



CURATED CHINA JOURNEY  
**Dragon Discover**







Western Sichuan

8 Days 7 Nights

## Snow Peaks & Tibetan Highlands

### BEFORE YOU GO

#### Key Travel Prep

-  Please book your own international flights to and from Chengdu.
-  Please arrange your own travel and medical insurance. Consider supplemental evacuation coverage — parts of this route are remote and above 4,000 metres.
-  Please arrange your own mobile data plan before departure.
-  Check China visa requirements for your nationality before booking.
-  Bring any personal prescriptions you need. Carry altitude sickness medication (acetazolamide/Diamox) — consult your doctor before departure.
-  Please inform us of any dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions when booking. Highland Sichuan cooking differs from Chengdu — simpler, heartier, and less spicy at altitude.

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

## Overview

### Eight days from Chengdu's teahouse pace to the snow-capped passes of western Sichuan and back.

Cross Zheduo Pass at 4,298 metres, photograph Xinduqiao's golden light on the plateau, walk through Tagong Grassland with prayer flags snapping overhead, stand beneath the glacier walls of Yala Snow Mountain, and hike twin alpine valleys at Mount Siguniang — then close with a quiet afternoon of Tibetan manuscript study and hands-on craft at a private museum back on the Chengdu plain.

## Trip Snapshot

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### Accommodation

City hotels in Chengdu and Wenjiang. Highland hotels in Kangding, Bamei, and Xiaojin — best available at altitude.

### Airport Transfers

Private airport transfers in Chengdu on arrival and departure.

### Guide & Transport

Bilingual guide and private SUV or business vehicle for 8 days. Highland-experienced driver. Private group, no joiners.

### Meals

Daily breakfast plus lunches and dinners from Day 2. Sichuan city cuisine, highland dishes on the plateau.

### Signature Experiences

Panda Base morning, Kuanzhai Alley, Zheduo Pass 4,298m, Tagong Grassland, Huiyuan Temple, Tibetan craft workshop.

### Trip Style

A highland road trip. Scenic driving with stops at peaks, passes, grasslands. Gentle walking, no climbing.

## Where You'll Stay

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### 4-Star Equivalent

#### Chengdu City Hotels

2 Nights

Comfortable modern city hotels in central Chengdu. Smart rooms, convenient location for panda base and old-town sightseeing.

### Best Available

#### Highland Hotels & Guesthouses

4 Nights

The best available at 2,500–4,000 metres. Not luxury, but vetted for safety, heating, and hot water. A warm bed after a day on the plateau.

### 4-Star Equivalent

#### Wenjiang City Hotel

1 Night

A comfortable city-edge hotel near the Rongfu Museum. The return to lowland comfort after four nights at altitude.

# Itinerary

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## Day 1 — Arrival & Welcome to Chengdu

Your driver meets you at **Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport** or **Chengdu Tianfu International Airport** with an English name sign — from here, everything is handled. The drive to your downtown hotel takes 30–60 minutes depending on which airport you arrive at.

Early arrivals may be able to check in before 2pm depending on room availability. The rest of the day is yours to recover from the flight and settle into the city at your own pace. After 6pm, Chengdu's night market streets and snack alleys come alive — your guide provides a short list of nearby options for anyone who wants to explore on foot.

## Day 2 — Panda Base & Kuanzhai Alley

 Chengdu Panda Base    Kuanzhai Alley

After breakfast, a 40-minute drive brings you to the **Chengdu Panda Base** at the morning feeding window — the only stretch of the day when the pandas are reliably awake and active. Your guide narrates the conservation story: how China brought the species back from the edge of extinction, and the role these animals have played as global cultural ambassadors since the 1970s. The visit includes the Panda Tower viewpoint and time to watch both adult and juvenile pandas.

Lunch is a featured Chengdu meal.

The afternoon shifts to **Kuanzhai Alley** (\*Kuanzhai Xiangzi\*) — three parallel lanes dating to the Qing garrison era, each with its own character: Wide Alley for slow strolling, Narrow Alley for tea and craft shops, Well Alley for the courtyard restaurants. Your guide introduces the traditional Sichuan courtyard architecture and the local tea culture that makes Chengdu's pace famously unhurried.

The evening is free. Your guide hands over a curated list of nearby restaurants before stepping back.

## Day 3 — Chengdu to Kangding · Gateway to the Highlands

 Kangding    +1 more

After breakfast, you pack up and begin the drive west toward the Tibetan highlands. The road climbs gradually from the Chengdu basin through forested gorges and river valleys — the landscape transforms visibly as the elevation rises. The full drive to Kangding takes approximately 4.5–5 hours with a rest stop at a highway service area.

Arriving around midday, lunch is a highland-friendly meal in **Kangding** (\*Kangding\*) — a compact river-valley town at 2,560 metres that has served as the frontier between lowland China and the Tibetan plateau for centuries. After a rest period to let your body adjust to the altitude, a gentle afternoon walk explores **Kangding's old town** and **Love Song Square** (\*Qingge Guangchang\*) — named after the famous Kangding folk song that most Chinese know by heart.

Dinner is included. Your guide recommends an early night — this is the acclimatisation day, and the altitude is real. The body needs rest.

## Day 4 — Zheduo Pass · Xinduqiao · Tagong Grassland

 Zheduo Pass  Xinduqiao  Tagong Grassland  +2 more


This is the day the landscape opens up. After breakfast, the drive climbs from Kangding to **Zheduo Pass** (\*Zheduo Shan\*) at 4,298 metres — the physical boundary between lowland and highland Sichuan. Your driver stops at the summit viewpoint for photography and a moment to take in the scale of the plateau stretching ahead. Move slowly here; the air is thin and the wind is cold.

The descent from the pass leads to **Xinduqiao** (\*Xinduqiao\*) — a highland village known among Chinese photographers as a paradise of golden light. The afternoon light on the plateau here, with Tibetan farmhouses scattered across sloping meadows backed by distant snow peaks, is why photographers plan entire trips around this stretch of road. Lunch is in Xinduqiao.

The drive continues to **Tagong Grassland** (\*Tagong\*) and **Tagong Temple** — a vast highland meadow ringed by snow peaks and filled with prayer flags snapping in the wind. Your guide explains the prayer-flag tradition and the role this monastery plays in the local Tibetan community. The temple exterior and grassland are part of the scheduled visit; entering the temple itself is subject to availability.

You continue to **Bamei** for the night. Dinner and an early rest after a day at altitude.

## Day 5 — Huiyuan Temple & Yala Snow Mountain

 Huiyuan Temple  Yala Snow Mountain  +1 more


After breakfast, a short 30-minute drive brings you to **Huiyuan Temple** (\*Huiyuan Si\*) — a Gelug-school Tibetan monastery built in 1731 to house the young 7th Dalai Lama during his years in the Kangding area. The visit is a guided deep look at Tibetan Buddhist architecture, devotional art, and the living monastic rhythm of the highland communities. Your guide provides respectful etiquette notes before entering: remove hats, walk clockwise, and do not photograph monks without permission.

Lunch is a local highland meal.

The afternoon drive takes approximately one hour to the **Yala Snow Mountain** (\*Yala Xueshan\*) viewpoint at above 4,000 metres. Yala is a 5,820-metre sacred peak whose glacier face is visible from the observation platform — the sheer scale of the ice wall is the kind of sight that stops conversation. Dress warmly; the wind at this elevation is persistent and cold.

The drive continues to **Xiaojin** for the night — approximately 2.5 hours from the viewpoint. Dinner and rest.

## Day 6 — Mount Siguniang · Twin Alpine Valleys

 Shuangqiao Valley

Changping Valley

+2 more

After breakfast, a one-hour drive from Xiaojin brings you to **Mount Siguniang** (\*Siguniang Shan\*) — the Four Sisters, four glacier-topped peaks rising above two of Sichuan’s most beautiful alpine valleys.

The morning is spent in **Shuangqiao Valley** (\*Shuangqiao Gou\*) — the gentler of the two valleys, where a scenic shuttle carries you through meadows and glacial moraines with panoramic views of the snow-capped peaks above. Walking here is easy: short paths to viewing platforms, with the shuttle handling the distances.

Lunch is near the mountain.

The afternoon moves to **Changping Valley** (\*Changping Gou\*) — a pristine alpine corridor walled by glacier peaks and old-growth forest. The trail is an established hiking path that goes as deep as you want; the group can walk a gentle section or continue further for those who prefer a longer hike. Horse riding is available along the valley trail at your own expense.

By late afternoon, you begin the drive to **Wenjiang** on the western edge of the Chengdu plain — approximately 3.5 hours. Arrival around 9pm, with a late dinner and check-in.

## Day 7 — Tibetan Museum & Craft Workshop

 Rongfu Tibetan Culture Museum

 Tibetan craft workshop

After breakfast, a 20-minute drive brings you to the **Rongfu Tibetan Culture Museum** (\*Rongfu Bowuguan\*) — a private museum near Chengdu that houses an unusually deep collection of Tibetan manuscripts, sutras, and religious art, bridging the cultural connection between western Sichuan and the Tibetan plateau.

The morning is a private guided tour of the collection, with your guide explaining the long history of Tibetan Buddhism and literary culture along Sichuan's western frontier. Seeing these artefacts after four days driving through the communities that produced them gives the visit a resonance it would not have on Day 1.

Lunch is at the museum.

The afternoon is the day’s centrepiece: a hands-on **Tibetan craft workshop** where you create your own pieces to take home. The session is guided by a specialist and covers traditional Tibetan craft techniques.

By mid-afternoon, you return to central Chengdu for your final hotel stay. The evening is free to explore Chengdu’s restaurant and nightlife scene on your own.

## Day 8 — Departure from Chengdu

A final breakfast and a relaxed morning to pack at your own pace.

Your driver takes you to **Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport** or **Chengdu Tianfu International Airport**, timed to your flight. The drive takes 30–60 minutes depending on which airport. The driver assists with luggage and confirms

your departure details before the journey closes.

## Before Booking

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### ✓ What's Included

**Transport** — Private SUV or business vehicle for the full 8 days, plus airport transfers in Chengdu on arrival and departure. Driver experienced on highland roads.

**Guide** — Professional bilingual guide for the full journey, with high-altitude experience and cultural knowledge of Tibetan western Sichuan.

**Accommodation** — 7 nights: comfortable city hotels in Chengdu (2 nights) and Wenjiang (1 night), plus the best available highland hotels and guesthouses in Kangding, Bamei, Xiaojin, and en route (4 nights).

**Meals** — Daily breakfast plus included lunches and dinners from Day 2 onward. Featured meals include Sichuan city cuisine, highland-friendly dishes, and Tibetan-influenced regional cooking.

**Entrance Fees** — All scheduled sightseeing including the Chengdu Panda Base, Kuanzhai Alley, the Kangding old town area, Zheduo Pass, Tagong Grassland, Tagong Temple (exterior), Huiyuan Temple, Yala Snow Mountain viewpoint, Shuangqiao Valley and Changping Valley at Mount Siguniang (including scenic shuttle), and the Rongfu Tibetan Culture Museum.

**Experiences** — Private guided visit to the Rongfu Tibetan Culture Museum collection, plus a Tibetan craft workshop with take-home handmade pieces.

**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.

Horse riding in Changping Valley (Day 6) is a small on-site purchase arranged directly at the trailhead — not a pre-booked add-on.


### Prepare for Travel


 Please book your own international flights to and from Chengdu.


 Please arrange your own travel and medical insurance. Consider supplemental evacuation coverage — parts of this route are remote and above 4,000 metres.


 Please arrange your own mobile data plan before departure.


 Check China visa requirements for your nationality before booking.

 Bring any personal prescriptions you need. Carry altitude sickness medication (acetazolamide/Diamox) — consult your doctor before departure.

 Please inform us of any dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions when booking. Highland Sichuan cooking differs from Chengdu — simpler, heartier, and less spicy at altitude.

 Most scheduled venues accept international cards, but carry some cash or set up a Chinese mobile-payment app for highland towns and smaller shops.

 This tour reaches 4,298 metres at Zheduo Pass and spends several days above 3,000 metres. Walking is mostly gentle, but altitude affects everyone differently. Good physical fitness and prior altitude awareness recommended.

 Western Sichuan highlands: warm in summer, cold and dry at altitude year-round. Temperatures can drop below freezing at high passes even in summer. Bring warm layers, a windproof jacket, sun protection (UV is intense above 3,000m), and comfortable shoes with grip.

## ? FAQ

### **Where does the tour start and end?**

Starts and ends in Chengdu. Private airport transfers are included on arrival and departure.

### **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](#).

### **Can I fly a drone during the tour?**

China requires all drone operators (including foreign visitors) to register with the CAAC before flying. Many scenic areas along this route are restricted zones. Inform your guide in advance if you plan to bring a drone.

### **Should I book pre/post-tour accommodation?**

If your flight arrives early on Day 1, early check-in is usually available. If departing late on Day 8, we can adjust your airport transfer timing. For longer stays, we can recommend Chengdu hotels.

### **How serious is the altitude on this tour?**

The route reaches 4,298 metres at Zheduo Pass and spends four days above 3,000 metres. The itinerary is designed with a gradual ascent through Kangding (2,560m) to help your body adjust. Walking is gentle — no technical climbing. Consult your doctor about altitude medication (acetazolamide/Diamox) before departure. The tour is not recommended for travelers with serious cardiac or respiratory conditions.

### **How physically demanding is the Mount Siguniang day?**

Shuangqiao Valley is gentle — a scenic shuttle does most of the work and you walk short distances to viewpoints. Changping Valley offers optional light hiking on established trails with the option to ride a horse (at your own expense). No technical climbing is involved.

### **What are the highland hotels like?**

Highland accommodation in western Sichuan is simpler than city hotels. We select the best available in each town — vetted for safety, heating, and hot water. Rooms are clean and comfortable but more basic than what you would find in Chengdu. The experience is part of the journey.

### **How do we get around during the tour?**

A private SUV or business vehicle with an experienced highland driver is with you for all 8 days. Drive times between

stops range from 30 minutes to 5 hours, with regular scenic stops and rest breaks. The highland roads are paved and well-maintained.

### What kind of food should I expect at altitude?

Highland Sichuan cooking is heartier and simpler than the famous Chengdu cuisine — noodles, yak meat, Tibetan butter tea, and locally grown vegetables. Meals are adjusted for international palates. The spice level is lower than in the lowlands.

### Is this tour suitable for children?

This tour has a minimum age of 12 due to sustained high altitude (above 3,500 metres for multiple days). Children must be able to handle long drives and potential altitude discomfort. Please consult your paediatrician before booking.

## Local Names

### **Kangding** kahng-DING

Gateway to the Tibetan highlands — a frontier town at 2,560m where Han Chinese and Tibetan cultures converge

### **Zheduo Shan** juh-DWOH shahn

Zheduo Pass — the 4,298-metre crossing that marks the physical boundary between lowland and highland Sichuan

### **Xinduqiao** shin-doo-CHOW

Xinduqiao — known as the photographer's paradise for its golden highland light on the Tibetan Plateau

### **Tagong** tah-GOHNG

Tagong Grassland — a vast highland meadow ringed by snow peaks and filled with prayer flags

### **Bamei** bah-MAY

Bamei (Danba area) — a Tibetan highland town known for its monastery and stone watchtower villages

### **Huiyuan Si** hway-YWEN suh

Huiyuan Temple — a highland Gelug monastery built in 1731 to house the young 7th Dalai Lama

### **Yala Xueshan** yah-LAH shweh-shahn

Yala Snow Mountain — a 5,820-metre sacred peak whose glacier face is visible from the highland plateau

### **Siguniang Shan** suh-goo-NYAHNG shahn

Mount Siguniang — the Four Sisters, four glacier peaks above twin alpine valleys in northern Sichuan

### **Shuangqiao Gou** shwahng-CHOW goh

Shuangqiao Valley — the gentler of Siguniang's two valleys, with meadows and snow-peak panoramas

### **Changping Gou** chahng-PING goh

Changping Valley — Siguniang's wilder valley, a pristine corridor walled by glacier peaks

### **Kuanzhai Xiangzi** kwahn-JAI shahng-zuh

Kuanzhai Alley — three parallel Qing garrison lanes (Wide, Narrow, Well), each at a different speed of Chengdu life

### **Rongfu Bowuguan** rohng-FOO boh-woo-GWAHN

Rongfu Tibetan Culture Museum — a private collection of Tibetan manuscripts and sacred art near Chengdu