



## A CHINA ROMANCE

DREAM IDYLL OF SOUTHERN WATERS  
AND MOUNTAINS



 **Commonwealth  
Club Travel**

October 19-30, 2014

BEIJING • GUILIN • LONGSHENG • YANGSHUO • HANGZHOU • SHANGHAI

# TOUR HIGHLIGHTS & SPECIAL FEATURES

*Experience the Delights of a Well-Crafted Itinerary*

## Dear Members and Friends of the Commonwealth Club:

Join us for a romantic exploration of China's natural beauty, October 19 - 30, 2014. Your journey focuses on the idyllic karst mountain regions of Guilin as well as the sublime West Lake in Hangzhou.

Southern China has been known over the millennia for its exquisite landscapes of mountains and waters. Guilin evokes this special beauty, and your cruise down the Li River provides hour after hour of visual delight. Yangshuo is the debarkation point for the cruise and offers its own loveliness, as karst shapes tower above the agricultural plain and form the backdrop of rustic villages. Wander through local villages and the picturesque landscape here to soak it all in.

A special treat is Longsheng, a hill region of rice-paddies under cultivation since the Yuan dynasty. This region epitomizes harmony with nature as life adapts along the steep hillside.

Experience Yao and Zhuang cultures and village life. We stay the night in Li An Lodge, a boutique hotel created by an American photographer, with accommodations as artistic and refined as the surrounding views.

The West Lake is said to be the most inspiring synthesis of modernity and nature in Asia. Ultra-chic Hangzhou sits on the lake's north side, while the other shores seem tied to the natural rhythms of old dynastic ways. Su and Bai Causeways frame views found in Chinese landscape paintings, and the Guo Zhuang Garden provides multiple perspectives of garden and lake refinement.

Your exploration of southern Chinese charm is bookended by the grand cities of Beijing and Shanghai. The imperial grandeur of the Chinese emperors is felt throughout Beijing, as high-tech cosmopolitanism is present everywhere in Shanghai. Two cities could not be more different and yet remain quintessentially Chinese.

While exploring China's fabled cultural heritage, you will also discover its culinary delights. China cannot be understood in its true dimensions without delving into its marvelous cuisine!

Also note that pre- and post-tour extensions are available to customize your experience and make your stay even more enjoyable.

Join us on this special exploration of Chinese beauty. These enchanting regions will make memories for a lifetime, you will not want to miss them!



Li River



Li An Lodge



Longsheng

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristina Nemeth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kristina Nemeth  
Director of Travel



## FABULOUS DINING

### *Savor China's Exquisite Regional Cuisines*



**China today arguably** produces some of the finest cuisine in the world. Given the country's stratospheric economic rise and the emergence of a fun-loving middle class, the special dining



experience is prized in Chinese society more than ever before. A good time in China means nothing if not "to eat well."

The enjoyment of good food will prove one of this tour's recurring themes. Fine dining certainly makes for a happy occasion, but in China, it means much more. Every Chinese region defines itself by its cuisine—this means the most direct way of experiencing a region is through tasting its food. In the Middle Kingdom, food unlocks the subtlety and richness of culture.

As your tour passes through much of the country you'll have ample opportunity to discover each region's culinary specialty. One after another, dishes brought to the table will surprise you by their presentation and uniqueness. It is this enjoyment of "food as culture" that will be part and parcel of your China



experience. Here are just some of the fine eating establishments you'll enjoy:

§ In BEIJING, dine at *China Lounge*, recognized as a premier location for the fabled Chinese delicacy, Peking duck. §



Your lunch with Beijing locals in their courtyard home in Houhai shows that all succulent foods need not be produced by five star kitchens. § And *Xiaolongpu* at the foot of the Great Wall showcases farmers' fresh produce and hearty foods—particularly braised meats—conducive to the northern climate and rugged terrain.

§ In GUILIN, *Zuoan Restaurant's* dishes seem inspired by the local love of bold colors and artistic contrast to create the "wow" effect.

§ In HANGZHOU, *Grandma's Kitchen* gathers the incredible array of Hangzhou specialties in one place and brings a delectable set to table. § Lunch at a *tea farmer's home* features the local approach to southern food with the unexpected and marvelous use of *longjing* tea.

§ In SHANGHAI, *Lu Bo Lang* is famous for its dim sum and masterful harmony of color, fragrance, and flavor. § *Xi Family Garden Restaurant* is often cited as one of the city's best choices for Shanghai cuisine and delicate sweet tastes.



## PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

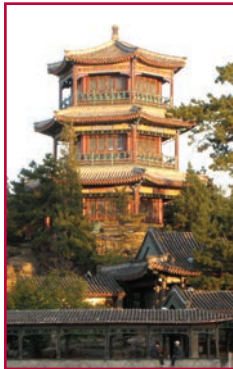
*Come to China Early*



Young Monk



Yanyu Pavilion



Jinshan Tower



Pule Temple

### CHENGDE IMPERIAL RESORT

*5 Days\**

October 16 - 20, 2014

Spend three days experiencing the grandeur of the Qing Imperial Resort at Chengde, a two hour drive north of Beijing. A UNESCO World Heritage Site with a history of more than 300 years, this is one of the great cultural landmarks of all China.

The garden complex includes imperial halls, southern-style lake gardens, Mongolian yurts, and a wooded hillside with numerous pavilions. Beyond the palace many Buddhist temples were built, each one architecturally unique, of which five remain.

\*dates include 2 days of international travel

An 8-page color brochure is available for this extension



Comorant Fisherman, Guilin

## A CHINA ROMANCE

### ITINERARY

October 19 - 20 • **U.S. - Beijing**

Depart the U.S. for Beijing. Arrive the next day and transfer to the hotel. (meals aloft)

- *Accommodations at Novotel Beijing Peace Hotel located in the heart of Beijing.*

October 21 • **Beijing**

After breakfast, visit the Forbidden City, the abiding symbol of imperial China. Truly one of the great achievements of civilization. Marvel at its expansive architecture, magnificent imperial gardens, and the many museums of Chinese antiquities and treasures within the complex.

Enjoy lunch at a local family's home in the historic Houhai District. Then explore the picturesque lake district where many old courtyard homes are preserved amid narrow hutong alleys bordering tree-lined lakes. Tour the district by "pedicab" for a more lively experience of traditional Chinese life.

Visit the astounding National Museum by Tiananmen Square. The newly-renovated museum has become an immense cathedral for Chinese art and antiquities. The

stone-clad atrium is a grand architectural space unmatched in the world.

In the evening, enjoy a welcome banquet at the luxurious China

Lounge Restaurant featuring fine cuisine and famous Peking duck. (b,l,d)

October 22 • **Beijing**

In the morning, drive to the Great Wall of China at Mutianyu, a rugged section of the Wall that offers less crowded access (with cable car availability) and a more striking perspective as the Wall climbs and winds over the surrounding hills. Here the Great Wall of China presents a visual experience that consistently exceeds visitors' expectations.

Lunch is at Xiaolongpu Restaurant near the foot of the Wall. The restaurant is famous for farmers' fresh produce and unique local cuisine.

On the way back, drive by the Olympic Village and see the Olympic stadiums with their innovative designs. Herzog & de Meuron designed the National Stadium, known as the "Bird's Nest," while the firm PTW designed the National Aquatics Center, the "Water Cube."

Later, tour the Temple of Heaven, one of the finest expressions of the Ming dynasty. Built in the 15th century, the stunning

architecture of the Temple of Heaven represents the most advanced principles of mechanics and geometry available at the time.

The evening attend a presentation on



Bird's Nest, Beijing

contemporary society in modern China. Dinner is on one's own. (b,l)

**October 23 • Beijing - Guilin- Longsheng**  
After breakfast fly to Guilin. Upon arrival, transfer by motorcoach to Longsheng.

Longsheng is famous for rice terraces cut into precipitous hills that farmers have cultivated since the Yuan dynasty. Skeins of luscious green rice plants create remarkable views throughout the valley. Longsheng is the home of Yao and Zhuang minorities who continue to don colorful dress and carry on their traditional life. Explore the village market and delightful craft shops.

Hike the rice terraces and visit the locals in their traditional dwellings. (b,l,d)

• Accommodations at *Li An Lodge*

Li An Lodge is a beautiful boutique hotel with 16 rooms created by an American-Chinese artist. The lodge is a work of art itself and displays the owner's art collection in every room.

**October 24 •**

**Longsheng - Guilin**

Continue to explore the paths and life of Longsheng until early afternoon.

Then, motorcoach to

Guilin, world famous

for its spectacular karst limestone formations, vertical mountains thrust up from the seabed some 300 million years ago. Eroded over the millennia by water and winds, these picturesque mountains, immediately recognizable to anyone familiar with Chinese painting, have provided inspiration for countless Chinese artists.

Enjoy dinner at Zuoan Restaurant. (b,l,d)

• Accommodations at the *Waterfall Hotel by the Li River*

**October 25 • Li River - Yangshuo**

This morning, cruise down the Li River, winding past Mural Hill, Folded Brocade Hill, Crescent Moon Hill, and many more. The four-hour cruise navigates some of the region's most stunning karst formations.

After disembarking, tour Liugong & Mushang villages, a gorgeous agricultural valley surrounded by distant karst scenery. Walk into the fields to enjoy another experience of rural China, this time in the middle of a visual paradise.

Return to Yangshuo and wander lively Xijie West Street, filled with restaurants, crafts shops, and local inns. Xijie is the home away from home for numerous Westerners and so exudes a cosmopolitan air as well as an invitation for a rollicking good time.

After dinner, attend Zhang Yimou's colorful water show, *Impressions of Sister Liu Sanjie*. Zhang made numerous Oscar nominated movies such as *Raise the Red Lantern* and *House of Hidden Daggers*. He also directed the Beijing Summer

Olympics opening in 2008. After the show, transfer back to your hotel in Guilin. (b,l)

**October 26 •**

**Guilin - Hangzhou**

In the morning fly to the ancient capital Hangzhou, the most elegant and beautiful city in China today. This is the place Marco Polo called "paradise on earth".

Tour the elegant Qing dynasty Guo Zhuang Garden and stop by charming Quyuanfenghe Park. Enjoy a gentle hike up Gushan Hill by

the West Lake. Traditional architecture, landscape gardens, pavilions and museums line up the hillside with a bird's-eye view of the West Lake and Hangzhou City.

Before dinner, tour the grand architectural compound of the Qing dynasty merchant, Hu Xueyan. Countless courtyards lead from one to another, culminating in a grand garden with monumental rockery and idyllic pavilions.

In the evening, tour Xihuxintiandi by the West Lake, a beautiful lakeside park developed recently with gardens, fine restaurants and boutique shops. (b,l)

• Accommodations at *Shnagri-La Hotel by the West Lake*

**October 27 • Hangzhou**

After breakfast, stroll through Huangang



Longsheng Rice Terraces



West Lake, Hangzhou

Park with its lovely flora and fauna, so representative of southern Chinese elegance.

Visit the National Silk Museum, where you will be amazed by the intricate production of silk.

At lunchtime, visit the Meijiawu Tea Plantation and meet tea farmers who continue the ancient art of *longjing* tea cultivation. Enjoy lunch at a tea farmer's home.

In the afternoon, tour Lingyin Temple, one of the earliest grand Chan Buddhist temples remaining in China today.

Take a sunset boat ride on West Lake and tour the charming gardens on the isles.

Dinner is at Grandma's Kitchen where you will enjoy authentic Hangzhou cuisine. (b,l,d)

#### October 28 • Hangzhou - Shanghai

In the morning, take the new high-speed train to Shanghai, a fun fifty-minute ride!

For lunch, enjoy delicious Shanghai dim sum at Lv Bo Lang Restaurant.

In the afternoon, tour Yuyuan Gardens, designed in six unique parts, making the garden seem much larger



than it really is. You will find one of the best Ming rockeries here, and wending the zigzag bridge to Huxingting Teahouse is a delight.

Dinner is on one's own.

In the evening, explore Xintiandi in downtown Shanghai. Designed by MIT architect Ben Wood, Xintiandi is a \$200 million "entertainment environment" with modern restaurants, clubs, cafes, and boutiques. Xintiandi proved so successful a model for urban redevelopment that it spawned dozens of imitators across the country. (b,l)

• Accommodations at the Jinjiang Tower in the historic district by the French Concession

#### October 29 • Shanghai

In the morning, tour the Shanghai Museum and view its wonderful collection of Chinese ceramics, paintings and furniture.

Lunch is on one's own.

In the afternoon, meet with the youngsters at a local primary school. Tour the Pudong economic district and ride the elevator to the top of the highest building in Asia, the World Financial Tower, for a bird's-eye view of the old and new Shanghai by the Huangpu River.

Learn about how Shanghai is Leading China's economic boom.

The rest of the day is free for personal exploration and last minute shopping.

In the evening, enjoy a farewell banquet at Xi Family Garden Restaurant, serving impeccable Shanghai food. (b,d)

#### October 30 • Shanghai - U.S.

After breakfast, depart for the airport and your return flight. Arrive in the U.S. the same day. (b, meals aloft)

## POST-TOUR EXTENSIONS

*Stay in China A While Longer*

### HUANG MOUNTAINS & HUIZHOU VILLAGES

*5 Days*

October 30 - November 3, 2014

Take a one-hour flight from Shanghai and explore Anhui province and its idyllic landscape of rice paddies, Ming and Qing dynasty villages, and dynastic market center. Discover traditional Anhui life in Hong and Guanlu villages.

Then, visit the crown jewels of the region, the Huang Mountains. The beauty of the granite precipices towering above the morning valley fog has provided inspiration to Chinese artists for centuries. On foot and by cable car, explore the Yellow Mountains' fabled views.

An 8-page color brochure is available for this extension



Huang Mountains



Terracotta Warriors

### XIAN & YANGZI RIVER CRUISE

*6 Days*

October 30 - November 4, 2014

Fly to the ancient Tang dynasty capital of Xian. Explore the Shaanxi History Museum and its artifacts spanning many dynasties. View the extraordinary 2,300-year-old terracotta warriors in the tomb of China's first emperor, Qinshihuang.

Later, see another imperial wish for immortality at the Han Emperor's Tomb.

Then, fly to Chongqing and visit General Stilwell's Museum. Enjoy the lively art scene at the Chongqing Art Galleries.

Board the Victoria cruise ship and travel downstream through the spectacular Three Gorges. Along the way, disembark to enjoy activities onshore.

Visit a relocated village and see the breathtaking Lesser Gorge, Danninghe. Experience the spectacular Three Gorges Dam at Sandouping, the largest in the world. Disembark at Yichang and fly to Shanghai.

A 1-page color brochure is available for this extension



## TOUR COST

• Rates are per person and are based on a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 28 participants, and do not include international air:

<b>Main Tour, Double Occupancy</b>			<b>\$4,295</b>
<b>Single Supplement</b>			<b>\$1,390</b>
Chengde Pre-Extension	\$1,350	Single Supplement	\$ 590
Huang Mountains Post-Extension	\$2,050	Single Supplement	\$ 750
Xian & Yangzi Post-Extension	\$2,390	Single Supplement	\$ 850

**Roundtrip International Air** available through Airtreks. For pricing, please contact Airtreks directly at 415.977.7136 or at china-advocates@airtreks.com.

**Private Airport Transfers** upon arrival in Beijing and departure in Shanghai are recommended for those not on the recommended group flights and available through China Advocates.

**Main Tour Includes:** • Double occupancy accommodations • All group meals listed in itinerary • All sightseeing, entertainment, and cultural activities listed in itinerary • Airport transfers and portorage (for those purchasing the recommended group flights) • Chinese airport taxes • All group air and ground transportation within China • English-speaking Chinese local tour guides • China Advocates' national tour director (with a minimum of 10 participants) • Gratuities to local guides and drivers on main tour • Preparatory materials

**Not Included:** • Domestic U.S. and international airfare • Gratuities to national tour director • Gratuities on extensions • Airport transfers and portorage (if not on group flight) • Visa processing • Meals not included in the tour • Excess baggage charges • Travel insurance • Items of a personal nature

For more information, please call 415.597.6720 or email [travel@commonwealthclub.org](mailto:travel@commonwealthclub.org)

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### Tour Reservation Form

Commonwealth Club Travel: *A China Romance* October 19-30, 2014

Enclosed is a deposit for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$700 per person) to hold \_\_\_\_\_ place(s). Please make checks payable to **China Advocates**. Final payment is due July 21, 2014.

Name (1) \_\_\_\_\_  
please print your name as it appears on your passport

Name (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
please print your name as it appears on your passport

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Alt. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Optional Extensions:**  Chengde Pre-Tour  Huang Post-Tour  Xian/Yangzi Post-Tour

**Accommodations:**  Double  Single  I need assistance in securing a roommate.  
(I understand that if a roommate cannot be secured for me, I agree to pay the single supplement fee(s).)

**Bed Request:**  One Bed  Two Beds  Non-Smoker  Smoker (based on availability)

I/We understand that, by signing below, I/we acknowledge that the Responsibilities and Conditions section of this brochure has been read and accepted.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Credit Card Payment :**  Visa  MasterCard  American Express  
(Deposit and/or Membership fee only)

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV Code \_\_\_\_\_  
(Final Balance must be paid by check, payable to China Advocates) (Visa/MC 3 digits on back, Amex 4 digits on front)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mail or fax reservation form with deposit to:

**Commonwealth Club Travel**  
595 Market Street, 2nd Floor • San Francisco, CA • 94105  
fax: 415.597.6729

## TRAVEL IN CHINA

The schedule will be demanding with moderate physical activity. Travel in China requires good physical condition and health (special needs must be arranged for in advance and may result in additional costs), a spirit of adventure, a flexible attitude, and a sense of humor. The itinerary is subject to change and modification. Every effort will be made to carry out the program as planned, but alterations may still occur. Participants should be aware that no refunds will be made as a result of unforeseen changes, modifications, or delays.

### CONDITIONS

**RESERVATIONS:** Bookings are subject to the terms and conditions mentioned in these sections. By placing a deposit you agree to the terms and conditions listed herein. To confirm your reservation, a deposit of \$700 per person is required. Credit card payment is accepted for the deposit only; **final balance must be paid by check.**

**AIR:** Air cancellations and penalties are based on each carrier and ticket. Be sure to review these policies before purchasing air via Airtreks. China Advocates, Inc. and The Commonwealth Club of California are not responsible for any penalties incurred due to air changes or cancellations.

**CANCELLATIONS:** *No cancellation is valid until it is received in writing by the office of Commonwealth Club Travel.* Cancellation penalties are based on the date of receipt of written notice and are as follows: **91 or more days prior to departure, a cancellation fee of \$500 per person is retained; 90-46 days prior to departure, \$1,500 per person; 45-31 days prior to departure, \$2,500 per person; 30-0 days prior to departure, no refund is made.**

Cancellation penalties for additional hotel nights, hotel and cruise ship room upgrades, tour extensions, and any special arrangements, are as follows: **50-31 days prior to departure, 25% of cost is retained; 30-0 days prior to departure, no refund is made.**

**RESPONSIBILITIES:** China Advocates, Inc. and The Commonwealth Club of California act only as agents for the various carriers for which tickets are provided and assumes no responsibility or liability in connection with the service of any train, vessel, carriage, aircraft, motor vehicle or other conveyance which may be used either wholly or in part, in the performance of their duty to the passenger. Neither will they be responsible for any act, error, or omission or for any injury, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned by a reason of any defect in any vehicles, or through neglect or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger, or for any hotel proprietor, hotel service or restaurant, or for any other person engaged in carrying out the purpose for which tickets or coupons are issued. Nor will China Advocates, Inc. and The Commonwealth Club of California and/or their agents be responsible for loss, injury, damages or expenses to persons or property, due to illness, weather, strikes, local laws, hostilities, wars, terrorist acts, acts of nature or other such causes in connection with this tour or anything beyond their reasonable control. In the event it becomes necessary or advisable for the comfort or well being of the passengers, or for any reason whatsoever, to alter itinerary or arrangements, such

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alterations may be made without penalty to the operators. The right is reserved to withdraw any or all tours should conditions warrant, also to decline to accept or retain any passengers as members for the tours. In such instances, there will be no refund for unused portions of the tour. Refunds for unused carrier tickets may be only in accordance with the regulations of the carrier. China Advocates CST 2064278-40. The Commonwealth Club of California CST #2096889-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California. All legal questions will be settled within the jurisdiction of the County of San Francisco, California.

**VISA:** To obtain a Chinese visa, a passport is required that is valid for at least six months beyond the duration of the tour. Travelers are responsible for their own visas.

**Trip cancellation insurance is highly recommended and available. You will receive travel insurance information once you are confirmed on the program.**

*Itinerary is subject to modification.*

*Prices are subject to change without notice.*



Tea Cultivation, Hangzhou