Vent Nouveau s.a.l.
TRAVEL & TOURISM
Since 1970

CHINA
15 - Day Itinerary

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Beijing, the capital of China, lies just south of the rim of the Central Asian Steppes and is separated from the Gobi Desert by a green chain of mountains, over which The Great Wall runs. Modern Beijing lies on the site of countless human settlements that date back half a million years. It is China's second largest city in terms of population and the largest in administrative territory

Day 1 – Arrival in Beijing

Upon arrival at Beijing International Airport, please proceed to the luggage area to claim your check-in bags. You are greeted by an English speaking tour guide of Destination Asia representatives with specially designed welcome signage at the luggage carousel area exit and transferred to the hotel.

Day 2 – Beijing

Breakfast at leisure in a hotel.

Pickup time: 9:00am

Full day sightseeing to **Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven and Hutong Tiananmen Square** is the largest public square in the world. It has long been a gathering place for locals and visitors alike. On the north side of the square is Tiananmen Gate (the Rostrum). It was from the balcony of the Rostrum on October 1, 1949 where Mao Zedong, chairman of the Communist Party, proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic of China.

The Forbidden City (Imperial Palace), directly behind the Rostrum, was home to 24 emperors beginning with its creation by Emperor Yongle in 1420 until the last Qing emperor, Puyi, left in 1924. The entire complex consists of 8,706 rooms in which an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 people lived including 3,000 eunuchs, as well as maids and concubines, all within 170 acres.

Optional visit to She Lent Fang Palace (Shu Fang Zhai)- the essence of traditional Chinese palace architecture in Forbidden City. Located on the east side of the Chonghua Palace, it was originally the head of the Qianxi Five places, and was built in the 18th year of Ming Yongle (AD 1420). After the Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty took the throne, he changed the second west to the Chonghua Palace, and changed the head to the She Lent Fang Palace, and built the stage as a place for the performance of the Chonghua Palace. At present, the building and interior decoration are in good condition. It is the VIP reception desk of the Palace Museum. It is used for the rest of the national leaders and foreign leaders when visiting the Forbidden City. It is a non-open area where visitors are not allowed to enter. Lunch.

The Temple of Heaven is a sequence of temples and altars set in a park. Twice a year during imperial times, the emperor and a magnificent procession of some 1,000 eunuchs, courtiers, and ministers would leave the Forbidden City for the temple. At the winter solstice, he expressed thanks for the previous harvest, and on the 15th day of the first month of the lunar year, he begged the gods of sun and moon, clouds and rain, and thunder and lightning to bless the coming harvest.

Optional Taichi Class (30-45 minutes) Discover the ancient art of meditative self-defence that is Chinese Tai Chi. Your Tai Chi Master will guide you through introductory poses and breathing exercises in the remarkable setting of the Temple of Heaven.

Beijing Hutong are lanes or alleys formed by lines of Siheyuan (a compound with houses around a courtyard). Most of them were built during the Yuan (1206-1368), Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644- 1908) dynasties surrounding the Forbidden City. Many famous operas and dramas are based on the themes of hutong life. Man-power rickshaw is arranged for you to feel the Hutong of Beijing. Take a rickshaw to visit the ancient Beijing Hutong. Transfer to hotel after tour. Dinner.

Day 3 – Beijing

Breakfast at leisure in the hotel.

In the morning you will have chance to visit the Mutianyu section of the Great Wall, one of the great wonders of the world (inclusive of the return cable car fee) Mutianyu Great Wall Located in Huairou County about 45 miles from Beijing, Mutianyu Great Wall enjoys a long history and is part of the glorious culture of China. It connects Juyongguan Pass in the west and Gubeikou Great Wall in the east. The wall was first built in Northern Qi Dynasty (550 - 557).

Optional: Champagne on the great wall with two waiters.

Western lunch.

Followed by visiting Ming Tombs (Changling)
The Ming Tombs are a collection of imperial mausoleums built by the Chinese Ming dynasty emperors. After the Yongle Emperor finished the Forbidden City in 1420, he began constructing his own mausoleum outside of Beijing. Subsequent emperors placed their tombs in the same valley, resulting in the fascinating sight we can see there today.

Transfer to hotel after tour.

Optional dinner at Temple Restaurant Beijing with French cuisine (beverage is not included) with round way transfers.

Day 4 – Beijing

Breakfast at leisure in the hotel.

The Lama Temple. Built in 1694, this impressive compound was once the home of Prince Yong who would later become Emperor Yongzheng. Upon his ascension to the throne the buildings were converted into a temple dedicated to Tibetan Buddhist study. Today it remains one of the largest and most important Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in the world. One of the pavilions within the temple houses a sculpture of the Maitreya Buddha 26 metres tall and is carved from a single trunk of white sandalwood.

Summer Palace Drive to Northwest Beijing to visit The Summer Palace is one of the finest landmarks in Beijing. It has long been a royal garden and was considerably enlarged and embellished by Emperor Qianlong in the 18th century. It was later abandoned. Shared boat on Kunming Lake is included.

Optional: a private boat on Kunming Lake on Summer Palace.

Lunch. 798 Modern Arts District Factory number 798 was part of a factory complex that manufactured electronics from the late 50's to the 90's. At the turn of the century, artists and cultural institutions began to divide, rent out, and re-make the factory spaces, gradually developing them into galleries, art centres, artists' studios, design companies, restaurants, and bars. The fabulous buildings themselves were German designed and made for perfect spaces in which to display modern art. Bringing together contemporary art, architecture, and culture in a historically interesting location just 30 minutes from the city centre, 798 has evolved into a dynamic and fascinating art and cultural precinct that is definitely worth a visit. **Transfer to hotel after tour.**

Day 5 – Beijing - Datong Air

Breakfast at leisure in the hotel. Private transfer to the airport and fly to Datong.

Upon arrival at Datong Airport, please proceed to the luggage area to claim your check-in bags. You are greeted by Destination Asia representatives with specially designed welcome signage at the luggage carousel area exit and transferred to your hotel.

Yungang Grottoes of Datong is deemed as the Three Largest and Most Famous Grottoes Clusters together with Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang, and Longmen Grottoes of Henan. Located at the southern foot of Wuzhou Mountain, the grotto area was excavated along the mountain, imposingly stretching 1 kilometer with rich contents. Covering over 18,000 square meters of engraving area, there are existing 45 main caves, 209 subsidiary caves, more than 1,100 niches, and more than 51,000 stone statues, among which the largest statue measures 17 meters and the smallest only 2 centimeters. One of the largest stone carving art treasurys famous both home and abroad, the Yungang Grottoes was inscribed as a key cultural relic under state protection in 1961, a world heritage site in 2001, and a 5A national Scenic Area in 2007.

Lunch.

Hanging Monastery (Xuankong Si) Hanging Monastery stands at the foot of Mt. Hengshan, 5 kilometers (3 miles) south of Hunyuan County, and 65 kilometers (40 miles) from downtown Datong City. Since it hangs on the west cliff of Jinxia Gorge more than 50 meters above the ground, it is called Hanging Monastery.

Optional Dinner at Fenglinge Restaurant (beverage is not included) with round way transfers Transfer back to hotel.

Day 6 – **Datong - Pingyao by Car**

Breakfast at leisure in the hotel. Drive about 4 hours to Pingyao

Lunch.

Pingyao Old City has a very long history about 2,700 years, known as the best-preserved old city in the regions inhabited by Han people; it still remains the architectural style of Ming and Qing Dynasties. It is another World Cultural Heritage in Shanxi except Yungang Caves and Mt. Wutai.

Street of Ming and Qing Dynasty, the streets in this ancient town are broad and very well arranged. Dotted with memorial archways and decorated gateways, stretching one after another and high and low, the old houses and courtyards flanking the streets and **lanes remind visitors of the long past and their ancestral places.**

Ancient city wall was originally built using rammed earth, and was rebuilt with bricks in 1370 during the reign of Emperor Hong Wu of the Ming Dynasty. The wall testifies to the profound influence of Confucianism in this region, as the 3,000 embrasures on the wall are said to represent the number of disciples of Confucius, and the 72 small watchtowers represent his 72 top disciples.

Rishengchang Bank Museum- the first money exchange shop in China, and also is the former management and organization form of modern banks of China. Transfer back to the hotel after the tour.

Day 7 – Pingyao

Breakfast at leisure in the hotel.

Wang Courtyard

Acclaimed as the "First Folk Residence in Cathay", the Grand Courtyard of the Wangs is the largest existing folk residence cluster in China and a model of the merchant family's residence in North China's Shanxi Province, demonstrating the quintessence of Chinese architectural art and cultural values. The famous architect Zheng Xiaoxie researched the place six times, describing it as a "priceless treasure not only for the nation, but also for the entire world." Situated in Jingsheng Town, 12 km east of Lingshi County in the province, the Wang's Grand Courtyard is only 35 km from the Ancient City of Pingyao, which is a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site. This luxurious residence covers about 45,000 square meters with 123 compounds and 1,118 rooms and took about half a century (1762-1811) to build. Lunch. Move on to visit Shuanglin Temple, which has stood there for 1,500 years since the North Wei Dynasty. Transfer back to hotel

Day 8: Pingyao - Dian by train.

Breakfast at leisure in the hotel.

Private transfer to train station and take bullet train to Xian

Upon arrival in Xian, you are greeted by Destination Asia representatives with specially designed welcome signage at the exit of train station.

City Wall

The city walls of Xi'an are some of the oldest and best preserved in all of China, and can be dated back to the 2nd century BC, when Xi'an was the capital of the country. The existing walls were completed in 1370 AD, and are about 14 kilometers in length and are still surrounded by a deep moat to this day. Since 1993, the Xi'an city walls have played host to a world-famous marathon where participants run along the entire length of the wall several times; however, on this tour we'll take a more leisurely pace to appreciate the spectacular views and rich history of this ancient structure.

Muslim Quarter

The Small Wild Goose Pagoda was built in 707, and was named after the already existing Big Wild Goose Pagoda, due to its remarkable likeness. Damage caused by an earthquake in 1556 resulted in the Small Wild Goose Pagoda getting even smaller, its height reduced by a full two meters. In the lower level of the pagoda, explore the precious artifacts and historical objects housed inside the Xi'an Museum.

Day 9 – Xian

Breakfast at leisure in the hotel. Visit the TerraCotta Warriors, one of the most amazing sites in the world Uncovered in 1974 by peasants digging a well, the terracotta warriors and Xian's greatest and most important attraction. The first emperor of the Qin Dynasty, Qin Shi Huangdi, ordered the making of the warriors. During his reign, he undertook military programs to the far corners of the known world. The estimated 8,000 terra cotta soldiers are a testament to his power and megalomania. In the main and most impressive vault, the figures are arranged in typical battle formation in 11 columns composed of officers, soldiers holding spears and swords and others steering horse-drawn chariots. Lunch.

Small Goose Pagoda

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Transfer back to the hotel after the tour.

Day 10 – Xian - Guilin By Air

Breakfast at leisure in the hotel.

Morning tour to Xian Jingwen Cattle Culture Ceramic Museum

Xian Jingwen Cattle Culture Ceramic Museum
Several thousand cattle collections and ceramics treasures of different eras, different materials and different styles, are displayed alternately in the unique exhibition hall. During this incredible hands-on experience, you will have thousand-year-old relics presented to you right in front of your eyes. On rare occasions, the curator may allow you

to hold and touch these precious national treasures.

Optional: invite curator for a personal speech.

Lunch at a famous Defacheng Dumpling Restaurant (two soft drinks per person included)

Defachang restaurant is a hundred years old restaurant, not high-end but it is a must experience for dumplings.

The most famous cuisine in Xi'an is the dumpling, and there are more varieties of this bite-sized delicacy than you have likely ever imagined before. Sample more than twenty different types of dumplings at this banquet meal, and be amazed by the unique and delicate flavors of these tasty treats!

After lunch, drive about 1 hour to Huxian Farmer's Painting Village, including visiting the farmer's family and farmer's painting house.

Learn the amazing story of a painter-turned-farmer during China's Cultural Revolution in this fascinating excursion to Hu Xian County. The villagers will welcome you with a traditional dragon dance, after which you will be given a brief lecture about one villager's experience during the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s in China. Then, watch firsthand as he creates a masterpiece right before your eyes, and take a look around his incredible studio. You may even get to try your hand with the brushes yourself, or learn the Chinese paper-cutting techniques used to produce intricate artwork out of tissue paper.

Private transfer to the airport and fly to Guilin.

Upon arrival at Guilin Airport, please proceed to the luggage area to claim your check-in bags. You are greeted by Destination Asia representatives with specially designed welcome signage at the luggage carousel area exit and transferred to your hotel.

Transfer back to the hotel.

Day 11 – Guilin

Breakfast at leisure in the hotel.

Morning cruise along the Li River (departing from a hotel in downtown Guilin)

A cruise along the Li River between Guilin and Yangshuo is truly an unforgettable experience. Every bend in the river brings a new and even more beautiful sight into view.

Many of the karst formations are, with a little imagination, reminiscent of animals or objects, and bear names like Crown Cave, Painting Cliff, Snail Hill, Yellow Cloth Reflection Hill, and many others. Along the way, you will also see graceful groves of bamboo, farmers tending to their rice paddies, and lumbering water buffalos pulling carts or cooling off in the river. **Enjoy lunch on the boat before disembarking in Yangshuo. Amble along Yangshuo's most famous local street**.

Yangshuo is China's unofficial adventure tourism capital, boasting outdoor activities as diverse as rock climbing, kayaking, caving, bamboo rafting, and biking. West Street is the city's oldest street, with a history dating back over 1400 years. Since the 1980s, the street has also been this region's confluence of eastern and western cultures. Today, it is the heart of Yangshuo, and has excellent cafes and restaurants lining either side serving food from all over the globe. You will pass by quirky boutique shops, hotels in renovated courtyard homes, and curious Chinese tourists who have come to see foreigners and eat Western food.

Enjoy Impression Liu Sanjie with seats at A1 area. (The best seats)

Impression Liu Sanjie is the first of the acclaimed "Impressions" series of outdoor folk musicals by Zhang Yimou, the world famous Chinese director and artistic director of the 2008 Beijing Olympic opening ceremony. The show is set on water against the stunning background of the spectacular limestone karst formations of Guilin, and tells the tale of a young girl named Liu Sanjie of the Zhuang local ethnic group.

The 70-minute show features a cast of over 600 actors and actresses, all of whom come from the local area. Transfer back to hotel

Day 12 – Guilin - Shanghai

Breakfast at leisure in a hotel.

Visit one of the most famous landmarks in Guilin, Elephant Trunk Hill
One of the most famous natural landmarks in Guilin, Elephant Trunk Hill resembles a huge elephant drinking water from the river with its trunk. Between the trunk and the legs of the figure is the Water Moon Cave. Learn the conflicting legends as to why ancient peoples gave the cave its intriguing name, and decide for yourself which story you believe.

Cool off in Guilin's enormous and breathtaking Reed Flute Cave
This stunning cave is indisputably the most impressive karst cavern in all of Guilin. Not only is it the largest cave in the area, but its vast array of stalactites and stalagmites are reminiscent of the most ornate cathedral or palatial hall. The cave derives its name from the reeds that grow outside its walls, which are said to make the best flutes in all of

China. You won't be the first visitor to this cave, and you won't be the last: Reed Flute Cave has been a tourist attraction for over 1200 years! **Lunch. Private transfer to the airport and fly to Shanghai.**

WELCOME TO SHANGHAI

Shanghai, Hu for short, is situated on the estuary of Yangtze River of China. It is the largest industrial city in China. Covering an area of 5,800 square kilometers (2,239 square miles), Shanghai has a population of 18.7 million, including 2 million floating population. Originally, Shanghai was a seaside fishing village and in time its gradual development led to it being granted County status on August 19th, 1291 during the time of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368). Hence this day became the anniversary of the founding of Shanghai. Today's Shanghai is a multicultural metropolis with both modern and traditional Chinese features. Bubbling Shanghai shows off every aspect of her unique glamour. Modern Shanghai has three key areas of interest to the visitor. These comprise Sightseeing, Business and Shopping centered upon People's Square and along the Huangpu River; the city's Cultural Center with its public activities and community facilities; and finally the main Entertainment and Holiday Tourism area located at Mt. Sheshan, Chongming Island, Dingshan Lake and Shenshuigang Area.

Upon arrival at Shanghai airport, our local DA representative will assist you to board a deluxe air-conditioned vehicle waiting outside the airport and transfer to the hotel.

Day 13 – Shanghai

Breakfast at leisure in a hotel.

Yu Garden, Old Bazaar
Yuyuan Garden, a place of peace and comfort in the heart of bustling Shanghai, dates back to the fabled Ming Dynasty. Now a popular tourist destination, Yuyuan began as a private garden created by Pan Yunduan, who spent almost 20 years - and all of his savings - to build a garden in order to please his parents in their old age. That is why he called this garden "Yuyuan" - because "yu" in Chinese means "peace and health".

Then visit Jade Buddha Temple
Situated in the northwest near the intersection of Anyuan Lu and Jiangning Lu, the temple is an active one, attracting large numbers of visitors, both local and overseas Chinese tourists. It is one of Shanghai's few Buddhist temples. Jade Buddha Temple was built between 1911 and 1918, housing 70 resident monks. Its exterior is easily identifiable by its bright saffron walls. Inside, the centerpiece is a two-meter-high white jade sitting Buddha encrusted with jewels. **Lunch.**

Followed by a walk along the famous Bund with its colonial architecture.

The Bund, also called the Zhongshan Road, is a famous waterfront and regarded as the symbol of Shanghai for hundreds of years. It starts from the Baidu Bridge, which is at the connecting point of the Huangpu River and the Suzhou Creek, to the East Jinling Road and winds 1500 meters (less than one mile) length. Walking along the Bund, which is at the west shore of the Huangpu River, the Oriental Pearl TV Tower can be seen on the opposite side and also the Jin Mao Tower. Being one of the Top Ten Shanghai Attractions, the Bund is a really beautiful and special place that is worth visiting. **Dinner at your hotel on your own. Transfer back to the hotel.**

Day 14 – Shanghai

Breakfast at leisure in a hotel.

Morning tour to Zhujiajiao.

Zhujiajiao - a town with over 1,000 years of history, features rivers, bridges, old streets and gardens. Small rivers crisscross the town with 36 old bridges on them. Over 1,000 houses first built in the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911) stand along both sides of nine narrow streets. Visit this old town including Fangsheng Bridge -A stone arch bridge built during the mid-Qing Dynasty, which is viewed as the landmark structure of Zhujiajiao. **Lunch.**

Then visit Xintiandi & Tianzifang
This fashionable pedestrian street is composed of traditional Shikumen (“stone gate”) style houses that now serve as boutique shops and restaurants. Tianzifang, once an unassuming laneway in a factory area, has been transformed into the art district of Shanghai. Here you will find many art galleries, private studios, craft shops, and some of the most charming bars and cafes in Shanghai. Transfer back to the hotel after the tour.

Optional Dinner at Ye Shanghai restaurant (beverage is not included) with round way transfers.

Day 15 – Shanghai

Breakfast at leisure in a hotel.

Check out the hotel.

Sculpture Park
Beautiful, family-friendly park in north Jing'an. The park is full of art and statues, some of which rotate throughout the year to make room for the work of international artists. There is only one green space to run around and sit on, and usually the security guards come around at 8pm to kick people out. Still, it's great, and always free.

The Shanghai Tower

Shanghai Tower is a mega-tall skyscraper located at the core of Pudong's Lujiazui Finance and Trade Area in Shanghai. The structure is 632 meters tall, which makes it the tallest building in China, and the third tallest in the world. The unique design of the tower's glass facade, which completes a 120°twist as it rises or about 1°per floor, is intended to reduce wind loads on the building in order to withstand Shanghai's frequent typhoons. The Tower sports 121 floors above ground and 5 floors underground, with an observation deck on floor 119, 552 meters above ground. The elevator goes up at record speed and takes less than a minute. **Western lunch.**

French Concession

Under the administration of the French from 1849 to 1946, the French concession is today a pleasant mix of wide tree lined avenues and interesting European style architecture. The area contains many gorgeous art deco and Tudor style mansions and retains a very European feel despite being in the heart of Shanghai. As the premier residential and retail district of Shanghai, the French concession is replete with boutique shops, charming cafes and exceptional restaurants.

Shikumen (Stone Warehouse Gate) is the unique local residence in Shanghai. Combined with Chinese and Western architecture styles, the residences appeared in the 1860s.Tianzifang and Xintiandi are famous for the Shikumen in Shanghai. There are still about 2 million Shanghai people living in Shikumen houses. Shikumen are 2 to 3 storey town houses. Decorated with modern elements, Shikumen is becoming a new fashion in Shanghai.

Free shopping time on Nanjing road.

Optional Dinner at Roof 325 restaurant (beverage is not included).

Private transfer to Shanghai Pudong airport.

END OF SERVICE