China Trip Information

By

World Spree/China Spree
You will receive your final documents approximately 2 weeks prior to your departure and they will include:

- Welcome Letter
- Air Route
- Final Itinerary
- Contact Information
Parting Words of Advice

“Be patient, flexible, open and good-natured. This trip will be a learning experience, not an escape; an adventure, not a getaway.”

Travel with an open mind and expect the unexpected

Ten Commandments for World Spree Travelers

I. Thou shalt not expect to find things as thou hast them at home, for thou hast left thy home to find things different.

II. Thou shalt not take anything too seriously … a carefree mind is the beginning of a vacation.

III. Thou shalt not let other tourists get on thy nerves, for thou art paying out thy savings to enjoy thyself.

IV. Thou shalt not forget that thou dost represent thy country.

V. Thou shalt not worry. One who worrieth hath no pleasure … and few things worried about come to fruition!

VI. Remember thy passport, so that thou always knowest where it is. A person without a passport is a person without a country.

VII. Blessed is the one who can say “thank you” in any tongue, for this is worth more than tipping.

VIII. When in Rome, do as the Romans do. If in difficulty, use thy North American common sense and friendliness.

IX. Do not judge the people of a country by one person with whom thou hast had difficulties.

X. Remember thou art a guest in every land. Those who treateth their host with respect shall themselves receive honorable treatment.
Expect the Unexpected

Dear World Spree Travelers,

Traveling to one of World Spree’s exotic destinations means taking an adventurous trip in a developing country. Resplendent in rich historical heritage, the region also boasts a contemporary and vibrant culture. Bear in mind that part of the adventure involves witnessing life as the region’s residents do, and immersing yourself in their world to a certain extent. While most days are all about having fun, some aspects force us to leave our comfort zone. Please read on for details.

A typical day’s sightseeing will include the bustle and noise of city streets, sights and smells of local markets, and interacting with friendly locals. Traveling here especially requires patience as potential delays sprout up due to developing, or very little infrastructure, procedural matters we are not used to, regulations and conditions unique to the locality.

We have found that our guests with a solid sense of humor and adventure, and those who accept that things do not always go according to plan, are those who find their experiences most rewarding.

*Please note:* Group travel means you will be traveling as a group with people you did not previously know for the duration of this journey. By the end of the trip, you’ll know them fairly well; in fact, many World Spree travelers form lasting friendships, returning to travel together with us again. But you likely will not enjoy every person, every day. The evergreen qualities of patience, flexibility, humor and mutual consideration will help everyone have a good time. Please respect your fellow travelers. Be kind and punctual.

This tour is fully-packed and fast-paced. We’ll walk along city streets and ancient ruins, and many of the monuments we visit will have uneven paths and walkways or stairs with no handrails. In most cities we visit, vehicles and street vendors crowd the sidewalks. Tours include days where you will endure long periods of driving, sightseeing on foot and some climbing of steps. To fully participate in this tour, you must be able to:

- Walk, sometimes for long distances, and sometimes over uneven surfaces without assistance;
- Complete some long days of touring with minimal breaks;
- Climb steps, sometimes without handrails.

If you do have mobility difficulties, you should have already notified us when you booked this tour so we could offer you an alternative private tour at additional expense.

Although things are developing quickly, you will still see a difference in civil infrastructure and, therefore, tourist facilities do not always match Western expectations. For example, you may see a hole in the road or a wet floor without a warning sign or safety barricade. Concepts of personal responsibilities are different from those in the West. Consequently,
tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in North America. We want you to have an enjoyable vacation so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, pay attention to notices and always follow advice from your trip leader.

**Itinerary Change**

Order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions. In each city, your tour guide may adjust the sequence of local visits depending on weather, traffic, holidays and local schedules. Potential visits to schools, local families and other local features depend on available times and approval from local authorities. The schedules of the domestic airlines operate with frequent changes and may affect the tour schedule as a result. Your trip leader will inform you of any schedule changes as soon as they arise.

Even though there have been improved road conditions over the years, ongoing road construction, traffic and/or weather conditions may still lengthen the driving times.
Passport & China Visa Instructions

*Exclusively Prepared for World Spree Travelers*

**Passport requirements**

A valid passport is required for all World Spree travelers (U.S. and Canada) traveling abroad. Your passport must be valid for a minimum of 6 months after your date of return. Your passport should have the recommended number of blank pages for visa stamp(s), per country you are visiting (amendment and endorsement pages cannot be used towards this requirement). If you are not a passport holder of U.S. or Canada, it is your responsibility to find out the passport and visa requirements for each country on your itinerary.

**Visa Information - China**

**Single Entry Visa is Required for this trip**

If you hold a passport from another country please contact the Embassy directly or our preferred travel documentation provider, CIBT.

It is the responsibility of every traveler to obtain and pay for all entry documents (visas, etc.) as required by the laws, regulations, or orders of the countries you will visit.

****PLEASE VISIT THE MEMBER AREA WHERE YOU WILL FIND THE WORLD SPREE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR YOUR CHINA VISA APPLICATION******

**Embassy links**

Please visit the following link for the latest information on obtaining your visa through your local Embassy or Consulate:

**US Passport Holder**

**Chinese Embassy & Consulate lists**

- Washington D.C Chinese Embassy
- San Francisco Chinese Consulate
- Los Angeles Chinese Consulate
- Houston Chinese Consulate
- New York Chinese Consulate
Chicago Chinese Consulate

Canadian Passport Holder

http://www.visaforchina.org

For your convenience, we suggest that you use our preferred travel documentation provider, CIBT. It is much easier and faster to arrange your visa through a service, and you will enjoy professional and expert handling of your visa application. If there’s a problem, a specialist with contacts at the consulate will ensure you get your visa in a timely manner.

For U.S. passport holders: make sure to use the CIBT or quote Account #103349 to receive your heavily discounted service fee.

For Canadian passport holders: make sure to use the CIBT or quote Account #100491 to receive your heavily discounted service fee.
WHAT IF…

Emergency Plan for a missed flight or connection arranged by World Spree

*Please read prior to your trip*

World Spree tours consist of air travel segments using commercial flights with scheduled airlines. The passage contract (the airline tickets) of your flights, once issued, shall constitute the sole agreement between you and the airline(s), and are subject to terms and conditions specified by the airliners. If the airline has a late or canceled flight, it is the airline’s responsibility to protect our mutual customers and get you to your destination.

**Flight Reschedule Procedure:**

Once World Spree issues your air tickets, we are no longer able to modify your booking using our in-house reservation system to reschedule you, or see any change made by the airline on your booking. The booking resides solely in the airline’s reservation system afterwards.

Please work directly with the airline. The staff at the airport counter are the best people to handle any flight rescheduling effectively, as they usually have the most authority and much more experience than the airline call center agents or World Spree has. The flights World Spree book are commercial (not chartered), and re-protection of your flights is governed solely at the airlines discretion.

**If the international flight to your destination is canceled or delayed**

If your international flight is delayed or canceled, the airline is responsible for protecting you on the next available flight.

These are the following steps you need to take:

1) Immediately request the assistance of the airport counter staff in re-protecting you on the next available flight. Kindly ask them to reschedule you for the **same day**, even if it means them using an alliance partner airline flight. They should be able to do that if those flights are not too full. *Do not delay speaking to the airport counter staff to call World Spree as timing is everything and you could miss an opportunity to catch another flight.*

2) Once you know what flights you will be protected on or what the new flight times due to a delay are, notify World Spree of your new flight schedule. Call **866-652-5656** during our regular business hours (8 a.m.—5 p.m. PST, MON-FRI); after hours please see Emergency contact info from the “Contact Sheet” found in your Final Documents.

**If the connecting flights to your international flight is canceled or delayed**

1) If **World Spree** has booked your connecting flights in connection with your international flight
If World Spree has booked your connecting flight from your home city to your international flight departure city and it is delayed or canceled due to mechanical or weather reasons, causing you to miss your international flight, you should speak immediately with the airline that operates the flight to SFO/JFK/IAH/LAX/IAD/YYZ/YVR. They are responsible for rescheduling you on the next available flight. We strongly recommend that you request the airline to reschedule you on their next flight to your final destination or international connecting city instead of flying you to the next North American connecting point because you will likely miss one travel day.

Once you know what flights you will be protected on or what the new flight times due to a delay are, notify World Spree of your new flight schedule. Call 866-652-5656 during our regular business hours (8 a.m.—5 p.m. PST, MON-FRI); after hours please see Emergency contact info from the “Contact Sheet” found in your Final Documents.

2) *If you have booked your own connecting flight to your international flight*

If you have booked your connecting flight from your home city to the international flight departure city World Spree booked for you and it is delayed or canceled, due to mechanical or weather reasons, causing you to miss your international flight, they are **NOT** responsible for rescheduling you on the next available flight. You need to speak immediately with the airline that operates the flight to SFO/JFK/IAH/LAX/IAD/YYZ/YVR to see if the airline has a flight to reschedule you on so that you are able to still connect to your international flight so that you do not miss a day of travel. If they do not, ask for their assistance in finding an airline that does have a flight that will get you there in time. If you have left the legal connecting time between your flights and you have purchased travel insurance, immediately advise your insurance company for their recommendations.

Once you know what flights you will be protected on or what the new flight times due to a delay are, notify World Spree of your new flight schedule. Call 866-652-5656 during our regular business hours (8 a.m.—5 p.m. PST, MON-FRI); after hours please see Emergency contact info from the “Contact Sheet” found in your Final Documents.

**Homebound Flights to U.S./Canada with connections**

If your flight home from the final city on your tour connects in another city, you can check your bags through to your final destination in U.S./Canada.

If the first leg of your flight home is delayed, causing you to miss your second flight, you should speak immediately with the airline check-in staff at the airport. Please request kindly and firmly that they reschedule you on the next flight **DIRECTLY** to your final destination in U.S./Canada without connecting anywhere, even if this means they need to provide an overnight where you are at the expense of the airline.

Again, we emphasize that rescheduling is at the airline’s discretion. As a customer of that airline, you need to push them politely, but firmly, to get you on a desirable flight. World Spree has no direct control over the airline(s); you, as the passenger meeting them face-
to-face, will have a better chance of the airline finding a suitable alternative flight for you. If the airline has to reschedule you on the next day’s flight, they may or may not provide an overnight hotel which will not likely be World Spree’s standards. We recommend that you stay at that hotel just in case there is any further change to the flight schedule so that the airline can get a hold of you in a timely manner.
Important Airline information and Contact info

Frequent Flyer miles
Airlines administrate frequent traveler programs, and they are beyond the control of World Spree. If you have questions or concerns regarding earning or redeeming your frequent traveler mileage points, you must contact the airline directly when you receive your e-ticket itinerary from World Spree. In order to claim your frequent traveler mileage, the airline may need you to provide the original ticket receipt and boarding pass, so be sure to save these papers.

Air Ticket Reconfirmation
Airlines no longer require reconfirmation of your homebound transpacific flights; however, we recommend you check with the airline locally 24 hours before your departure for any potential schedule change or delays. Our World Spree offices in your destination will be able to assist you for your return flight.

Air China - Seat Assignment and Dietary Request
On receipt of your air ticket, please go to the Air China website to pre-assign your seats and to make any special dietary request (if applicable) for your transpacific flights.

☐ For seat selection  
☐ For special meal requests, Air China Call Center: 1-800-882-8122
☐ Monday - Friday: 6 a.m. – 6 p.m., PST; Saturday: 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., PST
☐ Air China is a member of Star Alliance

China Airlines - Seat Assignment and Dietary Request
Seating for most classes of service are done at airport check-in; see further details on the airline website listed below. To make any special dietary request (if applicable) for your transpacific flights, call the toll-free line.

☐ China Airlines Call Center: 1-800-227-5118
☐ Daily from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m., GMT
☐ You can check in online 24 hours prior https://www.china-airlines.com/us/en
☐ China Airlines is a member of Sky Team

Japan Airlines - Seat Assignment and Dietary Request
Seating for most classes of service are done at airport check-in; see further details on the airline website listed below. To make any special dietary request (if applicable) for your transpacific flights, call the toll-free line.

☐ Japan Airlines Call Center: 1-800-525-3663
☐ Daily from 5 a.m. – 6 p.m. PST

Japan Airlines is a member of OneWorld

**Cathay Pacific  Seat Assignment and Dietary Request**

On receipt of your air ticket, please contact Cathay Pacific to pre-assign your seats and to make any special dietary request (if applicable) for your transpacific flights.

- Cathay Pacific Call Center: 1-800-233-2742
- Monday - Friday: 6 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. PST; Saturday: 6 a.m. – 4 p.m. PST
- You can check in online 48 hours to 90 minutes prior to departure at [www.cathaypacific.com](http://www.cathaypacific.com)
- Cathay Pacific is a member of OneWorld
Shopping in China (Hong Kong and Tibet)

Shopping is always an integral part of international tourism, and China is well-known as a bargain shopper’s paradise. China is abundant in marvelous selections of arts and crafts, luxurious silk, embroidered linens, oriental rugs, jade carvings, chops (ink seals), cloisonné, wood-block prints, patent medicines, reproductions of old art, hand-painted snuff bottles, etc.

For your convenience, we list the “specialties” and the cities where they are famous for them. You might have a shopping opportunity in those cities, provided the shopping must be related to a learning experience. Due to the busy itinerary of your trip, each shopping stop listed below is strictly limited to a maximum of 45 minutes. If for any reason your guide does not abide by this restriction, please report to World Spree at info@worldspree.com immediately or show this document to your guide.

Please note: China Spree is NOT involved in your shopping and this guideline is provided solely for your convenience.

Beijing

*Local Specialties*: Jade, Cloisonné (Enamel ware), Chairman Mao hats, Great Wall T-shirts, chops, fresh-water pearls, etc. Chinese Zodiac chops make a good gift for your families and friends. You can either make it at your hotel or order from your guide. Price varies per quality of materials and craftsmanship. Near the entrance to the Great Wall, you will find a lot of stalls selling many knick-knacks for tourists.

During your stay in Beijing, you will have a chance to visit *Beijing Jade Carving Factory*, which is located on the way to the Great Wall and where we have lunch that day, and a fresh water pearl shop near the Summer Palace.

Xian

*Local Specialties*: Replicas of Terra-cotta Warriors, Chinese traditional furniture and lacquer wares, farmers’ painting, etc.

Shanghai

*Local Specialties*: Shanghai is a shopper’s paradise. You can virtually find everything you want here. Silk, fashion clothing, knock-off bags and watches, silk rugs, Chinese oil paintings, etc.

Suzhou

*Local Specialties*: Silk, Silk, Silk. Suzhou is home to Chinese classic gardens and is also known as “City of Silk” – as recorded by Marco Polo.

If you have Suzhou on your itinerary, you will have an opportunity to visit *Suzhou No. 1 Silk Spinning Mill*, where you learn the full life cycle of silk worms and see how the silk is made from the cocoons. The Mill also has a big store attached with a wide selection of
silk garments. Silk comforters make the most popular gift, particularly for American Northwest summers. The prices are higher than on street but the quality is better. If purchasing bedding, keep in mind that the sizing is different in China than at home.

**Chengdu**

Brocades, usually silk brocades, are one of the most popular "souvenir items" among tourists. Also, giant panda products ranging from postcards, key-ring trinkets, T-shirts to big stuffed toys, and beautiful embroidery, Tea and Tea sets or Chengdu Hotpot Seasonings.

**Hong Kong**

There is a wide range of things to buy in Hong Kong. The best buys here are designer clothes and handbags, cosmetics and perfume, electronics and computers, jewelry, watches and Hong Kong pastries are a specialty to the area.

**Lhasa**

*Thangka* is a kind of scroll painting using complicated lines, bright colors and is rich with religious flavors often made either by painting, embroidery or sometimes sewn with pearls. There are colorful aprons, fur hats or caps to take home. Other local gifts that are worthy of your consideration include wooden bowls, jewelry, jade, prayer wheels, carpets, tapestries, local boots and beads.

**Should you shop in tourists’ stores or from street vendors?**

Street vendors are likely to be less expensive than tourists’ shops; however, the quality is usually not comparable. It is important to keep in mind that the majority of street vendors are operating without permits or licenses and should you purchase from them, make sure you inspect your purchases before paying for them. Make sure you pay with exact change to avoid getting fake money back. While some may suggest hard negotiating with street vendors, the opposite is true. Bargaining is expected, but please keep in mind that the majority of these vendors are struggling to survive which is likely why they do not have a vendor’s license.

Shopping via street vendors is great for small and inexpensive purchases; however, if you are looking for something of high quality, the tourist shops are probably your better choice. With a tourist store, you will have a guarantee that you will not be able to get from a vendor, as long as you keep your receipt. When purchasing large and/or expensive items, it is a good idea to use your credit card so that you will have the backing of your credit card company in case of any discrepancies. It is also a good idea to get insurance on anything you ship home.

***We recommend that if you buy anything in a shop included in our tour itinerary and later on you find the comparable item selling at lower price in the market or somewhere else, immediately seek out your China Spree tour guide to assist you as you are entitled to get a full refund (provided it is not used, consumed, or damaged) from the store. Please
note that you must return the item(s) to the store before you leave the city—as this is the warranty provided by these shops, to the best of our knowledge. The original receipt is required to receive a refund. For anything you buy outside of these stores, it is your sole responsibility to deal with the vendor directly. We are unable to assist with stores inside your hotels, as they are usually outsourced to different vendors who frequently change.

Tea House & Art Gallery Scams

China Spree urges our travelers to use caution when dealing with unidentified strangers in your free time in Beijing or Shanghai.

Example: More than one young woman and man (or combination) may come up to you in a park, near a museum or other public place, and ask if you are American/Canadian. They start up a conversation saying that they would like to practice their English and start asking you all sorts of questions as they engage you in conversation (where are you from, what do you do, what kind of car do you drive, what sights have you seen in Shanghai, etc). They explain that they are students from another town in China touring Shanghai and possibly other cities. Just as they are getting ready to leave, they mention that they are on their way to see a performance at a tea house or, they may say they are going to see a traditional Chinese tea ceremony, and do you want to come along? If you accept, you risk the chance of being (over)charged a very large sum for "service and tea."
Arrival/Departure Ground Transfer Information

On Arrival

On the airplane, you will be given two forms to complete: An immigration form (China Arrival Card) and a health form (Entry Health Quarantine Card), both of which have to be submitted, along with your passport, at the airport immigration center. Clear Immigration, then proceed to the Baggage Claim area at Terminal 3 by a short train ride. Claim your baggage and clear Customs.

Wear your nametag throughout the entire trip. This will aid all officials and tour personnel to ensure that you will enjoy all the benefits provided by China Spree to this special group.

Included Transfers

If you book an air-inclusive package traveling on the scheduled departure date, your airport-hotel transfers are included on arrival/departure days. Collect your baggage and proceed through Customs to where a China Spree representative will be waiting with a China Spree logo.

If your flight is delayed or if you miss your connecting flight, call China Spree with your new flight details. They will make every effort to meet you when you arrive. If you are not met due to a delayed or missed flight, follow the instructions for On Your Own Transfers (below). Retain any receipts for taxis or other transportation in case you need to make a claim with the airline or your travel insurance.

Please report the information to China Spree's head office in Bellevue, WA, during regular business hours (9 a.m.–5 p.m., PT, Monday-Friday, except holidays).

To report a flight change during a weekend or on a holiday, please contact our transfer staff in Beijing directly with the information below:

Peter Li
Cell: (011) 86 13501100972
Email: flightchange@gmail.com

On your own transfers

If you take a “Land only” package, or arrive earlier than scheduled (or depart later than scheduled), your airport/hotel transfer on arrival/departure days are on your own.

If China Spree is not providing your group transfer, or you miss your transfer for some reason, proceed directly to your hotel in Beijing.

Hotel Contact Information

Refer to the “Contact Information” page in your final document package to see which hotel you will stay at in Beijing. The hotel name and address are listed in English and Chinese. Note: The actual hotel you will stay in may be different from the hotel listed on
the China Spree website. The hotel appearing in the “Contact Information” is the approved choice.

**Taxi Information**

A taxi ride to your Beijing hotel will take 40-60 minutes, depending on traffic and the location of your hotel. It will cost approximately $25-$30. You do not need to negotiate the fare before getting into the taxi. You should have some local currency or change money at the Travelex Money Exchange booth before you leave the Baggage Claim area.

The taxi line-up is located on the main level (1st floor) in Terminal 3. You will see a taxi sign directing you to the taxi area just outside the waiting area. There will be an airport information desk, and the staff speak English. Different airliners may land in different terminals; please contact the related airliner for updated information.

*Note:* On your way to the taxi stand area, you may be approached by someone offering a taxi ride to your hotel, or to carry your luggage, or even just to give you directions. Please simply ignore them. **This is a scam.**

Head for the clearly labeled taxi line with an obvious “Taxi” sign – this is the regulated taxi pick-up area. The usually long line moves quickly. Ignore any offers to coax you away from the line. At the head of the line, a dispatcher will give you your taxi's number, useful in case of complaints or forgotten luggage. Prices per kilometer are displayed on the side of the cab. Insist that drivers use their meters, and do not negotiate a fare. If the driver is unwilling to comply, feel free to change taxis.

Most of the taxis serving the airport are large-model cars, with a flag fall of RMB12 (About $1.80, good for 3½ km) plus RMB2 (About $0.3) per additional kilometer. The amount on the meter should be approximately RMB90-120, plus RMB10 toll charge. If you're caught in rush-hour traffic, expect standing surcharges. In light traffic, it takes about 40 minutes to reach the city center during rush hour; expect a one-hour cab ride. After 11 p.m., taxis impose a 20 percent late-night surcharge. **Upon arrival at your hotel, be sure to ask for the receipt and write down the taxi license number in case of forgotten luggage.**

**Hotel Check-in for “Land Only”**

If you are taking care of your own transfer from the Beijing airport to your Beijing hotel, please head to Reception upon arrival at the hotel. Check in by providing your name and tour code. The hotel has been notified of your independent arrival and will assist you with check-in. In the unlikely event that the hotel has trouble retrieving your booking, please have them call John, our local manager, at 1-505-317-1977. Your guide is aware of your independent arrival at the hotel and will contact you with a message at the front desk or in your room, when the main group arrives.

**Shanghai/Hong Kong Ground Transfer Information**
The hotel-to-airport transfer is included on the return day, except for people on a "Land only" tour or those departing later than scheduled. If you are returning independently, you should note that there are two airports in Shanghai: Pudong International Airport (PVG) and Hongqiao Airport (SHA). Please confirm the correct airport for your departure flight with your guide.

The Maglev train is only available to Pudong International Airport (PVG). You may take a taxi to the Maglev train station at Shanghai Longyang Road (find the Chinese address below). The travel time to PVG is less than 8 minutes. The Maglev train starts at about 7:30 a.m. and a ticket costs RMB40 (About $6).

There is only one airport in Hong Kong (HKG). The best way to get there is by taxi or shuttle. The concierge in your Hong Kong hotel can arrange it for you.

Please show the cab driver the Chinese address of your hotel in Beijing which can be found on the “Contact Information” page in the booklet.

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**Shanghai Pudong International Airport**

(Airport code: PVG)  
上海浦东国际机场(国际出发)

**Shanghai Hong Qiao Airport**

(Airport code: SHA)  
上海虹桥机场

**Maglev Train Station at Longyang Road**

龙阳路磁悬浮车站

**Hong Kong International Airport**

(Airport code: HKG)  
香港国际机场
Know Before You Go

Destination Information for China (Hong Kong and Tibet)

Capital City - Beijing

Population – Nearly 1.5 Billion people

Money Matters

The exchange rate is about 6.2 Chinese Yuan (RMB) to 1 U.S. dollar and is subject to change. Chinese Yuan is not internationally exchangeable and should only be purchased and sold within China. Some commercial banks in North America do offer Chinese money exchange service, but their exchange rate is usually higher than in China and you could have a problem bringing the currency into the country. We recommend that you exchange money in your China hotel or at a bank; the exchange rate is the same everywhere in China, and it is cheaper than using Travelex at the airport. Bring U.S. dollars (cash) as it’s easy to use.

Many hotels in China cannot change travelers’ checks. Please always retain the money exchange slip, which is required to convert back to U.S. currency when returning home. ATMs are commonly available in the larger cities. Service fees apply for cash advances depending on the credit/debit card you use. Merchants, banks and hotels often reject bills that have been damaged in any way. The smallest tear or missing corner will cause difficulty with street vendors and established businesses alike.

Please be advised that mainland China and Hong Kong use different currency. You will need to convert the Hong Kong dollars to U.S. currency or to Chinese (RMB) before leaving Hong Kong; and convert any left over Chinese RMB back to U.S. dollars before leaving China.

Credit Cards

China is very much a cash-based society – bring a money belt or clothing with secure pockets because you'll need to carry around a fair amount of local cash. Major credit cards are only acceptable at hotels, tourist stores and upscale shops. We recommend you use credit cards towards the big purchases at tourist stores and buy insurance for the shipped items. Please call your credit card company to notify them of your trip to China so they won’t decline your transactions made while you are in China.

Internet

Internet access is available at most Chinese hotels (if not all). If you only want to check emails, you can use the computer in the business center at your hotel for a moderate fee. Some hotels offer free Internet access in your hotel room, but some do charge an hourly rate of up to $15 per day. Wi-Fi is not commonly available to your hotel room; some hotels only offer Wi-Fi in a public area. In order to use an iPad or iPhone in your hotel room, you may have to buy an AirPort Express from Apple to convert the wired Internet access to
wireless. Data roaming for your smart phones could be expensive, so turn off data roaming while in China or purchase a plan before leaving home. Please note: Gmail addresses are blocked most of the time in China.

**Cell phone**

Smart phones such as Blackberry and iPhone can roam in China, but data roaming could be expensive. Check with your carrier for their special international call/roaming plan; otherwise turn off the data roaming to avoid the high cost while in China. You may also buy a local SIM card in China to use on your unlocked phone. The cards are prepaid—e.g. RMB100 will get you quite a bit of talk time and at lower cost than the hotel IDD service. You may also buy a calling card so you can call home from your hotel room. Consult your tour guides for more information.

To dial a local number: 17951 + the local cell phone number, or 17951 + 0+China area code + local number.

To dial North America: 17951 + 001 + local number.

**Valuables**

Your passport, money, insurance policy, air tickets and medication should be carried with you at all times. All hotels for your China trip offer safety deposit boxes either in your hotel room, or at hotel Front Desk.

**Dress and Laundry**

China is a country with few dress taboos. Dress casually and comfortably. Formal wear is not required for this trip. Coordinate your outfits for multi-tasking and dress in layers to suit various weather/temperature changes.

You should take a small amount of powdered detergent and wash out clothing and hang it up to dry. Bring clothing made of synthetics or cotton/synthetic blends that will dry overnight. Take a couple of pair of shoes/sandals in case of rain or blisters.

Comfortable walking shoes are essential for your journey. You’ll be on your feet and walking a lot, sometimes over rough and slippery surfaces, so choose your footwear carefully. The soles of your shoes should offer good traction. You can find supportive shoes specifically designed for walking. Bring shoes that are broken in, not new.

**Toiletry**

Common toiletries such as tooth brush/paste, soap, shower gel, shower cap, shampoo, conditioner, comb, hair dryer, iron and sometimes even slippers are readily available in your hotel room. It is wise to bring hand wipe/sanitizer to use before dinner and after using the washroom. Bring a handkerchief or bandana that can substitute for a hand towel, which is not commonly available in the public washrooms. Bring your own toilet paper as it is not usually available in the public washrooms either. Outside of your hotel washrooms, others will not come close to the cleanliness standards at home.
Important Health Matters
Inoculations are not mandatory for travel to China; however, we remind you that traveling in China does require certain precautions. Most seasoned travelers get immunized for Hepatitis A&B and Tetanus. Please consult your doctor or travel clinic for further information. If you take prescription medication, be sure to bring enough to last the entire trip. Keep these medications with you and do not pack them in checked baggage. For the latest overseas travel health information, please contact the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) or call toll-free 1-800-232-4636. Long-term travel overseas might cause tourists to develop stomach upset; a change in water, food, sleep habits and/or climate may all cause discomfort. Bring anti-diarrhea medications such as Imodium and Lomotil just in case.

**Important: High Altitude of Lhasa**
If your tour includes a stay in Tibet, you will be at an altitude of 12,000 feet. Discuss with your doctor medication to alleviate altitude sickness, especially if you are prone to altitude sickness or have not previously been to high altitudes. At this altitude, almost everyone feels some of the symptoms of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS). These symptoms include headache, nausea, loss of appetite, trouble with sleep and lack of energy. Talk to your doctor about whether the trip to Tibet is advisable for you and if you should obtain a prescription medication, which can help prevent or treat AMS. Medication to reduce mountain sickness may be advised by your physician and is strongly recommended for a Tibet tour.

While you are in Tibet, you must not exert yourself! Catching a cold or cough in Tibet may cause very serious consequences, or even lead to death. If you catch a cold or cough prior to Tibet, you must notify your tour guide or our China representatives (see "Contact Information" page of your booklet) to cancel your Tibet portion of your trip because of serious health concern. If you catch a cold or cough while in Tibet, you also need to notify your guide so we can evacuate you out of Tibet in a timely manner (at your own cost).

We strongly recommend that you have a medical checkup before you take the tour to Tibet. This is a must if you have any medical conditions or physical limitations. Let your doctor know about any medical conditions you have, particularly cardiac or respiratory disease or diabetes, and discuss the potential risk for your travel to that high an altitude (12,000 feet). The hospitals and medical facilities in Tibet are relatively primitive and may not be able to handle your medical situation.

**Time**
China spans four time zones but has only one time – *Beijing Standard Time*, which is 15 hours ahead of Pacific Time. When it’s 6 p.m. in San Francisco, it is 9 a.m. in Beijing the next day.

**Venturing Out Alone**
If you are out and about by yourself, remember cars always have the right of way - a crosswalk, even a walk sign, doesn't mean the same thing it does at home. Be very careful crossing the street tourists do get hit. Always carry a hotel card with you. You can get these at the front desk. In case you get lost, all you have to do is grab a cab and give him your hotel card; they'll know where to bring you.

**Electricity**

China's electrical current is 220V, 50 cycles AC. Plugs and outlets come in a variety of shapes. Convertors and adaptors are available at your hotel, but may be subject to limited supplies. You are advised to bring along adapters and converters for your North American appliances.

**Water**

Tap water in China is not considered safe to drink, despite the fact that water is commonly chlorinated and processed in China. Drink only bottled water or boiled water. Bottled water and soft drinks can be easily obtained at a reasonable price. China Spree provides two bottles of drinking water everyday except on a cruise and in Hong Kong.

**Meals**

Breakfast is usually an American buffet served in your hotel. Lunch and dinner are arranged at local restaurants and are served in a family style. Most Chinese don't like pop - they are all tea drinkers - therefore, tea is always free and refillable with your meals. The industry standard for included beverages for a China tour is one glass per person, and the size of the glass varies. China Spree includes two 6-oz. glasses or a 12-oz. glass of local beer, mineral water or soda per person, per meal, for our overland tours.

Based on the feedback of past World Spree travelers, we decided to stay with Chinese food for our group meals, and work to improve the quality and variety of the meals, trying to provide the menus that represent local flavor. Your comments about our meal arrangements are very important. If you like or dislike any specific meal, please notify your guide right away onsite so they can make changes for you. Although it is extremely difficult to satisfy all palates, we hope you understand the great efforts we make to appeal to everyone in our group meals. We very much appreciate your comments and suggestions on this matter.

**Weather and Pollution**

Pollution can get very heavy, especially in interior cities like Beijing, and particularly in winter time when locals burn coal for heating. The smog can affect contact lens wearers or those with respiratory problems. Some wear a mask while in China, especially for travel late November through March.
Know before you go - Important Travel Instructions

Passport & China Visa
Please make sure you have the right China visa for your China trip. You should have a China visa sticker attached to inside of your passport by now. See Visa document for full instructions.

Optional Tour Payments
We recommend that you purchase the optional tours prior to departure so we can make arrangements accordingly. You can still book the optional tours directly with your tour guide during the trip, but the cost will be $5 more for each individual optional tour (see attached Optional Tour page for details). He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card or American Express credit cards only.

Document Copy
Make two copies of your passport identification page. This will facilitate replacement if your passport is lost or stolen. Leave one copy at home with friends or relatives. Carry the other one along with a passport size photo with you in a separate place from your passport. Leave a copy of your itinerary and contact information with family or friends at home so that you can be contacted in case of an emergency.

Air Travel Basics

Note: It is your sole responsibility to contact the appropriate airline prior to departure to confirm your flight schedule, check-in time, departure terminal and gateway, baggage check-in procedure, etc. You should also visit TSA’s website (www.tsa.gov) for the updated travel warning and security measures.

Airline Tickets
Your airline tickets contain the segments as specified on your e-ticket itinerary which you will receive with your final documents. Please verify these segments and check your name spelling on the tickets to make sure it is the legal name as it appears on your passport. Please contact us immediately if there is any discrepancy.

Your air tickets for flights within Indochina are issued in Vietnam and will be given to you from your Vietnamese local tour guide. You don’t need to contact World Spree to confirm them.

Please note: Airlines administrate frequent traveler programs, and they are beyond the control of World Spree. If you have questions or concerns regarding earning or redeeming your frequent traveler mileage points, you must contact the airline directly when you receive your e-ticket itinerary from World Spree. In order to claim your frequent traveler
mileage, the airline may need you to provide the original ticket receipt and boarding pass, so be sure to save these papers.

**Air Ticket Reconfirmation**

Reconfirmation of your homebound transpacific flight will be looked after by your guides.

**Flights in China**

Domestic air travel within China is frequently subject to flight delays and schedule changes on short notice. Our local agency and your tour guide will do everything possible to keep your trip running smoothly. This unpredictability is part of the adventure of traveling in a developing country.

**Luggage**

We strongly recommend that you carry only one piece of check-in baggage plus one carry-on per person. Please see the following link for precise luggage allowances on your international flights; [https://www.worldspree.com/baggage_allowance.aspx](https://www.worldspree.com/baggage_allowance.aspx)

Domestic flights have very stringent luggage restrictions, allowing one piece of check-in per person that must not exceed 44 lbs (20 kg), plus a carry-on bag not over 11 lbs (5 kg). The carry-on must fit in the overhead bin or under the seat. Baggage in excess of allowances will incur excess baggage charge payable on site by the passenger.

To reduce the risk of damage to your luggage, either do not lock your bags when checking in for flights that originate in North America, or use TSA-approved locks. According to the TSA, baggage-handling agents may require access to the contents of your luggage and will break locks as required. There are some locks available from retailers that are “accepted and recognized” by TSA. TSA screeners have tools for opening and re-locking bags using those locks, thus avoiding damage to the lock or bag if a physical inspection is required.

Outside of the U.S., we strongly recommend you lock your luggage as a preventative measure against theft. In some countries, you are required to lock your luggage for flights; in others, the screening process may entail opening or breaking the lock. Your tour guide will advise you during the trip as to what is correct for that country.

**Airport Security**

Please read TSA updates before travel. Liquids and gels over 100 ml should be packed in checked luggage at all airports in both U.S. and Asia.

**Electronics on board the plane**

The General Administration of Civil Aviation of China (CAAC) has announced the Notification about Prohibition of Lighters on Board (the 7th document of 2015).

The content is as follows:
- Lighters or matches should NOT be taken along with passengers.
- Lighters or matches should NOT be put in the carry-on luggage.
- Lighters or matches should NOT be put in the check-in luggage.

Do not pack any electronics in your check bags, including laptops or cameras. Not only may these items be stolen, but if your bag is delayed, customs may not allow it to be cleared and sent to you, without you personally coming to claim it and showing proof of purchase.

You may bring items that contain lithium batteries as carry-on baggage, provided that they do not exceed 2g and the rating of the lithium ion battery does not exceed 100Wh. Lithium ion batteries with a rating between 100Wh and 160Wh may be installed on devices packed in checked baggage or carry-on baggage with the approval of the airline. Lithium batteries exceeding 160Wh are prohibited in both carry-on and checked baggage.

Spare batteries for portable electronic devices should be wrapped individually to prevent short circuits and may only be transported in carry-on baggage. Place the batteries in their original retail packaging or insulate the electrodes using adhesive tape to cover the exposed electrodes, or place each battery into a separate plastic bag. Passengers are allowed to carry no more than two airline approved spare batteries with a rating of 100Wh but not exceeding 160Wh.

**Travel Insurance**

Never travel without insurance. We strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance to protect your travel investment. If you already have travel insurance, please bring the insurance brochure or insurance certificate with you in case you need to contact them.
Essentials to Pack

CLOTHING
Shirts and blouses: (it’s fairly easy to purchase replacements along the way)
Pants: (wrinkle-free)
Sweater / sweatshirt: (for evening and early morning)
Raincoat or windbreaker
Walking shoes: (comfortable, durable and broken in)
Rubber-soled shoes: (for pools/spas)
Swimsuit
Hat: (keeps the sun out or head warm)

ACCESSORIES & GADGETS
Collapsible umbrella/lightweight rain gear
Small Binocular: (optional)
Camera / camera batteries
Film / Memory cards: (you will need a lot of them)
Pocket calculator: (calculate exchange rate on purchases)
Clock or watch with alarm
Ziploc bags: (handy, versatile, and good for wet swimsuit, medication, and dirty laundry)
Duct tape: (come in handy if the handle of your suitcase snaps)
TSA approved Combination lock: (your checked baggage should be locked during transportation)
Adaptor and converter: (can be borrowed from your hotel, but subject to limited supply)
Powdered detergent: (for doing your own laundry; laundry service available at all hotels)
Backpack: (for carry-on items on your bus tour)
Duffle bag: (to carry your souvenirs, etc.)

MEDICINES & COSMETICS
Prescriptions to last the entire trip
Aspirin / cold pills
Imodium™: (for treating diarrhea)
First-Aid Kit with Band Aids
Moist towelettes, hand sanitizer/wipes
Toilet paper/Kleenex
Spare eyeglasses / Contact lens supplies
Insect Repellent (must)
Suntan Lotion (must)
Fingernail Clippers / Nail File: (in checked luggage only)
Sunglass / Sun-visor (must)

IMPORTANT NOTES
*All Domestic flights in India only allow 1 bag at 33LBS/15KG
*Have an extra set of clothes in your carry on in case your luggage is delayed
*Do not pack any electronics in check bags as it may not clear customs should your bag be delayed.
WORLD SPREE PHOTO CONTEST

A picture is worth a thousand words!

Bring along a good camera, and be sure to bring enough film or digital media to last the entire trip so you can preserve the memories of a lifetime. Enter our annual Photo Contest and share your beautiful moments with all World Spree travelers. You will also have a chance to win a cash prize.

Photo Album Contest (including online photo album) and Video Contest
- First Prize: $500 cash each
- Second Prize: $200 cash each
- Third Prize: $100 cash each

Travel Journal Contest
- First Prize: $500 cash

To enter our contest, send us a collection of great photography of yourself or your fellow travelers engaged in a "magic moment" on your World Spree trip. Here are the rules:

- Your pictures must be of a recent trip with World Spree and should contain at least 10 photos
- The picture must capture the spirit of discovery with World Spree, catching a magic moment of learning, sharing, doing, making friends, encountering cultures “up close and personal,” or with the iconic attractions of the trip destination
- Enter as often as you wish during the calendar year of your tour

You may enter the contest one of three ways:

1. Social Media:
   A. Facebook: Upload or share the pictures and/or the videos to our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/worldspree. The subject of the post must be Annual Photo Contest [and the year of your tour]. You can create as many posts as you need.
   B. YouTube: Upload your video(s) to your YouTube account. Title videos “Annual World Spree Photo Contest [and the year of your tour]” Once you post the video on YouTube, click the share button (generally displayed under the video). Copy the provided link and paste it into a comment at www.facebook.com/worldspree.
   C. Other: If you are using another form of social media (Tumblr, Instagram, Flickr, Vimeo, etc.) please share the link to the content that you have uploaded to www.facebook.com/worldspree. Please be sure to post “Annual Photo Contest [and the year of your tour]” in the comments.

2. E-mail: You may send photos to worldspreephoto@gmail.com. The subject of the email must be “Annual Photo Contest [and the year of your tour].”
Send as many emails as you need and don’t attach too many photos in a single email.

3. **Mail**: Create a CD or DVD of the media and mail it to our company. Find our address below.

Be sure to caption each picture, indicating where and when it was taken, the name (or tour code) of the trip and the names of the people in the photo (if known). We encourage a small story or description about the pictures. **Please note**: You are giving World Spree and China Spree permission to use on our website, social media sites, and in our promotional materials all photos, videos and journals you submit. We’re sorry, but we cannot return your pictures, so please make copies. If you are submitting a Travel Journal, please include a daily photograph to illustrate your trip.

If you prefer to send your entry by regular mail, your entry must be postmarked by **December 31** of the calendar year of your tour and sent to our office at the following address:

**U.S. address:**
Tour Beyond, Inc.
2320 130th Ave. NE, Suite 200
Bellevue, WA 98005

**Canadian address:**
World Spree Travel (Canada), Inc
8988 Frasteron Court Suite 308
Burnaby, BC, Canada V5J 5H8

Send all email entries to worldspreephoto@gmail.com. Please do not use any other contact email addresses listed on our website.
Suggested Movies

“The Road Home” (1999 Drama) The Road Home is the story of a country girl and a young teacher falling in love, and after the teacher's death many years later that brings their son back from the big city for the funeral. The burial preparations make him remember how his parents fell in love. From there, he is forced to confront the China that his parents knew and the China he knows now.

“Eat Drink Man Woman” (1994 Comedy) The title is a quote from the *Book of Rites*, one of the Confucian classics, referring to the basic human desires and accepting them as natural. The beginning of the quote reads as follows: “The things which men greatly desire are comprehended in meat and drink and sexual pleasure.”

“Farewell My Concubine” (1993 Drama) The film explores the effects of China's political turmoil during the mid-20th century on the lives of individuals, families, and groups. In this case, the affected are two stars in a *Peking opera* troupe and the woman who comes between them.

“The Last Emperor” (1987 biography) is about the life of Puyi, the last Emperor of China, whose autobiography was the basis for the screenplay. Puyi's life is depicted from his ascent to the throne as a small boy to his imprisonment and political rehabilitation by the Communist Party of China.

“Summer Palace” (2006 Drama) is a Chinese-French collaboration production and it was the first from mainland China to feature the full-frontal adult nudity of both its male and female leads. The film deals with two young students who begin an intense romantic relationship in the backdrop of the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989. The film is named after the Summer Palace located in Beijing.

“Shower” (1999 Comedy-drama) The film revolves around a family-run bathhouse in Beijing. An aged father and his younger, mentally challenged son have been working hard every day to keep the bathhouse running for a motley group of regular customers. When his elder son abruptly returns one day, it once again puts under stress the long-broken father/son ties. Presented as a light-hearted comedy, Shower explores the value of family, friendship and tradition.

“The Blue Kite” (1993 Drama) Though banned by the Chinese government upon its completion, the film soon found a receptive international audience. Along with Zhang Yimou’s *To Live* and Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine*, The Blue Kite serves as one of the quintessential examples of China's Fifth Generation filmmaking, and in particular reveals the impact the various political movements, including Anti-Rightist Movement and Cultural Revolution.

“To Live” (1994 Drama) It is the first Chinese film that had its foreign distribution rights pre-sold. The film was banned in mainland China by the Chinese State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television due to its critical portrayal of various policies and campaigns of the Communist government.
“The Founding of a Republic” (2009 History) Although the film premiered on September 17, 2009 in mainland China, it has yet to receive publicity in Taiwan (Republic of China). For most of us, the Chinese civil war that led to the founding of the China that we know today is rarely spoken of in the history books. But this history movie is an excellent look at a part of history that most of us have never heard of.

“Assembly” (2007 Action) The film was first released on December 20, 2007. The Chinese civil war left countless fallen soldiers in its wake. This film tells the story of how the surviving soldiers of the Chinese civil war fought for government recognition of their fallen comrades.

“Mongol: The Rise and Fall of Genghis Khan” (2007 history) The film is about the early life of Temüjin, who later came to be known as Genghis Khan. This is one of the best Chinese history movies. Beautifully shot, it tells the story of one of the most brutal warlords in history - Genghis Khan - from his birth as a slave to his rise as conqueror.

“Forever Enthralled” (2008 Biography) Forever Enthralled follows the life of Mei Lanfang, one of China's premiere opera performers.

“Aftershock” (2010 Disaster-drama) The film depicts the aftermath of the 1976 Tangshan earthquake. It was released in China on July 22, 2010, and is the first "big commercial film" IMAX Film created outside the United States.

“The Soong Sisters” (1997 Historical drama) About three Hainanese Chinese women who were, along with their husbands, amongst China's most significant political figures of the early 20th century. They each played a major role in influencing their husbands, who, along with their own positions of power, ultimately changed the course of Chinese history.

"Raise the Red Lantern."",(1991 Drama) The film tells the story of a young woman who becomes one of the concubines of a wealthy man during the Warlord Era in 1920s. Although the screenplay was approved by Chinese censors, the final version of the film was banned in China for a period.

“Ju Dou” (1990 Drama) was the first Chinese film to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1990. The film is a tragedy, focusing on the character of Ju Dou; a beautiful young woman who has been sold as a wife to Jinshan, an old cloth dyer. The film was banned for a few years in China, but the ban has since been lifted.

"Mulan Joins the Army" (1939 Historical-War) This film is about a young woman who disguises herself as a man in order to take her father's place in the army. The first incarnation of the legend of Mulan, this 1939 film tells her story while chronicling the time of the Northern Wei dynasty.

“The Sand Pebbles" (1996 Action) It tells the story of an independent, rebellious U.S. Navy machinist's mate, first-class aboard the fictional gunboat USS San Paboin in 1920s China. The Sand Pebbles was a critical and commercial success at its general release.
“**Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon**” (2000 Kungfu) The film was directed by Ang Lee and has won more than 40 awards. It has been praised for its martial arts sequences, story, direction, musical score and cinematography.

“**Yellow Earth**” (1984 Drama) *Yellow Earth* is set in Shaanxi, a province of central China, in early spring 1939. The Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang have stopped fighting one another and are working together to overwhelm the invading Japanese. Because of their co-operation, navigation between the areas is permitted.

“**Beijing Bicycle**” (2001 Drama) *Beijing Bicycle* revolves around a seventeen-year-old boy, Guei (Cui), from the countryside who came to Beijing to seek work. The film explores the theme of youth as well as several social issues, including class, youth delinquency, theft, and rural-urban socio-economic divisions and change.

**Suggested Readings**

“**Rare Earth**” (2012 ) by Paul Mason. A washed-up TV reporter stumbles onto a corruption scandal in Western China. Pursued through the desert by a psychotic spin-doctor and a world-weary cop, he discovers the real China: illegal metal mines, a fashion-crazed gang of girl bikers, a whole commune of Tiananmen Square survivors and the up-market sleaze-joints of Beijing. It is about the West's inability to understand the East; one man's epic journey across a dying landscape where “thousands of pairs of eyes peer beyond grimy windowpanes into the moonless sky, looking for something better.

“**Soul Mountain**” (2000) by Gao Xingjian. The novel is loosely based on the author’s own journey into rural China, which was inspired by a false diagnosis of lung cancer. It is a combination of story fragments and travel accounts.

“**The Penguin History of Modern China** - the Fall and Rise of a Great Power, 1850 to Present (2008) by Jonathan Fenby. In 1850, China was the 'sick man of Asia'. Now it is set to become the most powerful nation on earth. *The Penguin History of Modern China* shows how turbulent that journey has been. For 150 years, China has endured as a victim of oppression, war and famine. This makes its current position as arguably the most important global superpower all the more extraordinary.

“**Chinese Cinderella**” - a true story of an unwanted daughter (1999) by Adeline Yen Mathe. A riveting memoir of a girl's painful coming-of-age in a wealthy Chinese family during the 1940s. A Chinese proverb says, "Falling leaves return to their roots." In *Chinese Cinderella*, Adeline Yen Mah returns to her roots to tell the story of her painful childhood and her ultimate triumph and courage in the face of despair.

“**China Road - A journey into the future of a rising power**” (2008) By Rob Gifford. National Public Radio reporter Rob Gifford, a fluent Mandarin speaker, takes the dramatic journey along Route 312 from its start in the boomtown of Shanghai, to its end on the border with Kazakhstan. Gifford reveals the rich mosaic of modern Chinese life in all its contradictions, as he poses the crucial questions that all of us are asking about China.
“Wild Swan” (2003) by Jung Chang. The story of three generations in twentieth-century China that blends the intimacy of memoir and the panoramic sweep of eye witness history—a bestselling classic in thirty languages with more than ten million copies sold around the world, now with a new introduction from the author.


“Red Scarf Girl” (2008) by Ji-li Jiang. This is the true story of the author's determination to hold her family together during one of the most terrifying eras of the twentieth century, Culture Revolution in China.

“The Shadow of the Silk Road” (2008) by Colin Thubron. Making his way by local bus, truck, car, donkey cart and camel, Colin Thubron covered some seven thousand miles in eight months—out of the heart of China into the mountains of Central Asia, across northern Afghanistan and the plains of Iran into Kurdish Turkey—and explored an ancient world in modern ferment.


“Mao’s Great Famine” (2010) by Frank Dekotte. Professor and historian, Frank Dikötter, writes about the Great Chinese Famine of 1958–1962 in the People's Republic of China under Mao Zedong (1893–1976). Based on four years of research, Dikötter supports an estimate of "at least" 45 million premature deaths in China during the famine years. Dikötter characterizes the Great Famine as "The worst catastrophe in China’s history, and one of the worst anywhere.”

“The Good Earth” (1931) by Pearl S. Buck. The novel dramatizes family life in a Chinese village before World War I and helped prepare Americans of the 1930s to consider Chinese as allies in the coming war with Japan.

“The Search for Modern China” (1999) by Jonathan Spence. In this widely acclaimed history of modern China, Jonathan Spence achieves a fine blend of narrative richness and efficiency. Praised as "a miracle of readability and scholarly authority,” (Jonathan Mirsky) The Search for Modern China offers a matchless introduction to China’s history.

“The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II” (1997) by Iris Chang. The book is about the 1937–1938 Nanking Massacre, the massacre and atrocities committed by the Imperial Japanese Army after it captured Nanjing, then capital of China, during the Second Sino-Japanese War. It is one of the first major English-language books to introduce the Nanking Massacre to Western and Eastern readers alike.

“China Wakes” (1994) by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. In this book, Kristof and WuDunn, husband and wife, wrote about their experiences in China from 1988 to
1993. The couple spent five years in China as journalists reporting for *The New York Times*. The authors' view of China is that of a country torn between Deng Xiaoping's successful economic strategy and frustrated political reform and human rights.

“Tiger Head, Snake Tails: China today, how it got there and why it has to Change” (2013) by Johnathan Fenby. This is a comprehensively updated account of where China stands today, covering the generational change in the leadership completed in March 2013, the Bo Xilai scandal and the changing course of the world's second largest economy and the last major ruled by a Communist Party.

“China: Portrait of a People” (2008) by Tom Carter. What Carter found along the way, and what his photographs ultimately reveal, is that China is not just one place one people, but 33 distinct geographical regions populated by 56 different ethnicities, each with their own languages, customs and lifestyles.


“On China” (2011) by Henry Kissinger. This is a non-fiction book by the former United States Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger. His book focuses on Chinese history through the lens of foreign policy considerations, and in particular his own brand of realpolitik. In addition to pure history and discussion of foreign policy, the work is also something of a personal narrative of Kissinger's experiences in China, and in that respect is a memoir intended to bolster positive perceptions of his expertise and influence when it comes to Chinese-American relations.

Websites to China

A guide to China with articles, photos, facts, videos and news from National Geographic.

http://www.chinasite.com
The complete reference to the web sites regarding travel to China

https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/china
Country travel advice and advisories for China

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china
Get the latest China news, breaking China news, China business news, as well as information on China politics, China culture, and China military from the China Daily
http://www.chinatoday.com
A China information base. Find out what is happening in China today.

http://chineseculture.about.com
Get the latest news on China, including coverage of the Chinese government, media, laws, business and economy.

http://www.livescience.com/28823-chinese-culture.html
Chinese culture reflects the customs and traditions of one of the largest countries in the world, with 1.34 billion people.

http://chinadigitaltimes.net
China Presses Economists to Brighten Their Outlooks. … Culture & the Arts. ... China Digital Times is supported by the Berkeley Counter-Power Lab

http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/China.html
Culture of China - history, people, clothing, traditions, women, beliefs, food, customs, family Bo-Co

http://traditions.cultural-china.com
Chinese culture guide to Chinese traditions, customs, festivals, myths, legends, traditional clothing and ornaments, folk handicraft, folk arts, and Chinese ethnic people.

Poems & Quotations related to China

**Great Wall**
Zu Yong

**LOOKING TOWARD AN INNER GATE OF THE GREAT WALL**
My heart sank when I headed north from Yan Country
To the camps of China echoing its bugle and drum.
...In an endless cold light of massive snow,
Tall flags on three borders rise up like a dawn.
War-torches invade the barbarian moonlight,
Mountain-clouds like chairmen bear the Great Wall from the sea.
...Though no youthful clerk meant to be a great general,
I throw aside my writing-brush –
Like the student who tossed off cap for a lariat,
I challenge what may come.

**Yangtze River**
“In the Yangtze River waves push the waves ahead; so in life new people constantly replace the old ones.”

**Snow on the River** (Liu Zong-Yuan, 773-819 AD, China)
Not a bird in a thousand hills.
Not a soul on ten thousand trails.
An old man on a raft in straw quilts
Fishes alone with snowy chills.

江雪 (柳宗元)
千山鳥飛絕，萬徑人蹤滅。孤舟簑笠翁，獨釣寒江雪。

Through Yangzi Gorges (Li Bai, 701-762 AD, China)
In Baidi City color clouds are swirling, as I leave at dawn.
I'll cover hundreds miles to Jiangling when the day is done.
Apes from both riverbanks scream with echoes lingering on.
Through thousands mountain peaks my light boat has gone.

早發白帝城 (李白)
朝辭白帝彩雲間，千里江陵一日還。兩岸猿聲啼不住，輕舟已過萬重山

Guilin
"I often sent pictures of the hills of Guilin which I painted to friends back home, but few believed what they saw."
"Guilin's scenery is best among all under heaven."

Suzhou
Docking Overnight by Maple Bridge (Zhang Ji, c. 753 AD, China)
At moonset the crows caw through the frosty sky.
Unable to sleep, I watch maple trees by fishing light.
Outside Gusu, Cold Mountain Temple stands upright.
The sound of its bells reaches my boat at midnight.

風橋夜泊 (張繼)
月落烏啼霜滿天，江楓漁火對愁眠。姑蘇城外寒山寺，夜半鐘聲到客船

Sichuan
HARD ROADS IN SHU
Oh, but it is high and very dangerous!

Such travelling is harder than scaling the blue sky.

...Until two rulers of this region
Pushed their way through in the misty ages,
Forty-eight thousand years had passed
With nobody arriving across the Qin border.
And the Great White Mountain, westward, still has only a bird's path
Up to the summit of Emei Peak —
蜀道难，难于上青天

CHINESE HISTORY TIMELINE

1766-1122 BC: Shang Dynasty. City-state confederation ruled by priest-kings.


1279-1368: Yuan Dynasty. Mongol conquest and rule.


1644-1911: Qing Dynasty. Manchu conquest and rule

1839-42: Opium War
1851-64: Taiping Rebellion
1860s-90s: Self-Strengthening Movement
1885: Sino-French War over Vietnam
1894: Sino-Japanese War over Korea
1898: Kang Youwei’s 100 Days Reform
1900: Boxer Uprising
1905: Sun Yat-sen forms Revolutionary Alliance


1913: Yuan establishes military dictatorship
1915: Yuan imperial restoration
1916: Civil War
1916-26: Warlord period

1919: May 4th incident

1921: Founding of Chinese Communist Party (CCP)

1922: Nationalist Party revitalization by Sun Yat-sen. United Front with CCP

1925: Death of Sun Yat-sen (Succession by Chiang Kai-shek)

1926-27: Nationalists reunification. Purge of CCP

1931: Japanese seize Manchuria

1934: CCP Long March to north China

1936: Kidnapping of Chiang Kai-shek. Second United Front with CCP

1937: Outbreak of war with Japan

1941: Pearl Harbor

1945: Japanese defeat

1946-49: Nationalist – CCP Civil War

1949: Chiang retreats to Taiwan. Founding of Peoples Republic of China

**1949-Present: Peoples Republic.** Mao Zedong in charge

1957: Great Leap Forward, economic collapse

1966-76: Cultural Revolution

1976: Death of Mao Zedong

1977: Deng Xiaoping begins to reverse Maoist system

1997: Death of Deng Xiaoping