

## **China – Study Abroad – 2015**

### **Day 1: Board Your Overnight Flight to Beijing!**

#### **Day 2: Beijing**

Touch down in Beijing! Recall that it was in this city that Chairman Mao proclaimed the People's Republic of China in 1949. Meet your bilingual Tour Director who will remain with you throughout your stay. Overnight in Beijing

#### **Day 3: Beijing - Guided Sightseeing of Beijing**

An expert local guide introduces you to the Chinese capital, a treasure chest of imperial monuments. This ancient city first received its modern name when it became the capital for the second time in Chinese history in 1402 (“Beijing” means “Northern Capital”). See Tiananmen Square (the Gate of Heavenly Peace), the largest public square in the world. Visit the Forbidden City (Gugong), once accessible only to the Emperor. Get a close-up look at the golden-roofed Imperial Palace, one of the world's greatest architectural achievements. Hundreds of thousands of workers labored on the construction of this palatial complex during the Ming Dynasty. It was later removed during the 18th century (Qing Dynasty). Although situated in the very heart of Beijing, the Forbidden City is surrounded by both a moat and a protective wall. The emperors who once resided here often spent their entire lives within the complex – it was not until 1949 that a “commoner” set foot inside the area. Next, you will visit the Summer Palace. Formerly a palace for feudal Emperors, the Summer Palace is a magnificent example of China's classical garden architecture. The Palace grounds were originally divided into three sections, one for court activities, one for imperial residence and one for sight-seeing. The Long Corridor, the Paiyun (Cloud-Dispelling) Hall, the Temple of Buddhist Virtue, the Marble Boat, the Xiequ (Harmonious -Interest) Garden, the Zhichun (Spring-Heralding) Pavilion, and the Seventeen-Arch Bridge are the palace's main attractions. Tai-Chi Lesson Relax the way the locals do: with a gentle series of stretching exercises in a local park led by an experienced practitioner. Peking Duck Dinner Tonight you will be treated to the sumptuous dish that northern China is famous for: Peking duck! During this special feast, learn about the ritual preparation and savory side dishes that accompany this regional specialty. Overnight in Beijing

#### **Day 4: Beijing - Excursion to the Great Wall of China**

Travel north to Badaling to view one of the wonders of the world: the Great Wall of China. Its construction began in the 5th century B.C. as a defense against the Mongols: 300,000 people (many of whom are buried in the wall) labored on it over several centuries. Today the wall extends across mountains and valleys for more than 3,000 miles, but many argue that it is currently only one-tenth of its original length! In fact, if one were to take all of the stone used in the Great Wall's construction, one could build another wall - 8 feet high - around the entire globe. Visit a Tea House You'll better understand the importance of tea in Chinese culture when you visit a tea house. Not only for refreshment, Chinese tea holds a place in medicine, art and even literature. Inhale the earthy aromas and experience the culture and custom surrounding this ancient pastime as you are served a traditional tea. Rickshaw Tour of Hutongs A hutong is an ancient city alley or lane typical in Beijing. Today, although the city is becoming an international metropolis, its small lanes and alleyways still provide access to dwellings for half the total urban population. Dinner with a Local Family in Hutong Students will be split into small groups to join

local families in the Hutong area for dinner and get a glimpse into the daily life of these families. Overnight in Beijing

**Day 5: Beijing | Shanghai** - Visit the Temple of Heaven Built between 1406 and 1420, the complex of Taoist buildings that make up the Temple of Heaven cover 273 hectares and represent the pinnacle of Ming and Qing Dynasty architecture. In early morning when the air is filled with the fragrance of old cypresses, the temple grounds are full of people practicing a dozen or more forms of exercise, from qigong of martial arts, opera singing to disco. This is one of the best places in Beijing for people-watching. Board a High Speed Train to Shanghai Arrive in Shanghai, China's largest and most cosmopolitan city. Shanghai (meaning "up from the sea") has been an important port since the Opium War. Recall that it was in Shanghai that China's Communist Party - and later the Cultural Revolution - first originated. Overnight in Shanghai

**Day 6: Shanghai** - Guided Sightseeing of Shanghai

Your tour begins in the heart of the city with a visit to the Bund (once considered the "Wall Street of the East"), a beautifully landscaped promenade overlooking the waterfront. You will also view the Jade Buddha Temple; the extraordinary Buddhas you see here (each sculpted from a piece of white jade) were brought from Burma by a Chinese monk in the last century. Continue on to the glorious Yu Garden, a showplace of classical Chinese landscaping dating back to 1537. As you stroll along its winding paths, past goldfish ponds, shrubs and pavilions, note that the Chinese consider gardening a complex art form in which the challenge is to construct an entire world in miniature using minerals, plants, and animals in a limited space. Then spend time admiring the crafts and delicacies in the interesting shops that line colorful Nanjing Road. See an Acrobatic Show Witness a thrilling display by talented performers during today's show of traditional Chinese acrobatics. Overnight in Shanghai

**Day 7: Shanghai | Hangzhou** - Excursion to Hangzhou

Today, enjoy an excursion to Hangzhou, founded 2,200 years ago during the Oin Dynasty. Listed as one of the Seven Ancient Capitals of China, today Hangzhou is considered one of the most important tourism areas in the country. On your guided tour, you will visit West Lake, known for its beautiful scenery, and the Qinghefang Old Street. This vibrant street built in the Quing Dynasty style is known for its puppet theaters, traditional medicine shops and merchants selling unique wares, such as bronze and silk products. You'll also take a tour of the Silk Museum, the largest in the world, where you'll learn about China's five thousand year-old silk culture. Next, explore the history of tea at the National Tea Museum in nearby Longjing (Dragon Well) Village, which is a tea growing area south of the West Lake. The museum has no external walls but is enclosed by vegetation. Here, you'll learn about the history of tea, the best varieties and the etiquette of tea drinking in China. The tea plantations are very picturesque and there are opportunities to pick tea and taste a fresh brew. Overnight in Shanghai

**Day 8: Shanghai | Suzhou** - Guided Excursion to Suzhou

Journey to Suzhou, sometimes referred to as the Venice of the East. Here, you will enjoy a guided sightseeing of the city's famous gardens, including the Lingering Garden, the Humble Administrators' Garden and Tiger Hill. Tiger Hill is home to some local historic sights, chief among them the remarkable leaning Yunyan Ta (Cloud Rock Pagoda) at the top of the hill. Now safely shored up by modern engineering (although it still leans), this seven-story octagonal

pagoda dating from A.D. 961 is thought to be sitting on top of the legendary grave of He Lu, king of Wu during the Spring and Autumn period (770-464 B.C.), and also Suzhou's founder. He Lu was reportedly buried with his arsenal of 3,000 swords, his tomb guarded by a white tiger, which was said to have appeared 3 days after the king's death (hence the name of the hill). You will also visit the Humble Administrators' Garden, sometimes translated tongue-in-cheek as "Garden of the Stupid Officials." This is the largest of Suzhou's gardens, dating from 1513, and it makes complex use of the element of water. Linked by zigzag bridges, the maze of connected pools and islands seems endless. The creation of multiple vistas and the dividing of spaces into distinct segments are the garden artist's means of expanding the compressed spaces of the estate. Overnight in Shanghai

**Day 9: Board Return Flight Home** - Transfer to the Airport for Your Return Flight  
Your tour director assists with your transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home. Itinerary is subject to change