



Celestial Mountains Tour Company

CULTURAL TOURS

The Chinese Silk Road

DAY 1 Arrival at Beijing. Free time. Overnight at a hotel.

Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. This is the political, educational and cultural center of the country. Beijing is also known as Peking which literally means "northern capital".

DAY 2 City tour of Beijing. Visit to Tiananmen Square, Imperial Palace, also known as the "Forbidden City". In the afternoon, visit the Summer Palace. Overnight at a hotel.

Tiananmen Square is considered to be the world's largest. The Imperial Palace, also known as the "Forbidden City" was the center of power in China for 500 hundred years symbolizes all that is imperial and traditional China. The Summer Palace is one of China's largest and best-preserved imperial gardens.

DAY 3 In Beijing. Excursion to the Great Chinese Wall, Shenlu (Spirit Road) and Temple of Heaven. Overnight at a hotel.

The Great Wall of China is ancient China's greatest public work project and a symbol of Chinese civilization. The Temple of Heaven is a place where the emperors of the Ming and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties worshipped to heaven and prayed for peace and harvest.

DAY 4 Fly to Urumqi. Upon arrival in the afternoon, visit Xinjiang Museum. Overnight at a hotel.

Urumqi is a capital of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China. It is situated in a depression of the Eurasian continent and is the most remote city from the sea in the world.

DAY 5 Excursion to the Heavenly Lake and the Nanshan pasture. Visit Yurt homes of the local Kazakh people. Fly to Kashgar. Overnight at a hotel.

Heavenly Lake is in 115 km to the north-east from Urumqi. This lake is situated at the height of almost 2000m above sea level. The beauty of the mountain setting simply takes away breath.

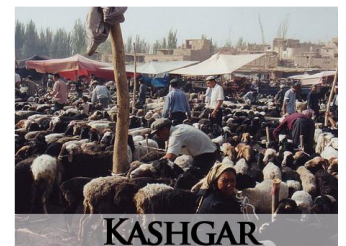
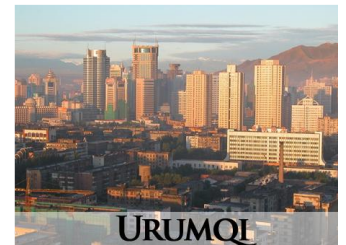
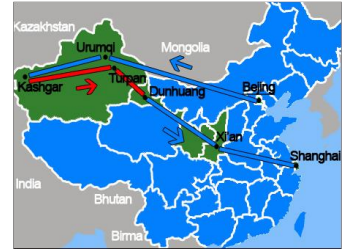
DAY 6 In Kashgar. Visit Sunday Bazaar, Id Kah Mosque and the Tomb of Yusup Hazi Hajup Overnight at a hotel.

As traveler Marco Polo wrote about Kashgar "It is an eastern Cairo, where there are mountains of goods, and people swarm like bees". The Sunday Bazaar is believed to be the largest outdoor market in the world. The Id Kah Mosque is the largest in China.

DAY 7 In Kashgar. Visit the Tomb of Abakh Hoja, Hannoyi Ruins and the Mor Pagoda. Fly back to Urumqi in the evening. Overnight at a hotel.

The tomb of Abakh Hoja was the cemetery for nobles in ancient times and includes the tomb of a famous concubine of the Qing Emperor Qianlong. Hannoyi Ruins is a Tang dynasty town built in the 7th century and abandoned in the 12th century.

DAY 8 Drive to Turpan. Visit ancient Jiaohe City. Overnight at a hotel.



Turpan is Uygur town set in a large oasis surrounded by desert and dry mountains. The ancient Jiaohe City was constructed over 3000 years ago; it is the most ancient city in the Turpan hollow, and the remains of many its structures are still standing.

DAY 9 In Turpan. Visit Emin Minaret and the Gaochang ruins, later stop by the Astana Tombs and Beziklik Caves. Overnight at a hotel.

The Emin Minaret is the largest old tower in Xinjiang. It is the only Islamic tower among the hundred famous towers in China. The Gaochang ruins reveal traces of a prosperous ancient trading center. The Astana Tombs were the burial ground for the nobles of ancient kingdoms.

DAY 10 Visit the Grape Valley of Turpan and see the houses of Uygur farmers. Take an overnight train ride to Dunhuang. Overnight at a hotel.

Turpan is synonymous with grapes and wine which is the area's most famous product. Grapes are cultivated here due to the irrigation system installed over 2,000 years ago that transferred water from the glaciers. Turpan and the Grape valley are situated on 80 meters below sea level.

DAY 11 In Dunhuang. Visit the legendary White Horse Pagoda, Crescent Spring Lake, and Singing Sand Dunes of the Gobi Desert. Overnight at a hotel.

Dunhuang is renowned for the Mogao Caves.

In ancient times, taking the advantage of its geographic location, Dunhuang became a major stop on Silk Road and was the center of trade between China and its western neighbors. It was referred to as "Sha Zhou" or "Beautiful desert oasis". The White Horse Pagoda was built in Dunhuang in 386A.D.

DAY 12 In Dunhuang. Visit Mogao Caves. Fly to Xi'an in the afternoon . Overnight at a hotel.

The Mogao Caves consist of some 492 grottoes which contain examples of Buddhist religious art, carved in a cliff facing the desert, and depicting 1000 years of history. Xi'an is one of the birthplaces of the ancient civilization in the Yellow River Basin area of China

DAY 13 City tour of Xi'an. Visit massive City Walls and Terracotta warriors in Shaanxi History Museum Overnight at a hotel.

Thirteen Chinese dynasties had their capitals in Xi'an. The city enjoys equal fame with Athens, Cairo, and Rome as one of the four major capitals of ancient civilizations. The city walls of Xi'an give a feeling of China's ancient capital. The life-sized terracotta warriors of China's first Emperor, Qin Shihuang, are over 2000 years old and amazingly well-preserved.

DAY 14 Visit Yangling to view some discoveries of the Han Dynasty. Fly to Shanghai and visit the Bund and Yuyuan Garden upon arrival. Overnight at a hotel.

Originally Shanghai was a seaside fishing town, and became China's most important city by the 20th century. Today it is the largest commercial and financial center in China, and the tenth largest city in the world.

DAY 15 In Shanghai. Visit Shanghai Museum. Have free time to wander around the city. Overnight at a hotel.

Today's Shanghai is a multi-cultural metropolis with both modern and traditional Chinese features. Shanghai Museum's galleries contain world-class collections of ancient arts and artifacts.

DAY 16 Departure