



Treasures of China's Silk Road

URUMQI • TURPAN • DUNHUANG • JIAYUGUAN • ZHANGYE • XI'AN

The Offer

Trace the footsteps of ancient merchants, monks, and explorers on this extraordinary 13-night journey along China's legendary Silk Road. Your adventure begins in the high-altitude oasis of Urumqi, winds through the low-lying desert ruins of Turpan, and crosses the golden dunes of Dunhuang. From there, stand before the westernmost fortress of the Great Wall in Jiayuguan, marvel at the vividly colored mountains of Zhangye, and journey past the Yellow River to conclude your epic pilgrimage in the ancient imperial capital of Xi'an. Travel in a small escorted group with handpicked hotels, and use leisure time to join optional tours if you wish (extra cost).

Designed for curious travelers, this comprehensive itinerary balances majestic natural wonders with some of the world's most significant archaeological sites.

This small-group escorted journey includes round-trip international flights, carefully selected hotels, guided sightseeing and listed entrance fees. During leisure time you may join optional tours and activities for an extra charge.



16-DAY TOUR PACKAGE | TREASURES OF CHINA'S SILK ROAD

Escorted Package Includes

- Round-trip international flights departing from Los Angeles
- Intercity train: Turpan -> Liuyuan
- High-speed rail: Lanzhou -> Xi'an
- Air-conditioned touring coaches for all city-to-city & local sightseeing transfers
- Total 13 nights hotel accommodation
 - 2 nights Urumqi hotel
- 2 nights Turpan hotel
- 2 nights Dunhuang hotel

- 1 night Jiayuguan hotel
- 1 night Zhangye hotel
- 1 night Wuwei hotel
- 2 nights Lanzhou hotel
- 2 nights Xi'an hotel
- All hotel taxes, fees and portorage included
- Airport & train station transfers
- 38 covered meals including daily breakfast
- Sightseeing per itinerary in modern air-conditioned motor coach
- Professional local English-speaking guides
- All listed attraction entrance fees and scenic zone shuttle services
- Camel ride at Mingsha Mountain included

Not Included: Optional tours and activities, gratuities, travel insurance, visas, and personal expenses (unless otherwise specified).

Highlights

- Heavenly Peaks & Grand Bazaars (Urumqi): Walk the shores of the crystal-clear, alpine Heavenly Lake in the Tianshan Mountains, and browse bustling handicraft stalls at the massive International Grand Bazaar.
- The Oasis of Turpan: Discover the 2,000-year-old Karez Underground Irrigation System, explore the traditional mud-brick homes of Mazar Village, and step into the hauntingly beautiful ruins of Jiaohe and Gaochang.
- Buddhist Grottoes & Camel Treks (Dunhuang): Stand in awe inside the UNESCO-listed Mogao Grottoes, then ride a camel across the singing sand dunes of Mingsha Mountain to catch a desert sunset.
- The Great Wall & Rainbow Mountains: Explore the massive desert gateway of Jiayuguan Fort and climb the Overhanging Great Wall, before photographing the brilliant, multicolored sandstone bands of Zhangye's Rainbow Danxia Geopark.
- Ancient Tombs & Yellow River Caves: See where the famous bronze "Flying Horse" was excavated at the Leitai Han Tombs in Wuwei, and take a day trip to the remote, cliffside Bingling Temple Grottoes along the Yellow River in Lanzhou.
- Imperial Xi'an: Uncover the secrets of the iconic, underground Terracotta Army, stroll the historic Ancient City Wall, and enjoy the lively, neon-lit pedestrian paths of Datang Everbright City.

The Itinerary

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Day 1 The U.S. -> Urumqi - Night on Board

Arrive at your U.S. departure airport ready to board your international flight toward Urumqi, the gateway to Xinjiang's Silk Road landscapes - Heavenly Lake, Turpan, Dunhuang and beyond. Settle in for a long overnight journey west across China. Night on board. Note: If your outbound flight departs before 4:00 a.m., please arrive at the airport the evening before the listed departure day.

Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang, is a Silk Road crossroads where Central Asian and Chinese cultures meet at the edge of vast desert and mountain routes.

Dunhuang is a legendary Silk Road oasis, known for the Mogao Caves and desert landscapes that once linked China with the wider ancient world.

Meals: In-flight

Day 2 Arrive Urumqi, China

Touch down at Urumqi Diwopu International Airport. Our local English-speaking guide and private driver will greet you at the terminal and transfer you to your hotel. Unwind after the long flight - Xinjiang's alpine lakes, desert basins and bazaars begin in earnest tomorrow. Standard check-in is from 2:00 p.m.; early arrivals can store luggage at reception. Overnight in Urumqi.

Overnight: Urumqi | Meals: In-flight

Day 3 Urumqi Welcome Dinner & Silk Road Orientation

Spend a relaxed morning recovering from your long-haul flight, then join your guide for a Silk Road orientation briefing covering Xinjiang's cultural mosaic and the days ahead through Turpan, Dunhuang and Xi'an. This evening, savor a welcome dinner of authentic Uyghur regional dishes - fragrant pilaf, hand-pulled noodles and grilled kebabs - before an early night. Tomorrow you head into the Tianshan mountains for Heavenly Lake.

Located in central-northwest China, Xi'an records the great changes of the country like a living history book. Called Chang'an (the eternal city) in ancient times, it is one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilisation in the Yellow River Basin, the eastern terminal of the Silk Road, and the home of the Terracotta Warriors. More than 3,000 years of history - including over 1,100 years as a capital - give the city extraordinary heritage.

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Overnight: Urumqi | Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 4 Urumqi -> Heavenly Lake -> International Grand Bazaar -> Urumqi

After breakfast, board a scenic shuttle bus bound for Heavenly Lake (Tianshan Tianchi). Tucked amid snow-capped Tianshan Mountain peaks, this crystal-clear alpine lake boasts peaceful shore trails and postcard mountain scenery, with plenty of free time for hiking and photos. Later we return to downtown Urumqi to explore the International Grand Bazaar, China's largest Central Asian-style market. Wander bustling stalls stocked with handwoven carpets, aromatic spices, dried fruits, ethnic jewelry and handmade Uyghur crafts. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are all fully covered.

Overnight: Urumqi | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5 Urumqi -> Karez Water System -> Mazar Uyghur Village -> Flaming Mountain -> Turpan

We depart early for Turpan, the iconic low-lying desert basin of Xinjiang. First stop: the Karez Underground Irrigation System, a brilliant 2,000-year-old water engineering invention built to sustain life in arid desert terrain. Next, visit Mazar Village, a well-preserved traditional Uyghur hamlet with earthen courtyard homes showcasing genuine rural minority culture. We then head to Flaming Mountain, the vivid red rock range immortalized in classic Chinese folk tales. All three daily meals are included.

Overnight: Turpan | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6 Turpan -> Jiaohe Ruins -> Astana Tombs -> Gaochang Ruins -> Sugong Pagoda -> Turpan

This full day is dedicated to iconic Silk Road archaeological relics. Complimentary scenic shuttles carry you between Jiaohe Ruins and Gaochang Ruins - two prosperous desert frontier cities abandoned centuries ago. Tour the Astana Tombs to view remarkably well-preserved ancient mummies and vivid tomb murals, then wrap up the day at Sugong Pagoda, a landmark Islamic architectural treasure unique to Turpan. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided.

Overnight: Turpan | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7 Turpan -> Train to Liuyuan -> Shazhou Night Market -> Dunhuang

Following breakfast, take an intercity train from Turpan to Liuyuan (recommended departure: 12:16, arrival: 15:48). Upon reaching Liuyuan, our driver transfers you to Dunhuang. In the evening, stroll Shazhou Night Market to sample a wide selection of northwest street foods and browse handmade desert souvenirs. All daily meals are covered in your package.

Overnight: Dunhuang | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8 Dunhuang -> Mogao Grottoes -> Mingsha Mountain Camel Ride -> Dunhuang

This is the unmissable highlight of your Silk Road journey. Visit the Mogao Grottoes, a UNESCO World Heritage Site housing thousands of ancient Buddhist caves adorned with priceless murals and stone sculptures. Free shuttle service within the scenic zone is provided. In the afternoon, travel to Mingsha Mountain (Singing Sand Dunes). Embark on a memorable camel trek across rolling golden sand dunes and stay to watch a breathtaking desert sunset. Full daily meals are included.

Overnight: Dunhuang | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9 Dunhuang -> Jiayuguan Fort -> Overhanging Great Wall -> Jiayuguan

Travel east to Jiayuguan, the western starting fortress of the Great Wall. Explore grand Jiayuguan Fort, the vital military gateway along the ancient Silk Road, with free in-park shuttle transport available. Afterwards, hike the Overhanging Great Wall, a distinctive section clinging to steep mountain cliffs. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are all included.

Overnight: Jiayuguan | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10 Jiayuguan -> Zhangye Rainbow Danxia Geopark -> Zhangye

Drive to Zhangye to discover the world-famous Rainbow Danxia Landform. Admire vibrantly layered, multicolored rock formations shaped by millions of years of natural erosion - one of China's most extraordinary natural wonders. All three daily meals are covered.

Overnight: Zhangye | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11 Zhangye -> Leitai Han Tombs -> Wuwei Confucian Temple -> Wuwei

First, tour the Leitai Han Dynasty Tombs, a pivotal archaeological site famous for the bronze Flying Horse national cultural relic. Afterwards, visit Wuwei's ancient Confucian Temple, a historic landmark embodying traditional Chinese education culture. Full daily meals are provided.

Overnight: Wuwei | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12 Wuwei -> Mountain & Valley Scenic Drive -> Lanzhou

Enjoy a scenic cross-country drive toward Lanzhou, with rolling mountain ranges, river valleys and quiet pastoral landscapes unfolding along the route. Check into your downtown hotel upon arrival. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are all included.

Overnight: Lanzhou | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 13 Lanzhou -> Bingling Temple Grottoes -> Lanzhou

Take a day trip to Bingling Temple Grottoes, a remote cliffside Buddhist complex carved along the Yellow River, featuring delicate stone carvings created across multiple dynasties. We return to downtown Lanzhou by evening. All daily meals are covered.

Overnight: Lanzhou | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14 Lanzhou -> High-Speed Train to Xi'an

After breakfast, board a high-speed train bound for Xi'an. Known as ancient Chang'an, Xi'an served as the eastern terminus of the Silk Road and once functioned as China's imperial capital for over 1,100 years, holding more than 3,000 years of profound historical heritage. Upon arrival, your local English guide greets you and leads sightseeing tours of the Giant Wild Goose Pagoda and Datang Everbright City, a bustling pedestrian street recreating the glory of the Tang Dynasty. The rest of the evening is yours to relax at your leisure.

Overnight: Xian | Meals: Breakfast

Day 15 Xi'an Full-Day City Tour: Terracotta Army & Ancient City Wall

Today's core highlight is the Museum of the Terracotta Army. Unearthed just outside Xi'an, thousands of life-sized clay soldiers, chariots and horses rank among humanity's greatest archaeological wonders. Every warrior bears unique facial features and custom weaponry, crafted to accompany Emperor Qin Shi Huang in the afterlife - this excavation counts as one of the most pivotal discoveries of the 20th century. After the museum visit, wander Muslim Street for optional local food tasting and souvenir shopping (meals here at your own expense). We finish the day exploring Xi'an's Ancient City Wall, one of the oldest and best-preserved complete city walls in China.

Overnight: Xian | Meals: Breakfast

Day 16 Depart Xi'an for the United States

You will receive private transfer to Xi'an Xianyang International Airport to board your return international flight back to the United States.

Meals: Breakfast, In-flight

Optional Tours / Activities

Optional experiences can be booked during leisure time. Prices are per person and paid locally unless stated otherwise.

Tang Dynasty Imperial Dinner & Cultural Dance Show

Experience the grandeur of China's most glorious era! Indulge in an exquisite 6-course Imperial dinner set to traditional Chang'an music, followed by a legendary cultural show featuring breathtaking ancient court dances and brilliant state-of-the-art staging.

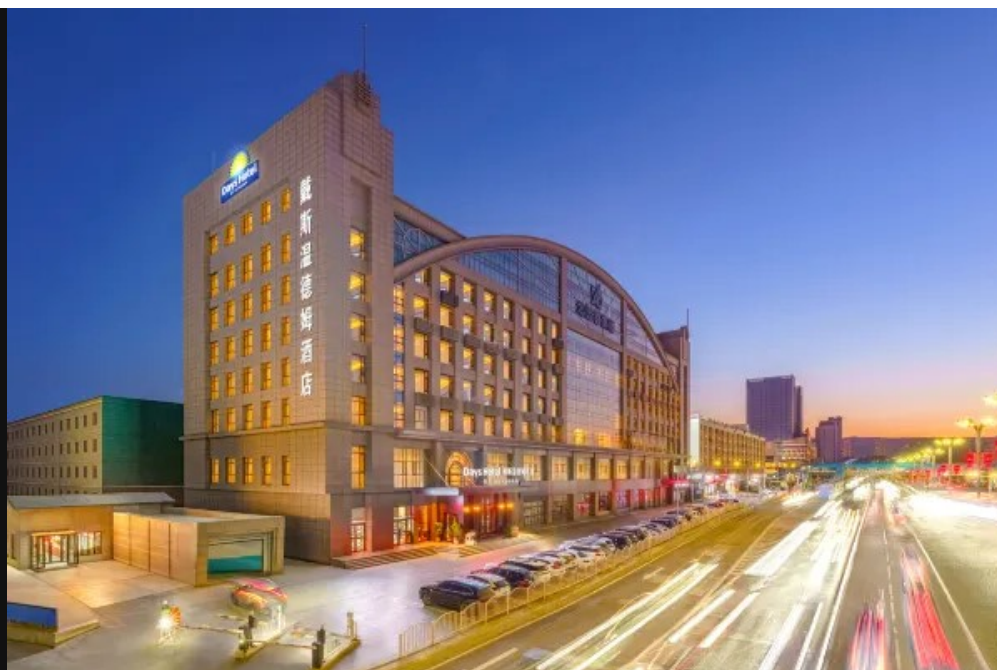
- Duration: Approx. 4 hours (Includes round-trip hotel transfers).
- Highlights: 6-course feast and a world-renowned historical dance production.
- Price: 56 USD pp



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Featured Hotels

Hotels are selected for location, comfort and service. Final properties are subject to availability (or similar).



4-Star | 2 nights

Days Inn by Wyndham Agricultural University Urumqi, Urumqi



4-Star | 2 nights

Holiday Inn Express Turpan, Turpan



4-Star | 2 nights

Dun Fuguo Hotel Dunhuang, Dunhuang



4-Star | 1 night

Jiu Steel Hotel Jiayuguan, Jiayuguan



4-Star | 1 night

Yinzun Hotel Zhangye, Zhangye



4-Star | 1 night

Jinwu International Hotel Wuwei, Wuwei



4-Star | 2 nights

Mercure Lanzhou Zhengning Road, Lanzhou



5-Star | 2 nights

Pullman Hotel Jinhui Xi'an, Xi'an

Important Information

Organised to match Trip Preparation on the tour page. Your quotation and booking confirmation prevail. Full detail: www.portaltrip.com/tours/china-wildlife.html and www.portaltrip.com/terms-and-conditions.html

1. Booking Information

- Packages combine flights, hotels, transfers and sightseeing. Components cannot be used separately.
- No online package checkout. We confirm by written quotation/email. A 10% non-refundable deposit secures your place; balance is due 30 days before departure (or in full if booking inside 30 days).
- Return passenger passport details promptly - ideally at least 45 days before departure.
- Special requests and optional extras after confirmation are subject to availability and may carry surcharges.
- You are responsible for passport, visa and entry rules for China and any transit points.

2. Our Policies

- Portaltrip arranges escorted packages with airlines, hotels and local suppliers; each supplier delivers its own services.
- Each booking is unique. Changes may not be possible and can incur fees. Names must match passports. Deposit is non-refundable; further fees follow your confirmation and Terms.
- Travel insurance (cancellation, medical, delays, baggage) is strongly recommended as soon as you book.
- Small-group escorted travel, typically twin-share, ages 18+. Single supplement quoted on request.
- Do not leave the published itinerary without authorisation (except free-time days) or onward services may be cancelled without refund.
- Hotels may be replaced with a similar standard; final names usually appear on documents about 4-6 weeks before travel. Twin/double rooms; triple share generally not available.
- Optional tours are usually paid locally in USD or RMB (weather, time and minimum numbers apply).
- Local guides provide site commentary; a tour leader/escort (when provided) helps with hotels and transfers.
- Moderate fitness expected (walks, stairs, uneven ground). Manage your own luggage between coach and hotel room.
- Carry USD and/or RMB cash. Cards are limited outside hotels. Dietary requests: tell us early - we cannot guarantee every preference.

- If a site is closed or tickets are limited, a similar activity may be substituted where possible.

3. About Your Flights

- International flights are generally Economy Class, typically from Los Angeles unless your quote states otherwise.
- Group tickets may limit advance seat selection or upgrades. Contact the airline once you have flight details, or arrive early at check-in.
- Frequent flier and KTN/TSA PreCheck: add details with the airline yourself. Mileage and PreCheck are never guaranteed.
- Typical international checked bag: about 50 lbs (23 kg) / 62 linear inches. China domestic flights often allow about 44 lbs checked and 11 lbs carry-on (1 piece each). High-speed trains: about 44 lbs + one carry-on; load your own bags at some stations.
- Plan to arrive 3 hours before international flights and 2 hours before domestic. Missing or skipping a flight may cancel remaining coupons and land arrangements.
- Lost/damaged bags: file a claim with the airline before leaving the airport.

4. Visa

- Most holiday travellers need a China Tourist Visa (L Visa). Passport should be valid at least 6 months from entry.
- Apply online, prepare photo and documents, submit in person where fingerprinting is required (US/UK/Canada and others), then pay and collect. Apply about 1-2 months before travel.
- Fees vary by nationality (US citizens often around USD 140 for common entry types - always check the embassy). Rules change; verify with the Chinese embassy or consulate for your country.
- Portaltrip can assist with China port visa for eligible itineraries (2+ travellers; about USD 100 service fee per person; not for Tibet/Xinjiang). Approval is never guaranteed.

5. Suggested Tipping

- Tipping is customary on guided tours in China. Suggested amount: about USD 8 per guest per day (around 60 RMB).
- Pay in USD or RMB to your local guide at the end of each destination segment. Tips are shared among guides, drivers and supporting staff.

Ready to travel?

Request a free quote for Treasures of China's Silk Road.

www.portaltrip.com/tours/china-wildlife-enquire.html