China and Yangtze River Cruise

Avalon Waterways • Century Legend

October 11 - 27, 2017 • 17 Days • 39 Meals

Escorted by Mark Aitchison

Yangshuo County - Credit K. Lee
China is indeed the giant of the East, a land of promise and of unknowns. We are pleased to once again offer this exceptional tour that combines the beautiful Yangtze River cruise through the Three Gorges, including visits to some of the most fascinating cities in China: the architecture of Beijing, the commerce of Shanghai, the antiquities of Xi’an, and the beautiful landscapes of Guilin.

The second phase of the massive Yangtze Dam was completed in June 2003, raising the water levels above the dam by 60 metres and creating a massive 1,000 kilometre-long lake. The magnificent scenery of the Three Gorges is absolutely breathtaking, where the peaks along the river still rise up to 1,000 metres from the water’s edge. A special visit to the dam is included as part of the cruise.

This particular voyage fills quickly and we expect that the demand for China will continue to grow. If China is in your plans, we urge you to book early in order to avoid disappointment.

### INCLUSIVE FEATURES
- Return economy group airfare from Canada to China
- All domestic flights in China
- 3 night deluxe cruise on the Century Legend or similar
- 12 nights first class hotels as indicated or similar
- All sightseeing tours and transfers, including entrance fees, as indicated in the itinerary
- 39 meals included as noted in the itinerary (B - 15 breakfasts, L - 13 lunches, D - 11 dinners)
- Beverages included with most meals
- All gratuities, surcharges, taxes and fees for included services
- China visa fee for Canadian passport holders
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

### OUR CRUISE SHIP - Century Legend
Cruise in style and comfort on board one of the newest ships on the Yangtze, the Century Legend. As you embark your contemporary, elegant ship, a friendly, English-speaking crew and stunning 7-story atrium lobby welcome you aboard. The Century Legend is charting a new course for Yangtze River cruising. The ship features a state-of-the-art propulsion system that reduces vibration and decreases emissions to reduce environmental impact. Other innovations include a pillar less multifunction lounge with unobstructed views of evening entertainment, and a large indoor swimming pool, both firsts on the Yangtze.

**Standard Stateroom (266 sq. ft.): Included**
October 11, Wednesday  Xi’an
Canada / Beijing
Today we depart for Beijing, the political, economic and cultural centre of the People’s Republic of China.

October 12, Thursday  Xi’an
Beijing
On arrival in Beijing, we will clear customs and transfer to our hotel for the next four nights. Buffet Dinner this evening will be at our hotel. **Beijing Capital Hotel (4 nights)**  D

October 13, Friday  Xi’an
Beijing
In the morning, we stroll through historic Tiananmen Square, where Mao Tse-Tung first raised the flag of the People’s Republic. Visit the “Imperial Palace”, or "Forbidden City", where in earlier times, only members of the Emperor’s family were permitted. In the afternoon, we visit the Summer Palace, the former retreat of the Imperial Family and the largest and best preserved imperial Gardens in China. We will enjoy a scenic cruise on the man made lake to enjoy the views and a performance of Kung fu in the evening.  BL

October 14, Saturday  Xi’an
Beijing
Our day begins with a visit to the Temple of Heaven, including the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvest. After lunch we venture out to visit the Beijing Planning Exhibition Hall, the Museum of Beijing encompassing its long history. Next we will tour Beijing’s Hutongs by pedicabs and visit a local family to learn more about Chinese culture. With our family hosts we will visit a local market to purchase the ingredients for our instructed dumplings dinner.  BLD

October 15, Sunday  Xi’an
Beijing
Today’s highlight is a trip to “The Great Wall” which was built over 2,000 years ago by Emperor Qin, and stretches over 5,000 kilometres across the top of China. En route to the Great Wall we shall visit the Sun Village which is home to the children of Chinese convicts and fights for their freedom. Back in Beijing we will visit the National Stadium (the Bird’s Nest of Olympic fame) for a chance to take some photos. This evening we have a special Peking Duck dinner.  BLD

October 16, Monday  Xi’an
Beijing / Xi’an
The mixture of mystery of an ancient capital city and a modern city has made the city of Xi’an, the starting point of the Silk Road, an international tourist destination well known at home and abroad. Marco Polo visited Xi’an in the Middle Ages when it was the capital of a vast empire and described it as the largest city in the world. We will enjoy a Chinese set lunch at a local restaurant before we visit “Hu County Village”. Enjoy a half day trip from Xi’an where we will experience real Chinese rural life and have a chance to learn to draw the famous farmer’s paintings. **Xi’an Golden Flower Hotel (2 nights)**  BL

October 17, Tuesday  Xi’an
A full day excursion takes us to the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, one of China’s greatest rulers and the builder of the Great Wall. Discovered in 1974, the tomb contains some 6,000 life sized terra cotta warriors and horses, the imperial body guard to the emperor on his journey after death. This evening we are in for a special treat. Following a delicious dumpling dinner at a restaurant, we continue to the theatre where we will enjoy a Tang Dynasty show.  BLD

October 18, Wednesday  Xi’an / Guilin
This morning we will visit the massive City Wall (over 20 feet thick) which is one of the oldest military structures in the world, followed by the visit of the Wild Goose Pagoda. This evening we transfer to the airport for our flight to Guilin, known as China’s most scenic region.  B

Guilin Bravo Hotel (2 nights)  D  BLD

October 19, Thursday  Guilin
In the morning we will enjoy a visit to Daxu, a charming typical old town where we will witness its long history through the cobbled streets, ancient houses and bridges. We will also have the opportunity to learn more about the local culture as we spend some time with two local families. This afternoon, we will visit the Reed Flute Cave, also known as the “Palace of natural Art”. Here we shall find beautiful stalagmite and stalactite formations and a crystal cave large enough to accommodate 1000 people. We will also enjoy a visit at Elephant Trunk Hill and wander through a local market.  BLD

October 20, Friday  Guilin / Yangshuo
A scenic boat trip down the Li River offers miles of breathtaking scenery, traditional farm settings and mist shrouded mountains rising from the river banks. Since ancient times, this landscape has been the subject of countless poems and paintings. Our cruise will end at the colourful market town of Yangshuo, where we have an opportunity to participate in a cooking class followed by dinner. **Green Lotus Hotel (1 night)**  BLD

October 21, Saturday  Yangshuo / Guilin / Chongqing
Today we make our way back to Guilin before catching our flight to Chongqing and our Yangtze River cruise. We will enjoy a nice dinner before embarking. **Century Legend (3 nights)** BLD

October 22, Sunday  Yangtze River Cruise
Appreciate a relaxing morning onboard to enjoy the passing scenery and discover the different amenities and activities the ship has to offer. In the afternoon, we will visit the unique Shibaozhai Pagoda. This evening is the Captain’s welcome party followed by a Crew Cabaret show.  BLD

October 23, Monday  Yangtze River Cruise
A world of magnificent scenery, lush greenery, steep cliffs, jagged mountain peaks, sparkling waterfalls and terraced landscapes awaits us as we cruise the three gorges of the Yangtze River. The Qutang Gorge is the smallest at just 8 kms long, it’s also the most spectacular, with cliffs rising 1,000 metres from the water’s edge. The Wu Gorge is 44 kilometres in length and known for its deep valleys, quiet beauty and the “Twelve Peaks”, lining the banks of the gorge and admired by visitors from around the world.  BLD

October 24, Tuesday  Yangtze River Cruise
This morning will feature an excursion to the Three Gorges Dam site. This world famous dam is the largest project of its kind in the world and created the 1000 km long lake that we just cruised through. Continuing our cruise onto
October 25, Wednesday  Shanghai
This morning we tour the major attractions of Shanghai. The classical Yuyuan Garden, built during the Ming Dynasty by the high ranking government official Pan Yundian. The Gardens’ total area occupies approximately five acres, and features pavilions, ponds, rockeries, cloisters, and streams all within six scenic zones, including the Sansui Hall and Wanhua Chamber. In existence for 400 years, the Gardens were specifically constructed for Pan’s aging parents as a sanctuary in which to live out their lives. Next we shall stroll the Bund and witness the spectacular views of the cities skyline. After lunch at a local restaurant, visit the Jade Buddha Temple, the most famous and one of the most active Buddhist temples in Shanghai. It was built during the Guangxu period of the Qing Dynasty to enshrine the two beautiful Jade Buddha statues that were brought from Burma.

October 26, Thursday  Shanghai
Today has been left free to enjoy this exciting city on your own. You may wish to visit one of the many shopping areas in the city or Shanghai Museum that contains over 120,000 relics from China’s history. There will be several optional excursions to choose from. 

October 27, Friday  Shanghai / Canada
This morning has been left at your leisure to rest or finishing packing for the journey home. This afternoon we transfer to the airport for our journey back to Canada. 

CT RATING 3 - Moderately Challenging: This tour includes long travel days and considerable walking over rough surfaces with limited facilities in some areas. Most meals will be Chinese in style and content.