

EXPLORE!

Family Beijing to Hong Kong
14 days

China, Hong Kong - Trip code FQCH



Family Beijing to Hong Kong

Travelling across China by train and plane, this fast-paced journey takes us from the imperial palaces of Beijing to the skyscrapers of Hong Kong. Trip highlights include Xian's Terracotta Army (and making your own army figure), giant pandas in Chengdu and the rural town of Yangshuo. We also walk through the vast Dragon's Backbone rice terraces, stay in traditional village houses, fly kites and meet the local Zhuang tribes. **TRIPLE ROOMS** This trip allows the option for triple rooms to be included within the booking on a selected number of night stops within the holiday. If you would like this option, a discount may be applicable on the cost of the trip - please ask our Sales team for further information.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Beijing** - Walk along the Great Wall at Mutianyu. Explore Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City
- ★ **Xian** - Meet the famous Terracotta Army of Qin Shi Huangdi.
- ★ **Villages and Rice Terraces** - Homestay and hike amongst the rural village of the Zhuang.
- ★ **Chengdu** - Visit a world famous panda research centre
- ★ **Hong Kong** - Free time to explore one of Asia's most vibrant cities.

For any questions about this trip contact one of our Adventure Travel Consultants on:

01252 884 243

See our opening hours

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:

Full on

Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

GROUP SIZE:

14 - 20

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

For any questions about this trip contact one of our Adventure Travel Consultants on:

01252 884 243

See our opening hours

DAY 1 - Join tour Beijing

Arrive Beijing and check-in at hotel. The rest of the day is free to relax, or perhaps explore something of our local surroundings and acclimatise a little to the enigma that is Beijing.

Our hotel in Beijing was established by the Tobacco Monopoly Bureau of Hunan Province and is close to the Temple of Heaven, Taoranting Park and the railway station hotel and is 30 minutes-walk to the Tiananmen Square. All rooms have satellite TV, a safety box and Internet Access. There are a number of restaurants, one of which is known for its Hunan cuisine and serves Chinese and Western style dinners. There is a tea garden serving Chinese and Western drinks, chess and card room and even a foot massage room. Foreign exchange and laundry are also available.



Accommodation: Xiao Xiang Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Free in Beijing to visit Tiananmen Square.

Today offers a chance to explore something of a city that has been at the centre of China, politically and culturally, since the days of the great Kublai Khan. You could pay a visit to Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City, home to the Ming and the Manchu (Qing) emperors for over 500 years. Other options include a visit to the Temple of Heaven, a trip out to the Summer Palace, or a tour of the city's fascinating hutongs (traditional alleys and backstreets) by rickshaw.



Accommodation: Xiao Xiang Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - Drive to the Great Wall at Mutianyu and fly kites by the wall or the Olympic stadium. Overnight train to Xian

This morning we drive by private bus to Mutianyu, some 125 kilometres to the north-east of the city, to pay a visit to China's famous Great Wall. One of the country's most iconic symbols, the Great Wall stretches from the China Sea to the Gobi desert, a journey of over 5,000 kilometres. The section we visit today is one of the best preserved parts of the wall, built over 400 years ago during the Ming dynasty. Over 10 kilometres in length, this magnificent structure crosses five mountain passes and features two beacon towers and nearly 70 watchtowers. We then fly kites either by the Great Wall or the square by the Birds Nets stadium, the main venue of the Beijing Olympic Games. Try out this ancient Chinese tradition as you battle with the wind to reach for the sky. This evening we then take the overnight train to Xian.



Accommodation: Overnight Train from Beijing to Xian



Simple Overnight Train



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Free day to explore the Shaanxi National Museum or the Muslim Quarter

We arrive in Xian early this morning and walk the short distance to our hotel in time for breakfast. The rest of the day is then free to make the most of China's old imperial capital. You might like to pay a visit to the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, a 64 metre high structure that offers some superb views out across the city. Another possibility is a visit to the Shaanxi National Museum. Alternatively, the network of alleys that make up the city's Muslim Quarter provide an excellent destination for a day of exploring.

The hotel in Xian offers good sized rooms with en-suite facilities and internet connection, TV, air-conditioning and a tea/coffee maker. Hotel facilities include a restaurant, fitness/health centre, sauna, laundry service, safety deposit boxes and Wi-Fi. The hotel is located close to the railway station with the bus for the Terracotta Warriors leaving from across the road.



Accommodation: Jie Fang Hotel (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Visit the Terracotta Warriors and Workshop and Calligraphy Class

Today we visit one of China's most famous sights, the Terracotta Army of Emperor Qin Shi Huangdi. Travelling by private bus to the site on the outskirts of Xian, we spend three to four hours exploring the well preserved characters, visiting the three excavated pits that hold, literally, thousands of life-sized archers, soldiers and charioteers. Buried here to guard the tomb of China's first emperor, the Terracotta Army is considered to be one of the greatest archaeological finds of the last century. Before experiencing the site, we visit a workshop close by where we witness the making of smaller versions of the Terracotta figures which gives some idea of the challenge that the Chinese craftsmen had when making the life sizes equivalent. Returning to Xian, we then travel onto the Tang Art Museum where we try our hand at the ancient art of calligraphy which of course is Chinese letter writing - learn how to write your name in this ancient communication style.



Accommodation: Jie Fang Hotel (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Morning flight to Chengdu and visit the Panda Research Centre and the ancient city of Huanglongxi.

A morning flight to Chengdu, the capital of China's Sichuan Province, brings us to a city that once marked the starting point of the old southern Silk Road. Set along the western edge of the Sichuan Basin, Chengdu can trace its ancestry back over 2,500 years and is famed throughout China for its food and its embroidery. The city is also home to the world famous Panda Breeding and Research Centre which lies just on the outskirts of the city. On arrival, we travel directly to the centre to see an animal that has become synonymous with China itself. Home to numerous free roaming Giant Pandas, the ultimate aim of the centre is to reintroduce these rare animals back into the wild in such numbers as to ensure their survival. To that end, the centre has enjoyed an extraordinary level of success with numerous new-born pandas over the past few years.

We visit Huanglongxi in the afternoon, which is an ancient town over 1,700 years old. Huanglongxi has been restored to retain its rustic charm, with ancient cobbled streets, temples and houses along its curving alleys. The majority of the buildings in Huanglongxi date back from the Qing Dynasty with ancient temples including Zhenjiang Temple, Chaoyin Temple and Gulong Temple which have all been featured in numerous films as part of exterior scenes of period movies. Return to Chengdu, overnight.



Accommodation: Chengdu Furong Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Fly to Guilin with free afternoon

We drive to the airport for the flight from Chengdu to Guilin this morning with the rest of the day free to explore. Guilin is China's most picturesque region and it's breathtaking scenery has attracted many visitors (and famous poets and artists!) for thousands of years. The city boasts an active nightlife but you can still catch a glimpse of Guilin's yesteryears in the countryside which continues to be home to many ethnic minority groups.



Accommodation: Dan Gui Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Drive to Pingan Village; village walks

The village of Pingan sits perched on the central ridge of the Dragon's Backbone, a visually stunning series of rice terraces that runs along the meandering contours of surrounding hills. Upon arriving at the village, we take a walk around and meet some of the local Zhuang people and see the unique agricultural feat of engineering that has created this remarkable landscape. Today's walk follows the rice terraces and there are a lot of steps along the route, we can take our time to enjoy the views and with plenty of breaks to rest our legs during the three hour adventure.

The guesthouse in Pingan is a small family run hotel set in a wooden style building design. There are good views of the local area and over the rice terraces from the balcony. The guesthouse gives a good location to wander around the surrounding area and discover the local village. The rooms are simple but clean with air conditioning, TV and internet access in the lobby.



Accommodation: Ping An Guesthouse (or similar)



Simple Guesthouse



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 9 - Morning walk to Longji Village. Afternoon drive to Yangshou

The Zhuang migrated into this region of China over 5,000 years ago and today represent the largest of the country's minority groups. Skilled in weaving and embroidery, the Zhuang follow a fascinating tradition of beliefs that are deeply rooted in the power of nature. This morning we take a walk for around three hours to another Zhuang village at Longji following a flat path. We then drive on to the small market town of Yangshou late this afternoon. Nestling besides the banks of the Li River, Yangshou lies amongst what many consider to be some of the most scenic landscapes in China.

The hotel in Yangshuo has tastefully decorated rooms with air-conditioning and heating, private bathrooms, radio, TV and phone. It is easy walking distance from the centre and close to the famous Western Street and a local food market that opens in the evening. There is a bar and lounge area, shopping arcade and Chinese and Western Restaurants. The hotel also offers laundry service, safe-deposit box and even shoe shine facility. There is a bank next door for currency exchange.



Accommodation: New Li Jiang Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Morning cooking lesson with optional cycle ride or raft along the Li River

We visit a cooking school in the city where the whole family learn how to prepare a number of traditional Chinese dishes using local produce for our lunch today. The afternoon is free for you to relax and soak up the atmosphere of this beautiful riverside town or you may want to hire bikes and cycle out into the surrounding countryside, climb to the top of 'Moon Hill' for some wonderful views across the open plains and out to the distant mountains or try a rafting trip along the Li River. A wander through the town's local market offers a chance to barter for everything from batiks and silk paintings to Chairman Mao's Little Red Book. If you decide to try bamboo rafting we recommend you are confident swimming 25 metres unaided.



Accommodation: New Li Jiang Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 11 - Morning free. Overnight train to Shenzhen

After a free morning in Yangshou we then drive back to Guilin to take an overnight train to Shenzhen, just to the north of Hong Kong. A testament to the resurgence of China as a modern world power, Shenzhen is one of the country's most successful Special Economic Zones. It is also the end of our journey across mainland China.



Accommodation: Overnight Train: Guilin to Shenzhen



Simple Overnight Train



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 12 - Cross border into Hong Kong. Free on arrival

On arrival in Shenzhen this morning we need to cross the border into Hong Kong by way of the Lu Wu rail connection. This requires us carrying our own bags across the border, where our local Hong Kong guide will be waiting to take us to our hotel, travelling with the locals on the MTR metro system. The rest of the day is then free to relax and enjoy one of Asia's most vibrant cities.



Accommodation: Panda Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 13 - Free in Hong Kong

You are free to take in Kowloon's bustling waterfront today, perhaps taking a trip on the famous Star Ferry to enjoy one of the world's most famous cityscapes from the water. Other options include a ride on Hong Kong's funicular railway to the top of Victoria Peak, where you can enjoy some panoramic views out across the city and the outlying islands. You could also visit the Lam Tsuen Wishing Tree, one of the city's most popular shrines, or take a stroll through the stalls and markets of Li Yuen Street in search

of some last minute bargains.



Accommodation: Panda Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 14 - Tour ends Hong Kong

Tour ends this morning after breakfast.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Family information

Minimum age

11

Why book this trip

This adventure is an epic journey across China taking a number of overnight trains and a flight to cover the huge distances that are involved. Families who want to really discover a country and don't mind travel around will really enjoy this holiday - plus there are lots of added extras such as flying kites, making a Terracotta statue, visiting a Panda sanctuary and a cooking lesson.



What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 12
Lunch: 1



Transport

Bus
Flight
Train



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)



Accommodation

1 nights simple guesthouse
8 nights standard hotel
2 nights simple hotel
2 nights simple overnight train

Trip information

Country information

China

Climate

China has primarily a temperate climate, with a wide spectrum of extremes due to its huge area. Summer months are hot and rainy though in the south the climate is tropical and we can experience rain at any time of the year, often falling in sharp tropical rain-storms which are heavy but short lived. Winter is colder and drier, temperatures in Beijing can be as low as -12c.

Time difference to GMT

+8

Plugs

3 Pin Flat

Religion

Mainly Buddhist

Language

Mandarin

Hong Kong

Climate

Hong Kong enjoys more of a sub-tropical climate and the winter months tend to produce temperatures in the high teens, with January being more susceptible to cloud cover, with occasional rain and cold fronts.

Time difference to GMT

+8

Plugs

3 Pin Flat

Religion

3 main religions - Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism

Language

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Beijing - Opera £15.00, Hutong trip £13.00, Temple of Heaven £3.50, Summer Palace £5.00 (entrance only) Xian - City Walls by bike - £10.00; Tang Dynasty show and dumpling banquet £30.00, Wild Goose Pagoda £5.00 Yangshuo - Sound and Light show £21.00 (£26.00 for VIP seat), Bamboo rafting £25.00, Painting lesson £8.00, Calligraphy lesson £8.00 Please note there will not be time for all these optionals.

Clothing

Lightweight clothing is needed all year round with some warmer clothes for the cooler evenings. Casual clothes are the most practical. You may also wish to bring some lightweight rainwear or an umbrella.

Footwear

Comfortable walking shoes, trainers and sandals

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

It is essential that your baggage is lockable; the airport authorities insist on this. Please be aware, before boarding a flight in China that the Chinese authorities will only allow glass bottles onto aircraft if they have been checked in as main luggage. Any glass bottles in the hand luggage may be confiscated. Please bring a shoulder bag large enough to carry clothing and toiletries for the nightstop in Pingan as we will not bring our main luggage with us for the night.

Equipment

Torch, insect repellent, sunglasses, sun cream and a water bottle. A Mandarin phrase book may also be helpful.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Local Staff: Accordingly you should allow approx. £25 per person for gratuities for local staff.

Country Information

China

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£5

Dinner price
£6.00 - 10.00

Beer price
£2

Water price
£1.5

Foreign Exchange

Local currency
Renminbi/Yuan

Recommended Currency For Exchange
Either EUR, USD or GBP.

Where To Exchange
In all towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival. When changing money ask for a receipt so you can change Yuan back into your own currency when leaving China.

ATM Availability
All major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance
Most major restaurants and stores.

Travellers Cheques
Travellers cheques can be changed in Hong Kong and at the Bank of China in all major cities but only during bank opening hours. Please note this is very time consuming and is not recommended.

Hong Kong

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price
£7.5

Dinner price
£14

Beer price
£2.4

Water price
£1.3

Foreign Exchange

Local currency
Hong Kong Dollar.

Recommended Currency For Exchange
Either EUR, USD or GBP

Where To Exchange
In all towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival. When changing money ask for a receipt so you can change Yuan back into your own currency when leaving China.

ATM Availability
All major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance
Most major restaurants and stores.

Travellers Cheques
Travellers cheques can be changed in Hong Kong and at the Bank of China in all major cities but only during bank opening hours. Please note this is very time consuming and is not recommended.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Flight, Train

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

The majority of hotels in China offer check in from 12noon. On days where we will arrive on a sleeper train the Tour Leader will try and arrange an early check in for the group, however this may not be possible. When travelling on sleeper trains we use a combination of a 'hard sleeper' berth (usually on the Shenzhen to Guilin journey), which are berths with 6 beds (3 on each side) and a curtain to separate from the main carriage and 'soft sleeper' berths, which are berths with 4 beds (2 on each side) which would be allocated to the Explore group. Due to the nature of booking train tickets in China we cannot guarantee that the entire group will be in the same carriage and you may be sharing your berth with non-Explore passengers or both sexes.

Family swimming

Swimming is not available on this tour

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

China: A visa is required by all nationalities. A single entry visa should be arranged in advance of travelling. In order to apply for your Chinese visa you will need to submit supporting documents from our local supplier confirming your itinerary and travel arrangements, which we will obtain on your behalf. So that we can provide this for you, and to ensure all local arrangements are in place, we require a copy of your passport no later than 8 weeks before you are due to start your trip. Once we have your passport copy we shall process and pass on the documents you require 6-8 weeks before your trip, please be mindful of this when applying for your visa. If you require the supporting documents earlier than this, please contact Explore so we can arrange this. Passengers wishing to extend their stay in China should be aware that current visa regulations only allow foreigners to stay in the country for up to 30 days. Please consider this when planning your trip. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions

relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Non refundable permits

China

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, infectious hepatitis, typhoid, tetanus and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Travellers may wish to take immunisation against Japanese Encephalitis. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Hong Kong

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, infectious hepatitis, typhoid, tetanus and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Travellers may wish to take immunisation against Japanese Encephalitis. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.
