



CHINA, TIBET & THE YANGZI

Unlock ancient secrets and witness natural wonders in a journey through the very best of China and Tibet. From Beijing's Forbidden City to the Dalai Lama's Potala Palace and Shanghai's futuristic skyline.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Small Ship Cruising, Cruises, Suggested Itineraries



China, Asia, Tibet



17 days from AU\$14,320 pp



Private

Journey Overview

Unlock ancient secrets and witness natural wonders in a journey through the very best of China and Tibet. From Beijing's Forbidden City to the Dalai Lama's Potala Palace and Shanghai's futuristic skyline. Drift along the Yangtze River through the breathtaking Three Gorges. Meet some of China's best-known residents, the giant pandas, and sip tea like a local.

Journey Highlights

- Explore Beijing's Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square and the Temple of Heaven
- Unravel the mystery of Xian's Terracotta Warriors
- Step inside the former winter residence of the Dalai Lama, Potala Palace
- Cruise along the mighty Yangtze River through the dramatic Three Gorges
- Climb or ride to the top of one of mankind's greatest engineering feats, the Great Wall
- Immerse yourself in the art, shopping and striking architecture of futuristic Shanghai
- Hop in a pedicab and travel back to yesteryear through Beijing's narrow hutongs
- Meet the giant panda, China's loveable national treasure



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Beijing

Welcome to the vibrant, iconic and ever-surprising world of Beijing. Settle into your luxury hotel and spend the rest of the day at leisure.

Four Seasons Beijing

Day 2: Beijing

Start your city discovery at the Temple of Heaven. Walk in the footsteps of past emperors and their royal processions to arrive at the magical landmark. There's no better place to enjoy the most traditionally Chinese of morning activities, tai chi. Watch or take part in your own private lesson with a local master (optional). Continue to the Forbidden City, built during the Ming Dynasty and recognised as the centre of the world for nearly 500 years. Today, as the National Palace Museum, it invites you to get lost amongst the largest collection of Chinese artworks and artefacts in the world. Cross to Tiananmen Square, an unmistakable statement of power from the founding fathers of the People's Republic. Soak up the atmosphere on one of the world's most famous and forbidding public plazas, flanked by Soviet-inspired architecture and Mao's Mausoleum.

Four Seasons Beijing | Meals: BL

Day 3: Beijing

Witness one of the great man-made wonders of the world: The Great Wall. Stretching over 8,000 kilometres from the western desert to the east coast, this structure is a triumph of engineering and a direct link with the legendary emperors of China's past. Leave the crowds behind at the Mutianyu section and scale the steps for sweeping views of the wall snaking through the Yan Mountains, or ride the cable car up and toboggan down. Later, trace the history of old Beijing as you hop aboard a pedicab to explore the city's labyrinth of lanes and alleys, known as 'hutongs'. Here, amongst some of the few surviving hutongs, step inside the home of a local family for a rare glimpse into a bygone era.

Four Seasons Beijing (Premier Room) | Meals: BL

Day 4: Beijing - Xian

Travel by train to Xian, the first capital of unified China. Wander through the vibrant Muslim Quarter to the Great Mosque, the largest and best preserved of the early mosques of China. Then, settle into your luxury hotel.

Shangri-La Hotel Xian / Meals: BL

Day 5: Xian

Visit the Terra Cotta Warriors, an astonishing symbol of imperial might. Buried for 2,000 years until farmers stumbled upon them in 1974, the Terracotta Army of Qin Shi Huang is one of the world's greatest archaeological finds. Continue on to the City Wall, a surviving symbol of Xian's infallible ancient military defence system. Cycle or stroll along the top, taking in its majestic battlements as you go.

Shangri-La Hotel Xian / Meals: BL

Day 6: Xian - Chengdu

Rise early for your morning train to Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province. After lunch, discover the mix of serene parks and startling modernity in China's fourth city. Take a stroll around People's Park, where mah-jong, tai chi and tea-drinking feature amid the Zen-style gardens. Head to a local teahouse where a fascinating tea demonstration awaits.

Shangri-La Hotel Chengdu / Meals: BL

Day 7: Chengdu

Meet some of China's best-known residents at the Chengdu Panda Breeding Research Centre, the most famous conservation and protection area for these rare animals. Immerse yourself in the world of the pandas, watching them play and devour piles of bamboo. This evening, marvel at Sichuan Opera's face-changing act. This 300-year-old art form sees performers switch masks with every swipe of their hands.

Shangri-La Hotel Chengdu) / Meals: BL

Day 8: Chengdu - Lhasa (3,656m)

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Lhasa, the heart and soul of Tibet. Lhasa is one of the highest cities on earth and your home for the next three nights. Settle into your hotel to relax and acclimatise.

Shangri-La Hotel Lhasa / Meals: B

Day 9: Lhasa

Discover the city's long history, unique culture and isolated location surrounded by the world's highest mountains. Visit the Ani Tsankhung Nunnery, a Buddhist nunnery built in the 7th century by Songsten Gampo, before moving onto the Jokhang Temple, Tibet's most revered religious structure, in the heart of Lhasa. Here, you'll get a real sense of daily life in Tibet as people come together for one purpose: to express their devotion. Encircling the temple is Barkhor Square, where you can follow pilgrims from all over Tibet as they complete their *kora* (walking clockwise around a sacred spot). In nearby Barkhor Bazaar, lose yourself amongst prayer beads and wheels, carpets, and thangkas. Then, see artisans at work in the Drogenling Tibet Handicraft Development Centre. Later, pause at the serene Sera Monastery, one of Tibet's Great Six monasteries and a renowned seat of Buddhist learning. Explore the monastic city before watching the dramatic debates held in the outside courtyards as part of the monks' training.

Shangri-La Hotel Lhasa | Meals: BL

Day 10: Lhasa

Visit Sanggye Dhunghor, the Thousand Buddha Shrine, and count some 200 Buddha statues carved into a dramatic rock face. Then, climb to the Potala Palace, the UNESCO World Heritage site dominating the skyline of Lhasa. This intricate building was commissioned by the Dalai Lama in 1645 and became the winter residence of nine Dalai Lamas. See statues and treasured prayer halls at every turn and admire the walls exquisitely covered with frescoes depicting episodes from Buddhist scriptures, landscapes and historical events. Step outside where, on a clear day, the view of the Himalayas is magical. Continue to the Norbulingka, "the Jewel Park", and bask in the tranquillity of this 99-acre haven. Finally, venture inside the palace of the present Dalai Lama, left exactly as it was when he fled to India in 1959.

Shangri-La Hotel Lhasa | Meals: BL

Day 11: Lhasa - Chongqing

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Chongqing, a former walled fortress and China's de facto capital during World War II. Discover an intriguing history in the Stilwell Museum, housed in the WWII headquarters and residence of U.S. Army hero and leader of American forces in China, General Joseph Stilwell. Immerse yourself more deeply in China's captivating culture in the Huguang Guild Hall, an impressive complex built as a meeting place for immigrants from the provinces of Hunan, Hubei, Guangdong and Guangxi. Later, board the Yangzi Explorer for your cruise along the world's third-longest river. Settle into your sumptuous cabin before meeting your fellow guests in the Explorer Bar. Bask in the night-time cityscape of Chongqing as you sail deep into the Three Gorges region of the mighty Yangtze River.

Yangzi Explorer | Meals: BD**Day 12: Cruising the Yangtze River**

Explore the Yangtze, your way. Uncover a secret project hidden in the mountains of Fuling. Hidden for 50 years, the 816 Underground Project is the world's largest artificial military cave. Alternatively, venture deep into the White Crane Ridge Underwater Museum. See the intricate ancient rock carvings, unique flora and fauna of the Yangtze River. Then, stop at the colourful market to sample local delicacies, including Fuling's famous pickles. After a day exploring, there's no better place to re-charge than back on your cruiser where personalised service is a given.

Yangzi Explorer | Meals: BLD**Day 13: Cruising the Yangtze**

Today is all about the spectacular Three Gorges. Wind through the canyons of Wu Gorge, known as "witches gorge" for its depth and twisting nature, and between the dramatic limestone cliffs of the narrow Qutang Gorge. Later, drift along the crystal-clear waters and forested slopes of Shennong Stream during a ride in a traditional sampan. As the boat gently floats through this stunning riverine gorge, spy hanging coffins stowed high within the limestone cliffs - evidence of early settlements. Pause at a traditional trackers village for a fascinating glimpse into a traditional rural Chinese community. Back onboard, enjoy a farewell feast of Chinese delicacies.

Yangzi Explorer | Meals: BLD

Day 14: Yichang - Shanghai

Meander through Xiling, the longest gorge, to the vast Three Gorges Dam with a tour of the site and exhibition centre. A massive feat of engineering, at over two kilometres in length, the dam is the world's largest hydroelectric power station in terms of capacity and energy generation. After your tour, bid farewell to the Yangtze and journey to Yichang city. Descend into the Three Travellers' Cave, a magical limestone cave named for three celebrities in the Tang Dynasty, who visited the caves in 819 and composed poems to mark the occasion. Enjoy the serenity of Riverside Park before transferring to Yichang Airport for your flight to Shanghai, China's glittering commercial metropolis.

The Peninsula Shanghai | Meals: BL

Day 15: Shanghai

A change of pace today as you're transported from the urban crush to Zhujiajiao, an ancient water town known as the 'Venice of Shanghai'. Only 45 minutes west of central Shanghai, this enthralling river town seems worlds apart from the modern megacity. Wander the tiny stone-paved lanes and stop awhile to take in the regal stone bridges arching over bubbling waterways lined with carefully preserved buildings, homes and courtyards from the Qing and Ming Dynasties. Find old enterprises, such as a soy sauce factory, rice commissary and a traditional Chinese herbal pharmacy. Head north of the old town to Kezhi Yuan, once amongst the largest private gardens in China, for some quiet contemplation before your final private boat ride down the pearlescent streams.

The Peninsula Shanghai | Meals: B

Day 16: Shanghai

Welcome to the China of tomorrow. Join your expert guide for a revealing tour of the city's diverse neighbourhoods. Amble along the Bund, the city's famous promenade, taking in its historic architecture and famed skyline. Navigate the tree-lined avenues of the French Concession, with charming facades and alfresco cafés proving Shanghai's reputation as the "Paris of the East". Bask in the wonders of the Old Town, set around the exquisite Yu Garden, and lose yourself in the warren of alleys and lanes. After lunch, explore artist studios and galleries in the thriving M-50 Contemporary Art District.

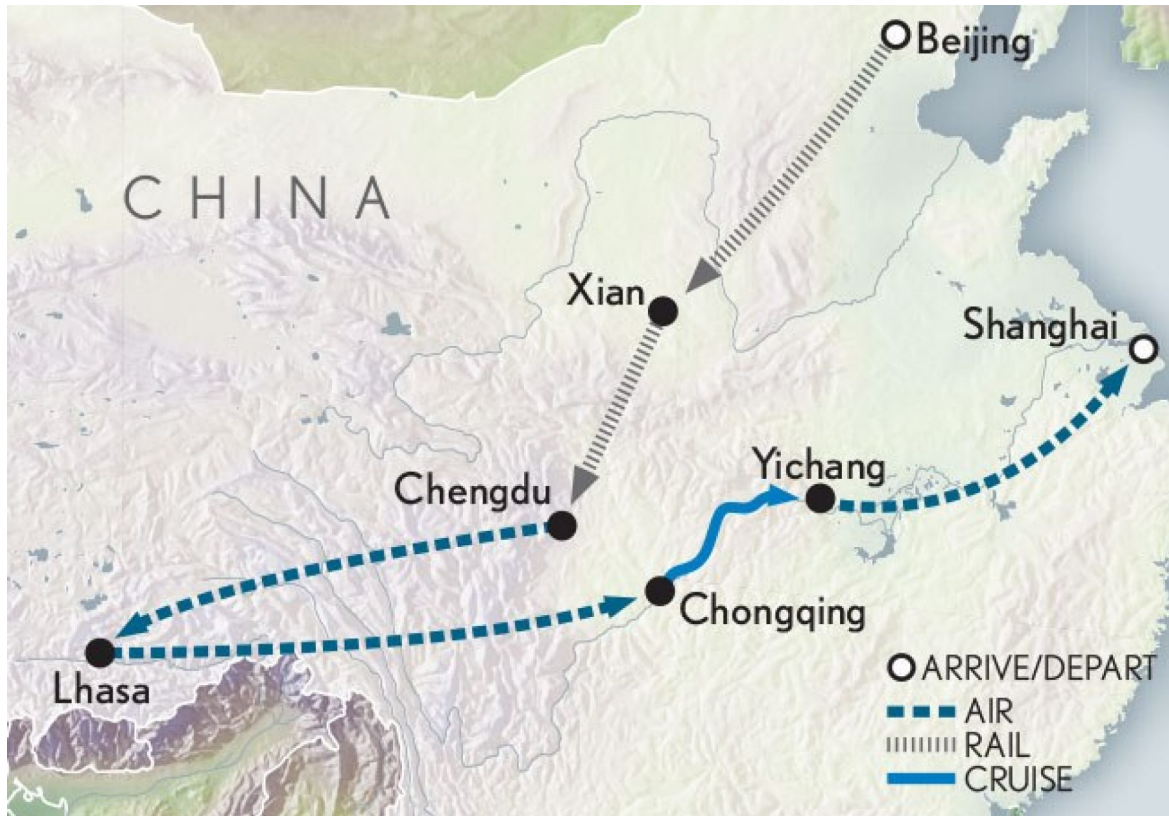
The Peninsula Shanghai | Meals: BL

Day 17: Depart Shanghai

Your adventure in China comes to an end as you transfer to the airport.

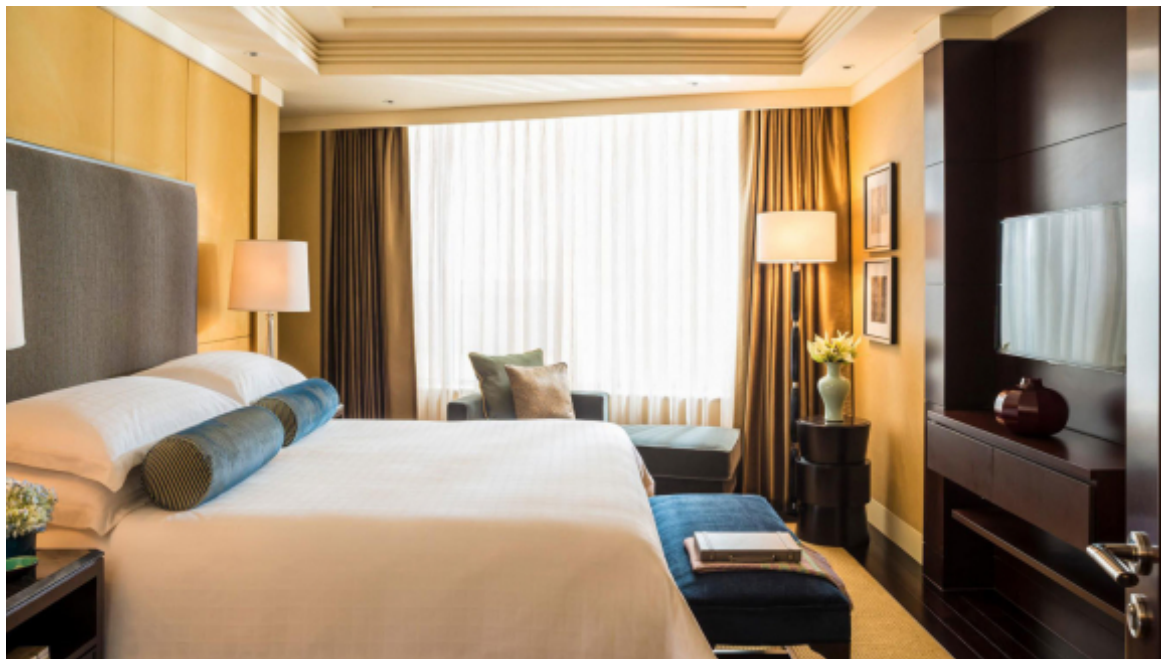
Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

Four Seasons Hotel Beijing



Enter the Four Seasons Hotel Beijing and be graced by modern elegance and unsurpassed sophistication all edged in a traditional Chinese style. The hotel boasts 313 guest rooms including 66 suites, each conveying a warm residential atmosphere. Guest rooms and suites are carefully designed with areas for sleeping and living, allowing for maximum comfort and relaxation. The bathroom is contemporary, featuring a deep soaking tub and a separate shower. Advanced technology features include wireless and high-speed cable internet access, a flat screen television, an MP3 player connection and an espresso machine.

The spa is the perfect place to relax after a day of exploring Beijing with a wide selection of therapies and treatments on offer. You might even try a traditional Chinese medicine consultation for the ultimate in restoring balance and well-being. Professional staff offer a seamless service and a warm welcome to this beautifully appointed hotel.

Why we like it

- Located within the Yansha area, the city's most dynamic business and entertainment area
- Elegance with a contemporary feel and oozing sophistication
- Exquisite dining options with two signature restaurants, a chef's table, three lounges,

- and a selection of private dining and in-room dining available
- An indoor pool with views of the city, a fitness suite and spa

Shangri-La Hotel Xian



A grand welcome to Xian awaits at the *Shangri-La Hotel Xian*, a modern hotel boasting some of the largest rooms in the city. Situated in Xian's central business district, the hotel is on the doorstep of the city's iconic historic sites, including the Terracotta Warriors Museum, Xian's breathtaking city walls and the Bell and Drum Towers.

Blending contemporary and classic style, the 393 spacious rooms and suites feature floor-to-ceiling windows with city or garden views, marble baths with rainfall showers and separate tubs, and all the expected modern conveniences. The Horizon Club rooms bring the added luxury of a personal butler service and private lounge.

Start your day with a lavish breakfast before stepping out into the heart of Xian. After a day exploring the wealth of historical sights of the city, head to the full-service spa for a rejuvenating traditional massage, sauna or dip in the indoor heated swimming pool. Later, choose from an impressive range of dining options in the hotel's three restaurants. Indulge in authentic Shaanxi homemade noodles at Tian Xiang Ge restaurant; take your tastebuds to Thailand in Siam Garden, and discover a menu of Asian and European cuisine in Yi Café.

Why we like it

- The hotel boasts some of the largest rooms in Xian
- The suites exemplify spacious, modern living quarters with a blend of Asian and Western influences
- Features a spa, well-equipped fitness centre, sauna, steam room and indoor heated swimming pool
- Located in the heart of Xian

Shangri-La Hotel Chengdu



On arriving at the resplendent Shangri-La Hotel in the history-rich city of Chengdu, you are welcomed into the majestic lobby by the gracious concierge. The stunning high-rise building comprises 593 guestrooms and expansive suites with refined interior design and floor-to-ceiling windows framing striking views of the Jinjiang River or bustling city centre.

Dining presents itself in the form of Shangri-La's signature restaurant, the Shang Palace serving traditional Cantonese-style dishes and the bold, piquant flavours of Sichuan specialities. Witness the talented chefs skilfully prepare a wide array of international cuisines in one of the nine open food theatres at the exuberant Café Z, before heading into the lively atmosphere of Mooney's Bar to enjoy classic cocktails and the live nightly entertainment.

After an adventure-filled day, retreat to the CHI Spa with 11 luxurious private spa suites and herbal steam facilities. Here you can experience holistic treatments, deriving from traditional Asian therapies, to relax the mind and renew the body.

This Shangri-La Hotel is ideally placed to explore the vibrant streets, colourful markets, unique museums and religious temples of this laid-back city.

Why we like it

- Landmark luxury hotel in vibrant Chengdu
- Spacious guestrooms and suites display an elegant, chic décor with modern furnishings and amenities
- Three delectable restaurants serve some of the finest international and traditional

cuisine in the city

- Facilities include state-of-the-art fitness centre, indoor swimming pool and the luxury CHI, The Spa

Shangri-La Hotel Lhasa



Located within walking distance of some of the Tibetan capital's best-known attractions is the first Shangri-La hotel in Tibet which exudes local elegance within tranquil and ancient surroundings and distinctive Tibetan architecture, interior design and service.

Each of its 262 guestrooms and 17 suites features designs inspired by the Tibetan city - little touches of turquoise, a stone prized in Tibet, and bedside lights in the shape of prayer wheels, breathe character into every room. Views of the gleaming Potala Palace or the mountains are enjoyed from every room.

There are four exceptional restaurants: Shang Palace offers the best in Cantonese and Sichuan cuisine, while Altitude features live cooking stations with Asian fare and Tibetan and Indian specialities as well as Western cuisine. Take afternoon tea in the elegant Lodgers Lounge, and later head to Shamala for tapas and drinks while watching the sun descend over the Potala Palace. Here, too, you will find thoughtful details imbuing a sense of place; curtains like prayer flags hang over the Altitude buffet restaurant and a giant lotus flower dominates the ballroom.

Shangri-La Lhasa has everything you would expect from a luxury hotel - a well-equipped gym, spa and indoor heated pool - with the addition of unique Tibetan services. Guests can unwind in the oxygen lounge and reflexology pavilion while adjusting to the high altitude, then revive the body and mind at CHI spa with a soothing signature treatment.

Why we like it

- Stunning views of the Potala Palace or mountains from every room

- Tibetan inspired design
- Oxygen lounge to assist with acclimatisation
- Minutes from the best sightseeing in Lhasa

Yangzi Explorer



Highlights:

Recently refurbished, the elegant Yangzi Explorer sets a new standard in luxury river cruising, with 3 and 4 night cruises between Chongqing and Yichang. The most celebrated stretch of the Yangzi is the spectacular Three Gorges where A&K uniquely tailors shore excursions. Highlights include the mountainous region of Fuling where fascinating touring options include the secret 815 Underground Project and the White Crane Ridge Underwater Museum. The crystal-clear waters and forested slopes of Shennong Stream are experienced during a ride in a traditional sampan. Qutang Gorge is famous for its rolling waters and dramatic cliffs, while Wu is characterised by majestic forest-crowned peaks. Xiling, the longest, finishes at the vast Three Gorges Dam with a tour of the site and exhibition centre. Friendly and intimate on board service creates an atmosphere more private club than cruise ship.

The Cabins

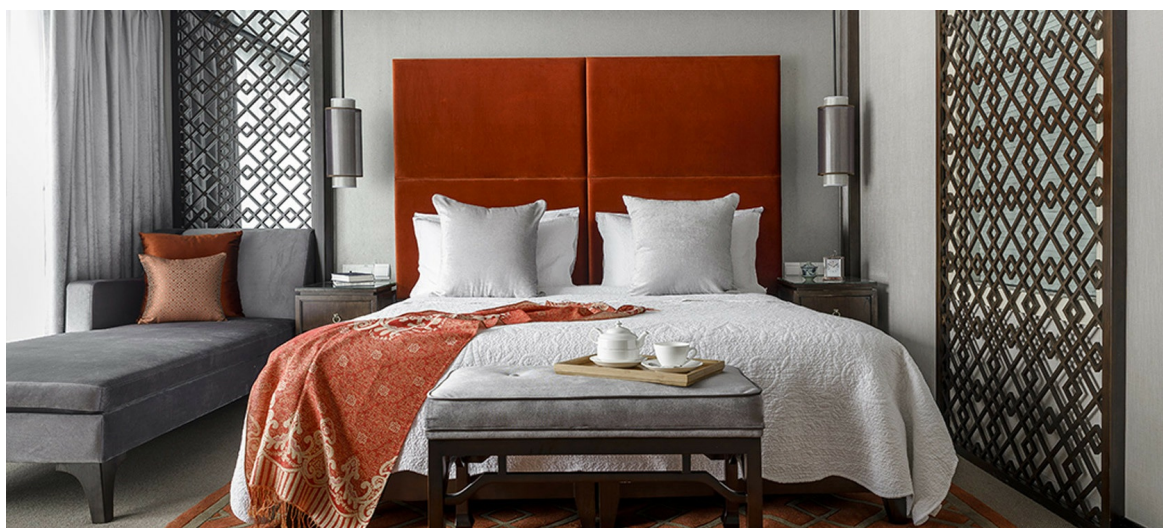
Offering 38 cabins, 24 suites and four themed suites over four decks, the ship boasts the largest and best appointed cabins on the river. Each has floor-to-ceiling picture windows, a private balcony and en suite bathroom.

DELUXE Cabins (31m²)



These 38 ensuite cabins are the largest entry level of their kind on the Yangtze River. Stylish, and with their own private balconies, each is fully equipped with satellite TV, electronic safe, minibar and fridge.

SUITE Cabins (39m²)



These 20 suites have an indoor seating area and a private balcony with table and chairs. They're spacious enough to accommodate a third person, and they include a free laundry service as well as access to the suite lounge for unlimited drinks and snacks.

MANDARIN & JADE SUITES (81m²)

CELESTIAL & IMPERIAL SUITES (110m²)



These four suites are the largest on the ship. Dressed in traditional Chinese décor, these sumptuous, spacious suites have separate bedroom and living areas and as well as uninterrupted views of screensaver-worthy landscapes as the ship sails its course.

Additional perks to this luxury accommodation include room service, in-suite private dining, sparkling wine, a fruit bowl replenished daily, and afternoon tea imaginatively presented in a birdcage.

Daily Activity

Complementing the natural beauty of the river is a rich programme of shore excursions and shipboard activities which highlight the wealth of China's cultural traditions as well as the river's history and ecology. Tai Chi classes, Chinese cooking and silk embroidery are just some of the diversions available. In between activities, the Huang Ding Spa beckons. There's also a fitness centre, sauna and beauty salon.

Luxury On Board

Dining is a delight with a team of internationally trained chefs dishing up innovative à la carte menus featuring Chinese and continental cuisine served with complimentary house wines and other refreshments at lunch and dinner. The ship boasts the highest crew to passenger ratio on the river of 1:1 delivering exceptional personalised service.

Families

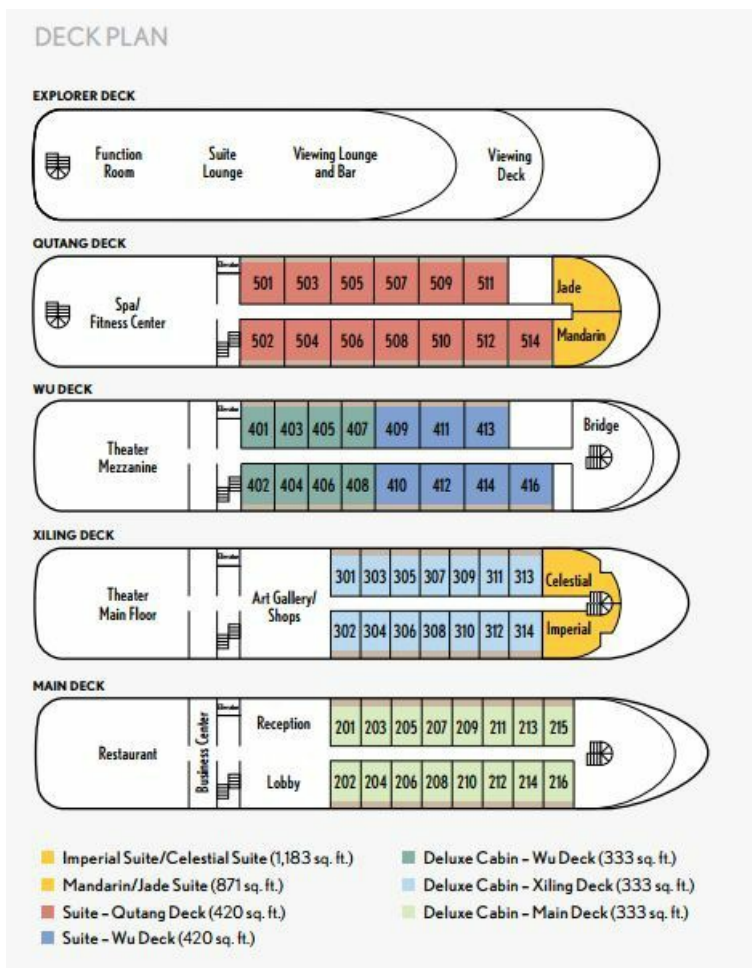
The specially tailored 'Summer River Camp' welcomes families on four night cruises, upstream from Yichang to Chongqing, with exciting activities planned to keep all entertained. There is Chinese Opera mask painting, paper folding, cooking, kite making, movie nights and early morning Tai Chi.

Facts

- Launch year: 2008
- Length: 91.5m
- Beam: 16.4m
- Draught: 2.8m
- Passengers : 124

What's Included

- All three meals during full sailing days and breakfast on day of disembarkation
- Beverages with meals including house wine, local beer, soft drinks and water
- Entrance fees as part of scheduled sightseeing
- Pre-arranged entertainment and on-board activities



The Peninsula Shanghai



The Peninsula Shanghai offers 235 supremely comfortable and stylish rooms and suites. Each room takes inspiration from the Art Deco period and Shanghai's Golden Age, when the city was known as the 'Paris of the East', and blends traditional Peninsula standards of luxury and state-of-the-art technology with historical references. Raising dining expectations to new levels, the hotel boasts a selection of five restaurants and bars including the Michelin starred Sir Elly's restaurant.

With street access and its own entrance from the Lobby, The Peninsula arcade features 25 leading luxury fashion and jewellery brands. The hotel is also just minutes from the heart of Shanghai's exciting shopping district Nanjing Lu. After a day of exploring, unwind at The Peninsula Spa by ESPA, a luxurious haven for body and mind, complete with 25-metre indoor swimming pool, fitness centre, seven treatment rooms, two VIP suites, heat experiences and highly trained therapists.

Why we like it

- Centrally located fronting the world-famous Bund offering glittering city views across the river to the spectacular Pudong skyline
- A modern take on traditional Art Deco
- World-wide reputation for quality accommodation and service
- Michelin-starred Chinese Restaurant

Abercrombie & Kent

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