

TRAIN : The Shangri-La Express

JOURNEY : Beijing - Urumchi

Journey Duration : More than 10 days

Day to Day Itinerary

Day 1:

Place & Transport: Arrive in Beijing, Flight not included

Today's Activities: Airport Transfer (Beijing)

Accommodations: Crown Plaza Sun Palace Beijing

Day 2:

Place & Transport: Beijing to Luoyang, Train No. Shangri-La Express 01 (Beijing Railway Station - Luoyang Railway Station Railway Station) Dep 21:30 - Arr 09:00

Today's Activities: Summer Palace, National Grand Theater, Tong Ren Tang, Hotel to Train station Transfer (Beijing)

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner at Hepingmen Quanjude Roast Duck Restaurant

- Summer Palace (1.5 hours): Much-loved summer retreat of the Imperial families, the lovely landscaped gardens, halls, pavilions and corridors are set around the lake and rivers in natural harmony. It is the largest and best preserved imperial garden in China, and also a World Heritage Site.

- National Grand Theater (1 hour): National Grand Theater, designed by French architect Paul Andreu, is an arts complex which people describe as a futuristic signature building. Located to the west of Tiananmen Square and with gorgeous design, it contains three large halls: a 2,416-seat opera house, a 2,017-seat concert hall and a 1,040-seat theater.

- Tong Ren Tang: Tong Ren Tang, is a Chinese pharmaceutical company founded in 1669, which is now the largest producer of traditional Chinese medicine. In 1669, the 8th year of Emperor Kangxi's reign of the Qing Dynasty, Tong Ren Tang was established in Beijing by Yue Xianyang who served as a senior physician of the royal court of the Qing Dynasty.

- Hepingmen Quanjude Roast Duck Restaurant: Beijing Roast Duck is renowned as the most delicious food of Beijing while Quanjude Restaurants enjoy a high reputation for its Beijing roast duck. Quanjude restaurants have developed their own technique and are famous for outstanding quality. Hepingmen Quanjude restaurant was established in 1979 and located beside Hepingmen Gate (Peace Gate).

Day 3:

Place & Transport: Luoyang to Xian, Train No. Shangri-La Express 01 (Luoyang Railway Station Railway Station - Xian Railway Station Railway Station) Dep 23:00 - Arr 06:00

Today's Activities: Longmen Grottoes, Train station Transfer (Xian), Shaolin Temple and Pagoda Forest (including Shaolin Kungfu Show)

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner

- Longmen Grottoes (2.5 hours): 13 kilometers to the west of Luoyang, Longmen Grottoes is one of the four largest grottoes in China. Live cultural relics lie amid green mountains and serpentine rivers. As early as 1961, Longmen Grottoes had been authorized by the central government of PRC as a key national cultural relic protection unit. It was authorized in 1982 by central government as one of the 44 National Parks of China. In 2000, it was enlisted into the List of World Heritage.

- Shaolin Temple and Pagoda Forest (including Shaolin Kungfu Show) (3 hours): This temple is shrouded in legend and mystery. The origin of martial arts and kung fu is part of the mystique of Shaolin Temple and the Shaolin monks. This is probably the most famous temple in China, not only because of its long history and its role in Chinese Buddhism, but also because of its martial arts or Wushu. There is a theatre here which presents the famous Kungfu Show at 0930, 1030, 1130, 1400, 1500, and 1600. It's best to get there early, as it is only a small theatre with about 200 seats.

Day 4:

Place & Transport: Xian

Today's Activities: Big Wild Goose Pagoda, Shaanxi History Museum, Tang Imperial Banquet & Show, Xi'an Ceramic & Lacquer Manufactory

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner

- Big Wild Goose Pagoda (1 hour): A major Buddhist site, the simple, elegant brick Pagoda stands in the grounds of the attractive Da Ci'en Temple. The Pagoda was built in the 7th century to house the Buddhist materials that Xuanzang (Tripitaka) brought back from his epic journey to India. The Temple complex has several large halls with some great Buddhist statues and murals.

- Shaanxi History Museum (1.5 hours): The history of Shaanxi is said to be the history of China, and this museum is quite simply one of the nation's best. Four major galleries in large, Tang-style buildings house a vast and impressive collection, beautifully displayed. Most of the item labels are in English, although some other information on the exhibitions is not, but your guide can help here. Wear comfortable walking shoes.

Tang Imperial Banquet & Show: A wonderful performance inspired by court songs, dance and music from the Golden Age of the Tang Dynasty, in a world class theatre restaurant. It's colorful, authentic, beautifully staged, and the costumes are exquisite. Combined with a delicious dinner, the show provides a glimpse into the prosperous period when Chang'an (Xi'an) was the capital of China, and the arts flourished as never before.

Time: 8:30pm

- Xi'an Ceramic & Lacquer Manufactory: Xi'an Ceramic & Lacquer Manufactory is a multi-function shopping mall containing ceramic and lacquer traders, and restaurants. It showcases Chinese traditional products of all types including hand-made copies of lacquer furniture and figurines. It has become a popular spot for foreign tourists looking for authentic, quality products.

Tel: 029-83519063

Address: No.5 Power Plant Road(E), Baozi Village, Xian.

Accommodations: Shangri La Hotel Xian (Superior)

Day 5:

Place & Transport: Xian to Lanzhou, Train No. Shangri-La Express 01 (Xian Railway Station Railway Station - Lanzhou Railway Station Railway Station) Dep 22:00 - Arr 09:00

Today's Activities: The Terracotta Warriors and Horses, Huaqing Hot Springs, Hotel to Train station Transfer (Xian)

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner

- The Terracotta Warriors and Horses (2 hours): Discovered accidentally in 1974, this incredible army of over 7000 soldiers, archers, horses and chariots in full battle array has guarded Emperor Qin's tomb since 210BC. Each figure is unique, and the painstaking repair and excavation continues in 3 pits which are protected inside huge hangars. 1.5 hours from Xian, there is also an excellent museum and film about the history of the vaults. Photos (no flash) are allowed. Wear comfortable walking shoes.

- Huaqing Hot Springs (1 hour): At the foot of Mt Lishan between Xi'an and the Terracotta warriors, the early Emperors and their concubines loved it here. Famous for ancient romances, and more recently the

Chiang Kai Shek incident, you can enjoy the appealing gardens with their lakes, pools, halls, pavilions and baths, and of course, the hot springs.

Day 6:

Place & Transport: Lanzhou to Jiayuguan, Train No. Shangri-La Express 01 (Lanzhou Railway Station Railway Station - Jiayuguan Railway Station) Dep 21:30 - Arr 09:30

Today's Activities: Gansu Museum, Waterwheel Garden, Yellow River Iron Bridge

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner

- Gansu Museum: The Museum houses 75,000 cultural relics, ranging from fossil to articles of historical and heritage significance. More than 110 pieces are rated of first class significance including Gansu color-painted pottery, and bamboo medication slips from the Han era. The most famous piece in the collection from the Han Dynasty (206BC-220AD) is a bronze Galloping Horse of Wuwei that is accompanied by an impressive array of chariots and carriages.

- Waterwheel Garden (20 minutes): There are giant steel and wood, once used to lift precious water from the Yellow River to supply the needs of this dry region. There is also a chance to ride on a raft of inflated sheep skins. It is located on South Binhe East Road, the opposite side of the river from White Pagoda Hill, 1 km west of Zhongshan Bridge.

- Yellow River Iron Bridge (30 minutes): The first bridge over the Yellow River was first built in 1372, but rebuilt in iron in 1909. At about 200 meters long it represents an impressive feat of technology at the time. It is located at the foot of the White Pagoda Hill and is also known as Zhongshan Bridge.

Day 7:

Place & Transport: Jiayuguan

Today's Activities: The Jiayuguan Pass(including Great Walls Museum), The Great Wall on the Cliff, The First Abutment Under Heaven, Sunlight Cup Factory

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner

- The Jiayuguan Pass (including Great Walls Museum) (3.5 hours): The "First Pass Under Heaven" is at the western end of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) Great Wall. It is the most magnificent and best-preserved pass among over a thousand Great Wall passes. This fort commands an awesome position

straddling the Gansu corridor between two mountain ranges. The adjacent Great Wall Museum is full of artifacts tracing the history of the world's longest wall.

- The Great Wall on the Cliff (1.5 hours): This spot is 11 km northwest of Jiayuguan city center, and 7 km north of Jiayu Pass Fort. The Suspended Wall is part of the Great Wall. The wall there was built on a ridge with a gradient of 45 degrees. It is very steep and it looks as if it should fall down from the side of the mountain range, so people refer to this section of the Great Wall as "the Suspended Wall".

- The First Abutment Under Heaven: It is the most westerly end of the Great Wall, balanced on the edge of the canyon of Beidahe River, 6 km (4 mi) south of Jiayuguan Fort and 8 km (5 mi) east of the city center. A canyon face viewing platform has been constructed to offer visitors great views of the canyon and abutment.

- Sunlight Cup Factory: This factory presents the manufacturing process and illustrates the history of Chinese sunlight cups. They are called "sunlight" cups because of their translucency. They are turned from a local rock resembling green marble, which is slightly magnetic. There are many wine "glasses", Chinese tea cups and other products displayed, which make beautiful and nice-to-use souvenirs.

Accommodations: Holidays Plaza Hotel

Day 8:

Place & Transport: Jiayuguan to Dunhuang, Train No. Shangri-La Express 01 (Jiayuguan Railway Station - Dunhuang Railway Station) Dep 10:00 - Arr 15:00

Today's Activities: Hotel to Train station Transfer (Jiayuguan), Train station Transfer (Dunhuang), Dunhuang Museum, Dunhuang Night Market, Silk Road Lecture

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner

- Dunhuang Museum (1.5 hours): This comprehensive local museum exhibits historical relics, folk art, local human and geographic artifacts and natural resources. Boasting a rich collection of over 4000 pieces of precious cultural and historical relics, the museum reflects the flourishing social development and cultural exchange between China and the West during the time when Dunhuang was a major center along the Silk Road. If you've visited the Jade Gate or Yangguan Pass, you may enjoy seeing what's been found.

- Dunhuang Night Market (40 hours): The night market is an attraction worthwhile for experiencing the local flavor of Dunhuang. It is a great place to buy local souvenirs and dried fruit at the lowest prices (remember not to accept the first price). You can also sample local snacks. The yogurt and nang (flat bread) are tasty.

- Silk Road Lecture: Before arrival in Dunhuang, a professor will give an entertaining and insightful lecture on the history and culture of the Silk Road in the Shangri-la Express bar car. The lecture will last one or two hours and covers the emergence of Buddhism in China and some interesting things about camels.

Accommodations: Grand Soluxs Hotel Dunhuang.

Day 9:

Place & Transport: Dunhuang to Turpan, Train No. Shangri-La Express 01 (Dunhuang Railway Station - Turfan Railway Station) Dep 17:00 - Arr 09:00

Today's Activities: Mogao caves, The Singing Sand Mountains and Crescent Spring, , Dunhuang Carpets Factory, Hotel to Train station Transfer (Dunhuang), Train station Transfer (Turpan)

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner

- Mogao caves (3.5 hours): Tours of Mogao caves are conducted by a guide (English, German, French and Japanese speaking guides are available) who you will share with other tourists. There are about 30 caves open to the public, but usually the tour consists of 10 which provide a representation of the total. The selection is at the discretion of the guide.

- The Singing Sand Mountains and Crescent Spring (2 hours): Crescent Spring (Yueya Quan) is in the Singing Sand Mountains (Mingsha Shan), 6 km (4 mi) south of Dunhuang. It is an oasis in the desert. The spring's name derives from the crescent-shaped lake formed by the spring water between two huge sand dunes. Although the area is very dry, the pool doesn't dry up as one might expect.

- Dunhuang Carpets Factory: The carpets factory sells high-quality hand-knotted carpets, which made of silks.

Day 10:

Place & Transport: Turpan

Today's Activities: The Ruins of the Ancient City of Jiaohe, The Flaming Mountain, The Karez Wells, Grape Valley, Night Activity

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner

- The Ruins of the Ancient City of Jiaohe (2 hours): Jiaohe was built by the ancient Cheshi people in the Qin Dynasty (221–206 BC) and the Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 AD). Located in the Yarnaz Valley, 8 km (5

mi) west of Turpan, it was dug out of and constructed from the yellow-gray parched ground of a narrow 30-meter-high, 1.5-km-long vertical sided island in a river. It is a good vantage point for seeing the surrounding landscape of vineyards and orchards followed by desert and mountains.

- The Flaming Mountain (30 minutes): The Flaming Mountains, the hottest place in China, overshadow the cradle of the Turpan ancient civilization and oasis agriculture. They provide a spectacular backdrop to the oases and scenery of the Turpan area, and have given rise to many legends and stories, such as the classic "Journey to the West". There are stone reliefs showing the monkey king Sun Wukong, the monk Tang Sen and the pig-man Zhu Bajie and their adventures in an underground cavern built at the foot of the Flaming Mountains to introduce its culture to visitors.

- The Karez Wells (40 minutes): This irrigation system of wells connected by underground channels is considered to be one of the three great ancient projects in China. The Karez Wells Folk Garden and Museum is located adjacent to Turpan, 3 kilometers east of the city center. The famous fruit and vineyards of these hot, dry desert communities owe their existence to the Karez wells, ancient underground irrigation channels fed by wells that tap into the snowmelt from surrounding mountains. These systems are still maintained and functioning today. A small museum provides an insight into their intriguing history and construction, and takes you below ground for a first-hand view.

- Grape Valley (1 hour): This is one of most famous scenic spots in Turpan. Located 4 km northeast of Turpan's center, it provides a welcome place of relaxation amidst the hundreds of square kilometers miles of grey desert. Every year over 300 tons of raisins are dried in drying rooms on nearby slopes.

- Night Activity: After the dinner - Roast Lamb, there will be a local Uygur traditional dance in the vineyard of the hotel.

Accommodations: Huozhou Hotel

Day 11:

Place & Transport: Turpan to Urumqi, Air Condition Fast Bus

Today's Activities: Hotel to bus station Transfer (Turpan), Express bus station transfer (Urumqi), The Xinjiang Museum, Heavenly Lake, Boat for Cruise on the Heavenly Lake, Kunlun Jade Shop

Meals: Breakfast, Chinese Lunch, Chinese Dinner

- The Xinjiang Museum (2 hours): The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Museum has collections of silver works of art, stone steles, coins and currency, ceramics, wooden articles, and paintings. One of the highlights is the well-preserved collection of 4,000-year-old corpses, unearthed along the Silk Road. A

modern-style building occupying 11,000 square meters, it is located on Xibei Road, 2 km north of People's (Renmin) Park.

- Heavenly Lake (1 hour): Heavenly Lake (Tian Hu) is a beautiful blue mountain lake. The blue lake water is finely contrasted with steep forested hills, high meadows and snowy Heavenly Mountain peaks behind. There you can walk, take electric carts, cable cars and a boat cruise on the lake.

- Boat for Cruise on the Heavenly Lake (40 minutes): It is a different way to visit Heavenly Lake by boat.

- Kunlun Jade Shop: This factory manufactures and sells many kinds jade articles including Xinjiang Hetian jade, jade jewelry, and Xinjiang jade sculptures.

Accommodations: Bingtuan Grand Hotel (Superior)

Day 12:

Place & Transport: Depart Urumqi, Flight No. TBA

Today's Activities: Hotel to airport Transfer (Urumqi)

Meals: Breakfast Departure