

## China - A Confucian Odyssey

→ **April 12 - 27, 2009**

→ **September 13 - 28, 2009**

In addition to seeing the Great Wall, Forbidden City, and other special sites in Beijing, enjoy an extensive introduction to Chinese life in Shandong Province through visits to factories, farms, and villages. Visit farmers' homes, cruise the 2,000-year-old Grand Canal in Suzhou, and climb the "sacred mountain" of Taishan. In Qufu, the birthplace of Confucius, visit the Temples, Parks, and Mansion, which after 75 generations, still hold the Master's name.

**UNESCO World Heritage Sites:** Imperial Palaces of the Ming and Qing Dynasties (Forbidden City), The Great Wall, Summer Palace, an Imperial Garden, Temple of Heaven: an Imperial Sacrificial Altar, Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor (Terra Cotta Warriors), Mount Taishan, Temple and Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion in Qufu, Classical Gardens of Suzhou

**People to People Experiences:** Meet the Chinese people as you have the opportunity to speak with university students, visit a nursery school for both senior citizens and children and tour a local hospital to learn about acupuncture. Enjoy a cooking demonstration and also visit with and share lunch in a local farmer's home, as well as visiting a township enterprise.

**Sample Lectures:** China's One Child Policy, "Education in China," "Confucius's Life and his Philosophic Thought," "Calligraphy and Art" (with a demonstration).

### **Food: An Insight Into Culture**

Celebrating food as another way to gain an understanding of a culture, you will visit local food markets, enjoy meals in select authentic local restaurants, and hear Chefs talk about some of their favorite dishes.

### Day 1 - Sunday

USA / International Date Line

Depart from the U.S.

### Day 2 - Monday

Beijing

Evening arrival in Beijing, China's second-largest city and capital for 700 years. Here you will have the opportunity to visit sites that connect the illustrious past of imperial China with the modernizing present of the People's Republic.

### **Beijing News Plaza Hotel**

### Day 3 - Tuesday (B, L, D)

Beijing

Visit the world's largest plaza, Tian An Men, where the first flag of the People's Republic of China was raised in 1949. View the impressive monuments, museums and parade grounds of Tian An Men. You will take an extended tour of the Palace Museum, also known as the Forbidden City, which is the largest example of Chinese architecture in existence and contains palaces, pavilions, gates and chambers, and is surrounded by a wall and moat. Visit the perfection of Ming architecture, the Temple of Heaven, where shape, color and sound take on symbolic significance. Hear a lecture on China's "One Child Policy" from a member of the China Population Information and Research Center. In the evening you will enjoy the culinary experience of a Peking Duck dinner. **Beijing News Plaza Hotel**

### Day 4 - Wednesday (B, L, D)

Beijing

A memorable visit to the 2,000-year-old Great Wall. Dating from the 4th century B.C. and stretching over 3,000 miles across China's northern frontier, the Great Wall remains one of the world's most remarkable engineering feats. Take a rickshaw through the old quarters of Beijing which are a labyrinth of narrow alleys with one-story brick houses called Hutongs. See the homes of ordinary residents as you glimpse local daily life. In the evening you will attend a cultural event (subject to schedule availability) such as the famous Peking Opera, ballet, or the circus. **Beijing News Plaza Hotel**

### Day 5 - Thursday (B, L, D)

Beijing / Xi'an

Travel to the Summer Palace where pagodas and pavilions add to the beautiful landscape around the lake. Walk along its well-known "Long Corridor" with lacquered pillars and crossbeams, as well as painted scenes of the scenic wonders of China. Afternoon flight to Xi'an, considered to be the cradle of Chinese civilization and one of the most important archaeological sites in the world. See the seven-story Big Wild Goose Pagoda, which offers a splendid view of the city. Enjoy a cooking demonstration reflecting Chinese culinary arts and then experience a sumptuous Royal Dumpling Banquet. **Jinshi International Hotel**

## Day 6 - Friday (B, L, D)

Xi'an

Visit the archaeological excavation of the 6,000-figure life-sized Terra Cotta Warriors that guard the still unopened burial mound of Qin Shi Huang, the emperor who unified China in 221 B.C. Visit the City Wall, which has over 400 years of history. Attend a lecture on "Education in China" at a local university where you will have the opportunity to speak with some of the students. This evening, attend the Tang Cultural Show. **Jinshi International Hotel**

## Day 7 - Saturday (B, L, D)

Xi'an / Jinan

In the morning pay a visit to the Muslim Mosque. Fly to Jinan, the capital of Shandong Province. Enjoy a dinner, featuring one of the oldest and respected of the major nine cuisines of China, specially arranged by our Chinese hosts from the Shandong Province. **Shandong Mansion Hotel**

## Day 8 - Sunday (B, L, D)

Jinan / Qufu

Look out across the Yellow River, whose banks often rise twenty feet above the city. The river is often called "China's Sorrow" because of its unpredictable flooding. After breakfast, travel to Qufu, the birthplace of Confucius. With its fine imperial architecture and cultural relics, Qufu's historic sites are second only to the Forbidden City in Beijing. Enjoy the lecture, "Confucius's Life and his Philosophic Thought." After lunch travel by traditional horse-drawn carriages to visit Kong Lin (Confucian Forest), the largest man-made park and best-preserved cemetery in China. A singing and dancing show is planned for the evening. **Queli Hotel**

## Day 9 - Monday (B, L, D)

Qufu

Early morning "Calligraphy and Art" lecture/demonstration. Visit the Temple of Confucius. See the stone-carved statue of Confucius and walk through the maze of more than 450 halls, rooms, and buildings of the Kong Mansion, the largest and most sumptuous aristocratic mansion in China. Enjoy a specially arranged Confucian Family Banquet. **Queli Hotel**

## Day 10 - Tuesday (B, L, D)

Qufu / Tai'an

Travel to Tai'an, the gateway town to Mount Taishan, the most revered of the five sacred mountains of China. Visit Bu Yang Village, and enjoy a visit and lunch in a local farmer's home where you can experience and observe the life and customs of rural China. Visit a nursery school for both senior citizens and children, and visit a township enterprise.

**Ramada Hotel**

## Day 11 - Wednesday (B, L, D)

Tai'an / Jinan

After breakfast enjoy a walk up Mt. Taishan ("When one goes up Taishan Mountain, the world will be dwarfed beneath his feet." - Confucius). The grandeur of this time-honored attraction can be experienced as you ascend the 7,000 stone steps on foot (if you dare) or by cable car. Also visit the famous Dai Temple (Temple to the God of Mt. Tai) the site where 2,200 years ago Qin Shi Huang, the First Emperor of China, held sacrificial ceremonies. Visit a local hospital to learn about acupuncture. Travel back to Jinan. **Shandong Mansion Hotel**

## Day 12 - Thursday (B, L, D)

Jinan / Suzhou (Grand Canal Cruise)

Board an early morning flight to Shanghai, and then travel through the countryside to Suzhou, which is known as the Venice of the East because of its canals and its quaint and traditional ambiance. Take a boat ride up the fabled Grand Canal, which stretches over 1,000 miles from Beijing to Hangzhou and crosses the Yellow and Yangtze rivers. It was constructed more than 2,000 years ago as China's main north-south artery. The activity of boats and people both on and along the Canal will provide you with unforgettable sights and photos. **Nanlin Hotel**

## Day 13 - Friday (B, L, D)

Suzhou

Visit two of Suzhou's classic gardens. The Lingering Garden, built in the Ming Dynasty and renovated and expanded in the early 19th century during the Qing Dynasty demonstrates a compact layout and a delicate decorative art. Fisherman's Garden (Wangshiyuan), built in the Southern Song Dynasty and then rebuilt during the reign of Emperor Qian Long of the Qing Dynasty was designed in a style which integrates the garden with the residence. The unique design of Fisherman's Garden gives the visitor the feeling that there are gardens inside the garden. Over ten million Chinese farmers produce more than half of the world's supply of silk fiber. Learn about the secrets of silk making on your visit to the Silk Factory and Embroidery Institute. **Nanlin Hotel**

Day 14 - Saturday (B, L, D)

Suzhou / Shanghai

Travel through the countryside to Shanghai, one of the largest and busiest cities in the world. See the famous waterfront Bund, once the financial center of the foreign powers. **Rainbow Hotel**

Day 15 - Sunday (B, L, D)

Shanghai

After breakfast, visit the newly opened Shanghai Museum of Art and History, the finest in all of China, and considered one of the great museums of the world. Visit the residential area called Caoyang Residential Village. In the afternoon visit the Childrens' palace. After dinner, take in a performance of the daring Shanghai Acrobatic Circus. **Rainbow Hotel**

Day 16 - Monday (B)

Shanghai / USA

Transfer for your flight to the USA.

## \* OPTIONAL - YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE EXTENSION \*

Day 16 - Monday (B, D)

Shanghai / Chongqing

Morning at leisure. Take an afternoon flight to Chongqing, the "mountain city" of Chongqing which clings to the steep slopes of the Yangtze. **Chongqing Hilton Hotel**

Day 17 - Tuesday (B, L, D)

Chongqing / Yangtze River Cruise

After breakfast, visit the Ford Auto Plant and enjoy a special banquet featuring Szechuan cuisine. Visit the Panda Zoo. Chongqing was the short-lived wartime capital of China which suffered devastating losses at the hands of the Japanese. Visit the Stillwell Museum and learn about the time Stillwell served as Commander-in-Chief of the American forces in the China-Burma-India theater, between 1941 and 1945 when the threat of the Japanese Imperial Army was finally overcome. After dinner embark on the President Cruise Ship, one of the premier cruise ships on the Yangtze River to begin your three-night Yangtze River Cruise. **President Cruise Ship**

Day 18 - Wednesday (B, L, D)

Yangtze River Cruise

After breakfast, take a shore excursion to Shibaozhai, built in the Qing Dynasty in 1750 with a height of 56 meters. Shibaozhai is simply a rectangular rock with sheer cliffs, standing on the riverside. A red wooden pagoda, 12 stories high, was built against the rock wall and you can climb to the top by spiral staircase in the pagoda. 160 meters above the river, enjoy a panoramic view of the winding river, the village and the countryside. Hear a lecture and view a demonstration on Chinese Cooking. **President Cruise Ship**

Day 19 - Thursday (B, L, D)

Yangtze River Cruise

After an early breakfast, depending on the water level of the Yangtze, disembark and board the small motor boats or authentic sampans to sail through the Lesser Three Gorges for an excursion on a crystal clear tributary river of the Yangtze. You can see the ruins of the ancient plank road and suspending coffins of the ancient Ba people hanging on the cliffs above you as you enjoy the spectacular scenery. Enter Wu Gorge and Qutang Gorge, the last of the Three Gorges. The combination of the height of the gorges and the narrowness of the river in this area - less than a hundred yards in places make the water swift. View the cliffs and peaks with pinnacles soaring up to 4,000 feet that have inspired Chinese landscape artists and poets for thousands of years. Hear a lecture and view a demonstration on Chinese painting. Enjoy a special banquet featuring Szechuan cuisine. **President Cruise Ship**

Day 20 - Friday (B, L)

Yichang / Shanghai

Disembark at Yichang and visit the world largest Three Gorges Dam with unprecedented magnitude standing 185 meters high and 2.3km long, a modern engineering feature that only the Great Wall in the ancient China could parallel. This controversial water conservative project will force 1.3 million inhabitants in the Three Gorge area to relocate in various parts of China, and provoke some eco-environmental concerns, but it will also benefit the people in the aspects of flood control, power generation, and navigation improvement. Transfer to the airport for your flight to Shanghai.

**Rainbow Hotel**

Day 21 - Saturday (B)

Shanghai / USA

Transfer for your flight to the USA.

## **PROGRAM FEATURES**

\* All air and land transfers with assistance. Airport departure taxes throughout the programs are not included. All specially arranged lecture/seminars and field experiences as indicated in the itinerary.

\* Deluxe and first-class accommodations throughout the program as indicated in the itinerary. Three meals daily within China.

\* All professional English-speaking guides are personally selected for you from firsthand experience by our China coordinator.

## **PROGRAM PRICE**

**\$2,795** per person double occupancy Land Only - Plus Airfare

(does not include international airfare, giving you the flexibility to use frequent flyer miles or search the internet for the best airfares available.)

**\$995** single-room supplement

## **OPTIONAL EXTENSION YANGTZE RIVER PROGRAM PRICE**

**\$1,350** per person double occupancy

**\$550** single-room supplement

Visas are required for all U.S. citizens. Information will be mailed upon registration.

B - Breakfast

L - Lunch

D - Dinner

Drinks are not included.