



Provincial Enlightenment

11 nights from \$4100

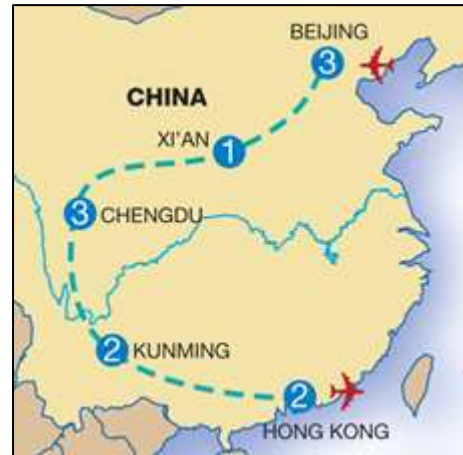
For Reservations Please Call 1-800-22-SWAIN

Destinations

Beijing, Xi'an, Chengdu, Kunming, Hong Kong

Includes

- Internal coach class air in China
- All round trip private airport transfers
- 3 nights Beijing
- Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven and Summer Palace private full day tour
- Great Wall of China with Ming Tombs private full day tour
- Peking Duck dinner
- 1 night Xi'an
- Terracotta Warriors private half day tour
- Tang Dynasty Theater
- 3 nights Chengdu
- Chengdu private half day city tour
- Le Shan private full day tour
- Emei Shan private full day tour
- 2 nights Kunming
- Kunming private half day tour
- Stone Forest private full day tour
- 2 nights Hong Kong
- Old and New Hong Kong private full day tour
- 11 breakfasts 6 lunches 2 dinners



Day 1 Fly USA to Beijing

Day 2 Welcome to Beijing, China

Upon arrival, you will clear customs and immigration before being transferred by private vehicle to your hotel.

For centuries, Beijing has played a major role in China's imperial rule. It was Kublai Khan, a grandson of Genghis Khan, who reunified the Chinese territories and transferred the capital to Beijing during the 13th century. Beijing was not only a lasting imperial city, but also a thriving trading city that served as the easternmost terminus of the caravan routes of the Silk Road.

Today, Beijing remains as it was centuries ago—a great center of power and commerce. It is a bustling metropolis of soaring high-rises, gaudy billboards, teeming highways and a growing international stature. Although a number of Beijing's historical sites are slowly being preserved, many of the city's ancient neighborhoods have been razed in recent years to make way for glitzy commercial skyscrapers and apartment blocks. Nevertheless, Kublai Khan's imperial spirit remains in the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, the Great Wall and the Summer Palace.

Day 3 Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven and Court Cuisine

This morning depart your hotel for magnificent Tiananmen Square, the largest public square in the world, where Mao's picture hangs over the rostrum at the entrance of the Imperial Forbidden City. Walk in the steps of ancient emperors as you tour the powerful Forbidden City, hidden from public view for over 500 years. This is where Chinese emperors resided and ruled the country for 700 years until the year of 1911.

The Imperial Palace provides outstanding examples of the greatest palatial architectural ensembles in China. They illustrate the grandeur of the imperial institution from the Qing Dynasty to the earlier Ming and Yuan dynasties, as well as Manchu traditions, and present evidence on the evolution of this architecture in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Continue to the masterpiece Temple of Heaven, an embodiment of grace and harmony. This is where Ming and Qing emperors prayed for good harvest and it is the largest temple complex remaining in China today. The pomp and grandeur of imperial China lives on in this historic landmark so integral to the nation's soul.

Lunch is at Beijing Fang Shan Restaurant. Set in Bei Hai Park a former imperial garden, Beijing Fang Shan Restaurant offers exquisite food from former Chinese dynasties. Waitresses in period garb lead you to the main dining room, which is splendid, with high painted ceilings and traditional Chinese art.

Day 4 Great Wall at Mutianyu and Summer Palace

A walk along the Great Wall of China ranks high on the wish list of many travelers and today's excursion will confirm it is one of the world's greatest travel experiences. Travel 43 miles by private vehicle northeast of Beijing to the Mutianyu section of the Great Wall, known for its beautiful surroundings of dense woods and rich pastures changing colors with each season of the year. It winds its way over a thousand meters to the crest of a mountain before turning sharply and dipping downhill, forming a triangle known as 'Ox-Horn Wall'. Linger at the towers and broad promenades; contemplate on the spectacular scenery and the lives lost in building this monumental construction that never truly fulfilled its purpose. There is ample time to stroll along its ancient stone promenade and photograph the wall as it winds across impossibly steep mountain areas. A cable car is available to help visitors and is included in today's tour.

Stop for lunch at Xiaolongpu Restaurant nearby, where their specialties include Sturgeon from neighboring Dongting Lake.

Continue on to the Summer Palace, formerly an imperial garden and palace for the Qing emperors. First built in 1750, largely destroyed in the war of 1860 and restored on its original foundations in 1886 - is a masterpiece of Chinese landscape garden design. The natural landscape of hills and open water is combined with artificial features such as pavilions, halls, palaces, temples and bridges to form a harmonious ensemble of outstanding aesthetic value.

Stroll along the famous 700 meter Long Corridor, with its beautiful Painted Gallery (each archway depicts a different scene), and enjoy some peaceful time on Kunming Lake by boat, soaking in the majesty of China's imperial past.

Peking Duck Dinner

This evening, transfer by private vehicle and enjoy a sumptuous Peking Duck dinner at Quanjude (Complete Collection of Virtues) Restaurant, which has a history of 400 years in Beijing and serves the city's finest duck.

Ducks are immersed in condiments unique to the restaurant and are roasted directly over flames stoked by fruit-tree wood. The best roasted duck is date-red, shining with oil, but with a crisp skin and tender meat. The chef cuts the meat into thin slices, each having a piece of skin. Then the meat is served inside very thin pancakes, garnished with Chinese onions and special sauce. The quintessential Beijing dining experience!

Day 5 Fly Beijing to Xi'an

Transfer from your hotel to Beijing airport by private vehicle for your onward flight. Upon arrival you will be met and transferred by private vehicle to your hotel.

In 1974 a farmer from the dusty town of Lintong was digging a well when he unearthed a chamber that housed one of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century. Today the ancient army of more than 7,000 life-sized terracotta soldiers that guard the entombed Emperor Qin Shihuang is considered the "eighth wonder of the world".

Terracotta Warriors

Transfer by private vehicle to the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, home of the world renowned Terracotta Army, an archeological site of unimaginable size and importance. No doubt thousands of statues still remain to be unearthed at this archaeological site, which was not discovered until 1974. Qin (d. 210 B.C.), the first unifier of China, is buried, surrounded by the famous terracotta warriors, at the centre of a complex designed to mirror the urban plan of the capital, Xianyan. The small figures are all different; with their horses, chariots and weapons, they are masterpieces of realism and also of great historical interest.

The statues remain where they were uncovered, protected by a large hangar-like hall. Individual soldiers can be studied more closely in a museum exhibit in an adjacent building. Following your visit you will be returned back to your hotel.

Tang Dynasty Show with Dumpling Dinner

Transfer from your hotel to the Tang Dynasty Theatre. As you travel around China, you'll soon discover that each region has its own unique cuisine. Your evening experience in Xi'an begins with a feast of local dumplings, nearly 20 varieties that are steamed and stuffed with a delicious assortment of vegetables, meats and seafood.

But the banquet is only the prelude to another feast for the senses. You'll experience the local color and pageantry of the Tang Dynasty Show. The performance showcases the music, dance and colorful costumes that have graced the region for centuries. The dinner and entertainment lasts for two and half hours and will fill a memorable evening in the walled city. Return to your hotel by private vehicle.

Day 6 Fly Xi'an to Chengdu

Transfer from your hotel to the airport by private vehicle for your onward flight. Upon arrival you will be met and transferred by private vehicle to your hotel.

This city of 4 million is the capital of the Sichuan region, which is famous for its pandas and spicy cuisine. One additional attraction is Chengdu's many teahouses, an important part of its cultural heritage. There, locals chat the hours away sipping tea and eating snacks, or maybe playing a little mah-jongg or chess. Chengdu also has a vibrant arts community, with many of the country's best and brightest living and working there.

Visit the city's zoo where giant pandas are on display. You can also visit the Giant Panda Breeding and Research Center in the northern part of the city. The Provincial Museum and the Sanxingdui Museum are worth visiting for their amazing Shu/Ba bronze humanoid figures. A couple of days could also be well spent exploring the area around Chengdu. Nearby (25 mi/40 km) is the Wolong Nature Preserve, home to golden monkeys, golden langurs and more than 500 pandas. Although it's not likely that you'll see a panda (sightings are rare), the beauty of the reserve makes the trip worthwhile.

As the main gateway to Tibet, Chengdu has daily flights to Lhasa. It's also the last urban outpost before Tibet, so enjoy the modern conveniences while you can. 940 mi/1,500 km southwest of Beijing.

Chengdu City Tour

Depart from your hotel by private vehicle to the Giant Panda Breeding Base, The giant panda is beloved by people from all over the world. It is a symbol of world biodiversity conservation, peace and friendship. Located six miles from the city in the northern suburb of Chengdu on Futou Hill, the Giant pandas at the Giant Pandas Breeding Base live in large naturalistic habitats, which help the visitor to understand how these animals live in the wild. It is an excellent recreational area and a highlight of any visit to Chengdu.

Then visit the Thatched Cottage of Du Fu. Situated on the side of the Flower Washing Brook in the western suburbs of Chengdu, it is the former residence of the celebrated Tang dynasty poet, Du Fu (712-770 AD). Du Fu lived in Chengdu for three years and nine months, creating 27 poems, many of which are generally regarded as his masterpieces and are still recited today. You will be transferred back to your hotel.

Day 7 Le Shan

The first Buddhist temple in China was built here in Sichuan Province in the 1st century A.D. in the beautiful surroundings of the summit Mount Emei. The addition of other temples turned the site into one of Buddhism's holiest sites. Over the centuries, the cultural treasures grew in number. The most remarkable is the Giant Buddha of Le Shan, carved out of a hillside in the 8th century and looking down on the confluence of three rivers. At 71 m high, it is the largest Buddha in the world.

Arriving at Le Shan you will be able to enjoy views of the Giant Buddha from below and from the side, as well as by river boat, as the stone sculpture faces Mount Emei, with the rivers flowing below his feet. Lunch is included in today's arrangements.

Return to Chengdu around 6:30 pm.

Day 8 Emei Shan

Mount Emei, inscribed as by UNESCO as a cultural world heritage site is notable for its exceptionally diverse vegetation, ranging from subtropical to subalpine pine forests. Some of the trees there are more than 1,000 years old. It is also revered by Chinese Buddhists as one of the four Holy Mountains and is shrouded in myths and legends.

On arrival take a chair lift to the highest peak, the Peak of the Ten Thousand Buddhas (Wanfo Ding), which reaches a height of 10,170 feet. A local lunch will be had on the mountain. The summit commands a grand view of rolling mountain peaks, sometimes visible, sometimes emerging from the clouds like small islands in an enormous ocean.

Day 9 Fly Chengdu to Kunming

Transfer from your hotel to the airport by private vehicle for your onward flight. Upon arrival you will be met and transferred by private vehicle to your hotel.

Kunming, at an elevation of 6,200 feet, is surrounded by gorgeous mountain scenery. It is home to many of China's ethnic minorities-tribal people-who consider themselves distinctly different from China's predominant ethnic group, the Han. The city is also intriguing because some of the neighborhoods escaped the 1950s Chinese modern architecture that characterizes most cities in the rest of the country.

Things to see in Kunming include an interesting market, some ruined pagodas, the Yuantong Temple (a glorious building set on Green Lake) and stores selling tribal handicrafts. A highpoint about Kunming is that its traditional Chinese teahouses have survived. Tucked into side streets, they serve as neighborhood centers where older citizens play games and smoke the afternoon away-visitors are welcome.

There are many lakes and old temples outside the city that make fun destinations for day trips. Most notable are the Huating Temple (built in the 1300s) and the 300-year-old Golden Temple (bronze-covered pillars, roofs and gates). Another attraction in the vicinity is the Stone Forest of Lunan. These oddly shaped rock formations are about 75 miles southeast of town.

Kunming City Tour

Depart for a city tour that visits Western Hill with Dragon Gate and Huating Buddhist Temple.

Sometimes called the Sleeping Beauty Hills (their contours are said to resemble the outline of a sleeping maiden when viewed from afar) this densely forested range of hills on the western banks of Lake Dian is home to a number of Buddhist and Daoist temples and pavilions carved into the sheer rock face.

Along the way, the first major temple is the large and impressive Ming dynasty Huating Si, which has statues of 500 arhats, 'saints' or sages who have fully realized for themselves the Buddhist Doctrine, and have attained freedom from the cycle of suffering and rebirth.

At the conclusion of today's tour you will return to your hotel.

Day 10 Stone Forest

Transfer by private vehicle today to the Stone Forest, located in Lunan Yi, which is about 75 miles from Kunming, covers an area of 96,000 acres and includes both large and small stone forests, as well as many other scenic spots. Walking through the Stone Forest, visitors marvel at the natural stone masterpieces and are bewitched by the intricate formations. The magnificent, strange and steep landscape creates countless labyrinthine vistas, including Major Stone Forest, Minor Stone Forest and Naigu Stone Forest; all of which feature stones in various formations. Animals, plants, and even human figures can be found here. Some are elegant, some are rugged, and each is lifelike with its own distinguishing characteristics. After a local lunch you will be transferred to your Kunming hotel.

Day 11 Fly Kunming to Hong Kong

Transfer from your hotel to the airport by private vehicle for your onward flight. Upon arrival you will be met and transferred by private vehicle to your hotel.

Hong Kong is a place of contrasts: geographically, socially and economically. Although many Asian cities claim to be where East meets West, the former British Crown Colony-whose largely Chinese population was ruled by Europeans for 156 years-is probably the closest the world comes to the genuine article.

Perched precariously on the edge of mainland China, Hong Kong has been battered by geopolitical forces for centuries. Thanks to its strategic deepwater harbor and proximity to Asia's most populous nation, the city profited as the capitalist gateway for the communist giant to the north. What was once a fishing village became one of the world's busiest international ports and business centers.

Scratch the cosmopolitan, high-tech surface, however, and you'll discover vestiges of ancient China lying just below the city's modern urban facade and, in some cases, right alongside it. Residents invariably live in two worlds: Skyscrapers and enormous shopping malls sit next to narrow alleys crowded with traditional vendors' stalls. Businesspeople use cell phones to consult fortune-tellers before making important decisions. Taoist priests exorcise evil spirits from buildings, even from the city's racecourses. In sleepy walled villages, farmers tend their crops in the same way they have for generations.

Day 12 Old and New Hong Kong

Make your way on foot to the ferry terminal and cross Victoria Harbour by the humble but legendary 'Star' Ferry service between Kowloon and Hong Kong Island that offers a memorable and scenic boat trip across one of the worlds most-photographed harbors.

At Central, commence a two-hour guided walk that takes you to the heart of Central business district where historic buildings stand amidst ultra modern office buildings, through and into the back streets of the old city of what was known as Victoria where modern Hong Kong began in 1841. Highlights include the Legislative Council Building, Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank Building, the old Bank of China Building, the Court of Final Appeal, Central Government Offices and St John's Cathedral. Ride the Central - Mid-Levels Escalator and explore places like SoHo, antiques shops along Hollywood Road and market stalls on Graham Street. Enjoy one hour of free time to explore Hollywood Road.

From Wanchai take the Peak Tram to Victoria Peak for the breath-taking 360-degree view of the bustling harbour, Hong Kong Island and Kowloon as far as the eye can see. Break for lunch at the stylish contemporary Tien Yi Chinese Restaurant at the Peak. Following lunch continue by vehicle to Aberdeen village via the scenic resort areas of Repulse Bay and Deep Water Bay. At Aberdeen board a sampan to see the fishing junks and the Jumbo floating restaurant moored there. The tour will continue to Stanley Markets where you will have free time to stroll around historic fishing lanes jam-packed with vendors selling Chinese artwork, silk collectibles and curios. Return to your Hong Kong or Kowloon hotel.

Day 13 Fly Hong Kong to USA

Hotels

For more information about the hotels visited in this itinerary please click the hotel name below.

City	Standard	Superior	Deluxe	Luxury
Beijing	-	Traders Hotel	China World Hotel	-
Xi'an	-	Grand Mercure on Renmin Square	Sofitel on Renmin Square	-
Chengdu	-	Sofitel Wanda (Deluxe)	Sofitel Wanda (Executive)	-
Kunming	-	Grand park Hotel (Deluxe Lakeview)	Grand Park Hotel (Privilege Club)	-
Hong Kong	-	InterContinental Grand Stanford	Kowloon Shangri-La	-

Pricing

To determine pricing for your tour select the appropriate travel season and desired accommodation level from the table below.

	Standard	Superior	Deluxe	Luxury
4/1/09-4/30/09	-	\$4550	\$5220	-
5/1/09-5/31/09	-	\$4390	\$5130	-
6/1/09-6/30/09	-	\$4260	\$5000	-
7/1/09-7/31/09	-	\$4210	\$4890	-
8/1/09-8/31/09	-	\$4320	\$5000	-
9/1/09-9/30/09	-	\$4480	\$5190	-
10/1/09-10/31/09	-	\$4560	\$5230	-
11/1/09-11/30/09	-	\$4380	\$5090	-
12/1/09-12/31/09	-	\$4100	\$4750	-
1/1/09-1/31/10	-	\$4190	\$4800	-
2/1/10-2/28/10	-	\$4130	\$4720	-
3/1/10-3/31/10	-	\$4350	\$5140	-
Single Traveler Supplement <i>from</i>	-	\$2280	\$2720	-
Single Room Supplement <i>from</i>	-	\$1090	\$1520	-

International Airfare Pricing

Routing: LAX or SFO-PEK/HKG-LAX or SFO

4/1/09-5/28/09, 8/17/09-10/25/09, 2/5/10-2/11/10, 3/12/10-3/31/10	\$1230
5/29/09-6/18/09, 7/20/09-8/16/09, 12/11/09-12/24/09	\$1520
6/19/09-7/19/09	\$1710
10/26/09-12/10/09, 12/25/09-2/4/10, 2/12/10-3/11/09	\$1070

Terms & Conditions

*Prices are per person, twin/double share in USD. Travel may be restricted to certain days of the week and be available from one or multiple US departure points. Add on fares are available from most US cities and surcharges may be applicable for travel on particular days of the week. Seats are limited and may not be available on every flight. Hotels and tours remain subject to availability. US and Foreign Govt. taxes and fees vary depending on the itinerary selected and may range from \$90 to \$395 per person. Passenger Facility Charges of up to \$18 per person and the September 11th Security Fee of up to \$10 per person, are not included. After ticketing changes may not be permissible in some circumstances, or a change fee may be applied. Cancellation penalties and other booking or alteration restrictions may exist. Please note that some air segments may be served by an associated carrier. Full payment for special deals may be required within a number of days of the reservation being made as nominated by your consultant at the time of booking (or 60 days prior to departure). Please note blackout dates may apply to Christmas, New Year and local special event periods. Prices indicated remain subject to change without notice. Group inquiries are welcome however specials remain subject to hotel and airline capacity control and therefore may not be applicable for group travel. The best deal available for group travel will always be given in lieu of the offer indicated. Unless otherwise indicated all travel must be completed by March 31, 2010 if not before.