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China Essence plus Yangtze Cruise - Deluxe - 11 Days

A Deluxe China trip! Beijing, Xi'an, Shanghai and the Yangtze cruise, all in China Essence Tour plus Yangtze Cruise.

240-Hour Visa-Free Transit in China

China is implementing a 10-day (240 hours) visa-free transit policy. The transit program allows visitors who have existing flight bookings from China to a third country (region) to snag a visa on arrival at a Chinese airport (port) and stay for 10 days before departure. Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan all count as third destinations.

Passport holders of 55 countries, including the United States and the United Kingdom, can enter visa-free through any of the 60 open airports (ports) in 24 provincial regions, covering popular tourist cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Xi'an, Chengdu and Guangzhou.

Read more about 240-Hour Visa-Free Transit in China.

Meanwhile, citizens from 47 countries can enter China visa-free for up to 30 days.

Date	Destinations	Attractions, Meals & Transport
1	Day 1: Beijing Arrival	Welcome to Beijing! Meet your guide and transfer to the hotel. Beijing, ancient capital, modern metropolis, the home of emperors and the heart of a great cultural tradition. Spend the rest of the day to explore Beijing's historical yet dynamic atmosphere on your own.
2	Day 2: Beijing	**Meals: Buffet breakfast, Western lunch** You can't come to Beijing and not get a photo taken on one of Beijing's cultural icons -- the **Tian'anmen Square**, the world's largest square lying in the middle of Beijing's central axis. Head directly to the north of the Tian'anmen Square for the **Forbidden City** (UNESCO), the world's largest imperial palace complex. The yellow-glazed tiles and ancient relics in the Forbidden City make it easy to feel like you're being transported back in time, when the city existed in all its imperial glory. Then head 15 km from central Beijing to one of the capital's most visited sites, the **Summer Palace** (UNESCO). Once as a resort for the imperial court, the Summer Palace is an opulent mixture of palaces, temples, gardens, pavillions, lakes and corridors. It's a perfect time to sit, catch your breath and take in the beauty of this magnificent place.

3	Day 3: Beijing	**Meals: Buffet breakfast, Western lunch, Special Dinner (Quanjude Peking Duck)** Today you'll visit another renowned imperial site, the **Temple of Heaven** (UNESCO), where ancient Chinese emperors made sacrifices to Heaven and prayed for bountiful harvests. Visit **Great Wall at Mutianyu** for its awe-inspiring former glory, winding through mountain scenery, with easier walking conditions and fewer crowds compared with Badaling Great Wall. You won't regret the fresh air, the nature and your marvelous Great Wall experience. Traditional Peking Duck at Century-old Quanjude Restaurant for special dinner tonight.
4	Day 4: Beijing - Xi'an (by air)	**Meals: Buffet breakfast, Chinese lunch** Today you'll be taken to the culture of grassroots Beijingers -- **Hutong tour** with pedicab ride. The Hutong courtyard, traditional courtyard homes of local Beijing people, is symmetrical and neat inside with room on all four sides. You'll be welcomed by hospitable Beijing residents during your home visit. Your next stop today is the **Yonghegong Lama Temple**. Initially built as a prince residence and later transformed into a royal resort palace, Yonghegong finally became the Buddhist temple as we know today, where Lamas read scriptures and hold Buddhist ceremonies. Then head to the airport for your Xi'an flight. Transfer to the hotel upon arrival.
5	Day 5: Xi'an	**Meals: Buffet breakfast, Western lunch, Special Dinner (Dumpling Dinner & Tang Dynasty Show)** Take an excursion to the **Terracotta Warriors Museum**. Admire the 7,000 terracotta soldiers that have stood guard over China's first emperor for over 2,200 years. "A nation that could create such a great history and culture will certainly create a bright future," quoted former US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, who has visited the Terracotta Army three times. Dip your toes into the century-old **Great Mosque**, which blends Islamic mosque styles and traditional Chinese architectural elements. If you happen to be interested in Chinese folk arts, then a visit to the **Gao's Familiy** is a must for your journey in Xi'an. You'll feast your eyes with the Chinese Shadow Puppetry, a form of theatre acted by colorful silhouette figures made from leather or paper, accompanied by music and singing and manipulated by puppeteers using rods. Tonight experience the enchantment and the splendors of the **Dumpling Dinner & Tang Dynasty Show**, taking you back thousands of years.
6	Day 6: Xi'an - Chongqing (by air) - Yangtze River Cruise (President Prime)	**Meals: Buffet breakfast, Western lunch, Dinner (on board the Yangtze Cruise)** Head to **Shaanxi Provincial Museum**, housing large quantities, full categories, and high grade precious art treasures, stone carvings and unearthed historical relics of the Han and Tang dynasties. Your day will start with **Xi'an Ancient City Wall**, one of 10 top attractions you must see in Xi'an and is the best-preserved city wall in China as well one of the largest ancient military defensive systems across the globe. Cycle on the nine-mile City Wall, one of the largest ancient military defense systems in the world. Then head to the airport for your Chongqing flight. Transfer to the hotel upon arrival. On arrival, meet your guide at the airport. Embark the Yangtze Cruise President Prime at the Chongqing Pier.

7	Day 7: Yangtze River Cruise	**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner** Today, start sailing for a distance of 430 miles in all the great gorges. In the morning, you could enjoy the spectacular view from the deck or you could take an optional tour to **Fengdu** - China's "City of Ghosts" (CNY 280 per person). In legend, Fengdu was a ghost city and the entrance of heaven or hell, and the imaged ghost statures here reveal ancient Chinese religion and belief. After lunch, take a shore excursion to the **Shibaozhai**. The Shibaozhai is a 12-storey wooden pavilion built in the Ming Dynasty, which looks like a giant bonsai on the Yangtze River. A cofferdam was built around the Shibaozhai to protect it from the rising water level caused by the construction of the Three Gorges Dam. After returning to the cruise, you will be invited to the Captain's Welcome Party.
8	Day 8: Yangtze River Cruise	**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner** This morning sail into **Qutang Gorge**, the shortest, narrowest and probably the most fascinating one. Later sail through **Wu Gorge**. It is well-known for the legend of 12 fairy maidens became the 12 peaks of Wu Gorge. Then you could take an optional tour to **White Emperor Town**, which is famous for historical temples and legends (CNY 280 per person). After lunch change to the "peapod" boat for sailing deep into the **Shennong Stream** for a 3 hours exploration. The contrasting heights of these gorges and the narrowness of the river make this area one of the most dramatic scenes in the world. Notice the ruins of the ancient plank road along the cliff face as well as the coffins suspended from the cliffs above. Afterwards, sail through the **Five-step Ship Lock**.
9	Day 9: Yangtze River Cruise - Yichang Departure- Shanghai (by air)	**Meals: Buffet breakfast** In the morning take a shore excursion to the **Three Gorges Dam Site**, the largest dam and hydroelectric project in the world. Then sail down the **Xiling Gorge**. Later, disembark at Yichang and transfer for a flight to Shanghai. On arrival, meet and transfer to your hotel.

10	Day 10: Shanghai	**Meals: Buffet breakfast, Special lunch (Dim Sum Banquet), Western dinner** Put all the quick paces and the hustles and bustles aside and stroll through the **Yu Garden**, you'll suddenly find yourself in an oasis of calm and beauty. Walk around the **Old City of Shanghai** with its maze of walkways, ponds, pavilions and stone bridges exuding Shanghai's history and stories. Your next stop is **the Bund**, a perfect introduction to Shanghai's glorious past. Stunning structures sit side-by-side with dazzling skyscrapers and super structures. Nicknamed as Shanghai's Wall Street, the Bund is filled with banks and institutions, even the bricks could talk! You simply can't miss the **Dim Sum Banquet** for special lunch in Lyubolang Restaurant. Try a wide varirty of mouth-watering Shanghai snacks. Go all the way to the lookout deck for a bird's eye view on the **Shanghai World Financial Center**, the tallest structure in the Chinese mainland and the third highest sky-scraper in the world consisting of offices, hotels, conference rooms, observation decks and ground-floor shopping malls. Then get a good view and the best taste of the essence of Chinese folk art in **Tianzifang Artist Area**. Golden glows of the old shikumen-style buildings shine with all the galleries, bars, restaurants and lounges inside. We'll call it a day after the exhilarating **ERA Acrobatic Show** tonight.
11	Day 11: Shanghai Departure	**Meals: Buffet breakfast** Transfer to the airport. End of service.
12	Spotlight Services	**Guaranteed Service**: Shopping-free tour route with zero extra charges **Lavish Meals**: Western cuisine plus special local delicacies **Deluxe Auto**: Buick MPV **Excellent Tour Guide**: Experienced English-speaking tour guide **Hand-picked Programs**: Quanjude Peking Duck, Dumpling Dinner & Tang Dynasty Show, ERA Acrobatic Show **Deluxe Accommodation**: Deluxe room-sets in 5-star hotels downtown - Regent Hotel Beijing - Hilton Xi'an - Yangtze Cruise President Prime or similar cruise ship - Westin Bund Center Shanghai

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