



VIKING RIVER CRUISES

14 Day Imperial Jewels of China



Day 1 — Beijing, China

Fly to Beijing, China's imperial capital whose rich history dates back more than 3,000 years, then transfer to your hotel. Your Tour Director will help you check in and accompany you throughout your cruisetour. Enjoy free time to relax or explore. Throughout your journey, you will enjoy traditional Chinese meals at restaurants and Western-style meals at your hotels.

Day 2 — Beijing, China

Beijing embodies the beating heart of China, brimming with massive monuments to a storied past and robust economic centers. Witness two of its cultural treasures this morning. In the massive Tiananmen Square (meaning "Gate of Heavenly Peace"), the epicenter of ancient and modern Chinese history, view the exterior of Mao Zedong's mausoleum. You will also see the tower that marks the northern edge of the square; built in 1417, this was long the stage from which new emperors were declared. Then, tour the nearly 1,000 buildings of the Forbidden City, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and accessible only to emperors and their families and court for 500 years. Walk its grounds among the opulent palaces, pavilions, courtyards and imperial gardens within the 26-foot-high walls.

After lunch in a local restaurant today, explore Beijing independently. Enjoy dinner this evening, or attend *The Legend of Kung Fu* for a beautiful display of performance art with roots dating back 4,000 years. (B, L, D)

Day 3 — Beijing, China

Experience one of the world's most iconic sites today. Travel to the Badaling Hills to behold one of the most impressive and best preserved sections of the Great Wall of China. Built and maintained between the 5th century BC and the 16th century AD to keep barbarian nomads out of the empire, this UNESCO World Heritage Site of sandstone and earthwork stretches some 4,000 miles. Explore its winding pathways and marvel at the panoramic views from its ramparts.

After a lunch of local specialties, visit the Sacred Way, another UNESCO World Heritage Site. Walk the tree-lined avenue guarded by massive sculptures of elephants, lions and camels to the Ming Dynasty tombs. This evening, dine at a local restaurant and relax at your hotel, or enjoy an optional Peking duck dinner, a dish once reserved only for emperors. (B, L, D)

Day 4 — Xian, China

Before departing Beijing, tour the city's *hutongs* via rickshaw.† During this rare glimpse into the traditional ways of the culture of Old Peking, you will navigate narrow warrens and admire the well-kept courtyards of families who still live in this richly historic community. After lunch, fly to Xian, celebrated as the eastern terminus of Asia's Silk Road. More than 3,000 years of history have unfolded here, including 1,100 as the capital city of ancient dynasties. From 618 to 907 AD, this city presided over one of China's most glorious cultural periods, spreading its influence throughout Asia into Europe and Africa. This evening after dinner, relax at your hotel. (B, L, D)

†Rickshaw tour available only on Beijing to Shanghai itinerary direction.

Day 5 — Xian, China

View what many call the Eighth Wonder of the World today: the magnificent Terra Cotta Warriors. At the enormous mausoleum where Emperor Qin Shi Huang was laid to rest over 2,000 years ago, see the 8,000 life-sized sculpted warriors, archers and infantrymen that were buried with him. Remarkably, each man and horse was molded with its own distinctive features. The incredible archaeological site was discovered by local farmers in 1974. After lunch, use your free time to further explore Xian. During this evening's optional excursion, see the ancient history of China come to life during a colorful and exuberant Tang Dynasty Dinner Show. (B, L, D)

Day 6 — Chongqing, China

Today, fly to Chongqing, gateway to the Yangtze and China's most important inland city, to embark your ship and enjoy a Western dinner. For the next five days, you will sail into an astonishing world where fishermen scoop their catches with large handmade nets, families tend to water-laden rice fields and timeless monasteries perch on cliff walls. Throughout your cruise, you may choose between Chinese or Western meals, participate in tai chi on deck each morning, play mahjong, attend destination-relevant lectures and immerse yourself in traditional China during numerous tours and activities. (B, L, D)

Day 7 — Shibaozhai, China

This morning, visit Shibaozhai Temple, a 12-story pavilion built in 1650 along the Yangtze. The bright red pagoda, an impressive example of Qing Dynasty architecture, was erected upon a hill and became easier to access after the construction of the Three Gorges Dam. As you explore, you may see the Duck Well. Legend says that a duck dropped into this hole will reappear in the Yangtze. At the small Rice Flowing Well, from which rice once poured at a slow trickle, consider the fable of the greedy monk who chiseled a larger hole—only to stop the flow completely. Tour the pavilion and temple before returning on board for lunch. This afternoon, marvel at the spectacular Yangtze scenery as you cruise past mist-laden mountains and limestone cliffs cloaked in green. (B, L, D)

Day 8 — Three Gorges, China

For the next 150 miles, travel the most scenic stretch of the Yangtze as it forces its way through a spectacular series of limestone ridges known as the Three Gorges. During breakfast, cruise through Qutang Gorge, the shortest, narrowest and most spectacular of the three large gorges. Then, board a smaller boat for an excursion through the Goddess Stream. Sail through these remarkable canyons flanked by towering cliffs. Along the way, see fascinating sites including the hanging coffins of the Ba people and the ancient plank road carved into the cliffside. Return on board for lunch, and spend the afternoon sailing through Wu (“Witches”) Gorge, renowned for its magnificent scenery. Dinner is served on board. This evening, sail through the 5-stage locks of the Three Gorges Dam. (B, L, D)

Day 9 — Three Gorges Dam, China

This morning, disembark for a tour of the Three Gorges Dam. The world’s largest hydroelectric power project took almost 20 years to build. During your visit, you will see the inner workings of this massive structure up close. Learn how the dam controls flooding and how it led to the relocation of 1.25 million people. Lunch and dinner are served on board while you cruise through Xiling Gorge, the longest of the Three Gorges. (B, L, D)

Day 10 — Jingzhou, China

This morning, arrive in Jingzhou, the seat of 20 emperors during the Zhou Dynasty, from 1046 BC to 256 BC. As you approach, remarkably preserved city walls, gates and watchtowers emerge on the river’s banks, legacies of Jingzhou’s days as an important military outpost. During your visit, you will stop by an elementary school sponsored by Viking. The children will greet you with a charming song and dance. Then spend time amid their contagious enthusiasm, perhaps getting to know a little about them and their lesson plans. Return to your ship for scenic cruising. (B, L, D)

Day 11 — Wuhan, China

Ancient and modern intermingle in Wuhan, capital of Hubei province. Former cradle of the brilliant Chu Civilization, Wuhan was an important commercial hub, as its merchants set out on the Yangtze on trade missions. It remains a central economic presence today. Visit the Hubei Provincial Museum, where you can hear the music of ancient bronze bells and view relics from 400 BC. Return to your ship for dinner on your final night on board. (B, L, D)

Day 12 — Shanghai, China

After breakfast, disembark in Wuhan. Fly to Shanghai, the “Paris of the East,” China’s largest city and one of the world’s most important ports. An intoxicating city of paradoxes, Shanghai is celebrated for both its colonial-era architecture along the famous Bund promenade and the futuristic skyline of its glittering Pudong district. British, French and American traders were granted parcels of land here known as concessions in the 19th century; today, their influences blend with a distinct Chinese sensibility. Shanghai remains one of China’s most open and welcoming cities. Upon arrival, check in to your hotel. (B, L, D)

Day 13 — Shanghai, China

This morning, see Old Shanghai and travel along the elegant Bund, stopping to admire historic banks and customs houses and breathtaking city views. At the Shanghai Museum, one of China’s finest collections, admire decorative ceramics, bronzes, calligraphy and paintings from the region’s past. After lunch, stroll the pathways of the exquisite Yuyuan Garden. Dating to the Ming Dynasty, this oasis was specially built by Pan Yunduan, a 16th-century governor of Sichuan, for his aging father. Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant before seeing the world-famous Shanghai Acrobatic Troupe from the best seats in the house. (B, L, D)

Day 14 — Shanghai, China

After breakfast, check out of your hotel and proceed to the airport for your return flight. Consider extending your China journey with 2 extra nights in Shanghai to further explore this fascinating city. (B)

2020	DIRECTION	FARE PER PERSON
Mar 17	Beijing to Shanghai	SOLD OUT
Mar 26	Shanghai to Beijing	SOLD OUT
Mar 29	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$3,999
Apr 7	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$4,499
Apr 10	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$4,499
Apr 19	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$4,499
Apr 22	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$4,499
May 1	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$4,499
May 4	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$4,499
May 13	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$4,499
May 16	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$4,499
May 25	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$4,499
May 28	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$4,499

Jun 6	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$3,699
Jun 9	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$3,699
Jun 18	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$3,699
Aug 20	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$4,199
Aug 29	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$4,199
Sep 1	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$5,099
Sep 10	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$5,099
Sep 13	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$5,099
Sep 22	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$5,099
Sep 25	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$5,099
Oct 4	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$4,799
Oct 7	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$4,799
Oct 16	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$4,799

Oct 19	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$4,799
Oct 28	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$4,799
Oct 31	Beijing to Shanghai	FROM \$4,799
Nov 9	Shanghai to Beijing	FROM \$3,699
