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10 days China Silk Road from Urumqi to Xining Qinghai Lake

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Urumqi
Turpan
Dunhuang
Jiayuguan
Xining

Engulf yourself in Rich Chinese culture on this 10 day Silk Road Tour! Explore Buddhism art treasure, stunning landscapes, the Great Wall and observe the unbelievable sight of sunset on the multi-colored rocks of the Zhangye Danxia Landform!

Type
Private
Duration
10 days
Theme
Culture and Heritage, Natural scenery
Trip code
SRA-05
Price
From £ 877 per person

Itinerary

From the massive Xinjiang Grand Bazaar, to the revered Kumbum monastery, this 10 day Silk Road Tour is one you won't soon forget! Visit the healing waters of Heavenly Lake and Oasis cities of Turpan and Dunhuang to the Tibetan city of Xining; where you'll visit the Mogao Grottoes, Echoing Sand Mountains, the west end of Great Wall of China and the largest salt highland lake Qinghai lake!

Day 01 :
Arrive in Urumqi



You'll Arrive at the city of Urumqi, which happens to be the world's most inland city. You'll be picked up at the airport and transferred to your hotel. From there you'll have the chance rest up and refresh in the comfort of your lodging accommodations.

Once settled, feel free to take a walk into the mind-boggling Xinjiang Grand Bazaar, where you'll find everything from entertainment to local fare and unique goods from different cultures in and around the region.

Day 02 :

Drive to Heavenly Lake - Drive to Turpan

You'll begin with a morning drive to visit the aptly named **Heavenly Lake**. This beautiful and serene body of crystal water has the ability to bring renewed energy to even the weariest of travelers. In the afternoon, you'll enjoy a drive to the oasis city of Turpan for the night. In this region of the China Silk Road, you will find a sparse population, fertile soil that boasts one of the countries greatest grape growing abilities and plenty of ancient ruins and relics to gaze upon.

Day 03 :

Turpan Day Tour

You'll receive a full day tour of Turpan. Morning drive to visit the **Gaochang Ruins**, was once an important stop along the ancient Silk Road. Because of the war and water shortage, it was finally abandoned, but the remaining city walls, temples, houses still indicates the past glory of this city and the culture of ancient Gaochang people. Then continue the visiting to **the Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves** situated on the west cliffs of the Wood Valley of the Flaming Mountains. Learn about the development and history of the Buddhism in this region from the colorful murals and other precious art works. Afterwards, **have a traditional Uyghur lunch in a local village of Tuyuk Valley**. On the way back to Turpan, stop to visit the **Flaming Mountain**, where the temperature on the surface reaches 47.8 C (118.04 F) in the hottest summer, hence the name. Follow the last visit today will be the **Jiaohe Ruins**, which is currently the largest and oldest earth city in the world. The remains you see today was descended from the Tang Dynasty. Most of them are well preserved due to the high location and dry climate. Overnight at Turpan.

Day 04 :

Another Morning in Turpan - Board the Train to Dunhuang

Your morning begins with visiting the intricate **Karez underground irrigation system**. An important source of life to all of Turpan, this system of caves, reservoirs, canals and wells is an impressive 5,000 km (3100 miles) in total length. From there, you'll head to Turpan train station and take the train to Liuyuan (D2706, 12:13-15:48, around 3.5 hours). Upon arrival at Liuyuan, you'll be greeted and taken to your hotel in Dunhuang (about 1.5-2 hours drive). Dunhuang is another beautiful oasis surrounded by soul soothing sand dunes, and one of the most important cities on the China Silk Road, you can rest up and enjoy the Shazhou Nightly Market or some traditional Chinese performance art at the Dunhuang Theater.

Day 05 :

Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes Day Tour

In the morning, you will visit the noted **Mogao Grottoes**. Regarded as one of the most precious treasures of Buddhist art, the Mogao Grottoes house numerous exquisite murals and Buddha statues, most of which date back more than 1,500 years. Afterwards, head out to **enjoy a camel ride to the Mingsha Mountains**. As its name indicates, the sand here echoes when the wind blows or when you slide down the mountain slopes. You can also choose from multiple desert activities, such as sand sliding (additional fee required, payable locally).

Later, head to **Crescent Spring** to see the lake located in the deserts of the Singing Sand Mountains. The lake got its name

because its shape naturally resembles a crescent. Enjoy a beautiful sunset. Overnight in Dunhuang.

Day 06 :

Drive to Jiayuguan with a Stop to Visit Yulin Grottoes



In the morning you'll drive to Jiayuguan, which takes about 5 hours. On the way you'll stop to visit network of caves called the **Yulin Grottoes**, this site is renowned for its mural paintings created during the Tang Dynasty, capturing scenes of daily life from that period. Be sure to visit caves 3, 25, and 29, as the paintings in these caves are the best-preserved and the largest in scale. Overnight at Jiayuguan.

Day 07 :

Jiayuguan Pass & Overhanging Great Wall - Drive to Visit Zhangye Danxia Landform

In the morning, visit the **Wei-Jin Art Gallery**, an expansive complex of more than 1,400 tombs built between the 3rd and 5th centuries during the Wei and Jin dynasties. Renowned as the largest underground art gallery in the world, this site houses a vast collection of precious brick murals that showcase the unique culture of the Wei and Jin eras.

Afterward, continue to **Jiayuguan Pass**, celebrated as the "Greatest Pass Under Heaven." Jiayuguan Pass is one of the most important and majestic military fortresses along the Great Wall of China. It has stood for centuries as the western starting point of the Ming Dynasty Great Wall. Walk westward to reach the **First Fire Tower**, which stands at 56 meters (184 feet) on a cliff in the Gobi Desert, overlooking the Talai River and the impressive Jiayuguan Pass in the distance.

In the afternoon you'll drive to visit the beautiful **Zhangye Danxia Landform for some hiking and a breathtaking sunset** over the multi-colored rocks. Overnight at Zhangye.

Day 08 :

Train from Zhangye to Xining - Xining Tour



In the morning you'll visit the **Giant Buddha Temple** in Zhangye, where you'll witness some of the most intriguing ancient artwork on the China Silk Road, including the Giant Buddha itself, lying inside the temple at 34.5 meters (about 113 feet) long and 7.5 meters (about 25 feet) wide. You'll then board the train to Xining (about 2 hours train ride). In the afternoon visit the **Tibetan Medicine Museum**, where you will learn about Tibetan culture and traditional medicine and marvel at the beautiful Tibetan Thangka arts. If time allows, explore the old part of Xining's Muslim area near Dongguan Mosque. Overnight at Xining.

Day 09 :
 Day Tour in Xining to visit Kumbum Monastery & Qinghai Lake
 Take a morning drive to visit **Kumbum monastery**, one of the six major monasteries of the Gelug Sect of Tibetan Buddhism in China, with a history of more than 400 years. The monastery is magnificent and rich in treasures, offering a strong religious atmosphere. Then continue to **Qinghai Lake**, the largest salt lake in China. The ellipse-shaped lake looks like a huge poplar leaf sitting on the alpine prairie. The scenery in Qinghai lake varies according to seasons. Summer and autumn are the most comfortable weather conditions and the lake's scenery is most beautiful during these seasons. You can choose to pay extra to cruise on the lake. Late afternoon return to Xining for overnight.

Day 10 :
 Departure From Xining



This is where we say goodbye. You'll be transported and on your way back home with memories to last a lifetime!

Inclusions

Tour notes:

Please note prices are based in CNY.

General inclusions:

2 bottles of mineral water provided daily.

All required government taxes and fees.

Domestic travel accident insurance.

Meals allowance for your guide and driver.

3 Stars hotel (shared twin room, private bathroom and daily breakfast)

Hotel accommodation is based on double occupancy (two persons sharing 1 standard twin room with private bathroom)

All entrance tickets as noted in the tour's itinerary.

Guide fluent in English, Chinese or Japanese that is certified by the state tourism build and from the local community. (If your native language is not listed please let us know, we are certain we can assist your needs.)

Airport and/or train station pick-up and drop-off.

All domestic flight and train tickets. Economy-class for flights and soft sleeper / seat for train tickets.

All vehicles are provided with air-conditioning (A/C).

Transportation will be provided via a comfortable and clean car, minivan or tourist bus depending upon the groups size.

General exclusions:

Personal expenses such as laundry, drinks, internet access, fax, telephone calls etc.

Tips for your guide and driver.

Optional Attractions that are not specified in the itinerary.

Flight and/or railway ticket(s) to the first city of the tour and departure from the last city of the tour.

Meals not specified in the itinerary.

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