

Duration: 11 days - Beijing – Xi'an – Shanghai – Suzhou - Shanghai

Countries Visited and time: China
Start on 30th May

Age Guide: >18 years (university students and staffs), < 18 years (high school students)

Max Group Size: 40

Transport: Private Vehicle, Plane, Train, On Foot

Accommodation: Hotels (7 Nights), Soft Sleeper Train (2 Night)

What's Included: 9 Breakfasts – 9 Lunch – 9 Dinner, All Activities and Entrance Fees as per Itinerary - Escorted Tour, Institute Tour Leader and Local Guide - Domestic train Beijing to Xi'an to Shanghai Private Vehicle to Suzhou and back to Shanghai - Great Wall & Terracotta Warriors - Hutong Tour

Local Payment: NO LOCAL PAYMENT

Highlights: **China** - Great Wall at Badalin - Ming Tombs - Photo Stop at Olympic Stadium Area - Tiananmen Square - Forbidden City - Temple of Heaven - Summer Palace - - Hutong Tour - Xi'an - Terracotta Warriors - Wild Goose Pagoda - Banpo Museum - Xi'an City Wall - Shanghai - Jade Buddha Temple - Yu Gardens - Bund Area

Tour Price: Euro 990 student; 1099 staff

Introduction: Experience the major highlights of China, from Beijing to Shanghai, in this eleven day tour, bursting with famous sights. We explore the capital Beijing – from the imperial Forbidden City, China's centre of power for over 500 years, Tian'an Men Square, the Summer Palace, and the Temple of Heaven, to the small traditional alleyways of the Hutongs, typical of the old parts of Beijing, and an important part of China's culture. We walk along the spectacular Great Wall of China at Badalin, and visit the Ming Tombs, as well as seeing the National Stadium (bird's nest) and Water Cube Stadium from its outside, Lama temple, Guozijian, the Imperial College, and Confucius Temple, before heading to Xi'An. Here we visit the City Wall, the Wild Goose Pagoda and of course the 2000 year old Army of Terracotta Warriors, unearthed in 1974. From Xi'an we fly to the trading port of Shanghai, "Paris of the East", built on the trade of opium, silk and tea, and visit the fabulous water town Zhujiajiao, the Yu Gardens and the Bund Area,

Shanghai's most famous mile. And the Up in the heaven is the paradise and down on the earth is Suzhou and Hangzhou" has been a popular saying since ancient time. Suzhou was once visited by Marco Polo who compared it to Venice of Italy.

Day 1: Beijing

Fly to Beijing.

Guide will pick you up upon you arrive at Beijing, and then visit the Summer Palace.

Today's tour begins with a visit to the Summer Palace, which is located in the north west corner of Beijing right next to Beijing University. Constructed as a place of rest and recreation for the emperor of old, it is now open as a public park and is one of the most impressive places to visit in Beijing. The focus of the Summer Palace is a huge lake with a long walkway circling it. To the one end is built a series of towers, halls and temples climbing the hillside. From the buildings towards the top of the hill you can see the entire lake and its surroundings. The park is accented by many small architectural features such as the beautiful 17 arch bridge, which leads to a small island, and the pagoda on the hill of the far shore.

2 hours happy Chinese studying in local school by the professional tutors

Day 2: Beijing

Beijing City Tour. Visit the Forbidden City, Tian An Men Square, Hu Tong tour and the Temple of Heaven. Today we have an full day Beijing city tour with our local guide. First stop is the infamous Tiananmen Square. Tiananmen Square is a huge open space surrounded on all sides by imposing official buildings. Apart from being a popular gathering place for tourists and kite flyers, it is still often used for any big celebration and for the government leaders to address the people.

From Tiananmen Square we go into the dramatic Forbidden City - so called because only the emperors, their families, Imperial eunuchs and other servants were allowed in there. The Forbidden city is a vast complex of halls, temples and housing which make up the former residence of the ancient emperors. Also known as the Imperial Palace, the complex is said to contain 9,999 rooms. The complex is divided into a northern and southern part. The southern area is where the emperor would hold ceremonies and entertain guests. The northern half was kept completely private residence accessible only to the select circles of the emperor. As you walk around the Forbidden City you can really lose yourself as the outside world of Beijing is barely visible from most parts. You can really experience a little of the feel of being a Chinese Emperor.

Our tour finishes with a trip to the Temple of Heaven, also called Tiantan Park. The Temple of Heaven, the jewel of Ming Dynasty architecture, was built in 1420 and is set in a 660 acre park. It is one of Beijing's most famous images and its silhouette is an emblem of the city. Southeast of the Forbidden City, the whole complex contains the

Temple of Heaven, the hall for the Prayer for Good Harvests, the Round Altar, the Echo Wall and the Imperial Vault of Heaven.

A hutong is an ancient city alley or lane, dating back to the Yuan (1206-1341) dynasty. The main buildings in the hutong were almost all quadrangles -a building complex formed by four houses around a quadrangular courtyard. The quadrangles varied in size and design according to the social status of the residents. The big quadrangles of high-ranking officials and wealthy merchants were specially built with roof beams and pillars all beautifully carved and painted, each with a front yard and back yard. However, the ordinary people's quadrangles were simply built with small gates and low houses. In the past, several thousand lanes, alleys and quadrangles formed residential areas for ordinary people living in the capital. Today, as the city develops into an international metropolis, its lanes and alleyways, occupying one third of the city proper, still serve as dwellings for half the total urban population.

The tour through the hutongs gives you fresh insight into Beijing's local life.

[Acrobatic show in evening](#)

Day 3: Beijing

Visit the Badaling Great Wall(cable car exclude) and the Dingling Mausoleum. – Great Wall. We begin our tour visiting one of the world's most famous landmarks – The Great Wall of China and Ming Tombs. We include a full day guided tour along the Badaling section of the Great Wall. Just like a gigantic dragon, the Great Wall winds up and down across deserts, grasslands, mountains and plateaus stretching approximately 6,700 kilometres (4,163 miles) from east to west of China. With a history of more than 2000 years, some of the sections of the great wall are now in ruins or even entirely disappeared. However, it is still one of the most appealing attractions all around the world owing to its architectural grandeur and historical significance.

For centuries, the wall served succeeding dynasties as an efficient military defence. However, it was only when a dynasty had weakened from within that invaders from the north were able to advance and conquer. Both the Mongols (Yuan Dynasty, 1271-1368) and the Manchurians (Qing Dynasty, 1644-1911) were able to take power because of weakness of the government and poverty of the people but never due to any possibility of weakness of the Wall.

Beijing Roast Duck dinner in evening.

Day 4: Beijing

Beijing City Tour - Overnight Train Xi'an.

Visit National Stadium (bird's nest) and Water Cube Stadium from its outside, Lama temple,

Guozijian, the Imperial College, and Confucius Temple, Take evening train to Xi'an;

The final part of the days sightseeing is a rickshaw ride around the hutongs.

After the tour we have some time for dinner, and then we are transferred to the train station for our overnight train to Xi'an.

For your comfort, the overnight train accommodation we provide is in soft sleeper cabins, so you will arrive at your destination well rested and refreshed.

Day 5: Xi'an

We arrive early into Xi'an train station, where we will meet our transfer to the hotel for breakfast and check-in. We then offer you a free morning to begin exploring your surroundings in Xi'an.

Visit The Big Wild Goose Pagoda, the medieval City Wall, learning the Chinese Calligraphy in the afternoon.

Xi'an was called Chang'an during the Han Dynasty. The connotation of "Chang'an" is "a place of permanent peace". It was not until the prosperous Tang Dynasty that Chang'an became famous both at home and abroad as the largest and busiest international metropolis of that age in the world. Xi'an obtained its present name in 1369. From the 11 century B.C. onwards, Xi'an or its vicinity was established as the capital city by 11 dynasties successively, including the Western Zhou, the Qin, the Han, the Sui and the Tang. The city's capital status lasted for 1,608 years. As regards the number of dynasties and span of time, Xi'an served as an ancient capital beyond compare.

With so much history, Xi'an possesses a number of fascinating attractions. In the afternoon we take a guided tour of Xi'an, which includes visits to the Wild Goose Pagoda and City Wall.

The Wild Goose Pagoda is situated in the Da Ci'en Temple, four kilometres away from the centre of the city. It is one of the city's most distinctive and outstanding landmarks, and possibly the most beautiful building left in Xi'an today. In AD 652, the Big Goose Pagoda was built to store the sutras and the figurines of Buddha. It is a sturdy and simple brick tower structure with a height of 64 metres, and occupies a base 25 metres by 25 metres square. The walls and doors are carved with vivid and exquisite figures of Buddha, reflecting the depth in the paintings of the Tang Dynasty.

[Tang Dynasty Dancing show in evening.](#)

Day 6: Xi'an

We continue our tour of Xi'an with a guided tour of the Terracotta Warriors Museum

and the Great Mosque, and Stele Forest.

The Terracotta Warriors and Horses are one of the most significant archaeological excavations of the 20th century. It is a sight not to be missed by any visitor to China. In 1974, a group of peasants uncovered some pottery while digging for a well. This discovery caught the attention of archaeologists immediately. They came to Xi'an in droves to study and to extend the digs.

Life size terracotta figures of warriors and horses arranged in battle formations are the star features at the museum. They are replicas of what the imperial guard should look like in those days of pomp and vigour. Altogether over 7,000 pottery soldiers, horses, chariots, and even weapons have been unearthed from these pits. Most of them have been restored to their former grandeur. In 1987, the Terracotta Warriors museum was listed by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage Site.

On our return to Xi'an, you may like to visit the Grand Mosque. The Great Mosque of Xian (Sian) is located in the "Huajue Xiang" district, inhabited mainly by the Muslim Hui minority. The 60,000 strong Muslim community that lives and works today in Xian traces its history to Arab and Persian merchants who, after traveling the Silk Road, became permanent residents of such cities as Guangzhou, Quanzhou, Hangzhou, Yangzhou, and Chang'an (today's Xian, the imperial capital of China for 13 dynasties).

The current buildings date from the middle of the 18th century but earlier mosques are thought to have stood on the same spot. The building is built along Chinese architectural styles and is surrounded by gardens. It is one of the largest mosques in China. The courtyard is open to the public, but praying areas are for Muslims only.

Take late afternoon or evening train to Shanghai

Day 7: Xi'an to Shanghai . In the morning we transfer to the train station to Shanghai. On arrival we are transferred to the hotel for check in.

Shanghai is a bustling metropolis located at the mouth of the Yangtze River. With a population of more than 13 million, Shanghai takes its place among the world's biggest, most booming urban areas.

In the afternoon we include a guided City Tour. Visit the Yu Garden, Bund-a show of world architecture, Oriental Pearl TV Tower.

Shanghai is endowed with rich tourist attractions related to its long and complicated history. Many buildings, constructed in various foreign styles, are well preserved in the Bund area, and western tourists will feel a sense of familiarity when strolling around the long street, which resembles those in European cities. This blending of eastern and

western styles has given the Bund area a reputation as a "World's Fair of Architecture." Many buildings from the 1920s and 1930s have also survived in the Old City section of Shanghai.

A visit to the Old City is easily combined with a stop at Yuyuan Garden, a well-restored Suzhou-style garden created during the Ming Dynasty. The Yuyuan Garden is claimed to be the most magnificent rockery of the Ming dynasty, and is a place of peace and comfort in the heart of bustling Shanghai.

[Huangpu River cruise in evening](#)

Day 8: Shanghai - Suzhou 1.5 hours Transfer to Suzhou Visit the Tiger Hill, the Chilly Hill Temple, Silk Factory and the Lingering Garden.

Tiger Hill, known also as Surging Sea Hill, is a large hillock, standing 36 meters high and covering an area of some 14,100 square meters. Going up to the hill, you will find a number of historical sites, including some from 2,500 years ago, which are as old as the city of Suzhou.

Hanshan (Chilly Hill) Temple, the best known bell described in Zhang Ji's poem disappeared a long time ago. The bell in the tower now, was modeled on the previous one in 1904. Every year on New Year's Eve in China's lunar calendar, the bell is tolled to pray for the happiness and safety of the coming New Year.

Silk Factory: Suzhou is also famous for its silk production. In the factory you can see how the silk is processed from the silk worm to the final woven cloth.

The Lingering Garden was listed from the first as cultural relics of national importance in 1961. With an area of 23,310 sq.m. it is celebrated for its artistic way of dealing with the spaces between various kinds of architectural form. Buildings make up one third of the total area of the garden, the hall of which being the most remarkable in Suzhou. The garden is separated into the middle, eastern, northern and western parts. The ancestral temple and the house lie to the south of the garden.

Featuring man-made mountain and lake scenery in the west and garden courts in the east, the middle part of the garden is the original site of the Xu's East Garden and the Liu's Hanbi Villa, and is regarded as the best part of the whole garden. The eastern, northern and western parts are the extensions of the Sheng's Garden. The eastern part is noted for its strangely shaped limestone, the northern part idyllic scenes, and the western part the delights of woody hills.

A winding roofed walkway behind the small entrance of the garden, while leading to the places of quietude, shows the masterly use of contrast between big and small,

straight and zigzag, and light and shade. After strolling for about 50 meters, one can catch a glimpse of lattice-windows revealing a half visible landscape garden behind. Interestingly enough, the view is changing at every step.

Day 9: Suzhou Learning the Chinese Shadow boxing in the morning at park;
-Shanghai

Visit the Water town Zhujiajiao, and Riverside road

Located in a suburb of Shanghai city, Zhujiajiao is an ancient water town well-known throughout the country, with a history of more than 1700 years. Covering an area of 47 square kilometers, the little fan-shaped town glimmers like a bright pearl in the landscape of lakes and mountains.

Endowed with another elegant name - 'Pearl Stream' - the little town is the best-preserved among the four ancient towns in Shanghai. Unique old bridges across bubbling streams, small rivers shaded by willow trees, and houses with courtyards attached all transport people who have been living amidst the bustle and hustle of the modern big city to a brand-new world full of antiquity, leisure and tranquillity.

It is said that to visit Zhujiajiao without seeing the bridges means that you have not really been to Zhujiajiao at all! Bridges in the town are distinctive and old, built during Ming and Qing Dynasties. The old town is thoroughly connected by 36 delicate spans in different shapes and styles, from wooden to stone to marble.

Fangsheng Bridge (Setting-fish-free Bridge) is the longest, largest and tallest stone bridge, with five openings both in Zhujiajiao and in the Shanghai region. This bridge was built in 1571. On the bridge stands a stone tablet named Dragon Gate Stone, which is engraved with 8 coiling dragons encircling a shining pearl. On top of the bridge are 4 lifelike stone lions.

Lang Bridge (Veranda Bridge), also named Huimin Bridge, is the only wooden bridge and the most featured span in this town. It has wooden bars on the two sides and upturned eaves above, just like a narrow corridor.

In the town, there is an ancient street filled with representative ancient buildings from the Ming and Qing Dynasties, attracting great numbers of domestic and foreign tourists. That is North Street, which is the best preserved ancient street in this suburb of Shanghai. Only one kilometer long, the whole street is at once primitively simple, yet very elegant. Strolling on this ancient thoroughfare and appreciating the historic buildings, long-established stores, and old bridges as well as the many narrow lanes is another enjoyment.

Zhujiajiao boasts imposing gardens as well as ancient dwellings built during the Ming

and Qing Dynasties. Among the ancient architecture, Ke Zhi Yuan is the largest manorial garden in the town. The garden is commonly named 'Ma Family Garden' after a former host named Ma Wenqin.

Located in Xijin Street in the northern part of town, Ke Zhi Yuan features beautiful sightseeing and quiet and secluded surroundings. It consists mainly of three parts, including a hall area, an artificial hill area and a garden area. In the artificial hill area, there is magnificent symbolic architecture - a foursquare five-story building, on the top of which stands a diametric pavilion named 'Moon View Pavilion.' This building is considered the tallest architecture in the town.

The scenic spots outlined here are just a sampling of the pretty attractions of Zhujiajiao. Old narrow lanes, peculiar stone hawsers on the riverside and old residences also make you enjoy yourself so much as to forget to go home.

Day 10: Shanghai

Transfer you to Pudong Airport, and pleasant tour ends.

From Dublin to Beijing and come back from Shanghai to Dublin, the total 11 days.

Please Note:

Please be aware that arrival times and the itinerary may change due to unforeseen delays or events such as festivals and public holidays. However, we shall endeavour to ensure all sites are visited and that your tour runs as smoothly as possible.

Be flexible, you will enjoy your tour much more. Institute makes a point of visiting the indigenous populations of each country you visit, in order to give a true reflection of the country; please treat the local people and their customs with respect.

This itinerary will be followed as closely as possible. However there may be times when it is necessary to change the route according to local conditions. There will be times travelling long hours as there will be days where we have to cover great distances. Weather patterns can change dramatically - high altitudes tend to be a lot cooler.

You are free not to participate in any of the included excursions. However, please note that there will be no refund for any excursions not taken.

Lastly, your tour leader is always conscious of everybody's views, but sometimes he/she will have to make an unpopular decision and your understanding will be appreciated in these circumstances.

What's Not Included:

International plane tickets and insurance in Ireland (if you want we can book for you and plus 5% charge for service), (the Chinese local tour insurance is included in fees) unless otherwise stated in the itinerary, tipping, pre-tour and post-tour accommodation. Chinese visa application fee.

Tiping:

Tiping is expected & accepted in China, as salaries are low and any gratuities for good service will be gratefully accepted. This applies mainly to the local guides & hotel porters.

Your tour leader will arrange a "tip kitty" at the beginning of the tour so this will save you the worry of how much to tip. An account of tips given will be kept and be available for passengers to see. **Please allow at least US\$40 cash per person for this, as well as additional money to tip your National Guide/Tour Leader at the end of the tour.**

Pre Departure Information Follows

**Medical Information Vaccinations:
and Vaccination:**

No vaccinations are compulsory in Asia, but we do recommend you are covered for *diphtheria & TB, hepatitis A, *hepatitis B, *malaria, typhoid, polio and tetanus.

NB* A Yellow fever certificate is required if arriving from infected areas. Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

You may need additional inoculations so please contact your G.P or a travel medical centre for further information. Please consult your doctor for up-to-date information and prescriptions for vaccinations, anti-malarial requirements and any reasonably foreseeable illnesses whilst travelling in Asia.

We also recommend:

- A dental check-up prior to travelling.
- That you know your blood group in case of emergency.
- That if you have any pre-existing medical conditions which might affect you on tour, you make these known to your tour leader and your agent at the time of your booking.

Medical Supplies:

We advise that all passengers bring along their own personal first aid kit. Below is a list of some recommended items:

Band Aids/Bandages, Laxatives, Upset stomach remedy, Anti-diarrhoea remedy, Panadol/Aspirin, Rehydration remedy, Antiseptic cream/powder, Sterile dressing, Any

relevant course of medication such as contraceptive pills.

A complete Travellers Medical Pack can be purchased for approximately US\$25 at most Vaccination Centres, Chemists and outdoor travel shops.

Insurance:

Travel insurance is compulsory for all tours. All clients MUST be insured to cover personal accident, medical expenses, cancellation, curtailment and repatriation. It is also very important that your insurance policy is relevant to the Kumuka style of travel. Kumuka offers a specially negotiated insurance policy specifically tailored to adventure travel. As well as providing substantial cover for medical emergency, cancellation and curtailment, personal luggage, money and valuables and legal expenses, this insurance will also provide cover for the adventure activities you may choose to undertake whilst on tour. Please call us on the Kumuka freephone number 0800 068 8855 (UK only), or on 1300 667 277 in Australia, for further information.

No client will be allowed on tours without suitable insurance. If you have already arranged insurance elsewhere, please be aware that many of the optional activities such as bungy jumping or water rafting may not be covered on your policy. If you plan on doing any of these activities please purchase additional insurance.

At the start of your tour you will be asked to present your original policy document and complete an insurance information form. We recommend that you have a photocopy of this document, which you keep separate from the original.

Please note: you will not be permitted to join a Kumuka Tour without travel insurance.

Passport:

Your passport is a valuable document and you should exercise extreme care in keeping it safe. We recommend that you keep your passport on you at all times, preferably in a money belt that is worn under your clothing. We advise that you take copies of relevant pages in your passport and any visas that you may purchase in case of loss or damage. Your tour leader will require your passport details at the pre-departure meeting. Again, we recommend that you have a photocopy of all passport details, kept separate. Your passport must be valid for six months after the END of your tour, and must have one blank page for each country to be visited.

Visa Requirements:

It is important that you obtain the appropriate visas before you embark on your Asia trip. Country entry regulations change daily, provides you with visa information. Please consult the relevant embassy for all details such as opening hours or costs. Certain visas cannot be obtained once you have started your tour, and during the peak summer months it can take longer than normal to get visas, please allow extra time to do this.

EACH CLIENT IS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY VISAS BEFORE JOINING A TOUR.

Institute can accept responsibility for changes in regulations or requirements for visas. The information provided is given in good faith. More information please check the website:

<http://ie.chineseembassy.org/eng/Consular/AboutVisa/t112836.htm>

Climate Information: Month: June

Average rainfall (mm) 376

Avg. temperature (°C) Day: 29 , Night: 18

Travel Tip: Always bring a lightweight, waterproof jacket and/or an umbrella even during the height of summer - this should prepare you for anything!

Security:

- Do not take unnecessary valuables with you.
- A money belt, or something similar, worn close to your body is the best way to carry passports, airline tickets and money.
- DO NOT leave any valuables in ANY hotel room in Asia, please use SAFETY DEPOSIT BOXES. Items are left at the individuals' risk.
- Pickpockets operate everywhere, particularly in tourist areas and in crowded markets; you must always exercise care.
- Be aware that anything left lying around will also be liable to theft.

Books and Reading

Material:

You might like to read up on the destinations that you are about to visit as these cities all have interesting sites and histories. We recommend a variety of guidebooks such as Lonely Planet, The Rough Guide and Insight Guides. All these publications have good general information as well as more specific country information that will help orientate you in the countries you visit.

Money:

We suggest passengers budget for between US\$20-35 per day for personal expenses, souvenirs, evenings out, alcoholic drinks etc. There will be some days when you spend nothing at all and others when you exceed your budget.

US dollars cash is easier to change into local currency than travellers cheques.

It is often a good idea to have a small amount of local currency prior to arrival, although there are money change facilities at Beijing Airport on arrival. This will cover you for any initial expenses at or from the airport.

Banks are open Monday to Friday and some are open on Saturday morning. In the main cities travellers' cheques can be exchanged only at the Bank of China. There is a set exchange rate in China determined by the Bank of China, the only bank authorized to deal in foreign exchange.

Many hotels will also change money and the hotel exchange rates are equivalent to those at the bank and far more convenient for travellers changing money.

Cash can be easily changed in larger towns throughout the country and Mastercard and Visa cards are also widely accepted in larger towns.

The Tour Leaders/National Guides will be able to advise on the best places to change money throughout the tour.

Local Customs:

Please use your discretion and be sensitive to cultural differences in the countries that you visit, in particular visits to religious buildings and when taking photographs. Your Tour Leader will advise you of any specific customs to observe.

Care should be taken to respect the conventions of other religious and ethnic groups, particularly in respect of clothing and footwear.

Luggage and Personal Equipment: and How much should I take?

- Please bring lightweight walking shoes or sandals, and a day sac. Pack essentially for hot conditions: days are hot and humid. Lightweight rain gear is essential at all times.
- Because of limited luggage space on transport, we must limit each passenger to ONE main suitcase or frameless backpack and one day bag. Your main bag must not weigh more than 20 kg's.
- A frameless or internally framed backpack is the best way to carry your belongings since it is easy to lift on and off vehicles.
- A small daypack is practical for keeping general items (e.g. camera, books, wallets etc.) at hand when your main pack is out of reach. It is also handy for day trips and excursions. We also recommend that you keep your passport, credit cards travellers checks etc. on you at all times, preferably in a money belt worn under your clothes.

TRAVEL TIP: You might be tempted to buy a few souvenirs here and there, so leave a little room for those extra purchases!!

Personal Effects:

We suggest that you take into account the time of year you will be travelling, and pack accordingly to the season. Quick drying clothes are recommended, and at many hotels there are laundry facilities. Your tour leader will advise where laundry facilities are available.

Personal Effects:

Camera & film, Spare passport photos, Water bottle, Money belt, Torch, Sewing kit, Sunhat/ Sunglasses, Music cassettes /CDs, Books, Wet Ones, Soap to wash clothes, Writing materials, Swiss Army knife, Calculator, Personal toiletries, including tampons, Contraceptives, Insect Repellent, Sunscreen.

NOTE: If you wear glasses, it is advisable to bring a spare pair since opticians are uncommon. If you wear contact lenses you may find that climatic changes and dust can create visual irritation, therefore, it is advisable to bring a pair of glasses.

Time:

For detailed information see

Language:

Mandarin is the official language of China. There are however many dialects, as different from each other as French and Italian, used around the country. Most common is Cantonese, which is used in the south, Hong Kong and around the world.

Written Chinese is the same everywhere and is understood by all. This can be quite amusing as Chinese experiencing difficulty communicating verbally with foreigners might write down what they want to say expecting the foreigner to understand.

English will be spoken in the larger cities. You might like to take the time before your trip to read up on the country you will be visiting and perhaps learn a few words of the language. Your effort will always be welcomed and will make your trip all the more enjoyable.

Photography:

All types of camera film are readily available in China; however, it is often cheaper to purchase it in your country of origin or through duty free.

As a guideline, most people use approximately one to two rolls of 36 per week. Fast film (200-400 ASA) may be useful at times and black & white film is nice to use for portraits of local people. A zoom lens is also useful.

Please remember, we are guests in the countries through which we travel and we may sometimes inadvertently cause offence by taking photographs without first asking permission.

It is absolutely forbidden by law to take photos at any borders, as they are all active military installations.

Food:

Travellers should forget about western food whilst in China. They should also prepare for alternative conventions about eating the norms: Breakfasts are light and often contain a selection of dishes you may not expect – rice and boiling water. Meals are huge and taken early. Lunch sometimes takes place around 12am and dinner typically 5pm. Desserts are not common, and meals always end with soup. Overall we can assure you that Chinese cuisine lives up to its reputation as being one of the world's best.

The Chinese are completely omnivorous, no doubt due to past famines, which has led to a wealth of exotic dishes. Vegetarians need to be apprehensive; a non-meat alternative is always possible. However, vegetarianism is not something Chinese chefs are particularly familiar with, so such dishes frequently feature a limited variety of vegetables and are not richly flavoured or spiced.

The variety of climate and local produce has created outstanding regional cooking in China. In the colder wheat producing North Noodles, dumplings and casserole type dishes predominate as well as the imperial speciality, Peking Duck. The province the stir-fried meat and vegetables, fried rice, and steamed chicken and fish dishes that are, to most of the world, typical of Chinese cooking.

Hong Kong offers not only Cantonese food, but also cuisine from all parts of the globe. Walk down almost any street and you can choose authentic food from Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Italy and many more.

Whilst travelling by train, there is food available from a dining car. Alternatively we allow time for passengers to shop at a supermarket and buy provisions for the journey. There is always hot water available from the samovar on the train, so bring along your favourite tea or coffee.

Vegetarians or those with special dietary needs can also be catered for however in some countries the type of food may be limited. Please let the Reservations team know your special requirements as soon as possible so we can do all possible to assist your needs.

The variety of food will differ, as you will be visiting a number of different countries. We try to ensure that you get the most experience from your Kumuka trip and one of the ways to do this is by trying local cuisine.

Accommodation:

We have put a lot of thought and effort into locating the most appropriate type of accommodation for each tour. It will always be clean, comfortable and of a very high standard. All accommodation is in comfortable tourist class accommodation. Depending on the tour, this ranges from overnight sleeper train or cruise boat through

to delightful lodges and excellent hotels (generally 3 star or above).

If you wish to spend a few additional days in your start city before the departure of your tour, then we can arrange accommodation for you. On the last day of the tour we usually arrive at our final destination in the late afternoon, when the tour ends. If you would like to book accommodation for that night or even stay additional nights, we will be more than happy to arrange this for you as well. All our accommodation is carefully chosen, conveniently located, clean and comfortable.

In most of the hotels in Asia you may be required to deposit your passport at Reception. This is a perfectly normal practice and nothing to be concerned about. Just make sure that you retrieve it when you check out of the hotel.

Please note that the majority of hotels in China have only a very limited number of double rooms. We will try to book double rooms for those couples that request them, but please be advised that we cannot guarantee double rooms, and twin rooms may be allocated.

Arriving in China:

Pre-booked transfers - If you have booked an arrival transfer, please look for our representative who will be holding a sign with your name or Institute once you have cleared Customs and Immigration.

Making Your Own Way - The Meeting Point for your tour is advised at the beginning of this dossier. If you have not arranged for us to meet and transfer you on arrival and are therefore making your own way to the Meeting Point, it is best upon arrival at to take a metered taxi. Drivers may want to negotiate a price before leaving the airport. Do not agree to this, insist that they switch on the meters and pay the amount that it displays when you arrive at your destination.

Optional Activities:

Institute endeavors to advertise a compliment of optional activities available locally during tours with selected ground handlers to make your tour more enjoyable. These ground handlers and activity partners are selected for their standards in quality, professional ability and reputation. Although institute has developed a travel insurance policy to cover all activities offered during your journey, institute cannot be held responsible for injuries or claims arising from adventurous activities by a third party.

Tipping & Bargaining:

Tipping is expected & accepted in China, as salaries are low and any gratuities for good service will be gratefully accepted. This applies mainly to the local guides & hotel porters.

All the government run shops have fixed price products, however in the markets, be prepared to bargain.

Drug Policy:

Under no circumstances are any illegal drugs allowed on any part of the trip. Anyone discovered in possession of any such drugs, will be asked to leave the tour immediately without question or refund.

Booking Terms and Conditions

Booking Conditions - Europe

Please read these booking conditions carefully as by paying the €200 deposit (per person, per tour) you acknowledge that you have read and agreed to the following conditions. Your contract is with UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland based at Q2 University College Dublin Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland. UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland is hereinafter referred to as 'the institute' in respect of the booking conditions which apply to all of the tours in this brochure.

1. THE CONTRACT ARRANGEMENTS AND DEPOSIT: When you make your booking you must complete a booking form, accepting on behalf of all your party the terms of these booking conditions and pay a non-refundable deposit of €200 per person, per tour. By paying the €200 you acknowledge that you have read and agree to the following terms and conditions. All persons named on the booking form shall be referred to collectively as either 'the client(s)' or 'you'. If the booking is made through a travel agent, all communications from the institute will be with the agent who acts as agent for the client in regard to all communications from the institute to the client.

2. CONTRACT: No contract shall exist between the institute and the client until the specified deposit has been paid and the client's booking made on the booking form has been confirmed in writing by the institute ('the confirmation invoice').

3. PAYMENT: The balance of the tour fare, and any visa cost (where applicable), must be paid no later than 70 days prior to the departure date for all tours, otherwise the institute may treat the booking as being cancelled by the client, and apply cancellation charges as set out in clause 4. All monies paid by the client to a travel agent under or in contemplation of a contract with the institute are held by the travel agent on behalf of the client until such time as the institute issues a confirmation Invoice in acceptance of the booking. Thereafter, the travel agent holds the client's money as agents of the institute until such time as payment is required by the institute.

4. CANCELLATION BY YOU: Cancellation of a booking must be made in writing, by the person signing the booking form, and is not effective until such cancellation is received by the institute. If the cancellation is received 70 days or more before departure, the appropriate deposit shall be forfeited. In the event of cancellation 69 days or less prior to departure the following charges will apply, with a minimum cancellation fee of the original deposit.

70 days or more – loss of deposit

69-31 days – 50% of tour cost

30 days or less – 100% of tour cost.

5. CANCELLATION BY US: The institute reserves the right in any circumstances to cancel the tour and all tours operate subject to a minimum number of participants (except for guaranteed departures). However, in no case will the institute cancel the tour less than 28 days before the scheduled departure date except for reasons of force majeure (as defined in clause 6) or failure on the client's part to pay the final balance. In circumstances where the institute is unable to provide the tour booked, the institute will return to the client all monies paid (less any insurance premiums, visa application fees, international plane tickets deposits and amendment fees paid), or offer an alternative holiday of comparable standard.

6. ALTERATION TO ITINERARIES, ETC: All itineraries in this brochure are suggested only. It is unlikely that the institute will have to make any changes to the client's suggested tour, but the arrangements are planned many months in advance. Occasionally changes may be made, which the institute reserves the right to do at any time. Most of these changes are minor and the institute will endeavour to advise the client of them at the earliest possible date. When a major change becomes necessary, notification of such alterations will be sent to the client's agent or to the client's last known address as soon as the institute becomes aware. The institute reserves the right to alter itineraries after departure, without payment of compensation if it is in the interest of the client to do so. Furthermore, compensation is not available if the institute is forced to cancel or in any way change the tour due to force majeure, namely war, riot, civil strife, industrial dispute, terrorist activity, natural or nuclear disaster, fire, adverse weather conditions or other material or external circumstances beyond the institute's control.

7. THE COST OF MAKING CHANGES TO THE HOLIDAY: A client can only make a change to his or her confirmed arrangements if (a) the change is more than 60 days before departure – an administration fee of €75 per person, per change, together with any additional costs incurred by the institute is levied, and (b) changes made 60 days or less before departure are subject to an administration fee of €150 per person, per change, and the additional costs incurred by the institute (which shall be deemed to be the same as the relevant cancellation charges as set out in clause 4) are paid.

8. TRANSPORTATION TO THE TOUR ASSEMBLY POINT: The client is responsible for making his or her own arrangements to arrive at the tour assembly point. There are no arrangements in existence should the client be delayed at the outward or homeward points of departure.

9. PRICES AND SURCHARGES POLICY: The price of your holiday was calculated using exchange rates obtained prior to publication. The price of your travel arrangements is subject to surcharges on the following items for increases in: transportation costs (i.e. fuel), Government action such as increases in VAT or any other Government imposed increase, or currency in relation to adverse rate variations. Even in this case, we will absorb an amount equivalent to 2% of the

holiday price however this excludes insurance premiums and any amendment charges. Only amounts in excess of this 2% will be surcharged. If this means paying more than 10% on the holiday price, you will be entitled to cancel your holiday with a full refund of all monies paid except for any premium paid to us for holiday insurance and amendment charges. Should you decide to cancel because of this, you must exercise your right to do so within 14 days from the issue dated printed on the invoice.

10. LIABILITY: Clients' bookings are accepted on the understanding that they appreciate the possible risks inherent in adventure travel and that they undertake the tours, treks or expeditions featured in the programme at their own volition.

(a) Where the client does not suffer personal injury, the institute accepts liability should any part of the tour arrangements booked with the institute not be supplied as described in this brochure and not be of a reasonable standard. In such a case, the institute will pay reasonable compensation if the client's enjoyment of the tour arrangements has been adversely affected but will pay no compensation if there has been no fault on the part of the institute or its suppliers and the reason for the failure in the tour arrangements was either the client's fault, the actions of someone unconnected with the tour arrangements or could not have been foreseen or avoided by the institute or its suppliers even if all due care has been exercised. Under no circumstances will the institute's liability for each client under this clause exceed the tour cost paid by that client.

(b) Where the client suffers personal injury or death as a result of an activity forming part of the tour arrangements booked with the institute, the institute accepts responsibility unless there has been no fault on the institute's part or its suppliers and the cause was either the client's fault, the action of someone unconnected with the tour arrangements or one which neither the institute nor its suppliers could have anticipated or avoided even with the exercise of all due care.

(c) As the client is solely responsible for making his or her own arrangements to arrive at or depart from the assembly point, the institute hereby excludes liability whatsoever and howsoever arising in respect therefore.

(d) In respect of carriage by air, sea and rail and the provision of accommodation the institute's liability in all cases will be limited in the manner provided by the relevant international conventions.

(e) If additional expenses are incurred through delay, accident or disruption of the tour beyond the control of the institute by force majeure, such expenses must be borne solely by the client.

(f) In respect of whitewater rafting activities, hot air ballooning, bungee jumping & other hazardous pursuits, the client will appreciate that by their nature these activities carry inherent risks. The client hereby agrees to be personally responsible for assuming such risks save to the extent that this does not conflict with sub clause (b) above.

11. NUMBER OF PASSENGERS CARRIED ON VEHICLES: The institute sets its own limits to the number of passengers carried on the vehicles but the institute is

not bound to these numbers under special circumstances as determined by the institute.

12. NO ALTERATION TO THE BOOKING CONDITIONS, ETC: No servant or representative of the institute has any right to alter, vary or waive any of these conditions, nor to undertake any liability whatsoever on behalf of the institute, unless such be in writing and signed by a director of the institute.

13. GOOD HEALTH: The client hereby confirms that he or she is in good health. Any client with a pre-existing medical condition or illness must declare the true nature of such condition at the time of booking and make arrangements for the provision of any drugs, or other cause of treatment that may be required during the tour. Such a client would be required to provide a medical statement from a GP to confirm that they are fit to travel.

14. UNSUITABILITY OF CLIENT, ETC: If the institute considers the client as unsuitable for a tour it may in its absolute discretion cancel such client's booking or decline to carry the client further if that client causes inconvenience or annoyance to other passengers.

15. IMMUNISATION: The client must take all immunisations as are required or generally recommended in relation to the countries due to be visited. For some countries a valid certificate of vaccination against certain diseases may be recommended or required. Full details are set out in this brochure. In addition, the institute recommends that anyone travelling overseas be immunised against typhoid, polio, tetanus and hepatitis. When travelling to more than one country additional vaccinations may be required. Professional medical advice should be sought regarding inoculations.

16. TRAVEL INSURANCE: Travel insurance is mandatory for all clients. Before the client commences a tour he or she must arrange his or her insurance with a reputable insurer, with protection for the full duration of the tour, to cover personal injury, medical expenses, repatriation expenses, loss of luggage and the expenses associated with cancellation or curtailment of a tour. If a client becomes ill, all hospital expenses, doctor's fees and repatriation costs are the client's responsibilities and the institute shall not be liable for any refund of the tour cost.

17. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE: If the client has a problem during the tour, the client should inform the relevant suppliers, or tour leader immediately who will endeavour to put things right. If the client's complaint cannot be completely resolved locally, the client must write to UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland within 20 days of the completion of the tour. It is unlikely that the client will have a complaint that cannot be settled amicably. However, disputes arising out of, or in conjunction with this contract which cannot be amicably settled, may (if the client so wishes) be referred to arbitration. The scheme, details of which can be supplied on

request, provides for a simple and inexpensive method of arbitration based upon documents alone with restricted liability of the client in respect of costs. The scheme does not apply to claims for an amount greater than €2250 per person or €11250 per booking form or to claims which are solely or mainly in respect of physical injury or illness or the consequences of such injury or illness. If the client elects to seek redress under this scheme, written notice requesting arbitration must be made within one month after the scheduled date of completion of the tour.

18. INFORMATION: Information given in all brochures, leaflets and advertising is given in good faith by the institute, and is based on the latest information available at the date of publication. The institute reserves the right to change any of the facilities or vehicles described in the brochure without becoming liable for compensation or refund.

19. TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION: It is the responsibility of the client to be in possession of a valid passport, visa permits and vaccination and other medical certificates as may be required for the whole of the tour. The institute does not accept responsibility for changes in regulations for visas or any particular requirements for visas. The institute cannot be held responsible for the failure of the client to obtain the necessary visas. Information about these matters or related items are given in good faith in this brochure.

20. SPECIAL REQUESTS: Special diet requirements must be advised in writing to the institute when the client makes a booking. The institute will attempt to provide special meals, however, these cannot always be provided.

21. EXCLUSION FROM THE TOUR: The institute shall not be responsible for or be liable to any client who commits an illegal or unlawful act in any country visited. He or she may be excluded from the tour, without any refund of the tour fare.

22. PHOTOGRAPHY RIGHTS: Clients must be aware that our authorised tour leaders and representatives may take photographs and films of our clients whilst on any of the tours of which the institute reserves the right to use such material for any advertising or brochure production without obtaining further consent. The institute also reserves the right to use any comments clients make regarding the tours on any questionnaires or complimentary letters, to use in future promotional literature.

23. SEVERABILITY: If any part, term or provision of this contract is held to be illegal or unenforceable it shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remainder of the contract. Furthermore, if any covenants are held illegal or unenforceable by virtue of its scale, extent or duration, it shall remain valid and enforceable in such reduced scale, extent or duration as any court may decide as being the maximum scale, extent or duration permissible.

24. JURISDICTION AND LAW: The Contract shall be subject to the laws of Ireland and the exclusive jurisdiction of the Ireland Courts.

25. INTERPRETATION: Headings are for convenience only and shall not affect the construction of any provision. Except where the context otherwise indicates, words denoting the singular include the plural and vice versa; words denoting any one gender include all genders; words denoting persons include firms and corporations and vice versa.

26. PERSONAL INFORMATION: The client acknowledges that he/she will provide UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland from time to time with information about the client of a personal nature ('personal information'). The client consents to UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland using any personal information for the purposes of making and completing airline bookings and travel related arrangements on behalf of the client.

I agree to the terms and conditions

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