

China: Beijing, Yangtze River Cruise & Shanghai

Pre-departure information for your tour



Passport, visa & entry requirements

- In order to enter China, U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport with an expiration date extending at least six months beyond the date of return.
- We recommend having at least two blank passport pages for entry stamps.
- U.S. and Canadian passport holders must obtain a visa in advance in order to enter China. You may choose to apply directly to the Chinese consulate or use a visa provider, such as our partner company, [VisaCentral](#). Obtaining a Chinese visa will be an additional cost.
- No visa is required to enter Hong Kong on the tour extension, unless you are planning to extend your stay over 90 days.
- If you're not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact the Chinese consulate (and Hong Kong's consulate if you are traveling on the tour extension) for specific entry requirements.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to [goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements](#) and searching the code ICH.

Tour pacing & mobility

- You will walk for about 2 hours daily across moderately uneven terrain, including paved roads and unpaved trails, with some hills and stairs.
- Travelers should be healthy enough to participate in all included walks without assistance. Adding optional excursions may increase the total amount of walking on your tour.
- You should feel comfortable managing your own luggage at times, as well as getting in and out of small boats.
- Go Ahead Tours and the Tour Director who accompanies your group are unable to provide special, individual mobility assistance to travelers on tour. The responsibility of the Tour Director is to ensure the group as a whole enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing, individualized assistance to any one

traveler.

- If you have any mobility concerns or physical restrictions, please contact our Customer Experience Team.

Transportation & arrival information

- Round-trip flights booked through Go Ahead arrive in Beijing and depart from Shanghai (or from Hong Kong for the tour extension). A representative from Go Ahead Tours will meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel. Please remain in the arrival lounge, as the representative might be escorting one of your fellow travelers to the bus at the time of your arrival.
- Transfers to and from the airport at your destination are included for travelers who have purchased their flights through Go Ahead Tours. Travelers who purchase their own flights may request airport transfers with Go Ahead Tours for an additional cost.
- Flights from Beijing to Yichang, Chongqing to Xi'an, and Xi'an to Shanghai, as well as a four-night Yangtze River cruise, are included in the price of your tour. (The tour extension also includes a flight from Shanghai to Hong Kong).
- All other included transportation on this tour is by private motor coach.

Baggage allowance

- Please note that our travelers are limited to one checked bag and one carry-on bag per person due to storage limitations on motor coaches and other transfers, which may include train connections or flights.
- Contact your airline(s) for baggage size and weight restrictions for your flights, which may include on-tour flights in addition to your round-trip flights to and from tour. Please note that your included on-tour flights may have more restrictive baggage limits.
- Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage or exceed baggage size and weight restrictions. Be advised that you are responsible for any baggage fees incurred on all flights.
- Make sure you label your baggage and keep valuables, medication, and documents in

your carry-on bag.

Clothing & packing tips

- We recommend packing lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that can be easily layered to accommodate varying temperatures, as well as a light jacket or rainwear.
- A sturdy pair of walking shoes or sneakers is recommended for sightseeing.
- Waterproof shoes or sandals, a swimsuit, sunscreen, and insect repellent are recommended for outdoor activities.
- A small bottle of hand sanitizer may be helpful when other facilities are not readily available while on the road.
- You may want to pack dressier attire if you plan to visit a high-end restaurant or attend a special performance.
- It is preferable not to visit temples or other religious sites with bare legs and shoulders (and entrance may be denied on this basis).

Health

- At least 60 days prior to departure, check with your doctor or healthcare provider for the latest updates and entry requirements, or visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at [cdc.gov](#).
- Please be sure to take proper care with sun exposure, the sun can be especially strong in some of the areas you are visiting.
- Drink bottled water only. Refrain from drinking tap water, including when brushing your teeth.
- Bring a small first aid kit, including antacids, anti-diarrhea medication, motion sickness medication, and any prescription medications in your carry-on bag.
- Avoid eating fresh fruits and vegetables unless they are cooked or washed in clean water and peeled.
- Depending on season and weather patterns, air pollution in some locations may be problematic for travelers with a history of respiratory problems. Based on your health history, please discuss any precautions with your healthcare provider prior to departure.
- If you have medication that you take daily, be sure you have enough for each day of the tour and any possible delays encountered.
- Certain over-the-counter and prescription

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medications may be banned in one or all of the countries or regions on this tour. Importing these drugs can carry severe consequences, including imprisonment. Please consult your healthcare provider prior to departure to ensure that any drugs you may want to bring with you are legal in all countries or regions you will visit.

- If you have dietary restrictions and/or food allergies please notify Go Ahead Tours at least 30 days prior to your departure by logging in to your account and updating your traveler info. To update this information closer to your departure date, please call our Customer Experience Team.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements and searching the code ICH.

Cuisine

- The diversity of Chinese cuisine reflects China's long history. With each dynasty, new recipes and cooking styles emerged. The food on your tour will introduce you to many of the country's Eight Cuisines— Shandong, Sichuan, Guangdong, Fujian, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Hunan, and Anhui. Popular ingredients throughout include noodles, tofu, bok choy, bitter melon, Chinese broccoli, and meats like chicken, duck, and shrimp. Most meals are served with rice, and are often seasoned with ginger, garlic, and white pepper. Along the Yangtze River, you may sample Anhui cuisine. Some traditional Anhui dishes include braised turtle with ham.

Electricity & air conditioning

- Mainland China operates at 220 volts and uses Type A, C, and I plugs with two flat pins, two rounded pins, or three flat pins set at an angle, respectively.
- We recommend packing a universal adapter, as well as a voltage converter if you plan on using your own hairdryer or other device without a built-in converter.
- The strength of the air conditioning in Asian hotels is often not as strong or as cool as what one might be used to in the U.S. or Canada. When air conditioning is available, it

is usually regulated seasonally and controlled centrally by the hotel.

- Your hotels may provide hairdryers, irons, and other small appliances. However, these amenities cannot be guaranteed.

Connectivity

- Wi-Fi is available in most hotels, though some charges may apply.
- There is no Wi-Fi on any of the motor coaches or on the Yangtze River cruise.
- Please contact your mobile service provider for information on roaming charges.
- Internet access in China is strictly regulated by the Chinese government, and a number of censorship laws restrict which sites can be accessed from within the country. You may be unable to visit websites such as Google, Facebook, or other email servers. To learn more about which websites may be inaccessible in China, visit blockedinchina.net

Time zones

- China is 12 hours ahead of Eastern Time.
- When it's noon in New York, it's midnight in Beijing.

Currency

- The renminbi (the people's currency) is the official currency in China. The yuan is the basic unit of the renminbi and the two names are often used interchangeably. (You will use the Hong Kong dollar on the tour extension.)
- Better rates of exchange are usually available overseas, although it's worth ordering some currency from your local bank to use when you first arrive.
- We strongly advise that you take debit/bank cards and credit cards, which can be used to withdraw cash at local banks as needed.
- You can use most debit/credit cards at ATMs on the international networks Cirrus and Plus, but make sure to check with your home bank about withdrawal fees.
- Inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans so that they won't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges.

- International banks and businesses primarily accept debit and credit cards that work with the EMV chip system. If you do not already have at least one debit or credit card with a chip in it, we strongly recommend requesting one from your bank prior to your tour.

Tipping

- At the conclusion of your tour, it's customary to offer your Tour Director and driver a gratuity in local currency. Please keep current exchange rates in mind.
- We recommend tipping the equivalent of \$8USD to \$10USD per person per day for your Tour Director and the equivalent of \$3USD per person per day for your driver.
- If applicable, we also recommend the equivalent of \$2USD per local guide.
- Tips can only be paid in cash.
- The cruise line will automatically bill a flat service charge of 150 yuan (approximately equal to \$22.50 USD) to each passengers' credit card upon check-in. (Please note: Currency rates can fluctuate.) This charge will cover tips to the onboard crew, including housekeeping and restaurant staff. Tips for the river cruise guides are not automatically billed. The cruise line recommends tipping the equivalent of \$5USD to \$6USD per person per day.

Purchasing excursions on tour

- Most optional excursions will be available for purchase while you are on tour.
- Your Tour Director will only accept cash (in USD only), Visa, or MasterCard as payment for excursions.
- Please be advised that if you pay for an excursion by credit card while on tour, it may take up to three months for your card to be charged.
- Some optional excursions may only be purchased in advance. See page four of your tour itinerary for more information.

Shore excursions

- Afternoon shore excursions are offered directly from your cruise ship along the Yangtze River. Ask cruise representatives for

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details on shore excursions, as some are quite walking intensive.

- Please be advised that passengers who choose not to partake in shore excursions must stay on the boat.