



GUEST ITINERARY

CURATED CHINA JOURNEY
Dragon Discover


Zhangjiajie


3 Days 2 Nights


Avatar Mountains & Tujia Heritage


BEFORE YOU GO

Key Travel Prep


 Please book your own international flights and any flights / trains to Zhangjiajie before Day 1. Zhangjiajie Hehua International Airport (DYG) and Zhangjiajie West HSR Station are both served by the included airport / station transfer.


 Travel accident insurance is included for the tour itself. We recommend supplemental medical and evacuation coverage for international travel.

 Please arrange your own mobile data plan before departure.

 Check China visa requirements for your nationality before booking.

See the full "Prepare for Travel" section later in Before Booking.

 Bring any personal prescriptions. Tianmen Mountain reaches 1,519 metres and the Forest Park plateau sits around 1,000 metres — well below altitude-sickness territory, but bring layers for cool mountain air.

 Please inform us of any dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions when booking. The Tujia heritage banquet on Day 3 is a regional Wulingyuan menu and includes Tujia salamander as a house specialty (farmed, per national conservation regulations); a non-salamander menu can be arranged on request.

Overview

Three days inside Zhangjiajie's UNESCO sandstone country and the living Tujia culture that shares its mountains.

The route opens at the foot of Tianmen Mountain — the world's longest passenger cableway up the cliff face, the Glass Skywalk along the rim, the Ghost Valley plank walk, and the 999-step climb through Tianmen Cave — then closes the day after dark with a laser-and-mist light show projected across the natural arch itself. Day three crosses the city to Zhangjiajie National Forest Park, the visual model for Pandora in *Avatar*, where the Bailong Elevator lifts you 326 metres up the cliff to Yuanjiajie's pillar plateau and the original Hallelujah Mountain. After a Tujia heritage banquet with the Gaoshan Liushui welcome toast, the afternoon walks the Yuntiandu glass bridge across Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon and ends with a hands-on session at a Tujia brocade workshop before transfer to the airport or rail station.

Trip Snapshot

Accommodation

2 nights at boutique-style hotels in the Zhangjiajie / Wulingyuan area. 4-star equivalent throughout.

Airport Transfers

Private airport or station transfers in Zhangjiajie on arrival and departure.

Guide & Transport

Bilingual guide and private vehicle for all 3 days. Includes the Wulingyuan run and the Grand Canyon Glass Bridge transfer on Day 3.

Meals

2 breakfasts, a Tujia heritage banquet lunch on Day 3, and a dinner before the Tianmen night show. Other meals are on your own arrangement.

Signature Experiences

Tianmen night light show, *Avatar* Hallelujah Mountain, Yuntiandu glass bridge, Gaoshan Liushui toast, and a Tujia brocade workshop.

Trip Style

Pillar-mountain scenery and living Tujia culture in three days — fast-paced sightseeing on Days 2 and 3 with quieter arrival rest on Day 1.

Where You'll Stay

4-Star Equivalent

Zhangjiajie Boutique Hotels

2 Nights

Two nights at boutique-style hotels in the Zhangjiajie / Wulingyuan area, picked for proximity to the next morning's start point — Tianmen Mountain on Night 1, the Forest Park on Night 2.

Itinerary

Day 1 — Arrival in Zhangjiajie · Settle into the Mountain City

Your guide meets you at **Zhangjiajie Hehua International Airport** (or Zhangjiajie West HSR Station, depending on your inbound route) and transfers you to the hotel through the city — the limestone ridges of Tianmen Mountain rise in the distance as you drive in, the silhouette that gives Zhangjiajie its mountain-city character.

After check-in, the rest of the day is yours to recover from the journey and settle into the rhythm of the trip. Your guide walks through the Day 2 plan over a short orientation, answers questions about the cableway, the night show, and the glass walks, and points out a few simple local restaurants near the hotel for dinner.

Overnight in **Zhangjiajie**.

Day 2 — Tianmen Mountain · Glass Skywalk · Night Light Show

 Tianmen Mountain  Tianmen Cave  Tianmen Night Light Show  +6 more

The day belongs to **Tianmen Mountain** — the 1,519-metre limestone peak that rises straight out of Zhangjiajie city, named for the natural arch of **Tianmen Cave** that pierces its cliff face like a stone gate to the sky. After breakfast, your guide walks you to the lower cable-car terminal at the south side of the city.

The ascent itself is the first headline: the **Tianmen Mountain Cableway** climbs 7.5 kilometres along a single span — the world's longest passenger cableway up a mountain — and lifts you 1,300 vertical metres in twenty-eight minutes, with the 99 hairpin bends of **Tongtian Avenue** (*Tongtian Dadao*) unfolding directly below.

At the rim of Tianmen, the morning is built around the cliff-edge walks. The **Glass Skywalk** (*Bolizhandao*) runs a glass-bottom plank along a vertical drop with the city spread out on the horizon; the **Ghost Valley Plank Walk** (*Guigu Zhando*) traces the cliff face on a regular wooden boardwalk for travelers who prefer their feet on solid colour. Your guide routes you through both, or around either, at your own comfort.

The upper plateau is gentler — pine forest, a few quiet courtyards, and the small **Tianmen Mountain Temple** that gives the peak its religious history. Lunch is on your own arrangement; your guide can recommend a snack point on the mountain or a quick stop after descent. Late morning, you cross the plateau to the **Lingxiao Terrace** (*Lingxiao Tai*) viewpoint and the **Gongtong Garden** (*Gongtong Yuan*) of dove trees that bloom white in May.

The descent is the second headline. The mountainside elevator drops you to the head of the **999-Step Stairway** that climbs through Tianmen Cave itself — a 131-metre arch through solid rock, the tallest naturally-formed mountain-piercing cave in the world. The climb takes about thirty minutes at a steady pace; a parallel escalator system covers most of the elevation for travelers who'd rather skip the stairs. Both surface at the foot of the cave looking up through the arch at the sky.

In the late afternoon you return to the city for a Hunan-style dinner at the foot of Tianmen Mountain, then go back up by cableway in the dark for the **Tianmen Night Light Show** — a thirty-minute laser-and-mist projection painted across Tianmen Cave with surround sound and a sound-and-light score. The cave glows blue, red, and gold as the show works through Tujia legends and the mythology that gave the mountain its name. Return to the hotel.

Overnight in **Zhangjiajie**.

Day 3 — Avatar Mountains · Glass Bridge · Tujia Heritage · Departure

📍 Avatar Hallelujah Mountain

🌉 Yuntiandu Glass Bridge

🧵 Tujia Brocade Workshop

+12 more

An early breakfast and the drive out to **Zhangjiajie National Forest Park** — China's first national forest park, the heart of the Wulingyuan UNESCO World Heritage site, and the visual model the Avatar production team used for the floating mountains of Pandora.

The ascent is its own attraction: the **Bailong Elevator** (*Bailong Tianti*) — the Hundred Dragons Sky Lift — runs three glass cabins straight up the cliff face for 326 metres, the world's tallest outdoor lift. Two minutes later you step out onto **Yuanjiajie**, the pillar plateau at the heart of the park.

The morning route walks you through the headliners of Yuanjiajie: **Avatar Hallelujah Mountain** (*Qiankun Zhu*) — the 1,080-metre sandstone pillar formerly known as Southern Sky Column, renamed in 2010 after James Cameron's design team confirmed it as the visual model for the Hallelujah Mountains; **First Bridge under Heaven** (*Tianxia Diyi Qiao*), a natural arch suspended 357 metres above the valley floor; and the row of slender pillars at **Imperial Brush Peaks** (*Yubi Feng*) on **Tianzi Mountain**, named for their resemblance to upright calligraphy brushes. From there the route descends to the forest floor along **Jinbian Stream** (*Jinbian Xi*), the seven-kilometre Golden Whip Stream where the pillars frame the canopy from below.

Lunch is the cultural anchor of the day — a **Tujia heritage banquet** at a Wulingyuan-area Tujia restaurant, opened with the **Gaoshan Liushui** welcome toast (*Gaoshan Liushui Jingjiu*). Tujia hosts pour rice wine in a cascading line so each cup spills into the next, sung over by the table — a 'high-mountain-flowing-water' ritual that means the welcome flows like the river off the mountain. The menu features regional dishes from western Hunan, including Tujia salamander as a Wulingyuan house specialty (farmed, per national conservation regulations); a non-salamander menu is available on request.

In the afternoon, the route crosses to **Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon** for the **Yuntiandu Glass Bridge** — a 536-metre glass-bottom suspension bridge hanging 300 metres above the canyon floor, the longest glass bridge in the world. The walk takes about fifteen minutes at the bridge's daily-capped pace; a regular footbridge crosses the canyon for travelers who would rather skip the glass.

The last stop is the **Tujia Brocade Workshop** — a hands-on session with a Xilankapu master at a Wulingyuan workshop. Tujia brocade is a 2,000-year-old weaving tradition listed on China's first national intangible cultural heritage roster in 2006. You see the wooden waist loom in operation, learn how the cotton warp and the bright silk weft build the geometric patterns that have stayed unchanged for centuries, and try a few rows yourself before taking home a small woven piece.

Depending on your departure timing, your guide and driver transfer you to **Zhangjiajie Hehua Airport** or **Zhangjiajie West HSR Station** for the onward journey. Day 3 dinner is on your own — most travelers eat at the airport or onboard the next leg.

Before Booking

✓ What's Included

Transport — Private airport or station transfers and a dedicated vehicle with driver for all ground transport across the 3-day route, including the Wulingyuan and Grand Canyon legs.

Guide — Professional bilingual guide for the full 3-day journey, with cultural knowledge of Zhangjiajie's pillar landscape and Tujia heritage.

Accommodation — 2 nights at boutique-style hotels in the Zhangjiajie / Wulingyuan area, 4-star equivalent throughout.

Meals — 2 breakfasts, 1 Tujia heritage banquet lunch with the Gaoshan Liushui welcome toast, and 1 dinner at the foot of Tianmen Mountain on the night-show evening.

Entrance Fees — All scheduled sites including Tianmen Mountain (cableway, Glass Skywalk, Ghost Valley plank walk, Tianmen Cave stairway), the Tianmen Mountain night light show, Zhangjiajie National Forest Park (Bailong Elevator, Yuanjiajie, Tianzi Mountain, Jinbian Stream), and Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon with the Yuntiandu Glass Bridge.

Experiences — Tianmen Mountain night light show, Tujia heritage banquet with the Gaoshan Liushui toast ritual, and a hands-on Tujia brocade workshop with a Xilankapu master.


Insurance — Travel accident insurance included for the full journey.


Pricing Promise — Everything in the itinerary is included in the tour price. Optional packages and room choices, if any, are shown clearly before payment. No hidden on-trip charges.


+ Booking Options

Everything in the itinerary is included in the tour price. No paid booking options apply to this route.


Prepare for Travel


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 Please arrange your own mobile data plan before departure.

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 Bring any personal prescriptions. Tianmen Mountain reaches 1,519 metres and the Forest Park plateau sits around 1,000 metres — well below altitude-sickness territory, but bring layers for cool mountain air.

 Please inform us of any dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions when booking. The Tujia heritage banquet on Day 3 is a regional Wulingyuan menu and includes Tujia salamander as a house specialty (farmed, per national conservation

regulations); a non-salamander menu can be arranged on request.

🏠 Most scheduled venues accept international credit cards. For smaller shops in the Wulingyuan villages, please have local cash or a local mobile payment app ready.

👟 Tianmen Mountain and the Forest Park involve sustained walking on stone stairs, plank walks, and uneven boardwalks. The Glass Skywalk and Yuntiandu Glass Bridge both have height exposure — not recommended for travelers with strong vertigo. Comfortable, grippy walking shoes are essential.

👤 Zhangjiajie has cool mountain air year-round, with morning mist common spring through autumn. Bring layers, a waterproof shell, and a small daypack. Summer at altitude is pleasantly cool; winter brings frost and occasional snow on the high pillars.

? FAQ

Where does the tour start and end?

Starts and ends in Zhangjiajie. Private airport or station transfers are included on arrival and departure.

How do we get around during the tour?

By private vehicle with a dedicated driver for the full 3 days, with a bilingual guide throughout. Day 3 includes the round-trip drive between Wulingyuan and the Grand Canyon (about 40 minutes each way) and the run to the airport / rail station for departure.

How physically demanding is the tour?

Days 2 and 3 are walking-heavy. Tianmen Mountain involves the cableway up and a mix of plank walks, stone stairs, and the 999-step climb through Tianmen Cave on the descent. The Forest Park day uses the Bailong Elevator and scenic shuttles to limit ascent, but Yuanjiajie and Tianzi Mountain still involve 4–5 hours of walking on uneven boardwalks. Comfortable, grippy walking shoes are essential.

What does the Tianmen Mountain night light show involve?

After dinner at the foot of Tianmen Mountain, the cableway carries you back up to the mountainside terrace facing Tianmen Cave. A laser-and-mist projection painted across the 131-metre natural arch — synchronized with music and surround sound — runs for about 30 minutes. The show typically operates spring through autumn; winter performances are weather-dependent and may be replaced with the daytime visit only.

Is the Glass Skywalk and Glass Bridge included?

Yes — both. The Tianmen Glass Skywalk runs along the cliff rim of Tianmen Mountain on Day 2; the Yuntiandu Glass Bridge spans Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon on Day 3. Travelers who prefer not to walk the glass surfaces can take the parallel rim path on Tianmen and the upper canyon trail at the Grand Canyon — your guide will route around either if needed.

What is the Tujia heritage banquet?

A lunch at a Wulingyuan-area Tujia restaurant featuring regional dishes from western Hunan, opened with the Gaoshan Liushui welcome toast — a Tujia ritual where rice wine is poured in a cascading line so each cup spills into the next, sung over by the hosts. The menu includes Tujia salamander (farmed, per national conservation regulations) as a house specialty; a non-salamander menu is available on request.

What does the Tujia brocade workshop involve?

A hands-on session with a Xilankapu (Tujia brocade) master at a Wulingyuan workshop. Tujia brocade is a 2,000-year-old weaving tradition recognised on China's first national intangible cultural heritage list in 2006. You see the wooden waist loom in operation, learn how the cotton warp and bright silk weft build the geometric patterns, and try a few rows yourself.

Should I book pre/post-tour accommodation?

Day 1 starts with airport / station pickup, so any flight or train arrival into Zhangjiajie that day works. Day 3 ends with airport / station drop-off — the Tujia brocade workshop typically wraps mid-afternoon, so aim for an evening flight or train. We can advise based on your timing.

Can I fly a drone during the tour?

China requires all drone operators (including foreign visitors) to register with the CAAC before flying. Zhangjiajie National Forest Park, Tianmen Mountain, and Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon are all no-fly zones for visitor drones. Inform your guide in advance if you plan to bring a drone.

What is the cancellation policy?

Our cancellation and refund policy is tiered based on how far in advance you cancel. Full details at [Terms & Conditions](#).

Is this tour suitable for children?

Minimum age is 10 on this tour because of the height exposure on the Glass Skywalk, the Yuntiandu Glass Bridge, and the long stairway through Tianmen Cave. Children should be steady on stairs and comfortable with mountain heights; either glass walk can be skipped if needed.

Local Names

Tianmen Shan tee-EN-men shahn

Tianmen Mountain — Heaven's Gate, named for the 131-metre natural arch piercing the cliff like a stone doorway

Tianmen Dong tee-EN-men dohng

Tianmen Cave — the world's tallest naturally-formed mountain-piercing cave, reached by a 999-step stairway

Tongtian Dadao tohng-tee-EN dah-dow

Tongtian Avenue — the Road to Heaven, climbing 1,300 vertical metres in 99 hairpin bends

Yuanjiajie ywen-jee-AH-jee-eh

Yuanjiajie — the heart of Zhangjiajie National Forest Park, home of the Avatar Hallelujah Mountain and First Bridge under Heaven

Qiankun Zhu chee-EN-kwun joo

Avatar Hallelujah Mountain — the 1,080-metre sandstone pillar that James Cameron's team used as the visual model for Pandora

Bailong Tianti bye-LOHNG tee-EN-tee

Bailong Elevator — the Hundred Dragons Sky Lift, the world's tallest outdoor elevator at 326 metres

Tianzi Shan tee-EN-zuh shahn

Tianzi Mountain — the Emperor Mountain, with the Imperial Brush Peaks rising like a row of calligraphy brushes

Jinbian Xi jeen-bee-EN she

Jinbian Stream — the Golden Whip Stream, a seven-kilometre forest creek through the base of the pillar valley

Yuntiandu yoon-tee-EN-doo

Yuntiandu — the world's longest glass-bottom suspension bridge, 536 metres across Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon

Xilankapu shee-lahn-KAH-poo

Xilankapu — the 2,000-year-old Tujia brocade tradition, woven on wooden waist looms with cotton warp and bright silk weft

Gaoshan Liushui gow-SHAHN lee-OH-shway

Gaoshan Liushui — the High-Mountain-Flowing-Water toast, where rice wine cascades from one cup into the next

Wulingyuan woo-LING-ywen

Wulingyuan — the UNESCO World Heritage scenic district that contains Zhangjiajie's pillar landscape