

CHINA BY TRAIN

Enjoy the comfort and easy pace of train travel. As we journey across beautiful landscapes and varied terrain, you will experience the diversity of this enormous country and have plenty of opportunities to get to know your fellow passengers!

Some of the trains we'll be experiencing on this tour include a disused freight train in the 798 Art District that used to transport goods produced in the old Bauhaus-style factories. We'll also pay a visit to Beijing's first railway station on the corner of Tiananmen Square which has now been converted to a train museum.

A holiday dedicated to train travel would not be complete without riding the subway in Beijing. Up until 1970 only the military were allowed to use it. We'll ride on a newer version of the subway and get to see some of the old subway stations.

The night trains to Xi'an and Nanjing are very comfortable and saves time on day travel. We'll be in shared compartments with soft sleepers. The bullet train from Nanjing to Shanghai is a high-speed modern train that will get us to Shanghai in just two hours.

If you want to cover a lot of ground and avoid domestic flights, this is the perfect way of experiencing this vast country. Join us on an unforgettable train voyage!

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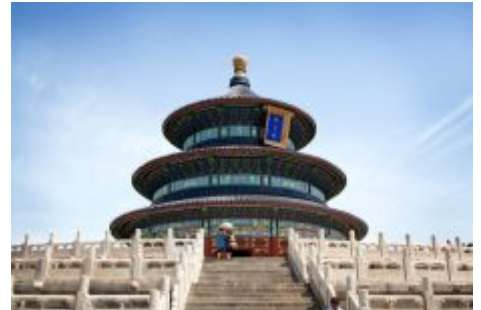
Day 1: Arrival in Beijing - Welcome Dinner

You will be picked up at the airport or train station and driven to the hotel for check-in. This afternoon is free for you to explore Beijing on your own.

We'll enjoy our dinner at a restaurant near the hotel.

Meals: Dinner

Lodging: Qianmen Jianguo Hotel Beijing



Day 2: Imperial Beijing and Beijing's first train station

The morning begins at the Beijing Urban Planning Museum where a great model of the inner city of [Beijing](#) is on display. A visit here shows visitors the changes that China and Beijing have undergone in the last 30 years.

Just next door, lies the oldest train station in Beijing. It was built in 1903 and was built by and for the foreign legations in the Legation Quarter just north of the train station. Ten years ago, the train station was falling apart and housed numerous small businesses but today the area has been cleaned up and the building serves as a part of Beijing's railway museum.

Across from the museum is one the greatest symbols of new China: [Tiananmen Square](#). The 440,000m² square is home to the Memorial Hall of Mao Zedong. Entry requires a valid ID, so please bring your passport if you wish to see Mao Zedong. To the north of the square, lies the [Forbidden City](#) of the Ming and Qing dynasties. We cross over the five famous bridges and Mao Zedong's picture to enter through the city's south gate. We will have lunch at Xinyigong restaurant before paying the magnificent Forbidden City a visit.

Entering the Forbidden City and seeing the largest courtyard (Siheyuan) in all of Beijing, is a stunning sight that instantly transports you back to Beijing before 1910. Leaving the Forbidden City, we climb the Coal Hill or Jingshan which means the 'Hill of Scenery' and the character Jing (景) holds the characters for both sun and capital city inside it, meaning the hill from where one can see the sun rise and set over the capital. On our way back to the hotel we visit a silk showroom.

Before dinner, we'll stroll through the lively Donghuamen Night Market at Wangfujing Street.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Qianmen Jianguo Hotel Beijing



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Day 3: The Great Wall of China, the Ming Tombs and visit a home in a local village

Today we'll start in the centre of Beijing and drive through the suburbs into the rural areas of the municipality of Beijing. On our way we will visit a cloissone factory.

In the morning we will climb the Juyongguan section of the [Great Wall](#) which once was one of the most important sections of the Great Wall due to its strategic location between two mountain tops just north of Beijing.

After a good climb we proceed to the Sacred Way which leads into the area of the Ming Tombs. Thirteen emperors were buried in the area and we will visit the only tomb that was excavated, the Ding Tomb. The village is an open and friendly place so we will be allowed to visit a home and see the local supermarket. There will also be time to stroll around and get a glimpse of people's everyday life.

We will visit a cloisonné factory after our excursion to the Ming Tombs. Lunch will be enjoyed at the restaurant in the factory building.

Driving back on the new highway, the tall buildings of Beijing's inner city slowly reappear showing how great construction projects have been always been embedded in Chinese history. The day will end at the Bird's Nest Olympic Stadium in the northern part of Beijing. Outside the Bird's Nest you will be able to see the extension of the north – south axis that runs through Beijing.

We'll have our first underground train experience today. From the Olympic Area, we'll take the subway to Dongsishitiao Station and walk to the restaurant for dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Qianmen Jianguo Hotel Beijing



Day 4: Temple of Heaven, The Opera House, 798 Art District, Peking Duck Dinner

Depending on the season this will be a fairly early pick-up at the hotel (7:30am summer, 8:30am winter) as we leave for the [Temple of Heaven](#) to experience the outdoor life of Beijing locals. In every corner of the park inside the Temple of Heaven we will see elderly Beijing residents dancing gracefully, exercising and playing "pukepai" which just means playing cards but is based on the phonetics of the English word poker.

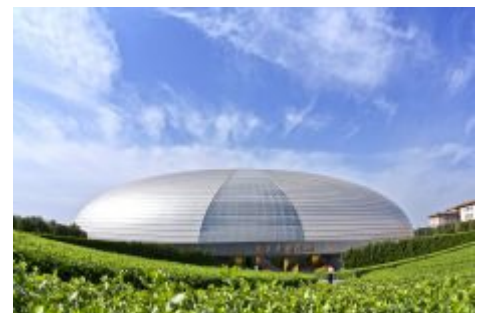
After our morning walk in the Temple of Heaven we will visit a traditional Chinese tea house and taste a few of China's many teas. From ancient China, we move on to the modern art world of Beijing at the National Centre for Performing Arts - also known as the Egg. An impressive building covered in titanium on the outside and Brazilian rosewood on the inside of the shell. World market prices soared when Beijing started purchasing the titanium for this building which says something about the scale of this amazing building.

The [798 art district](#) in the eastern part of Beijing was originally part of the great industrialisation of the larger Chinese urban areas. In and around this joint factory area with the simple name of 798, an innovative and creative art culture arose in the early 1980s. Art shops, studios and galleries emerged in the abandoned factory buildings. Until the mid-90's, the Chinese army had a secret factory in this area. In the middle of the area is an old train that was used to connect the factory area with the national railway system.

In the afternoon we watch an impressive acrobatics performance before heading for dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Qianmen Jianguo Hotel Beijing



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Day 5: Exploring old Beijing. Drum Tower, the Hutongs and the night train to Xi'an

After breakfast, we check out of the hotel.

This morning, we'll walk through the hutongs. A hutong is a narrow alleyway in the centre of Beijing. All the buildings are grey and no more than two stories, because the emperor wouldn't allow colours on other buildings apart from his own palaces and no building was allowed to be higher than the wall encircling the Forbidden City. Today, the hutongs are becoming hip and have a good mix of poor and rich, young and old, traditional and modern.

The drum tower marked the centre of the city in the Yuan Dynasty in the 13th century. It has been there ever since, although it has burned down a few times. It had the function as a clock, letting people know what time it was in the days before watches. Today you can't hear the drums more than 200m away but some hundred years ago, when there were just one storey buildings and no cars, you could hear it in most parts of the inner city.

We'll be walking through a market north of the bell tower. With fresh produce on display, this market is a real treat! Chinese cookies, delicacies and all kinds of spices and delicious vegetables are brought in by farmers every morning.

We continue out work towards Nanluoguxiang, restored hutong with shops, coffee bars and restaurants lining each side of the street. It's a great place for an afternoon walk and for people watching.

We'll have an early dinner before heading to the train station for the night train to Xi'an.

About the train: the train we use is a Direct Express Train. In Chinese: Zhi DaTeKuai (直达快), hence the Z on your ticket. The 'Z' trains are the second best category train. The top speed of this type of train is 160km/h. Generally, Z-trains are direct from A to B without a stopover but on some routes they do have a few stops.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Soft sleeper on the train to Xi'an



Day 6: Arrival in Xi'an. Giant Wild Goose Pagoda, the Muslim Bazaar and the Grand Mosque

We arrive in Xi'an early in the morning and are taken by bus to the hotel where we have breakfast. If an early check-in is possible, we'll quickly get settled before we head out for a Xi'an city tour.

The first stop will be the Xian [city wall](#) built during the Ming dynasty and is roughly 14km long. It's possible to rent a bicycle on the wall and ride around it. There are restrictions on how tall buildings can be in the centre of Xi'an but not outside the walls, which means that on one side you get a good view of the old Xi'an centre and on the other side the modern metropolis circles the wall. Next we'll pay a visit to the [Giant Wild Goose Pagoda](#) which was built in the Tang dynasty (652) and lies within the walls of the Monastery of Great Maternal Grace. One of its functions was to store Buddhist sutras that the monk Xuanzang brought back from his 17-year overland journey to India.

We'll spend the afternoon visiting one of Xi'an's oldest neighbourhood and visit one of the most impressive and largest mosques in China. Tucked away in the [Muslim Quarter](#), the mosque was built during the Tang dynasty (742 A.D.) and has since been renovated and enlarged many times to its present size of more than 13.000m². Wandering around the lively streets and alleyways of the Muslim Quarter is the perfect way of ending the day. Be enticed by fresh spices and local delicacies, pick up gifts to bring home or just soak up the atmosphere and enjoy the evening stroll.

Dinner will be a mouth-watering hot pot meal at a nearby restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Golden Flower Hotel Shangri-la



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Day 7: Imperial Xi'an: Shaanxi History Museum and the Terracotta Army

After breakfast, we'll check out of the hotel and set off for one of the most magnificent sights of this journey, the [Terracotta Army](#).

The historic exploration of Xi'an continues at the [Shaanxi History Museum](#) which houses imperial artefacts from the Zhou dynasty through to the Tang dynasty.

We'll enjoy an early dinner before boarding the night train to Nanjing.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Soft sleeper on the train to Nanjing



Day 8: Arrival in Nanjing. Yangtze River Bridge,

We arriving in Nanjing.

We climb the legendary mile long Nanjing Yangtze River Bridge from where we can enjoy the view of the countless freight ships going back and forth on the river and hear the trains running by beneath us.

We will also see China Gate - one of the city gates from the early Ming Dynasty. One of the sights we'll be visiting today is the final resting place of Ming Xiaoling, the first emperor and founder of the Ming Dynasty.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: New Century Hotel Nanjing



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Day 9: Nanjing - Shanghai. The Yuyuan Bazaar, River Cruise

We'll leave for Shanghai on the bullet train today.

In Chinese: Gao Tie (高铁). This is the fastest EMU (Electric Multiple Unit) train running long distances through China. It's top speed is 350km/h, however, the speed is usually limited to between 300km/h to 200 km/h depending on the route.

When we arrive, we'll check into the hotel and drop off our luggage.

One of the places we'll visit today is the Yuyuan Bazaar - also known as the Old City in Shanghai. This area was the Chinese governed area back when Western powers had taken most other parts of central Shanghai. In general, architecture in Shanghai looks very European but the Yuyuan bazaar looks very Chinese, especially in contrast to all the colonial architecture just a few blocks away.

We'll also embark on a river cruise on the Pudong River running through Shanghai. On one side there is the old colonial buildings and on the other side, the breathtaking highrises that only some 20 years ago were rice paddies.

We'll have dinner at a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Shanghai Jiulong Hotel or similar



Day 10: World Financial Center, Shanghai Railway Museum, The Bund, Nanjing Road

After breakfast, we will visit the tallest building in Shanghai, the World Financial Centre, for breathtaking views of Shanghai.

Today, we'll pay a visit to the Shanghai Railway museum. The museum is on the former site of the Shanghai railway station built by the English. All the exhibitions are placed either on rails or in the old train carriages.

We'll go for a stroll along the Bund and admire the colonial architecture and impressive buildings while admiring the river views.

A trip to Shanghai would not be complete without a visit to Nanjing Road, a must-see in Shanghai. You can shop to your heart's content in this famed shopping street.

We'll enjoy a farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Shanghai Jiulong Hotel or similar



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Day 11: Farewell China. Departure Service

Depending on your departure time, you will be picked up at your hotel and driven to the airport or train station.

Meals: Breakfast

DATES AND PRICES

Additional information

A child is defined as 12 years or younger **and** below 1.20m in height.

Above are prices based on the period of travel. If the dates don't fit your holiday plans, just [get in touch](#) with us and we'll arrange the holiday to accommodate your preferred travel dates.

INCLUDED

- Pick up and drop off service at hotel, airport or train station
- Professional local English-speaking guide
- Hotel accommodation
- Transportation according to the programme with car, coach or bus depending on group size
- Meals as stated in the itinerary B = Breakfast. L = Lunch D = Dinner. Breakfast is usually international breakfast buffet combined with local Chinese breakfast. Lunch consists of local Chinese dishes including meat and vegetables. Sometimes lunch is a western-style sandwich if the weather or programme so requires. Dinner is specialised Chinese meals from many different regions in China.
- All entrance fees to the sites mentioned in the itinerary
- Beverages (soft drinks or local beer) within a reasonable limit (2-3 glasses)
- English map of Beijing
- 24hr on-call service in case of emergencies

EXCLUDED

- Anything not in "Included" list above
- Any flights or transportation besides those mentioned in the "Included" list above
- Phone calls or other personal expenses
- Tips - We recommend that the guide receives 2 USD per person per day and 1 USD per person per day for the driver

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

We reserve the right to make improvements and changes to the itinerary due to local circumstances or events outside our control.

Tour starts/ends:

This tour starts in Beijing and ends in Shanghai.

An Albatros Travel representative will meet you at the airport. This tour includes pick-up and departure services. Please let us know your flight details, including flight number, arrival and departure times, in order for us to arrange your transfers.

Level of ability required:

This tour does not include any strenuous activity so no particular level of ability is required, however please be prepared for some walking. If you have any concerns or questions regarding disability access, please contact us in advance.

Food and dietary information:

If you have any particular dietary preferences or requirements, please make these clear when you make your booking. Most types of diet can be catered for. We will eat at local restaurants. It's not a problem to maintain a vegetarian diet in China.

Breakfast at the hotel is usually an international breakfast buffet.

Health and vaccinations:

In general, tourists do not need any vaccinations. Malaria vaccinations are not necessary in most parts of China. However, we advise you to consult with your doctor before travelling. For more information about health and vaccinations, please look at this [website](#).

What to wear:

Weather in Beijing

Summertime in Beijing is usually characterised by hot and humid days followed by balmy evenings. Winters are often very cold with temperatures dropping to -10 degrees Celcius (14 degrees Fahrenheit). Spring and autumn are good seasons for visiting China's capital although spring sometimes sees sandstorms caused by the winds blowing dust from the Mongolian steppe.

Baggage and what to bring:

Baggage

For domestic travel by air, the baggage allowance is 20kg (44lbs) per person. Since we do not provide tours with international air travel, please check your airline's website for luggage weight limits.

Adaptors

Flat two pin outlets are used in China. European round two pin outlets can also be used but don't fit perfectly. A plug adaptor can be purchased in most electronic stores.

Visa requirements:

Most travellers need a tourist visa to China. Please consult the Chinese consulate or embassy in your country of residence for visa application. This [website](#) may be useful in providing information regarding the application procedure.

Cancellations:**If you need to cancel**

We understand that your travel plans sometimes change and we try to be as flexible as possible. However as we have to book accommodation at hotels we are also bound by their cancellation policies. In general, the following rules will apply when cancelling a tour you have booked:

- If cancelling more than 45 days before commencement of our services there is no cancellation fee and we will refund 100% of your money
- If cancelling within 45 to 31 days before commencement of our services: 20 % of the total booking value will be levied
- If cancelling within 30 to 15 days before commencement of our services: 60 % of the total booking value will be levied
- We are unable to offer a refund if cancelling less than two weeks before commencement of our services

For full details of our cancellation terms, please see our general [Terms and Conditions](#).

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Beijing Albatros Travel Service Co. has implemented both the EU 'Law on Package Tours' and the regulations set forth by the China National Tourist Administration. In accordance with these laws, travel agencies must be able to document that they have drawn the attention of the consumer to all possible contingencies: the detailed itinerary, all formalities and expenses, possible changes, and the terms of agreement must be very clear when the tour is booked (i.e. before you confirm your booking by paying a deposit).

It is therefore very important that you have familiarised yourself thoroughly with the terms of agreement for a tour. The terms of agreement comprise the following elements: brochure and/or website information including price list and itinerary, invoice, terms and conditions.

If the tour is booked AND paid for on the Beijing Albatros Travel Service Co. website, chinatoursandholidays.com, the traveller is obliged to read and possibly print all relevant information and documents:

- A. Brochure and/or website information including price list and itinerary which contains a detailed description of the tour, current prices and a specification of expected extra expenses, as well as special regulations or information relevant to the specific tour. Flight times, visa requirements, etc., are frequently altered and information regarding these will therefore seldom be found in the printed brochures.
- B. The terms and conditions must be seen in context with the other relevant content of the terms of agreement as mentioned above. If there are conditions stipulated in the tour itinerary or practical information relating to the specific tour, these must be included in the information provided in our brochure and/or our website. Otherwise, you may assume that the general terms and conditions for Beijing Albatros Travel Service Co. are valid for your tour.
- C. Product liability insurance. In keeping with legislation regarding extended liability for tour operators, we always presume that our customers have familiarised themselves with the content of all of the distributed material.

1. Booking

A booking is binding for both customer and travel agency once the deposit has been paid.

2. Conditions of payment

The following rules apply unless other conditions are stipulated in the tour itinerary or practical information relating to the specific tour on our website.

At the time of booking, a deposit on 25% of the tour's total price per person, though no less than 300 USD, must be paid. The remaining payment must be submitted no later than 75 days prior to departure. If the deadline for the remaining payment is exceeded, there is no guarantee against otherwise unnecessary changes. Please note that some tours have different conditions of payment and often stricter conditions for cancellation, i.e. tours utilising chartered ships or flights. These conditions will be stated in the specific tour terms and conditions on our website.

3. Cancellation

The following rules apply unless other conditions are stipulated in the tour itinerary or practical information relating to the specific tour on our website.

Cancellation by the customer

If the customer cancels a tour up to 76 days prior to departure the deposit is lost. If cancellation is made within 75-15 days prior to departure, a handling fee of 85% of the total price of the tour will be charged. Later cancellations: The customer has no claim to reimbursement.

Should war and life-threatening epidemics break out, or natural catastrophes and similar events occur within 14 days prior to departure, the trip may be cancelled free of charge. This will, however, be on condition that the United Kingdom's Foreign Office directly advises against travelling to the specific area, and that the contingencies have arisen after the booking of the tour.

Cancellation by the travel agency

If the number of participants is insufficient for a scheduled group tour, it may be cancelled up to 14 days before departure. The minimum number of participants for a tour is 10 persons. The tour may also be cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control and which neither our partners nor we could foresee (force majeure). In such cases the customer has no right to compensation beyond a refund of the price of the trip. Should the aforementioned contingencies arise the travel agency will always try to offer an acceptable alternative.

4. Travel documents

If travel documents, other than the invoice, are required, these will be emailed or posted to the participants upon full payment.

Additional travel documents could include detailed flight schedules (if included in the purchase), vouchers and itinerary that include the pre-booked services at your destination. If you are participating in a tour with a guide or in an event described in our programme, you will not normally be given a voucher beforehand.

5. Passport and visa

Unless otherwise specified, obtaining the required passport and visa for travelling is the responsibility of the traveller.

The traveller must ensure he/she has a valid passport and visa and give the travel agency correct information regarding name and nationality, etc. We draw your attention to the fact that the processing of visa may take several weeks. The travel agency cannot be held responsible for travellers who, for whatever reason, may be denied entry at a border. Some countries require the traveller to be in possession of a suitable amount of currency, as well as a valid return ticket.

Please be aware that rules and regulations may change between booking and departure.

Please note that there are also visa requirements when in transit. Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months after returning from your destination.

6. Vaccination requirements

These should be obtained from your own physician. Information given by the travel agency about vaccination and/or prophylactic measures or other medical subjects should be considered a service that is under no medical liability.

7. Change of traveller

In keeping with legislation, and if practically possible, transferring one's tour (instead of cancelling it) to family or friends on the condition of paying a fee is an option. The size of the fee depends on the character of the tour. The travel agency does not carry out resale of tours already paid for, nor does the travel agency guarantee that a change of traveller can be effectuated.

8. Changes in prices

In accordance with legislation, tour operators may raise the agreed upon price as a result of increased transport costs (including increased fuel prices), altered taxes, tariffs and fees, as well as fluctuating exchange rates. Unfortunately, many sudden price increases occur as a result of fuel surcharges, increased safety taxes or other taxes. On many overseas travels, these extra costs may exceed several hundred USD. Price increases will take place according to the following principles:

- 1) Airfares, tariffs and taxes will be increased with the exact amount if this exceeds USD 50.
- 2) Alterations in currency rates with more than +5% or less than -10% in relation to the list price when published. The alteration in price will only include costs regarding the relevant currency and not the entire cost of the package. Please note that we continuously update our price lists, and that a tour will always be sold at the current price even though the customer may be in possession of an outdated price list. The same tour may have been sold at different prices, because we rarely permit price increases to influence the price of tours that have been booked prior to the price increase. General price reductions as a result of, for example, an exceptional reduction in airfares will benefit all customers, regardless of when a tour is booked or paid for.

9. Changes in the itinerary

In accordance with legislation, the travel agency cannot, in principle, make major alterations in the planned tour once it has been booked. It is therefore important that you draw the attention of the agency to any special wishes you may have in connection with the tour you have booked (e.g. hotel with a tennis court, golf, diving, etc.). Such wishes must be included on the invoice. The purpose of this is to guard you against an undesired product. On many of our more 'adventurous' tours, we operate (as far as possible) with late changes in order to create the best possible tour-taking climate, local conditions and events into consideration. Changes due to weather and infrastructure can occur and the traveller must see this as a natural part of the trip. Therefore, no compensation is paid for delays and changes within a 24hr duration.

10. Travel insurance

All travellers should be suitably insured. This is of paramount importance regarding transport in case of illness, as well as home transportation etc. All travellers are responsible for having the appropriate insurance coverage. Participation on a trip presumes responsible and considerate behaviour, and you are expected to comply with the directions of the travel agency and its representatives. It is not advisable for travellers to venture alone into unknown and remote areas especially after nightfall. If you wish to be independent, this should always be in consultation with the travel agency or its local representatives. Should the travel agency not be represented at certain destinations, please consult relevant guidebooks for advice on specific conditions.

11. Taxes and tariffs

A number of taxes and tariffs are levied upon issue of your ticket and are included in the price of the trip. However, a number of local taxes cannot be levied beforehand and must be paid for on the spot. These are often airport taxes, as well as tariffs in some national parks. These expenses will usually be stated in your itinerary for your information. We would, however, like to draw your attention to the fact that tariffs and taxes may be altered between the booking of a ticket and your departure.

12. Your responsibility

As already mentioned, your participation in a trip is subject to your being aware of the above information as well as the information on the website, on the invoice and in the itinerary, and to your following the aforementioned regulations. It is also expected that you seek publicised information about the current political, health, natural and climatic conditions at your destination. People travelling individually must pay attention to the fact that the information material does not mention all circumstances. Especially airline tickets, alteration of these, reconfirmation of itinerary, visa etc. need extra attention.

13. People with disabilities

It will always appear from the itinerary whether special demands on physical ability and health are required for completing the tour. A principal rule is that all travel participants must be self-reliant. Wheelchair users and people with a motor handicap are very welcome on many of our tours, but please consult the travel agency before booking a tour. The travel agency reserves the right to turn away participants who, based on the travel agency's professional opinion, will not be able to complete the tour on their own. The travel agency is not responsible for any such refusal.

14. Claims

Claims regarding shortcomings on a trip must be directed to the travel agency or to its local representative as soon as they are ascertained so that the agency can attempt to rectify the situation. The travel agency is regulated by the China National Tourist Administration. In case of disagreement between the travel agency and the traveller regarding shortcomings on a tour, you may place your complaint with the local China Tourist Administration on this website: <http://en.cnta.gov.cn/>

Any lawsuit or dispute with the travel agency will be ruled upon according to Chinese law.