursion:** Step ashore to explore White Emperor City (Baidicheng), an ancient hilltop fortress overlooking the mouth of Qutang Gorge. Famed from Three Kingdoms history as the site where Emperor Liu Bei entrusted his son to strategist Zhuge Liang, it was also celebrated by Tang Dynasty poet Li Bai in his masterpiece "Down River to Jiangling").

Evening: Enjoy a delicious buffet dinner onboard as the ship sails west through Chongqing Municipality.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Onboard Yangtze River Luxury Cruise

VesselExpert River & Excursion Insights:
Today offers the most photogenic river scenery of the entire cruise. Keep your camera ready as you pass Kuimen Gate at Qutang Gorge; holding up a 10-Yuan banknote against the backdrop of Kuimen is a popular souvenir photo opportunity. The transfer from your main vessel to the small tender boats at Shennv Stream involves stepping across boarding ramps; crew members are stationed to assist guests. Bring a light jacket or windbreaker, as winds through the narrow tributary canyons can be cool.

Day 6: Yangtze River Cruise — Fengdu Ghost City & Captain's Farewell Banquet

Morning: Wake up to a relaxed morning on the water as your ship sails westward through Chongqing Municipality. After a leisurely buffet breakfast, disembark for a shore excursion to **Fengdu Ghost City**, an extraordinary complex of temples, shrines, and monasteries situated on Mingshan Hill. Dating back over 2,000 years, Fengdu is steeped in Chinese Taoist folklore and underworld mythology. Explore intricate halls, ornate archways, and vivid sculptures depicting Chinese mythology, ancient afterlife judgment, and traditional moral tales.

*(**Optional Shore Excursion:***Visit **Shibaozhai Pagoda** in Zhongxian County, celebrated as one of the world's "Eight Architectural Wonders." Built against a sheer rectangular cliff face, this magnificent 12-story red wooden pagoda was constructed without using a single metal nail. Ascend through its inner spiral wooden staircase to the top pavilion for sweeping, high-elevation views over the Yangtze River*).*

Afternoon: Return to the ship for a buffet lunch and a relaxing afternoon at sea. Relax on the sun deck as the riverbanks gently transform, participate in cultural workshops such as traditional Chinese knotting or tea tasting, or simply enjoy the tranquil river vistas.

Evening: Celebrate your final evening aboard with the **Captain's Farewell Party & Gala Dinner**. Enjoy a festive multi-course dinner with fellow travelers, followed by a lively cabaret performance put on by the ship's crew in the main theater.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Onboard Yangtze River Luxury Cruise Vessel

Expert Shore Excursion Insights:
Visiting Fengdu Ghost City involves walking up stone steps along Mingshan Hill (approx. 400+ steps). Cable cars are available on-site for guests who prefer to bypass the uphill walk. For guests visiting Shibaozhai Pagoda, the climb through the wooden tower involves steep wooden stairs, offering a unique architectural look into ancient timber construction. Your luggage will remain securely in your cabin while ship crew members prepare check-out logistics for your disembarkation in Chongqing the following morning.

Day 7: Yangtze River Cruise Disembarkation in Chongqing — Farewell & Onward Departure

Morning: Enjoy a final buffet breakfast onboard as your ship sails into the dramatic confluence of the Yangtze and Jialing Rivers at **Chongqing Chaotianmen Port**. At approximately 9:00 AM, complete cabin check-out procedures and disembark the cruise vessel.

Departure: Your local private guide and driver will meet you right at the port disembarkation exit to assist with your luggage and provide a smooth, comfortable transfer to **Chongqing Jiangbei International Airport (CKG)** or **Chongqing North / West Railway Station** for your flight home or onward journey within China.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Not included (End of Tour Services)

Expert Transit & Departure Insights:

Airport Transit: *Chongqing Jiangbei International Airport (CKG) is approximately 27 km (17 miles / 40–50 minutes) from Chaotianmen Port. For domestic flights, we recommend booking departures scheduled after 1:00 PM to ensure ample time for port disembarkation, traffic transit, and check-in processing.*

High-Speed Rail Connections: *Chongqing North Railway Station is roughly 10 km (6 miles / 25–35 minutes) from the port, offering high-speed connections to* ***Chengdu*** *(approx. 1.5 hours),* ***Xi'an*** *(approx. 5.5 hours), and* ***Guilin*** *(approx. 5.5 hours).*

Tour Extensions: *If you wish to extend your* ***stay in Chongqing*** *to explore iconic sites like the Hongya Cave stilt buildings, Ciqikou Ancient Town, or Liziba monorail station, your travel consultant can seamlessly add a private day tour or hotel stay.*

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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