

A Spiritual Journey to Holy Mt. Amnye Machen | 18 Days



Amnye Machen is one of the four main holy mountains of Tibet along with Kailash, Gongga and Meili Xue. Located in Golog Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (མགོ་ལོག་བོད་རིགས་རང་སྐྱོང་ཁུལ་) in Amdo (ཨ་མདོ་), it rises to 6282 m / 20,605 feet. In 1929, adventure traveler/botanist Joseph Rock incorrectly measured the mountain at over 9000 m / 29,520 feet, making it the world's highest mountain for a short time. Later, the mountain was re-measured at its current height. Amnye Machen has long been considered a sacred mountain and a place of pilgrimage. This lesser known holy mountain is equally as important to the Tibetan people as the more well known Mt. Kailash (Gang Rinpoche). Mt. Amnye Machen attracts Tibetan pilgrims from all across eastern and northern Tibet during the summer months. In the past, up to 10,000 Tibetans would make the 120-mile circumambulation of the mountain each year.

The journey from Beijing is marked by stunning, if desolate, scenery and Mt. Amnye Machen and Qinghai Lake; or Lake Kokonor (3600 m) are two of the most remote travel destinations in the world. At end of the day, the main attractions of what is likely to be a three week trip are a mountain and lake, but what a mountain, what a lake!

Our once-in-a-lifetime journey to Holy Mt. Amnye Machen begins in fabled city Beijing, the far east of China. This wild, remote trekking journey starting from the north eastern border of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, Qinghai takes us deep into far eastern regions of Tibet where the diverse journey reflects the Silk Route trade of olden times; old men and women with weathered, turning the wheel of Dharma chanting

prayers. The nomads, in their turquoise, coral and amber necklaces and Tibetan 'chubas' worship in their Tibetan Buddhist Gompas and animism still is visible in many forms. Qinghai has long been connected to the greater Tibetan world and forms the launching pad for some of China's wildest journeys.

Trip Highlights

- Beijing City tour
- The Great Wall of China
- Train Journey from Beijing to Xining on a World's highest railway, across some of the most fascinating terrain on earth
- Step inside and experience life as the "mountain people" live, in the roof of the world
- Holy Mt Amnye Machen

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Beijing

Welcome to China! Upon arrival in Beijing a *travel-to-nature Asia* guide/representative will be at the airport to greet and take us to our hotel. Please look out for your name-card once you exit out of arrival area.

Lunch in a local restaurant followed by the guided tour to the Forbidden City - the world largest imperial palace housing 9999.5 rooms, then proceed to Tian'anmen Square – also it is the largest city square in the world covering a total space of 44 hectares. We will go out for dinner in a nice local restaurant to enjoy the Chinese delicacies.

Accommodation: Royal Phoenix

Meal: Dinner

Day 2: Beijing – The Great Wall

After Breakfast in the hotel, we will head for a day excursion to the Great Wall of China, which extends over 8,000 kilometers from the Pacific to the Gobi Desert. Great Wall, the image of China throughout the

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world, lives up to its reputation, as one of the Eight Wonders of the World. It was built in 221 BC by the first emperor of China.

Here, we will take the opportunity to go for a short trek starting from Jingshanling and ending at Gubeikou. This short trek from the Jinshanling Great Wall to the Gubeikou Great Wall takes about 3 hours allowing us to see & enjoy the authentic Great Wall and avoid crowds, giving us the chance to admire and enjoy the environment and details of the Wall. We will meet our transportation at the foot of the Gubeikou Great Wall to transfer us back to our hotel. We will go out for a nice dinner (Peking Duck recommended) in a local restaurant followed with the fabulous Kungfu Ballet in the Red Theatre (optional).

Accommodation: Royal Phoenix

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 3: In Beijing - Summer Palace, Lama Temple & Hu Tong Tour

We have the whole day to explore most important historical sites of Beijing. To start with, we will visit the Summer Palace – the greatest imperial garden in China followed with the Lama Temple (Yonghe Temple; Yonghe Lamasery). Lama Temple is the largest and best-preserved lamasery in Beijing. It was built in 1694 during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) as the residence of the Emperor Yongzheng (the third emperor of the Qing Dynasty) before he ascended the throne. In the year 1744, the residence was completely converted into a lamasery. So this resplendent architectural complex is endowed with the style of an imperial palace, making it distinctive from others.

Late in the afternoon, we will then undertake the “Hu Tong Tour” by Rickshaw to experience the real life of the Beijing local people followed with a nice local dinner.

Accommodation: Royal Phoenix

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 4: Beijing to Xining by Train

Today afternoon, we will take an overnight train from Beijing to Xining. But before our departure, we have some free time. Therefore, a short visit to the Temple of Heaven in the morning is a worthwhile place in Beijing. It is much bigger than the Forbidden City and smaller than the Summer Palace with an area of about 2,700,000 square meters. The Temple was built in 1420 A.D. during the Ming Dynasty to offer sacrifice to Heaven. As Chinese emperors called themselves 'The Son of Heaven', they dared not to build their own dwelling, 'Forbidden City' bigger than a dwelling for Heaven.

After lunch, we will drive to Beijing Railway Station to take afternoon train to Xining, which arrives in Xining the following day. Overnight on board.

Accommodation: Onboard a train

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5: In Xining (2,300 m)

We arrive Xining Railway Station in the afternoon at around 2 pm. Upon arrival, we will be met by a guide and transferred to our hotel Jin Jiang Inn.

(Xining - Since July 1st, 2006, Qinghai-Tibet Railway has been opened to public and amazed thousands upon thousands of people around the world. World's highest railway, across some of the most murderous terrain on earth, miles upon miles of remote Tibetan plateau blanketed in permafrost, or even peak at altitude of 17,000ft., come on, let us just take the train travel to experience the unique scenery and landscapes...!)

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Xining is the capital and largest city in Qinghai province and once a major hub along the northern Silk Road. Xining, like Lanzhou, Changsha and the other provincial capitals, is a pretty generic Chinese city. But like the province it represents, Xining definitely reflects the greater ethnic diversity of western China. The monstrously huge mosque is surrounded by a lively Muslim quarter. The city's largest market sells a vast array of local snacks, some quite different from anything elsewhere in China. Xining Provincial Museum and Tibetan Traditional Medicine and Art Museum have decent exhibits of Tibetan art and cultural heritage values. Many tourists will end up in Xining only in transit to another destination.

To make ourselves familiar with Tibetan culture & traditions, we visit Tibetan Traditional Medicine and Art Museum in the afternoon. Established on Sept.9th, 2006, the Chinese Tibetan Medicine Cultural Museum is currently the only Tibetan medicine museum in the world. It exhibits and protects the relics of Tibetan cultural heritage. Its collection holds over 2,000 varieties of plant, animal and mineral specimens in addition to 180 Tibetan surgical instruments some of which date back almost 1,300 years. The collection also holds 1,000 volumes of ancient literature and a display of Tibetan cultural art created by 300 artists over 4 years. Exhibition rooms include the Mantang Instrument Hall, Ancient Literature Hall, Specimen Hall and Tibetan Cultural and Art Colored Painting Hall.

Accommodation: Jin Jiang Inn

Meal: Breakfast



Day 6: Xining – Erthi (2,900 m)

Before we commence our adventure trek around Amnye Machen we explore the Tibetan exotic nomadic culture, allowing us to get acclimatised. To begin with we drive to Tibetan Village called Erthi via Qinghai Lake, formerly known as Koko Nur or Kukurunor, is a saline and alkaline lake situated on the Tibetan Plateau in the province of Qinghai, and is the largest lake in China. The names Qinghai and Koko Nur both mean "Blue/Teal Sea/Lake" in Chinese and Mongolian. It is located about 100 kilometres (62 mi) west of Xining at 3,205 m (10,515 feet) above sea level in a depression of the Tibetan Plateau in the cultural area known to ethnic Tibetans as Amdo. The lake is located at the crossroads of several bird migration routes across Asia. Many species use Qinghai as an intermediate stop during migration.

We will drive up to Shala Pass where we can get a great panoramic view of the entire lake. We will go out for a short trek on Shala Pass summit to feel the thin air and then continue driving for another an hour to Gonpa Sopa Monastery. We will visit this small monastery and have a cup of butter tea with the monks. Optionally, we can also set up our camp here for overnight stay. Or it might be possibly that we try to find local families for home stay in Tibetan Village called Erthi.

Accommodation: Camping Tent

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 7: Erthi - Tawu Zhulma (3,900 m)

After our leisurely breakfast, we drive about 3 hours from Erthi village to Trazong monastery, one of the most isolated monasteries in the region. To all intents and purposes we are entering Tibet and the further we travel Tibetan nomad and their culture start taking over.

En-route a picnic lunch will be served for us. Today's drive is enriched with some of the most interesting and rich nomad inhabitant area of the regions in north eastern part of Tibet. Nevertheless, we will have opportunity to sight some of the exotic and rare wildlife along the way, such as wild Tibetan Ass, Tibetan Wolf, Tibetan Antelope, little Pica etc. We will have plenty of time to experience the wilderness,

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meet nomads and get to know their culture and life style and enjoy the upland Panorama. We will arrive in Tawu Zhulma in the early evening for overnight Camp.

Accommodation: Camping Tent

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8: Trek Tawu Zhulma to Jiashinongke (4,200 m)

Today, we commence our spiritual trekking Journey around Holy Mt. Amnye Machen. We will cover a total distance of about 15 km (6-7 hours) to Jiashinongke. We will pass Tibetan Mani Walls with sutras (Mani Stones) carved on them and Guri Gonpa, a branch of Dzongchen and Dodrub Chode of the Nyingma School, can be seen on the northwest side of the confluence of the 2 rivers Nyiwaga and Chushan. We will leave the trail to go and visit very important Monasteries, Guri Gompa and Derges Dzongchen Gompa. An incarnate Lama came to Amnye Machen at the beginning of the 20th century and spread Dzongchen teachings with his residence in tent monastery. The present Monastery which was destroyed was rebuilt at the present site in 1981 and now there are around 50 monks living here. Overnight Camp.

Accommodation: Camping Tent

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9: Trek Jiashinongke to Chablong (4,300 m)

Today, we will trek about 18 km (6-7 hours) to Chablong. Walking through a wild valley where we will start to see the first view of the snow capped mountains of Machen Kangri range.

After whole day of walking, we will reach Drakdi Lhatse Chogon at 4328 m. Another Mane Stupa can be seen here facing Mt. Dradi Lungsho Peak, the northern most and highest peak of Machen Kangri 's central set of peaks. On the way, we will enjoy the view of the grasslands and primitive high altitude bushes. Overnight Camp.

Accommodation: Camping Tent

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10: Trek Chablong to Halong-Chu Valley (4,450 m)

Trekking for about 22 km (7-8 hours) to Halong-Chu Valley can be challenging but fabulous landscape to compromise our today's hardwork. We will pass Drakdi pass (4700 m), where we will stop for view of distance Rikhar Tongshang Glacier, and the three ice covered peaks of the Holy Mt. Amnye Machen. Then we will descend into Yongri Valley where we will trek along this valley for next couple days.

For those interested on plants, the next several days one can start exploring the alpine meadows full of spectacular plants. There are Primula, Cypripedium, Pedicularis the list goes on. If the weather is fine we will be rewarded with gorgeous views of the valleys and mountains. Overnight Camp.

Accommodation: Camping Tent

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 11: Trek Halong-Chu Valley to Kisar Sangkhang (3,600 m)

Today, we descend through the Halong-Chu Valley along the Halong Chu to the second Tibetan town to Chorten Karpo (White Pogoda) at Chuwarna. The rest of the trail passes through a deep and narrow gorge to Kisar Sangkhang where we camp for overnight.

Accommodation: Camping Tent

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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Day 12: Trek Kisar Sangkhang to Kumo (4,100 m)

Today, we ascend very slowly and in about 7-8 hours we shall reach our camp site at Kumo. As we enter Halong Yungri-chu valley, the trail takes us along the Yungchu river. We will see some nomads' camps along the way and we have lots of opportunities to explore the grassland flora with *Incarvillea*, *Lilum* and *Primula* sps. and look for high altitude birdlife. Overnight Camp at Kumo.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 13: Trek Kumo to Nganggi Shogdeb (4,400 m)

While having breakfast, we will see how our crew packing our gears and getting ready to set off for the day. Our local Tibetan Guide will be delighted to lead us all the way up to cross Tamchok Gongkha La Pass (4,800 m). This is the highest pass on this trek. At this summit the tremendous view of the mountain range including the Holy Mt. Amnye Machen is breathtaking.

Our trail from the summit descend gently over the meadows along the river side with frequent views of the sacred mountains. As soon as we leave the meadows, we start to descend further on the western side to a valley of interesting rock formations to the valley of Mowatowa. Here we come across several meditation caves including the Retreat of the Great Nyingmapa master Zhabkar Tsokdruk Ringdrol. Finally, we arrive the plains of Nganggi Shogdeb for overnight camping.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14: Trek Nganggi Shogdeb to Machen Pomra (4,300 m)

Throughout the day we will pass through the amazing rocky mountain and cliff formation, exploring meditation caves in Deleni, and the cliffs Goku Chenmo. Near the cliffs there are 2 rocks, towers Mopa and Towa offering 'torma' to the God. This marks the entrance to the "Heavenly Palace" of the protector Machen Pomra. Overnight Camp.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 15: Trek Machen Pomra (4,300 m) to Tawu Zhulma

We will trek along Qushian River through the beautiful gorge about 6 hours, covering approximately 14 km to Jomolangra where we end our trekking today. In course of our trail, we will visit Dolma Gur-Chu Spring considered to be auspicious. The path leads us further to a spur where king of Ling Gesar was said to tie his horse when resting at the pass. The view at the back offers an impressive panorama of the main peaks of the sacred mountain Amnye Machen and other side the trail leading us to a wide valley where there are gentle slopes and the meadows are green with full of wild flowers.

In the late afternoon, we will arrive at Tawu Zhulma, completing our pilgrimage to Holy Mt. Amnye Machen. Here we meet our driver waiting to pick us up, and sadly we say good bye to our nomad crew. In the evening we'll celebrate our trek with a few cold beers at the camp. Overnight Camp

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 16: Drive Tawu Zhulma to Xining

Today we leave the magical place and head back to Xining. After breakfast, we drive for our return

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journey to Xining. Upon arrival, we will check in to Hotel Jin Jiang Inn.

In the evening will head for dinner in one of local excellent restaurants and farewell. Over dinner we will reflect our journey and personal insights. Certainly this trip to the mountains helped us braking old paradigms and giving fresh perspectives. Images of mountains and the experience in the remote mountain has resonated deeply in our hearts giving symbols of patience, strength, effort, and inspiration necessary for envisioning a more fulfilling future for one self.

Accommodation: Jin Jiang Inn

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 17: Fly Xining to Shanghai

We take direct flight from Xining to Shanghai in the morning. Afternoon, we will explore Jingmiao-Tower, Nanjing-Road and Bund.

The Jingmiao Tower - 88 floors house not just offices but also what is for now the highest hotel in the world. On its 53rd floor, the building opens up into an atrium that rises up to dizzying heights. The building, 420-plus meters tall and currently the fourth tallest in the world, came from an American design team at Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill.

It is known as a successful synthesis of Western and Eastern architecture. As one of the most famous shopping centers of the world, Nanjing Street not only has numerous famous shops, but also a long history. Time permits, taking a Chinese massage is optimal after our two and half weeks long journey.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 18: Depart Shanghai

Transfer to airport for your homeward-bound flight.

Meal: Breakfast

Includes

- Airport (pick up/drop off) transfers by private A/C vehicle
- Twin-Sharing accommodation in all Hotel/Resort as mentioned with daily breakfast
- Domestic flights Xining/Shanghai, train fare Beijing/Xining,
- Day 7 to 16 all inclusive - expedition style trekking with all meals (breakfast, lunch & dinner - delicious, gourmet meals); coffee & teas, horse, yak for portering, local Tibetan guides, highly experienced team leader, medical kit, roomy 4-season big tents, no sharing of tents (except for couples) & our famous 'Tibetan Festival Dining Tent' with all the amenities (camp table and chairs, mattress, extras)
- Group transportation by private vehicle,
- Service of English speaking local guides both in Beijing & Shanghai for city tours
- Entrance fees & permits as needed for monuments & monasteries,
- Special Travel Permit for Mt. Amnye Machen trekking Region

Excludes

- International flight tickets
- Visa fee
- Travel insurance
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Personal clothing and equipment
- Tips for trip leader/guide, driver, hotel staff and porters
- Items of personal nature such as alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, laundry, and other unforeseen expenses
- Items/services not listed in "included"
- Extra expenses/payment for 'Optional' activities/programs if participated

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Accommodation

Royal Phoenix Beijing

For travelers who want to take in the sights and sounds of Beijing, Royal Phoenix Hotel Beijing is the perfect choice. Its convenient location right in the city center allows you more time to see all that Beijing has to offer. Experiencing the best of the city's culture is easy since we are located merely 2.1 km from Forbidden City-The Palace Museum.

Jinjiang Inn, Xining

Jinjiang Inn is located in Chengdong Qu, a neighborhood in Xining. Tibetan Plateau Wildlife Zoo is a local attraction and the area's natural beauty can be seen at Xining Nanshan Mountain and Xining Nanshan Park.



Camping Tent

Our classic A-frame or ridge tents are sturdy and have plenty of room for two people. We use water and windproof flysheet which help make the tent nice and cozy inside. To complete the setup we provide a high-quality foam mattress together with an insulation pad so that you get a good sleep after a long tiring day.

Group/Individual

On this trip you will be traveling privately with your family & friends. Our representative/tour partner will look after your transfers to and from the airport and will be around to answer other questions you may have about your trip.

Accommodation - Hotel, Resort

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a fine heritage hotel in another or a family-run guesthouse or lodges in a smaller town. Accommodation in remote areas tend to be basic and may not have western amenities.

Single Accommodation

Single (room) supplement is provided on request (single supplement charge applies) and are subject to availability.

Food & Transport

All breakfasts, 11 lunches and 16 dinners are included.

Generally, food is cheap in China and you can avoid the spicier regional food if you wish.

Gastronomically the trip can be divided into two parts: 'tourist hotels' and 'local hotels'. In tourist hotels the breakfast is normally a buffet, with a huge spread of Chinese and western food, including coffee, juice, breads, cakes, fruit, eggs, bacon and a wide variety of noodle and stir-fried dishes. Dinners are normally taken in the hotel or local restaurants, serving rice with assorted vegetables, pork, fish, chicken and duck dishes. In the local hotels, breakfast includes rice porridge, dumplings, eggs, noodles, etc., however, we tend to augment this with fruit and cakes where available. Lunches and dinners are taken in local restaurants where the food is heavily flavoured with ginger, garlic bamboo shoots and chilli.

Vegetarians are well catered for but please inform us before departure of any special dietary requests. Please note that in China the availability of certain specialized products for restricted diets, e.g. gluten-free or dairy-free, is minimal or non-existent and we strongly recommend you bring these specialized dietary items from home. Strict vegetarians may find the diet rather limited to stir fried vegetables and eggs as all the soups are made with meat stock.

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Whilst camping, our camping crew/staff will bring a hot drink (usually tea) to your tent each morning. When you reach camp in the afternoon tea and biscuits will be served. At breakfast, dinner and in the afternoons, there is a choice of hot drinks. Breakfasts typically include cereal and/or porridge plus toast and eggs. Lunch on trek is usually served as a picnic en route. Lunch and dinner typically include soup to start, followed by a variety of hot dishes (both local and western) such as potatoes/chips, vegetables, curry, pasta, rice, dhal and vegetables. At dinner time a dessert such as fresh or tinned fruit, fritters or cake is also served. Please note that although some meals will include meat, it is not as readily available whilst camping.

For airport, sightseeing transfers, and for long drives we use a private air-con car, jeep, van depending upon group size. Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

Weather

The north and northwest of China has warm (25 deg C), quite humid summers, and cold dry winters. If you travel between June and August, it will be hot more or less everywhere, except in the mountains. Some rain must be expected, possibly heavy. If you travel in September/October, you will probably get less rain and the temperatures will be fairly warm (around 20 deg C) everywhere. The winter months in China are cold, so if travelling in March/April be prepared for temperatures to drop, below (10 deg C), at night, but with almost guaranteed dry sightseeing.

Generally, Tibet has a cold and dry climate with low humidity and strong sunshine due to the high altitude and clear skies. The weather in Tibet varies greatly between regions and seasons. In general, the summer months of June to August are the warmest and most humid, with temperatures ranging from 15°C (59°F) to 25°C (77°F). The winter months from December to February are the coldest, with temperatures ranging from -10°C (14°F) to 10°C (50°F). Tibet also experiences a rainy season from June to September, with the heaviest rainfall in July and August. However, due to Tibet's high altitude, the amount of rainfall is relatively low, and the region is generally considered to be quite dry.

Baggage Allowance

At time of writing the standard weight limit is one checked baggage is 25kg (55lb) and hand baggage 7kg (15lbs). We recommend packing only one piece of checked baggage. Luggage allowances for both hand and checked luggage are subject to change, we suggest you check the airline's website for the latest information prior to your departure.

ESSENTIAL/PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Passport & Visas

All nationalities require a passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit.

The information below is primarily for EU passport holders, but nearly all nationalities require a visa to enter China, which must be obtained prior to departure. For Tibet a Tibet Travel Permit (TTP) is required, which is a separate document issued by the Tibet Tourism Bureau. In order to obtain a TTP, you must first obtain a Chinese visa and then apply for the TTP through a registered travel agency in China. It's important to note that the visa application process can take several weeks, so it's recommended to apply well in advance of your planned travel dates.

We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Please note: Visa regulations can change without notice, therefore please check the current regulations or contact us.

Vaccination & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and

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knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements for China/Tibet. However, recommended vaccinations are: hepatitis A, hepatitis B, typhoid, Japanese encephalitis, rabies, meningitis, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis), chickenpox, shingles, pneumonia, and influenza. The risk of malaria is slight, but you may wish to consult your GP or travel health clinic for further advice. You will also need a yellow fever vaccination certificate if you're arriving from a country with risk of yellow fever transmission or transiting for more than 12 hours through a country with risk of yellow fever transmission. Please confirm your vaccine recommendations and requirements with your doctor or travel clinic.

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Dengue (a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes) risk is present throughout the country at elevations below 2300 m. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available, so take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Local Time

UTC/GMT + 6 hours.

Electricity

China operates on 220V and 50 Hz. There are three plug types in China – A, C, & I. Plug type A has two flat parallel pins whereas C has two round pins. And plug I has three flat pins in triangular pattern.

Money

The official currency in China mainland and Tibet is Renminbi (RMB) or Chinese Yuan (CNY). Yuan is the

basic unit and is divided into 10 jiao/mao or 100 fen. There are banknotes in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 yuan and coins in denominations of 1 yuan, 1 and 5 jiao, 2 and 5 fen. At the time of this publication (May 2023) the approximate exchange rates are 8 Yuan for one Euro and 7 Yuan for 1 US\$.

ATM | Credit Cards

Throughout the major cities/towns of China/Tibet you will find ATMs. Many (but not all) ATMs accept Visa/MasterCard that will allow you to withdraw money from your account at home.

Please do not rely wholly on ATM machines while in abroad sometimes they are broken or run out of cash.

Credit cards are still not widely accepted/used in China except in larger shops, handicraft stores and hotels in major cities.

You may want to notify your bank before leaving home and tell them where you plan to travel. They should put a note/remark on your account so that any withdrawal transactions would not be flagged as fraudulent.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

You will need to bring some extra money to cover drinks, laundry, souvenirs and any other personal expense, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Though it totally depends on individual but generally an approximate amount of US\$200 per person, per week should be sufficient (more if you enjoy a few beers); however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount. Or if you are the one frugal with money probably allocating less would also be suffice.

Optional Tours may be offered in some city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may

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wish to participate in any extra activities. Each optional tour/activity will be arranged locally by our local partner/guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

Tipping

Tipping in China is not a traditional practice, and it is not expected in most situations. It's generally uncommon and can even be considered rude or embarrassing in some circumstances so when taking a taxi, enjoying a refreshing drink or tucking into a delicious meal there's no requirement to leave any gratuities.

However, tipping has become more common in recent years, especially in areas frequented by tourists or in upscale establishments or your guide, driver. So if you do want to leave a tip, a small amount of cash is sufficient, and it should be given discreetly and graciously.

Itinerary Change

In case of some unusual events/incidents the order of programs (sightseeing, excursions etc.) might have to change in order to accommodate the local situations. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements while maintaining the overall integrity of your trip.

The domestic airlines may change their schedule frequently and, in such cases, our local partner/guide will inform you about the changes.

Travel Insurance

We highly recommend to choose/get an insurance plan/policy that covers your needs. And please make sure to keep/carry a hard-copy of your travel insurance documents on your person while on tour. It's prudent to check thoroughly the inclusions and procedure to file claims prior to purchasing insurance coverage. *travel-to-nature Asia* will not be responsible for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to purchase appropriate travel insurance from the date of booking.

Important Information

On all guided trips although our leaders/guides are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorize them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.
