

New Frontier and Shangri-la

Highlights

This 17-day journey offers the most splendid highlights of China and Tibet:

- One week in depth explore of Tibet, known for its exceptional culture, fascinating people, exotic architecture and breathtaking landscapes
- Lijiang Old Town, World Cultural Heritage of UNESCO, is well known for the fascinating culture of Naxi people
- Ride the brand new Qinghai-Tibet Railway
- Special gourmet dinners and cultural performances
- Deluxe five-star hotels or best local hotels throughout

Day-to-Day Itinerary

Day 1, U.S./Beijing

- Depart from US to Beijing.

Day 2, Beijing

Beijing, the 800-year-old ancient capital of China, is the exuberant heart of the Middle Kingdom. With thirteen million residents, it is the living epitome of China's past, present and future. Beijing Peninsula, 1 night

- Day 2, arrive in Beijing. Meet our guide and transfer to the hotel. D

Day 3-6, Lijiang

Lijiang, seat of Naxi Autonomous Prefecture. Naxi people are known for their matriarchal society, their pictographic language and their distinctive music. Grand Hotel (4-star, located at the entrance of old town), 4 nights

- Day 3, fly to Lijiang. B/L/D
- Day 4, explore the **Lijiang Old Town** (Wang Gu Pavilion for a bird-view of Lijiang town), Cultural Heritage of UNESCO. The architecture is tiled-roofed house with double-deckers. The entire house has three memorial archways and

- one screen wall facing the gate of the house. Afternoon excursions include the Black Dragon Pool, Naxi Culture Museum and the Yufeng Monastery where there is 500-year old camellia. **Performance: Naxi Ancient Dongba Music** B/L/D
- Day 5, full day excursion to the **Tiger Leaping Gorge**, one of the deepest gorges in the world, where the Yangtze River drops from the Tibetan Plateau.
 - Day 6, free to explore Lijiang. **Performance: Bon Fire Dance** B/L/D
 - Day 7, visit the **Baisha Village**, the old capital of Naxi People and meet Dr. Ho, the famous local herbalist. Lunch arranged in local family. In the afternoon, visit the **Jade Dragon Snow Mountain** (5500m) and Yuhu Village for former residence of Dr. Joseph Rock, who prepared the first dictionary of Naxi language during the decades he lived in Lijiang. En route, stop by Ganhaizi Grassland and Baishuihe River. Fly to Chengdu in the evening. B/L/D

Day 7-8, Chengdu

Chengdu is known for traditional arts and crafts, for Sichuan cuisine, and as home of the giant panda. Jing Jiang Hotel, 2 nights

- Day 7, arrive in Chengdu and transfer to hotel. B/L/D
- Day 8, explore **Giant Panda Breeding Center**. **Performance: Sichuan Opera (Changing-face)** B/L/D

Day 9-14, Tibet

Lhasa, the majestic capital of Tibet, is known for its ethereal beauty and spirituality. Today it is home to six million Tibetan Buddhists.

- Day 9, fly to Lhasa, continue to **Tsedang**, stay at Tsedang Guest House (best local 2-star). Visit **Yongbulakang** (Yunbu Lakang), which is the oldest-known dwelling in Tibet, the home of the legendary Yarlong kings. The Yarlong king, believed to have descended from the sky around 130 B.C., ruled Tibet before Songtsen Gampo (608 to 650 AD). B/L/D
- Day 10, explore the **Samye Monastery**, Tibet's first monastery founded on 779. Continue to **Shigatse**, Tibet's second largest city, is center of west Tibet. Stay at Shigatse Hotel (best local 3-star) for 2 nights. B/L/D
- Day 11, visit the **Tashilhunpo Monastery** (means "Heap of Glory"), founded on 1447, the seat of the Panchen Lama whose influence is the same as Dalai Lama.
- Day 12, drive back to Lhasa along magnificent the Yalung Tsangpo River (Brahmaputra in Indian). Stay in Lhasa Hotel (best local 4-satr). B/L/D
- Day 13, visit **Tibet Museum** and the **Norbulingka**, the summer palace of Dalai Lama. This afternoon journey to the **Jokhang Temple**, built 1,300 years ago to commemorate the marriage of the Chinese Princess Wencheng to the Tibetan

- King Songtsen Gampo. Later tour the **Barkhor Market** and visit a Tibetan family. B/L/D
- Day 14, explore one of the world's architectural wonders – the **Potala Palace**. This immense palace is thirteen stories high with over 1,000 rooms including the Dalai Lama's residence, tombs and numerous prayer halls. Observe Tibetan monks chanting prayers at the **Sera Monastery**. Performance: [Tibetan Dinner & Dance](#) B/L/D

Day 15, Qinghai-Tibet Railway

Qinghai-Tibet railway, 1220-mile between Lhasa and Xining (capital of Qinghai Province), is the highest railway in the world, with mountain over 16,000 feet (Kun Lun Mountain Pass, 15,731 feet). This \$3.3 billion line began to run since July 1, 2006. The train, sealed like plane, helps passengers from high altitude.

- Day 15, take the train N918, leaving Lhasa at 9:32 (soft bed). The best scenery (frozen tundra zone and no-habitable zone) is at the first 12 hour run of the train. B/L/D
- Day 16, arrive in Xining. Transfer to airport for flight to Beijing. Stay at *Peninsula Hotel* for the night. B/L/D

Day 17, Beijing/U.S.

- Transfer to the airport for the flight to U.S. Arrive in U.S. at the same day due to the time difference. B