

China's Three Gorges Hike



trip highlights

Hike high above the Yangtze River in the spectacular landscapes of the Three Gorges

Traverse the exposed Dragon Ridge above Wu Gorge, with sweeping views

Follow the Goddess Heavenly Road, hiking along cliffside trails to elevated viewpoints

Experience the Yangtze landscape from both its river and mountain trails

Challenge yourself on the ascent to Three Gorges Summit 1,388 meters (4,554 feet)

Travel with experienced local guides with carefully designed logistics throughout

Explore southwest China beyond the trails, visiting Chengdu and exploring Chongqing

Stay in comfortable hotels throughout



Trip Duration	9 days	Trip Code: CYZ
Grade	Moderate	
Activities	Trekking, Adventure Touring	
Summary	5 day trek, 8 nights hotel	

welcome to World Expeditions

For over 50 years, we've been creating high-quality, expedition-style adventures for active travellers with a curious spirit. From our very first trek in the mountains of Nepal to pioneering remote routes across all seven continents, our journeys are built for those who want to truly explore – not just visit.

At the heart of what we do is a simple philosophy: take the paths less travelled.

This means travelling with care, supporting local communities, minimising our impact, and unlocking experiences that most travellers will never have.

If you're ready to go further and dig deeper, we invite you to join us on the China's Three Gorges Hike, a journey that captures the essence of a unique adventure.

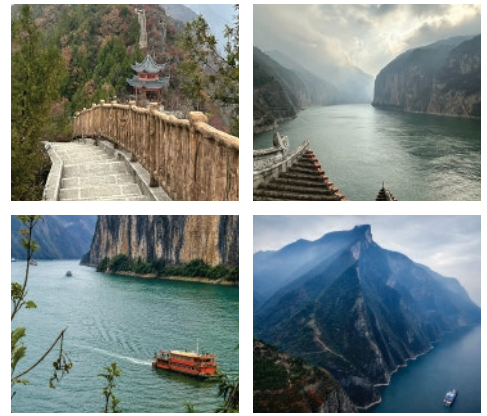
why travel with World Expeditions?

Explore China's Three Gorges in a way that goes well beyond simply viewing the landscape from the river. This active itinerary combines guided hiking, Yangtze River boat journeys and overland travel to reach walking routes around Wushan and Fengjie, including Dragon Back, Wu Gorge, Goddess Heavenly Road, White Salt Hill and Three Gorges Peak. The trip is supported by a tour leader and local mountain guides as specified by group size, with organised rail, road and boat transport connecting each stage of the journey. It is a strong fit with World Expeditions' focus on guided adventure travel in culturally significant destinations, combining active exploration with regional insight and practical support.



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World Expeditions does not require single travellers to pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we cannot match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. Please refer to our website for the additional cost.

the trip

Go beyond the usual Three Gorges experience and discover this dramatic stretch of the Yangtze River on foot. Carved through steep mountains as the Yangtze flows east towards central China, the Three Gorges—Qutang, Wu and Xiling—form a spectacular corridor of towering cliffs, narrow waterways and deeply cut valleys. This active journey focuses on the mountain landscapes around Wushan and Fengjie, with rewarding hikes involving sustained ascents, steep mountain trails and exposed sections leading to high ridgelines and viewpoints above the river. Hike Dragon Ridge overlooking Wu Gorge, explore the trails around Goddess Peak and Goddess Heavenly Road, and climb to Three Gorges Summit before descending by gondola. Boat journeys along the Yangtze connect several of the walks and reveal the scale of the gorges from water level. Away from the trails, visit Chengdu's renowned panda sanctuary and experience the city's food and culture, before exploring Chongqing, including the atmospheric Chinaware Alleyway. Together, these experiences combine challenging hiking with two of southwest China's most fascinating cities.

at a glance

DAY 1	JOIN CHENGDU
DAY 2	EXPLORE CHENGDU
DAY 3	TRAIN TO WUSHAN AND HIKE THREE GORGES DRAGON RIDGE (3-4HRS)
DAY 4	HIKE WU GORGE FROM SHENJIAWAN TO LANNIHU (7.37 KM / 4.6 MI, 4 HOURS)
DAY 5	GODDESS HEAVENLY ROAD HIKE TO LIUPING VILLAGE (10KM / 6.2MI, 5-6HRS)
DAY 6	HIKE WHITE SALT HILL & TRAVEL TO FENGJIE (6.72KM / 4.2MI, 5-6HRS)
DAY 7	CLIMB THREE GORGES SUMMIT & DESCEND BY GONDOLA (11.9KM / 7.4MI, 5-6HRS)
DAY 8	TRAIN TO CHONGQING
DAY 9	IN CHONGQING, TRIP CONCLUDES

what's included

- 8 breakfasts, 7 lunches and 8 dinners
- Twin-share 4 and 5* hotels
- Expert bilingual guide and mountain guide
- First-class high-speed rail from Chengdu to Wushan and Fengjie to Chongqing
- Private air conditioned vehicles
- Visit to Chengdu Panda Sanctuary
- Boat journeys on the Yangtze River and around the Three Gorges
- Gondola descent from Three Gorges Summit
- Medical kit

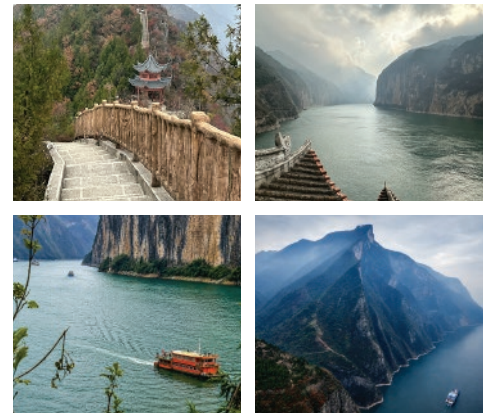
Local cash payments are becoming increasingly popular with many operators in the adventure travel industry. The policy seems to benefit the tour operators, more than the local economies or travellers, as it avoids local taxes and transfers the cost and risk of cash handling to travellers. In accordance with our Responsible Travel practices we have chosen a policy not to ask for such payments.

what's not included

- International airfares and departure taxes
- Visa costs
- Travel Insurance (compulsory)
- Arrival airport transfer
- Meals and drinks not listed
- Personal expenses

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trip dates

2027 06 Mar - 14 Mar
03 Apr - 11 Apr
08 May - 16 May
04 Sep - 12 Sep
09 Oct - 17 Oct
06 Nov - 14 Nov

fast facts

Countries Visited:
China

Visas:
Yes*

Vaccinations:
Please consult a travel vaccination specialist for up to date information

Private Groups:
Private group options are available for this trip*

Singles:
A single supplement is available for this trip*

Leader:
Expert local leader

Advice for people with limited mobility
This trip is not suitable for people with limited mobility.

*Ask our staff for more information.

- Tips and gratuities
- Any items not listed as included

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Join Chengdu

Make your own way to the group hotel in Chengdu, where your journey through southwest China begins. The remainder of the day is at leisure before meeting your tour leader and fellow travellers in the hotel lobby at approximately 6:30pm. This evening provides an opportunity to get to know the group and learn more about the journey ahead. Afterwards, head to a local restaurant for your welcome dinner.

Accommodation: Buddha Zen Hotel or similar
meals: D

DAY 2 Explore Chengdu

Spend the day discovering Chengdu, beginning with a visit to the Panda Sanctuary before continuing to People's Park and the historic Kuanzhai Alleyways, also known as the Wide and Narrow Ancient Alleyways. Together, these visits provide an introduction to several different sides of the city before you leave for the Yangtze region. Explore the traditional alleyways and experience the atmosphere of People's Park as you make your way through the city. Return to your hotel after a full day of sightseeing.

Accommodation: Buddha Zen Hotel or similar
meals: B,L,D

DAY 3 Train to Wushan and hike Three Gorges Dragon Ridge (3-4hrs)

Leaving Chengdu behind this morning and traveling approximately 4.5 hours by fast train to Wushan, the base for the next stage of your journey. After lunch, transfer towards the mountains and set out on a rewarding hike along Longji, or the Dragon Ridge, named for its main ridgeline, which resembles a massive resting dragon overlooking the mouth of Wu Gorge. We follow the middle section the true 'spine of the dragon', where the trail narrows as it traverses the crest of the mountain. In places there are steep, near-vertical drops on both sides, creating a considerable sense of exposure. Developed sections are fortified with stone or concrete surfaces and safety handrails, but the narrow ridge and open terrain can feel intense, particularly for those uncomfortable with heights. With few trees obscuring the outlook on the open ridge, there are panoramic views across Wushan, Wu Gorge, the Yangtze River and surrounding karst mountains. Continue towards Denglong Peak, the symbolic 'head' of the dragon, before beginning the long descent. Here, the developed paths transition to more rugged, unpaved trails that can become slippery and muddy after rain. Return to Wushan following a dramatic introduction to the mountain landscapes of the Three Gorges.

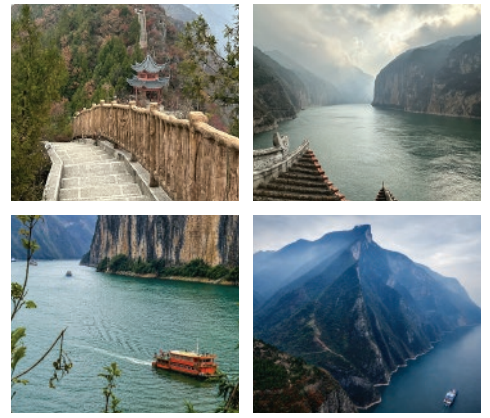
Accommodation: Hampton by Hilton Hotel or similar
meals: B,L,D

DAY 4 Hike Wu Gorge from Shenjiawan to Lannihu (7.37 km / 4.6 mi, 4 hours)

This morning, we head to the Yangtze River for an approximately one-hour boat journey to Shenjiawan, where today's full-day hike begins. Set out on foot through Wu Gorge in the area of Goddess Peak, up to Wangxia village. A mixture of stone steps and earth footpaths with some sections of denser vegetation on this rarely visited path. The combination of walking and boat travel allows you to appreciate

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thoughtful travel

Our World Expeditions adventures are grounded in a deep commitment to regenerative travel, going beyond minimising harm to actively restoring and enriching the places we visit. We partner closely with local communities, ensuring that our trips support cultural preservation, fair livelihoods, and community-led initiatives. Each expedition is designed to protect and regenerate natural ecosystems through low-impact practices, climate action, and education that fosters respect for biodiversity. We prioritise meaningful connections between travellers and place, encouraging a sense of stewardship that lasts well beyond the journey. By embedding sustainability into every layer of our operations, we aim not only to explore the world responsibly but also to leave it healthier, more resilient, and more vibrant for future generations.

trip grading Moderate

The theme behind most of our trips is action holidays and the fitter you are, the more easily you will adjust and enjoy yourself. On a trekking trip such as this you need to be in general good health and moderately fit. One of the days the trail climbs steeply from near river level, gaining approximately 1,290m / 4,232ft over a roughly 12km / 7.4mi point-to-point hike. This is a hard, sustained ascent, with thousands of steep stone steps and sections of narrow historic plank paths traversing the limestone mountainside. The grading overall would be moderate, with some "strenuous" activity. Before departure aerobic-type exercise, which increases your breathing, is an obvious advantage. We recommend that for about two to three months prior to departure you try to exercise most days for 30 - 45 minutes or aerobic type activity.

the landscape from contrasting perspectives as you make your way towards the riverside settlement of Lannihu. At the end of the hike, board a boat for the return journey along the Yangtze to Wushan.

Ascent: 957m / 3,140ft

Accommodation: Hampton by Hilton Hotel or similar

meals: B,L,D

DAY 5 Goddess Heavenly Road Hike to Liuping Village (10km / 6.2mi, 5-6hrs)

Another journey along the Yangtze River begins the day, with an approximately one-hour boat ride to Light Tower and the start of our full-day hike. From here, we follow the Goddess Heavenly Road (Shennv Tianlu) through a dramatic high-altitude cliffside landscape in the mountains above Wu Gorge. The route maintains a relatively steady elevation along the ridge at around 1,200m / 3,937ft. Underfoot, the developed trail varies between well-maintained stone flagstones, paved scenic roads and sturdy wooden boardwalks. As we traverse the mountainside, there are bird's-eye views over Wu Gorge and the winding Yangtze River, with Goddess Peak rising across the gorge. Viewing areas along the route include Tianzhan Lantern, Fairy Shoe Terrace and Feiyun Terrace. Shorter, steeper flights of stone stairs lead to some of these viewpoints, adding more demanding sections to the ridge walk. The Goddess Heavenly Road hugs the mountainside, with sheer cliff drops in places creating a considerable sense of exposure, although the developed route is protected by handrails and safety barriers. Travellers with a strong fear of heights may find these sections challenging, particularly around the elevated viewpoints. We continue along the ridge towards Liuping Village, completing another rewarding day exploring the Three Gorges from its mountain trails rather than solely from river level. From Liuping, we return to Wushan by bus.

Ascent: 1,023m / 3,356ft

Accommodation: Hampton by Hilton Hotel or similar

meals: B,L,D

DAY 6 Hike White Salt Hill & Travel to Fengjie (6.72km / 4.2mi, 5-6hrs)

This morning we travel by road for approximately one hour to Fengjie, before continuing by boat to Baiyanshan (White Salt Hill) for another hike above the Three Gorges. From the river, we make our way onto the mountain trails, climbing to elevated viewpoints with bird's-eye views towards White Emperor City and Fengjie. After the high trails around Wushan, today's walk provides another perspective on the Three Gorges landscape, combining travel on the water with exploration on foot above the Yangtze. Following the hike, we return to Fengjie by boat for lunch. In the afternoon, we visit the local museum to learn more about Kuimen and Fengjie in ancient times, adding historical context to the landscapes we have been exploring.

We then settle into our hotel in Fengjie and prepare for tomorrow's most challenging hike of the journey, the strenuous ascent of Three Gorges Summit.

Ascent: 647m / 2,123ft

Accommodation: Royal Hotel or similar

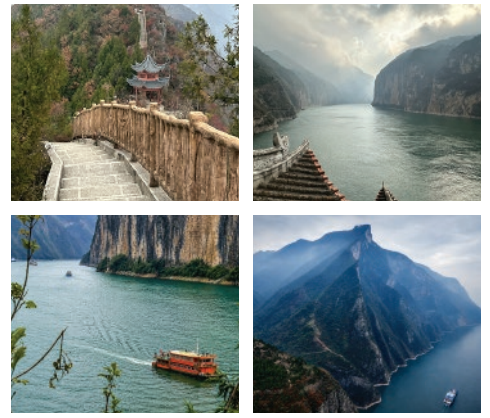
meals: B,L,D

DAY 7 Climb Three Gorges Summit & Descend by Gondola (11.9km / 7.4mi, 5-6hrs)

Today brings the most challenging hike of the journey as we set out from the ferry pier to climb Three Gorges Peak. After several days exploring the region from the Yangtze River and surrounding mountain trails, this strenuous ascent provides a fitting culmination to our time hiking in the Three Gorges. The trail climbs steeply

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adventure travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. In remote and developing countries do not expect standards you are used to at home. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable and itineraries may be altered. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. If you are uncertain about your suitability for this trip we recommend that you speak with your consultant or travel agent.

important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information on our website, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

from near river level, gaining approximately 1,290m / 4,232ft over a roughly 12km / 7.4mi point-to-point hike. This is a hard, sustained ascent, with thousands of steep stone steps and sections of narrow historic plank paths traversing the limestone mountainside. One of the defining sections is the "66 Switchbacks", where the trail leaves the shaded forest corridors and climbs through a relentless sequence of tight switchbacks and stone steps. Careful footing and a steady pace are essential as we continue upwards, with substantial elevation gain and exposed cliffside terrain making this the toughest walking day of the trip. After approximately 5-6 hours of strenuous hiking, we reach the upper section of Three Gorges Peak. Rather than retracing our long ascent, we descend by gondola before returning by road to Fengjie for our final night in the Three Gorges region.

Ascent: 1,290m / 4,232ft

Accommodation: Royal Hotel or similar

meals: B,L,D

DAY 8 Train to Chongqing

Bid farewell to the Three Gorges this morning and take the fast train from Fengjie to Chongqing, a journey of approximately two hours. In the afternoon, explore Ciqikou, also known as Chinaware Alleyway, before discovering more of this metropolis built among the mountains. It is a distinct change of pace after your days of hiking around Wushan and Fengjie and provides an urban finale to the journey. This evening, gather for a farewell dinner featuring Chongqing's famous hot pot.

Accommodation: SSAW Boutique Hotel or similar

meals: B,L,D

DAY 9 In Chongqing, trip concludes

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel this morning before the trip concludes in Chongqing. There are no organised activities included today, leaving you free to make your onward arrangements. You may choose to spend additional time in Chongqing or continue your travels elsewhere in China. Your arrangements are independent after breakfast.

meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

country information

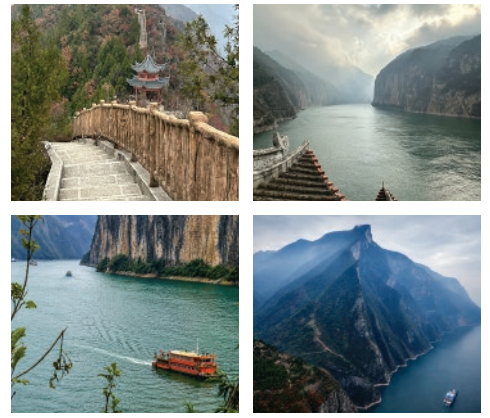
China is a destination that captures the imagination with its vast landscapes, enduring traditions and deep historical legacy. Stretching across nearly four million square miles (over 9.5 million square kilometres) and home to more than 1.3 billion people, it is a land of extraordinary contrasts – from alpine plateaus to subtropical forests, bustling megacities to quiet rural villages.

Long shrouded in mystery for Western travellers, China began opening its doors to tourism in the late 1970s. Since then, dozens of previously restricted regions have become accessible, and many ancient sites have been sensitively restored. Today, visitors can explore a remarkable breadth of cultural and natural wonders – including ancient temples, imperial palaces, sections of the Great Wall, and sacred mountains such as Huangshan and Emei.

China is home to 56 officially recognised ethnic groups, each with distinct customs, dress, languages and traditions. This cultural richness is visible in everything from local festivals and tea ceremonies to regional cuisines and architectural styles. While Mandarin is the national language, dialects and minority languages are widely spoken across different provinces.

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Modern infrastructure including high-speed rail, well-connected airports and an expanding domestic tourism network makes travelling within China increasingly smooth. Yet much of the country still retains its traditional rhythm, especially in smaller towns and remote landscapes where daily life continues as it has for generations.

This striking blend of old and new, along with the hospitality of its people, makes China a truly rewarding destination for those seeking insight, challenge and cultural depth.

climate

Spring and autumn are ideal seasons for hiking in China's Three Gorges, with generally milder temperatures than summer. From March to May, temperatures typically range from around 10–22°C / 50–72°F, bringing green mountain landscapes, spring flowers and comfortable daytime walking conditions, although showers can occur. From September to November, temperatures are generally around 15–25°C / 59–77°F, with cooler conditions, lower humidity and clearer days providing rewarding hiking conditions. Autumn can also bring striking red and golden foliage to parts of the region. Conditions can vary considerably between the Yangtze River valley and the higher ridges, where it may be cooler, windier and more exposed, so hikers should be prepared for changing mountain weather.

a typical day

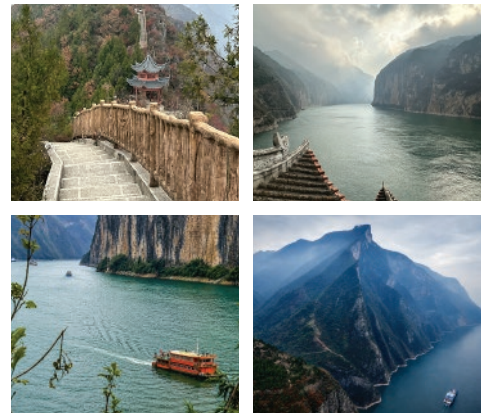
The average distance hiked each day is between 7–12km, with around 4–8 hours of walking on the main hiking days. The terrain is generally mountainous and undulating, with stone steps, forest trails, ridgelines and some steeper ascents and descents. The most demanding sections include the Dragon Back and Three Gorges Peak walks, where sustained climbing and uneven terrain require a good level of fitness. There are no concerns with altitude sickness on this trip. We recommend sturdy walking shoes or lightweight hiking boots with good grip. Most hiking takes place during the morning and afternoon, with regular stops to enjoy viewpoints, villages and the spectacular scenery of the Yangtze River and surrounding gorges. Boat journeys are incorporated into several days to access trailheads and provide a different perspective of the Three Gorges. The itinerary also includes cultural sightseeing in Chengdu, Wushan, Fengjie and Chongqing, with travel between regions by high-speed rail and private vehicle. As weather, river conditions and local arrangements can influence activities, the order and timing of walks may occasionally vary from those outlined in the itinerary.

dietary requirements

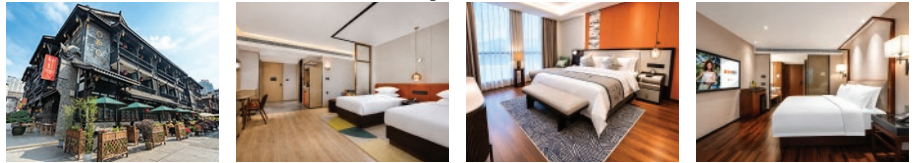
Provided we are advised in advance of your departure we are able to cater for vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (at least 1 month prior to your trip) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in very remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

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accommodation on the trip



Throughout your journey, stay in a carefully selected 4-5* hotels, chosen for their convenient locations, welcoming hospitality and all properties offer private ensuite facilities.

what you carry

In your daypack you will need to carry extra warm clothing (depending on the altitude, location and weather), a rainjacket, water bottle, valuables and personal items such as sunscreen, lip-eze etc.

equipment required

Specialist gear required include walking boots and day pack (a comprehensive gear list is provided in the pre-departure information provided on booking).

vehicles & safety

During the course of your trip, we will use a variety of vehicles, all of which are fit for purpose and the conditions encountered. It should be noted that laws governing transportation safety may differ from those in your home country and whilst wherever possible, vehicles with seatbelts are provided, on occasion some vehicles may not have seat belts fitted.

visas

Australian, New Zealand, Canada and the UK passport holders can travel to China for tourism without a visa if their stay is 30 days or less. This visa-free policy is effective to 31 December 2026. If you are staying over 30 days you will need to apply for a visa before your trip.

If you require a visa, it is advisable to apply for your visa approximately 6 weeks before your intended entry into China, but not earlier than three months prior. Applying too early may result in your visa expiring before your arrival. Passport holders from Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand and the United States, please visit: <https://consular.mfa.gov.cn/VISA/> to be directed to your dedicated city and countries website for instructions.

If you have any doubt about your eligibility, verify the conditions for visa free entry with your nearest Chinese Embassy.

Depending on your passport and location, different requirements apply and they change at short notice. Please refer to websites above for the latest information.

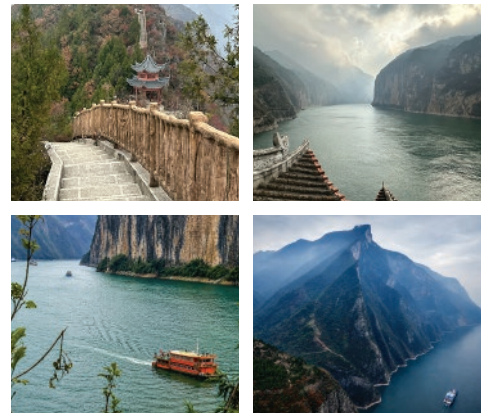
All other nationalities should check with your nearest embassy or consulate.

You must complete an electronic Digital Arrival Card (CDAC) prior to arrival to China. This free, mandatory, and 100% digital process is done via the National Immigration Administration (NIA) website, generating a QR code for immigration inspection. <https://s.nia.gov.cn/ArrivalCardFillingPC/entry-registration-home>

Please bear in mind that visas may be required for countries you are visiting en route or transiting through on the way to your destination. It is important that you check the requirements of all countries you will visit. Visa costs and requirements do change regularly so we suggest you check with your travel agent or World Expeditions reservations consultant. It is your responsibility to obtain all necessary visas.

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webinars & events

Catch a Webinar – Live or On Demand - to learn more about a particular trip. Make sure the trip you choose is right for you. Watch them live, so you can ask our presenters a question, or catch the recording later at your leisure and watch it On Demand. Visit our website or keep an eye on our newsletter for upcoming presentations.

private groups

The adventures that you see on our website are just a starting point. We operate many of our trips, which means we can be flexible and create an itinerary to suit your interests and dates. Talk to our team, you'll be surprised how much more affordable it can be when you get a group of friends, colleagues, a club – you name it, to travel with you!

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social networking

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YOUTUBE: World Expeditions

Subscribe to our channel at [youtube.com/worldexpeditions](https://www.youtube.com/worldexpeditions)

Share the love

Use the hashtag #WorldExpeditions on your best travel photos and videos to be featured.

trip availability

We operate small group adventures, which means availability is always worth checking early. Check trip availability online or call our team who might be able to dig a little deeper for you to find what you want, when you want.

Many adventures require services that, if not available at the time you book (like an internal flight or permit) could mean the trip is unavailable. So, book early to avoid missing out on your dream adventure.

how to book

Check trip availability and book your tour online, or call or visit one of our offices. To book a trip, you will need to complete a Booking Form (online or request a PDF) and pay a non-refundable deposit. Please note that when booking our tours to not confirm any additional arrangements until all services related to your tour are confirmed by your dedicated Reservations Consultant.