



**DEPARTURE: 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2010**

## **ITINERARY**

### **Tour Itinerary:**

#### **Day 1, May 7th, Arrive in Beijing**

Upon our arrival in Beijing, we meet our local/national guide at the Beijing Capital airport, and transfer to our hotel Raffles Beijing. And the rest of the day is free at your leisure.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: D

#### **Day 2, May 8th, Beijing**

In the morning, we set off to visit Tian'anmen Square, one of the largest urban squares in the world. As we walk along this expansive open area, we take in the past, present and future of China. To the north stands Tian'anmen, or Heavenly Gate, a preserved piece of Imperial China. A great-sized photo of Mao hangs from Tian'anmen while Mao's Mausoleum lies on the opposite end of the Square. Built in characteristic Soviet Era form by Russian architects, the Great Hall of the People lies in stark contrast next to the National Center for the Performing Arts, designed by French architect, Paul Andreu, which is also known as "The Egg" for its avant-garde domed-shape structure. After walking along Tian'anmen Square, we walk through Tian'anmen, or Heavenly Gate, to enter the Forbidden City. **We explore Forbidden City with a renowned Forbidden City Expert.** For five hundred years, the Forbidden City served as the Imperial Palace for Ming and Qing Dynasty emperors. The biggest and best preserved cluster of buildings in China, this monumental Palace complex, once strictly out of bounds to the Chinese public, houses up to 800 buildings and, reputedly, 9000 chambers. Most everyone has a hobby, even emperors - the Qianlong Emperor's hobby was fueled by his fascination for clockwork. One of our highlights in the Forbidden City is visiting his extensive collection at the Hall of Clocks, not frequented by the crowds of tourists that flock to the Forbidden City, which holds the masterworks of famous clockmakers from around the world, dating from the 18th through 20th centuries. **Special access to private quarters such as the Chonghua Palace (included).**

**Chinese lunch at Ken de Rouge.** Go from the grandeur of the Imperial Palace to a **walking exploration of the hutongs (Qianmen Area)** (literally, alleyways), a labyrinth of lanes that have served as homes to Beijing's residents for hundreds of years. We will explore Hutongs of Qianmen area, such as Dashila, Qianshi Hutong. The Hutong areas have a very special and important position in the rich history and culture of Beijing. Hutong gives a wonderful glimpse into the world of yesterday in Beijing. While visiting the Hutongs, you can appreciate the dramatic changes that the rest of Beijing has undergone. For dinner, we head to "Ghost Street," so called because its Mandarin name, gui jie, sounds similar to learners of Mandarin as the word for "ghost," also gui. "Ghost Street" is lined with bustling eateries and red lanterns, offering a festive and lively nighttime atmosphere. We step into a renovated siheyuan or the plush comfort of red velvet seating at **Hua Jia Yi Yuan, a popular restaurant serving modern Beijing cuisines. There, we sit down to a Peking Duck dinner.**

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D

#### **Day 3, May 9th, Beijing**

In the morning, we drive to the **Mutianyu Great Wall, a quieter and less-visited spot of the Great Wall.** Though the underlying architecture dates from the Ming Dynasty, the original plan for the Great Wall and some of its construction date back to the Qin Dynasty (221-207 BC). We take a cable car up or climb to the highest peak, where we see at least a dozen





watchtowers snake off in each direction. Depending on your interests, we can either take a cable car back or a leisurely walk along the great wall back to the foot of the wall.

**Special Lunch in a village house overlooking the Great Wall with Kung-fu performance by Shaolin Monks**

In the late afternoon, **we will go to visit a NGO named "Rural Women Knowing All"**, a training center when rural women learn livelihood skills. In the evening, we will go for a Chinese Opera Mudanting with buffet dinner at the Royal Grand Grainy.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D

**Day 4, May 10th, Beijing**

In the morning, we go to visit the **Temple of Heaven and study Taichi with local master**, where emperors once prayed for a good harvest, making offerings of grain, silk and animals. Constructed during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), its harmonious proportions and bold colors make it a masterpiece of Chinese architecture. The highlight of the Temple of Heaven is the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests, built without a single nail. After lunch, we go to **visit the Summer Palace**, located in the Western Hills. It's once a favorite pleasure ground for the Empress Dowager Cixi and it is a beautiful example of Chinese garden architecture. An immense park with scenic lakes, long painted corridors and gracefully arched bridges; the Palace is considered 'a paradise of hills and waters'.

Overnight: Raffles Beijing Hotel (Deluxe Room, 5-star)

Meals: B L D

**Day 5, May 11th, Beijing to Lhasa {Flight time approx. 5hrs 40 min}**

In the morning, we transfer to the airport for flight to Lhasa Lhasa is an amazing city where devout Buddhists and the fashionable set enjoy their lives in different ways. Crowded discos vie with praying pilgrims outside the sacred temples. Since we have just made a sudden ascent from the lowlands to an altitude of over 3,700 meters (12,139 ft), the afternoon is left free for you to acclimatize to the new environment. As we are staying in the old town, we recommend you venture around Barkhor market, where you will feel you are at the very heart of Tibet. In the evening, we will go for a welcome dinner at Lhasa Hotel.

Overnight: Four Points Sheraton (Deluxe Room), <http://www.fourpoints.com/Lhasa>

Meals: B L D

**Day 6, May 12th, Lhasa**

In the morning, we meet a **Tibetan Expert for informal discussion on Tibetan History and Art**. Later we make a pilgrimage to Jokhang Temple, the spiritual heart of Tibet. Each day, pilgrims from all across the municipality journey to this holiest of temples, some even prostrating themselves at each step of their trek until they reach the doorsill. Aside from the palace's historic past, pilgrims are drawn to Jokhang Temple for its statue of Jowo Sakyamuni (the historical Buddha at age 12), believed to be one of the most precious objects in all of Tibetan Buddhism.

Afterwards, we can either choose to stroll along the Barkhor street, or optional to **visit a nunnery or NGO organizations (Dropenling Handicraft Center)**, a workshop and gallery showcasing handicrafts all made by Tibetans.

Overnight: Four Points Sheraton (Deluxe Room)

Meals: B L D





### **Day 7, May 13th, Lhasa**

In the morning, we go to **experience the life of Dalai Lama at the famous Potala Palace**, an immense structure stacked atop Marop Ri (Red Hill), high above Lhasa Valley. Built on the site of a destroyed 7th-century palace, the Potala has housed each of the successive Dalai Lamas and served as the headquarters of the Tibetan government since its construction in 1645. It contains more than 10,000 shrines, 200,000 images, and 1,000 rooms. After lunch, stroll along the vast temples and college complexes of the Sera Monastery, one of the three main Gelupka monasteries in Lhasa, and an important spiritual center for Buddhist monks. You will have an opportunity to print your own paper at the printing center, where sutra texts are still made by hand on traditional Tibetan long paper. Experience a very different side of Lhasa side of Lhasa at the debate courtyard, where Tibetan monks energetically debate and challenge one another's views and interpretation of the sacred scriptures, and in the process hone their understanding of Tibetan Buddhism. Afterwards, we go to learn about the history, theory, and practices of Tibetan medication from an expert at a Tibetan hospital.

Overnight: Four Points Sheraton (Deluxe Room)

Meals: B L D

### **Day 8, May 14th, Lhasa**

In the morning, we go to visit the Norbulingkha to look around the inside of the building; the name means 'Jewel Park' although nowadays it is known as 'People's Park'. The Norbulingkha was formerly the summer palace and recreation gardens of the Dalai Lama and it was from here that the present Dalai Lama escaped in 1959. The nearby Tibet Museum is well worth a visit. Pass rapidly through the galleries justifying the Chinese occupation and you will find that the galleries on Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan arts and crafts along with objects of everyday life are well worth the visit. There are many outstanding pieces on display. After lunch, if energy permits, we embark on a short journey to the ancient and seldom-visited Pabongka Monastery, where local legend claims that the surrounding land was home to two divine tortoises - a male and female - that now exist as two granite boulders at this site. Follow a trail up to the Tashi Choling hermitage for breathtaking views of Lhasa Valley. Continue up the ridge and along the flanks of Phurbu Chok to the Sera Tse hermitage, and then hike onto the Dode Valley. There is also an optional short, easy walk to a nearby nunnery.

Overnight: Four Points Sheraton (Deluxe Room)

Meals: B L D

### **Day 9, May 15th, Lhasa**

In the morning, we can choose to driver 2hrs to **visit the Yamdrok Tso Lake** (4408 m), one of the three holiest lakes in Tibet. From the lake, we can enjoy the breathtaking views of its turquoise water surrounded by the mysterious Mt Donang Sangwari (5,340 m) and the snow peaks of Nojin Gangzang (7,191 m). Tibetans have regarded the lake's various as having their own colors have spiritual meanings. And a picnic will be served by the lake. In the afternoon, we drive to visit the Gandan Monastery. The Gandan Monastery complex was formerly one of the three great religious centers for the Geluggpa (Yellow Hat) sect of Tibetan Buddhism. Perched on a mountain east of Lhasa, it was built in 1409 by Tsongkapa. Drawing on support from monks and laypeople, the school rapidly expanded with disciples opening the Drepung and Sera monasteries in 1416 and 1419 respectively. Mongol support during the 17<sup>th</sup> century eventually assured their status as the preeminent school of Tibetan Buddhism, and more than 3,000 monks lived here prior to 1950.

Overnight: Four Points Sheraton (Deluxe Room)

Meals: B L D





### **Day 10, May 16th, Lhasa to Xi'an {Flight time approx. 2hrs 50 min}**

After breakfast, we drive to the Gonggar airport for the flight to Xi'an. Upon arrival, greeted by our guide, then we drive to the downtown, en route, we will visit the Hanyang Tomb, as a contrast to the Qin Dynasty Terracotta Warriors where we viewed row after row of soldiers buried along with horse-drawn chariots, various farm animals were unearthed at the Han Dynasty Hanyang Tomb, indicative of the prosperous and peaceful social-political climate of the times.

**Highlight: Special access to the Museum repair room features some valuable pieces not on display. For this evening, we will have dinner in our hotel, and have a private dumpling-making and noodle-throwing lesson by the expert chef.**

If our energy permits, we will walk around the Muslim quarter, where the way of life is derived as much from the ancient cultures of Central Asia as from China. For over 1,300 years, since the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618 - 907), Muslims have been an integral part of daily life in Xi'an, the beginning of the Silk Road.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D

### **Day 11, May 17th, Xi'an**

In the morning, we drive to visit The Terracotta Warriors, created to guard the tomb of the first emperor to unite China, Qin Shihuangdi, is regarded as one of the most remarkable archaeological discoveries in the twentieth century. Visit the pits containing Qin Shihuangdi's famous army of afterlife protectors.

**Special face to face program to get closer to the life-sized warriors this would be led by a museum curator.**

After lunch, we visit Shaanxi Acrobatic School in Xi'an and get an inside view of the lives of the acrobats. A "ten minute stage performance takes ten years of training." Here, most children take normal courses in the morning, and then devote their afternoon and evening to training. We visit their training hall and enjoy a performance afterward. Very different from watching the professionally directed and produced shows at the large theatres, we have an opportunity to learn about the Chinese education system within the context of an acrobatics-focused program.

Afterwards, we make our way to the Forest of Steles, a series of gardens which contain China's largest, richest and earliest collections of Chinese ancient stone tablets used by famous calligraphers before the invention of paper. We begin our visit with a private calligraphy lesson in studios in the bustling painting and seal market just outside of the Forest. Our calligraphy master then leads us to the Stele Forest, explaining the history and stories of these time-enduring tablets.

**Private evening dinner at Western restaurant overlooking ancient City Wall.**

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D





**Day 12, May 18th, Xi'an to Guilin {Flight time approx. 1hr 50 min}**

In the morning, we go to learn more about the history of Shaanxi and greater China in a larger context through a visit to the Shaanxi History Museum. As the cradle of Chinese civilization and the home of several Chinese dynasties, Shaanxi is a treasure trove of Chinese historical and cultural relics. Through well-chosen paintings, sculptures, and relics, the museum takes us on a tour of China's traditional history, starting with its unification under the first emperor, Qin Shihuang, to the end of the last dynasty. The highlight of our museum visit is access to the underground murals, many of which portray the Imperial and aristocratic lifestyles of the flourishing Tang Dynasty. Afterwards, we transfer to airport for flight to Guilin. Upon arrival, we transfer to our hotel.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D

**Day 13, May 19th, Guilin to Yangshuo**

In the morning, we drive to Yangshuo, go for a bamboo rafting on Yulong river. In the afternoon, we can choose hike along the Li river, or drive towards Aishan village via the old country road to Yongcun village. We pass by picturesque hamlets, tucked among subtropical plants and stretched in between rice paddies. As we drive, in the distance we will see the famous Moon Hill. We can get to the summit of Moon Hill after climbing 819 steps to have a bird's-eye-view of the surrounding hills and have a close look of the "Moon" which used to be the underground river canal. After exploring the countryside, we drive to overnight at hotel.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D

**Day 14, May 20th, Fri, Yangshuo to Hangzhou to Huangshan**

Morning, after breakfast, we drive to airport for flight to Hangzhou. Hangzhou, the terminus of the Grand Canal, is one of the greenest, most attractive cities in the world. Marco Polo during his visits to China, called Hangzhou "the most beautiful and magnificent city in the world". Upon arrival, we drive to the hotel in Huangshan.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D

**Day 15, May 21st, Sat, Huangshan**

Starting the day early, we drive to the foothill of Huangshan (Huang Mt.). We will ascend the eastern side of Huangshan. Huangshan is one of China's most famous landscapes, so while the scenery is truly striking, this is not the place to come for quiet contemplation! On our hike we will take in Huangshan's most spectacular vistas and reach its highest peak. The hike today will take us four hours to get to the top. Or we can take the cable cars.

We return to our hotel in the late afternoon.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D

**Day 16, May 22nd, Sun, Huangshan to Shanghai**

In the morning, we drive to Hongcun, the main village in Yi County. We spend time exploring old houses that are several hundred years old; each piece of intricate woodcarvings or exquisite piece of furniture here is a true sample of a living antique. We recommend you to bring enough film, as this is definitely one of the most photogenic villages in China. Late in the afternoon, we tour the Nanping village if time permitting.

Early evening, we drive to the airport for flight to Shanghai.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D





### **Day 17, May 23rd, Shanghai**

In the morning, we move on to the Shanghai Museum, which contains one of the world's finest collections of Chinese art, all housed in a state of the art museum. We move through the museum guided by the excellent audio self-guide, and then spend a few minutes in the museum shop browsing among the many excellent books available on Chinese art, history, and culture.

**After lunch at Dingxiang Garden, we will visit Xintiandi area**, then go for a walking tour of some of the tree shaded streets of the French Concession. Most of the houses of this area remain intact, providing a charming area for strolling, imagining the life of Shanghai's wealthy community prior to World War II, browsing in a few shops, and sampling a few of

China's most famous teas in a tea shop. To see what the interiors of these houses looked like, we spend a few minutes to go through either the home of Sun Yatsen or of Song Qingling. **Tonight witness famous Shanghai Acrobats show after dinner.**

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: B L D

### **Day 18, May 24th, Shanghai - Home**

After the breakfast, we transfer to the airport for your international flight home.

Overnight: N/A

Meal: B

**Tour Ends.**





**TOUR COST** : USD 7,570/per person/based on double  
**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT** : Available on request  
**INT. AIRFARE** : CAD 989.00 taxes 306.85 for a total of CAD1295.85/pp

Tour will operate with a minimum of 20 guests

For tax receipt purposes - The donation to the BC Society for Educating Girl's of Rural China for CAD1000.00 has been excluded from the tour cost and is payable by the guest directly to EGRC. Please contact the Foundation/Tien Ching directly for more information.

**TOUR LODGING INFO: 17 Nights Hotels**

PLACE	NIGHTS	HOTELS
Beijing	04 Nights	Novotel Xinqiao Hotel
Lhasa	05 Nights	Four Points Sheraton
Xian	02 Nights	Grand New World Hotel
Gulin	02 Nights	Green Lotus Hotel Yangshuo
Huangshan	02 Night	Huangshan Golf Hotel
Shanghai	02 Night	Ramada Gateway Shanghai

**TOUR PACKAGE INCLUDES:**

- Hotel accommodation as indicated in the itinerary for Beijing, Lhasa, Xi'an, Huangshan and Shanghai. Boutique hotels in Gullin. All based on double occupancy
- One (1) English speaking tour guide in each city and one (1) **National Host (Tour Manager - Western bilingual)**
- One (1) bus and accompanying drivers for all land transfers indicated in the itinerary
- Admission fees to all places and for all activities mentioned in the itinerary
- All meals as indicated on the itinerary.
- All relevant trip taxes, local duties and surcharges
- Drinking water is provided on coach.
- Mineral water, tea, and soft drinks during meals
- Porterage - 1 piece of luggage per guest while on tour
- Tourism Insurance required by Chinese Government
- Entrance vise fee to China and permit to Tibet
- Domestic economy class airfare within China
- China visa fees

**TOUR PACKAGE DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

- × Camera fees
- × Things of personal nature like laundry, telephone etc.
- × International airfares
- × All other than those listed in above inclusions

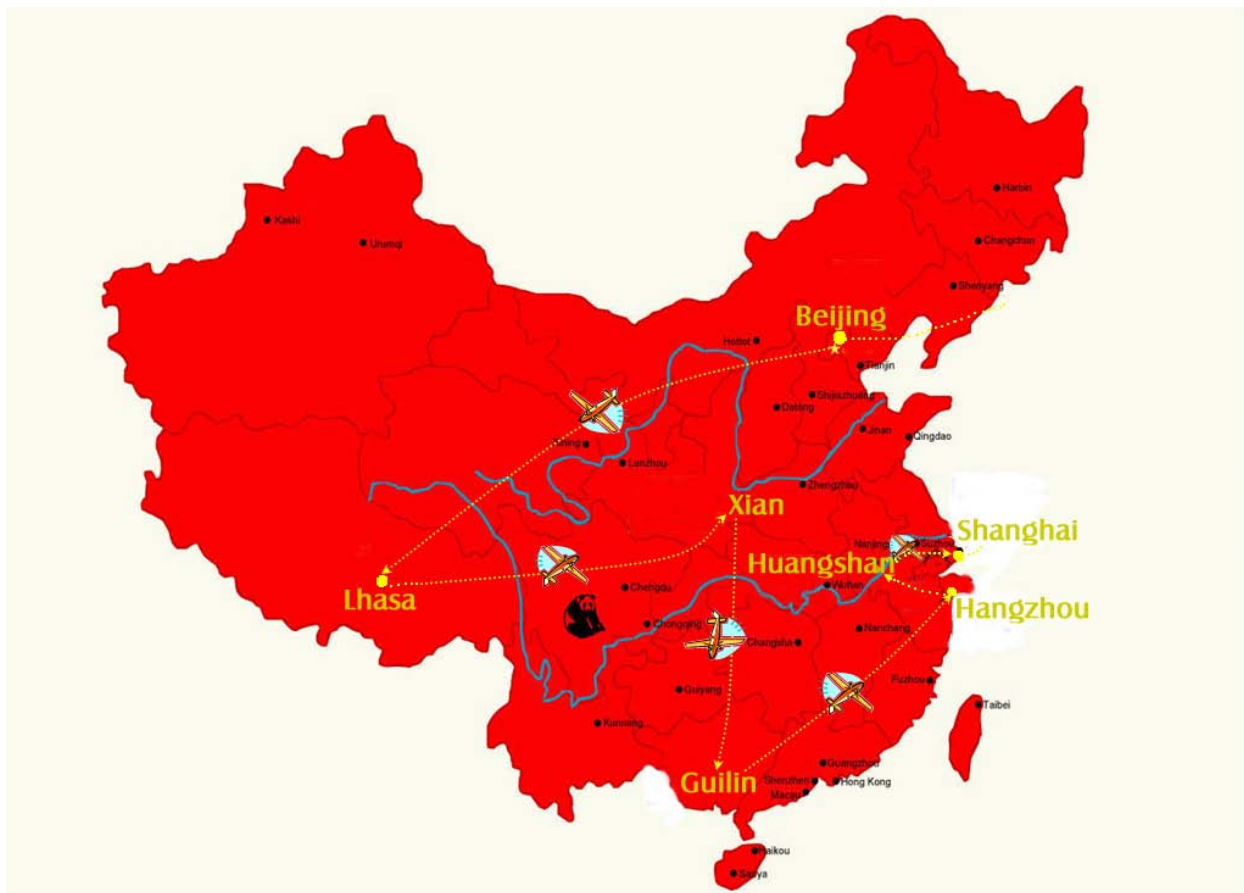
**BC Society for Educating Girls of Rural China** is a registered Canadian Charity (#83435 9077 RR0001). Since 2005 the Society has raised funds in Canada and sponsored 211 young women from rural areas of Gansu Province in Northwest China to obtain their university education. Under the Society's sponsorship 26 students graduated in 2009 and 185 are currently studying in 90 different universities in various cities in China. For more information on the Charity please visit: [www.egrc.ca](http://www.egrc.ca)



### Seasonal Weather Averages for May

Temp.	Beijing	Lhasa	Xi'an	Guilin	Hangzhou	Shanghai
High (F / C)	80 / 26	69 / 20	78 / 26	80/27	77 / 25	74 / 24
Low (F / C)	56 / 13	43/6	57 / 14	68/20	62 / 17	60 / 16
Rainfall (In / mm)	1 / 29	1 / 23.2	3 / 65	14/358	6 / 163	5 / 114

### China Travel Map



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