Han - Golden Land

Experience China's historic traditions and modern development in Beijing, Xi'an, Chengdu, Kunming, Guilin, and Shanghai

Han was the second imperial dynasty of China, preceded by the Qin and succeeded by the Three Kingdoms. It was founded by the peasant rebel leader Liu Bang. Spanning over four centuries (206BC-220AD) and stretching as far as Central Asia, Korean Peninsula and IndoChina, the period of the Han Dynasty is considered a Golden Age in Chinese history. To this day, China's majority ethnic group refers to itself as the "Han people".

The Han Dynasty was an era of cultural development and economic prosperity, seeing significant growth of the monetary economy and trade within the huge empire. Science and technology during Han flourished. Significant inventions of the era included papermaking, the nautical steering rudder, the use of negative numbers in mathematics, the raised-relief map, astronomical and earthquake detection instruments.

16 Days (Tour Code-HGL)

This tour departs on Saturdays and returns on Sundays. There are seven tour departures during the year in March, April, May, June, August, September, and October. Please refer to the Dates & Prices or Access China Tours website for 2010 and 2011 "Tour Dates", the current "Tour Land Price", "Single Supplement Cost", and "International Air Cost". Or call 1-800-788-1399.

Day 1 Depart North America

Fly to China from your nearest airport via the best routing. We can book your international air travel for your convenience.

Day 2 Arrive Beijing

Arrive in Beijing today and you are met by Access China Tours staff at the airport and transferred by vehicle to your hotel in downtown. Meet your fellow travelers and tour manager at the Evening Reception and learn more about the tour activities of the coming days.

<Evening Reception> **The Peninsula Beijing**

Day 3 Beijing

After breakfast, our exploration of Beijing starts from **Tiananmen Square** – the world's largest. Visit the futuristic **'Egg' - National Performing Arts Center**. Next, tour the **Forbidden City**, the magnificent imperial palaces of Ming and Qing dynasties for half a millennia.

After lunch, explore by a pedicab ride some of Beijing's old **Hutongs** (alleyways) and traditional **courtyards**. Climb up the nearby **Drum Tower**

and **Bell Tower** for an aerial view of the traditional neighborhood, and visit the private home of a local resident to hear their life stories.

Return to hotel for relaxation. Enjoy a welcome banquet featuring Peking Duck this evening.

<B-L-D> **The Peninsula Beijing**

Day 4 Beijing

Visit the **Temple of Heaven** early this morning. Observe Beijing residents doing traditional Taichi and other exercises in the exquisite parklands. Behold the beautiful Hall of Prayers and echo wall.

Stop by the lively **Silk Market**, a bustling place where buyers and vendors bargain hard over clothes, accessories, handbags, traditional arts and crafts.

After lunch, visit the enchanting **Summer Palace**, the renown retreat of Qing dynasty royals. The Long Corridor, Marble Boat and Longevity Hill are all structures of grace and beauty. Enjoy a boat ride on tranquil Kunming Lake.

Conclude the day in a courtyard restaurant with the famous Imperial Cuisine Dinner.

<B-L-D> **The Peninsula Beijing**

Day 5 Beijing

Put on your hiking shoes for an excursion to the extraordinary **Great Wall** of China. The remote and scenic Mutianyu section is a fine example of the Ming era construction. Stop by a small **mountain village** for lunch and meet with local rural residents.

Return to the hotel. Rest of the day is free for you to discover more of Beijing's treasures or just relax.

<B-L> **The Peninsula Beijing**

Day 6 Beijing → Xi'an

Visit the trendy **798 Art Complex** on the way to the airport to view some Chinese modern art created by Beijing's newest artisans. Fly to Xi'an, the ancient capital of eleven Chinese dynasties. Met and transfer to your luxury hotel upon arrival.

After refreshing in hotel, start your exploration by visiting the massive ancient **City Walls** and the nearby **Shuyuanmen Market**.

Tonight, enjoy a special Xi'an Cuisine Dinner in an elite local restaurant.

<B-L-D> **Sofitel on Renmin Square**

Day 7 Xi'an

Take a morning excursion to the UNESCO World Heritage Site, 2,200-year-old **Terracotta Warriors** of China's first Emperor - Qin Shihuang. This archaeological excavation site is a stunning exhibit of more than 7,000 ancient life-size terracotta statues of Qin soldiers, officers, horses, chariots and other artifacts.

Upon returning to the city, visit the elegant **Big Goose Pagoda** which has survived over a millennia of war and earthquakes. Tour **Xi'an History Museum** for its wonderful collection of ancient relics.

In the evening, enjoy a Special Dumpling Dinner followed by a **Tang Dynasty Stage Show** recalling the days when Xian was the largest city in the world.

<B-L-D> **Sofitel on Renmin Square**

Day 8 Xi'an → Chengdu

Transfer to airport for a noon flight to Chengdu. On the way, visit the **Yangling Archaeological Site & Museum** that exhibits remarkable figurines found in this imperial tomb of the Han Dynasty.

Chengdu is the capital of Sichuan Province, China's second most populous. After checking in at hotel and refreshing, your sightseeing in Chengdu begins at **Qingyanggong**, a charming Daoist monastery. Then stop by a local **tea house** to mingle with the friendly Sichuan residents for a cup of tea and live shows.

Tonight you will enjoy a walking tour in **Kuanzhai Alley** at the city center followed by a genuine and tasty Sichuan Cuisine Dinner.

<B-L-D> **Sheraton Chengdu Lido Hotel**

Day 9 Chengdu

Start out early today for a special visit to the **Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding & Research Center** outside the city. Here you can observe the current scientific work underway to preserve the dwindling population of iconic Giant Pandas indigenous to the western Sichuan mountains.

Next, travel to Guanghan to visit the magnificent **Sanxingdui Archaeological Museum,** which holds astonishing artifacts including bronze and gold works of the mysterious 3000-year-old Shu Culture.

In the afternoon, stop by **a village market** to behold the bustling rural local life. Back in Chengdu, pay a visit to the **Wenshu Buddhist Temple**.

<B-L> **Sheraton Chengdu Lido Hotel**

Day 10 Chengdu → Kunming

After breakfast, transfer to Chengdu Airport and fly to Kunming, capital of Yunnan Province.

Yunnan is home to more than half of China's 55 ethnic minority groups. Kunming is referred to as the 'City of Eternal Spring' because it enjoys mild and comfortable climate year round.

After check-in at the hotel and a short rest, enjoy a pleasant walk around placid **Green Lake**. Next, explore downtown Kunming, starting with a stroll in the **market area** followed by a tour of **Provincial Museum**. Later, enjoy a delicious Yunnan Cuisine Dinner, and conclude the day with the remarkable stage performance – **Dynamic Yunnan**.

<B-L-D> **Green Lake Hotel Kunming**

Day 11 Kunming → Guilin

This morning's excursion takes you east of Kunming City to the incomparable **Stone Forest**, an impressive rock formation landscape located in the ethnic Sani area. Also tour the **local market** full of colorful weavings and tapestries sewn by the Sani.

In the afternoon, visit **West Hill** to see elaborate Buddhist carvings along the winding paths. Admire a bird's eye view of the massive **Dianchi Lake** and cityscape below.

Transfer to the airport for a flight to Guilin, one of China's most beautiful cities. Upon arrival, you are met and transfer to hotel for check-in and rest. The evening is free and dinner is on your own.

<B-L> **Sheraton Guilin Hotel**

Day 12 Guilin ↔ Longsheng

Guilin has one of China's most scenic landscapes, its jagged and lush limestone peaks and meandering rivers create endless panoramas.

After breakfast, travel to the mountainous Longsheng region by vehicle for a full-day excursion to see beautiful **Rice Terraces** and to visit **villages of ethnic Dong and Yao peoples**, two of China's fifty five ethnic minorities. Some moderate climbing is involved and you will need comfortable walking shoes. Those who cannot hike can still enjoy all the scenery as sedan-chair service is available.

Return to Guilin by late afternoon. Enjoy a Sichuan Cuisine Dinner in a local restaurant.

<B-L-D> **Sheraton Guilin Hotel**

Day 13 Guilin → Yangshuo → Shanghai

Today, you will board a cruise boat for a relaxing four-hour **Li River Cruise**. The cruise will give you a chance to savor the unique and charming views of the area's sheer limestone peaks and tranquil waters that have inspired innumerable Chinese artists.

Disembark in **Yangshuo**, a lovely and tourist-friendly small town with streets lined with small hotels, countless souvenir shops selling traditional ornaments, jewelry and paintings, and restaurants serving international foods. Explore the lively street market and also visit **a farmer's village home** nestled in the panoramic landscape.

Bid farewell to Guilin and take a late afternoon flight to Shanghai. Transfer to hotel upon arrival.

<B-L> **Four Seasons Shanghai**

Day 14 Shanghai

After breakfast in your hotel, visit the exquisite **Yuyuan Garden** and the European **Bund** with Art-Deco architecture. Gaze across river at the towering structures of ultra-modern Pudong district.

In the afternoon, visit the marvelous **Shanghai Museum**, whose galleries contain precious collections of ancient art and artifacts dating back millennia. The Bronze Gallery is probably the world's finest, a must-see section.

Wander around in the former **French Concession**, represented by the leafy **Fuxing Park** and colonial era architecture. Stop at **Xintiandi**, a redeveloped neighborhood with trendy pubs, coffee shops, chic restaurants, and stores.

After dinner, go to a Shanghai theater to enjoy a stunning **Acrobatic Show**.

<B-L-D> **Four Seasons Shanghai**

Day 15 Shanghai

The morning of your last full day in China, visit the **Jinmao Building,** the world's 7th tallest in Pudong District. Stop by **Ohel Moshe Synagogue** to learn the scarcely reported history of Jews living in China. Finally, visit the awesome **Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center** for a perspective on the city's future development.

Afternoon is free for you to explore wonderful Shanghai on your own. The World Expo 2010 runs from May through October.

Join fellow travelers tonight for a special Shanghai Cuisine Dinner in a high-end local restaurant.

<B-D> **Four Seasons Shanghai**

Day 16 Return Home

Enjoy a last breakfast in your hotel. Transfer to the airport and board your homebound flight. Arrive in North America on the same day. **<B>**