



GUEST ITINERARY

CURATED CHINA JOURNEY
Dragon Discover




Chongqing & Chengdu

12 Days 11 Nights




Neon City & Sacred Mountain

BEFORE YOU GO

Key Travel Prep

-  Book your own international flights to Chongqing (arrival) and out of Chengdu (departure).
-  Please arrange your own travel and medical insurance — this tour does not include it.
-  Portable WiFi is provided for the group throughout the trip, so a separate data plan is optional.

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

-  Check China visa requirements for your nationality before booking.
-  Bring any personal prescriptions you need — pharmacies in China rarely stock Western brands.
-  Tell us about allergies or dietary needs at booking — Sichuan and Chongqing cooking is spicy by default and we adjust per guest.

Overview

Twelve days from China's vertical neon city to its slow tea-garden capital, connected by a two-hour high-speed rail ride.

Chongqing's cliff-face stilthouses and monorail-through-a-building, then 4,000-year-old bronze masks at Sanxingdui, pandas at dawn, covered-bowl tea at a Daoist temple, a forested sacred mountain wrapped in mist, and a Tibetan craft afternoon. The pace is built around the contrast — bathhouse afternoons in Chongqing, hot spring nights near Mount Qingcheng, and free evenings to find the cities on your own terms.

Trip Snapshot

Accommodation

Smart-home boutique hotels throughout. One standout night at a hot spring hotel near Mount Qingcheng.

Airport Transfers

Private airport or station transfers on arrival in Chongqing and departure in Chengdu.

Guide & Transport

Bilingual guide and SUV or 7-seat vehicle for 12 days. High-speed rail mid-trip. Private group, no mixed joiners.

Meals

Daily breakfast plus welcome dinner, Chongqing hole-in-the-walls, Sichuan home cooking, bathhouse buffet, mountain snacks.

Signature Experiences

Bathhouse afternoon, Tibetan craft workshop, Dao De Jing copying, tuo tea, covered-bowl tea, Sanxingdui, hot spring.

Trip Style

Two-city contrast with built-in rest. Major sights in the morning, slower local life and free evenings most afternoons.

Where You'll Stay

4-Star Equivalent

Smart-Home Boutique City Hotels

10 Nights

Not the Hiltons you know. New-generation Chinese boutique hotels — smart rooms, app check-in, robot delivery. Better located than the chains and honestly better run.

Scenic Stay

Mount Qingcheng Hot Spring Hotel

1 Night

A hot spring hotel at the foot of a Daoist sacred mountain. After a day on the forested trails, the evening is yours to soak. The guide hands the night back to you.

Itinerary

Day 1 — Arrival & Welcome to Chongqing

Your driver meets you at **Chongqing Jiangbei International Airport** or **Chongqing West Railway Station** with an English name sign — from here, everything is handled. A private business vehicle takes you to your downtown hotel for check-in and time to recover from the flight.

Later in the afternoon, your guide leads a relaxed welcome session: an overview of the 12-day route, the cultural rhythm of Sichuan and Chongqing, and a primer on what to expect from the food, the pace, and the cities themselves. The day closes with an included **welcome dinner** — a light, gentle meal designed around jet-lag-friendly dishes rather than the fiery Sichuan flavours waiting later in the trip. The rest of the evening is yours to settle in.

Day 2 — Mountain City Icons & Hongya Cave Night

 [Crown Escalator](#) [Shancheng Lane](#) [Hongya Cave](#) [+2 more](#)

Many travelers describe Chongqing as the first Chinese city that truly catches them off guard. After breakfast, the day opens at the **Crown Escalator** (*Huangguan Da Futi*) at Lianglukou — a 112-metre hillside escalator that climbs 52.7 metres in about two and a half minutes, connecting Chongqing's upper and lower city. It is the most direct introduction to the mountain-city's vertical transport system and the stacked geography that makes Chongqing physically unlike anywhere else in China.

From there, the group walks to **Jiefangbei Square** (*Jiefangbei*) — the city's historic heart, where a 1940s Liberation Monument now stands ringed by glass towers. Your guide traces Chongqing's wartime past and layered urban growth.

Lunch is a featured Chongqing meal nearby. The afternoon shifts to **Shancheng Lane** (*Shancheng Xiang*) — a restored hillside walkway where the old mountain-city life still survives. Stilthouse architecture clings to the slope, and a **hands-on mortise-tenon joinery demo** lets you handle and assemble the interlocking wooden joints that hold these buildings together without a single nail — a living intangible heritage craft.

As evening falls, the group heads to **Hongya Cave** (*Hongyadong*) — the 11-storey cliff-face complex that looks lifted from a Miyazaki film. With a pre-booked entry slot, your guide explains the stilthouse design and walks you through the levels before the group crosses to the **Qiansimen Bridge** viewing platform for night photography of the lit-up facade reflected in the Jialing River.

Dinner this evening is self-arranged. Your guide hands over a curated list of nearby restaurants before stepping back.

Day 3 — Ciqikou Ancient Town & Robot AI Centre

 [Ciqikou Ancient Town](#) [Longmenghao Old Street](#) [✨ Chongqing Robot AI Centre](#) [+2 more](#)

One of China's most disorienting trade-offs is how often the ancient and the futuristic land in the same afternoon. Today is built around exactly that.

The morning opens at **Ciqikou Ancient Town** (*Ciqikou*) — a Ming-era river trading port on the Jialing where the lanes are still lined with workshops grinding chilli paste, pulling sesame oil, and twisting handmade candy. Your guide arranges a **Chen Mahua candy-twisting demo** with a third-generation maker, and you try a simplified version yourself.

Lunch is inside the ancient town — local Chongqing dishes in a riverside setting.

The afternoon takes a sharp turn into the future at the **Chongqing Robot AI Centre** — a working exhibition space split into industrial and service-robot zones. This is not a concept demo; it is the technology already deployed across Chinese cities. The visit includes a **robot dog interaction** and an **AI-assisted drawing session**. (A robot-coffee bar and bookable robot performances are available on site as small extras.)

As evening falls, the group moves to **Longmenghao Old Street** (*Longmenghao*) — a Republican-era riverside quarter where you can try period-costume photography and explore the lit-up streets at your own pace. Dinner is self-arranged, with recommendations for restaurants overlooking the Yangtze.

Day 4 — Liziba Monorail · Eteling · Eling Park Tea

 Liziba Monorail  Eteling Second Factory  Chongqing tuo tea session  +1 more


After breakfast, you head to the **Liziba Monorail** (*Liziba*) viewing platform — the famous spot where Chongqing's Line 2 cuts directly through the sixth floor of an inhabited apartment block. After watching the spectacle from the platform, you board the train yourself for a ride through the city's vertical landscape.

Lunch is a featured local meal. The afternoon moves to **Eteling Second Factory** (*Eling Erchang*) — a decommissioned wartime printing plant reborn as Chongqing's premier creative park. The old industrial buildings now house studios, design shops, and rooftop terraces with panoramic views over the Yangtze.

The day continues at **Eling Park** for a **Chongqing tuo tea session** (*tuo cha*) — your guide walks you through the traditional compressed-tea preparation method while you look out across the mountain-city skyline.

The evening is free. Your guide provides nightlife recommendations for anyone who wants to find Chongqing's bar scene or night markets on their own.

Day 5 — Bathhouse Afternoon & Hole-in-the-Wall Lunch

 hole-in-the-wall eatery  Chongqing bathhouse afternoon  +1 more




The deeper you go into a real China trip, the more you realise the most memorable days are not the ones you ticked off a list. Today is the trip's built-in rest day — designed to slow you down and let you experience Chongqing the way locals do.

The morning is free for sleeping in, hotel rest, or a stroll around the neighbourhood. **Traditional Chinese Medicine** (acupuncture and tuina massage) is included in the optional **Wellness & Health Package** — select when booking.

Lunch is at a Chongqing **hole-in-the-wall eatery** (*cangying guanzi*) — the kind of no-frills, beloved local restaurant that the city swears by. The food is exceptional; the decor is not the point.

The afternoon and evening are given over to a full **Chongqing bathhouse afternoon** at a premium bathing centre — hot pools, dry and wet steam rooms, rest lounges, and a buffet dinner included. This is a genuine local ritual rather than a tourist spa: Chongqing residents spend entire afternoons here, and the pace is meant to be unhurried.

Day 6 — High-Speed Rail to Chengdu & Taikoo Li Night

 Taikoo Li  IFS Panda  Chongqing–Chengdu high-speed rail

After breakfast and checkout, your driver takes you to Chongqing West Station for the **Chongqing–Chengdu high-speed rail** — one of China's most popular intercity routes and a chance to feel, in about two hours, the speed and comfort that has reshaped domestic travel here. Your guide travels with you the whole way.

Arriving at Chengdu East Station, a private car meets the group and takes you to lunch — your first taste of Chengdu cuisine.

After check-in and a brief rest, the late afternoon opens with a walk through **Taikoo Li** — Chengdu's signature open-air retail district built around the historic Daci Temple. Your guide explains why Chengdu is consistently ranked among China's most liveable cities, pointing out the deliberate blend of ancient temple architecture and contemporary design that defines the neighbourhood.

Dinner is at a curated Chengdu restaurant. The evening continues with a night walk through the IFS district — including the iconic rooftop **IFS Panda**, a social-media landmark that looks best after dark — and a slow loop through Chengdu's young nightlife streets.

Day 7 — Sanxingdui Bronze Masks & Chengdu Old Town

 Sanxingdui Museum  Kuanzhai Alley  Jinli Ancient Street  +1 more




After breakfast, a private car takes you about 90 minutes north to **Guanghan** for a deep-guided tour of the **Sanxingdui Museum** (*Sanxingdui*). This is one of the most consequential archaeological discoveries of the 20th century: a 4,000-year-old civilization that produced towering **bronze masks**, gold sceptres, and a sacred bronze tree unlike anything found elsewhere in the ancient Chinese world. Your guide connects the Sanxingdui finds to the bigger story of how Chinese historians had to revise the long-held idea that Chinese civilization spread from one origin in the Yellow River basin.

Lunch is in Guanghan — local Sichuan dishes near the museum.

The afternoon returns to Chengdu for a walk through **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 Sichuan covered-bowl tea (*gaiwan cha*) ritual and the local custom of street ear-cleaning (*cai er*) that has been part of Chengdu teahouse culture for generations.

The evening moves to **Jinli Ancient Street** (*Jinli*) for a night stroll and dinner. Several courtyard restaurants here run live Sichuan opera face-changing performances (*bianlian*) during the meal — your guide steers you to the best room.

Day 8 — Pandas at Dawn & Daoist Tea at Qingyang Temple

 Chengdu Panda Base  Qingyang Temple  Dao De Jing copying +1 more

An early start 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, how the panda became a global cultural symbol, and the geopolitical role these animals have played since the 1970s. The visit includes the juvenile-panda enclosures (subject to availability on the day) and a slower walk through the bamboo gardens.

Lunch is near the panda base — light, comfortable Sichuan dishes after a morning on foot.

The afternoon shifts register completely, moving to **Qingyang Temple** (*Qingyang Gong*) — Chengdu's oldest and most active Daoist temple. Inside the temple grounds, a **covered-bowl tea** session lets you sit as locals do, sipping from a lidded porcelain bowl while your guide explains the Daoist philosophy that shaped Chinese attitudes toward nature, balance, and effortlessness.

The day deepens at the temple's **Laozhuang Academy** — a Daoist scripture hall where you practise **Dao De Jing copying** (*chao jing*), tracing passages from the foundational Daoist text with brush and ink. The session quietly closes the loop between the morning's panda story and the Daoist idea of living in harmony with nature.

The evening is free. A traditional Chinese **massage session** (*gufa anmo*) is included in the optional **Wellness & Health Package** — select when booking.

Day 9 — People's Park & Dujiangyan Night Bridge

 People's Park  Dujiangyan Irrigation System  Nanqiao Lantern Bridge

After a light breakfast and checkout, the morning is at **People's Park** — Chengdu's central green space where locals practise tai chi, dance in groups, play mahjong, and drink covered-bowl tea under the trees. This is an unstructured window for observing daily Chengdu life at its most relaxed. A **premium health screening** at a nearby Chengdu medical centre is included in the optional **Wellness & Health Package** — select when booking. If selected, the screening replaces the People's Park visit.

Lunch is a featured Chengdu meal before the drive to **Dujiangyan** — about 90 minutes west.

Dujiangyan Irrigation System (*Dujiangyan*) is a 2,200-year-old feat of hydraulic engineering, built in 256 BC, that still irrigates the entire Chengdu Plain today — no pumps, no dams, just the original channelling design. Your guide walks you through the Fish Mouth Levee, the Flying Sand Weir, and the Bottle-Neck Channel, explaining why the system has never needed fundamental modification.

As darkness falls, the group walks to the **Nanqiao Lantern Bridge** (*Nanqiao*) — a covered Qing-style bridge lit up at night and reflected in the Minjiang River below. The evening is free for dinner — your guide recommends a riverside fish restaurant beside the bridge.

You stay overnight in Dujiangyan.

Day 10 — Mount Qingcheng & Hot Spring Night

📍 Mount Qingcheng

🌟 hot spring evening

After breakfast at the Dujiangyan hotel, the day belongs to **Mount Qingcheng** (*Qingcheng Shan*) — one of the birthplaces of Daoism and a UNESCO World Heritage site, wrapped in dense subtropical forest that keeps the trails cool even in the height of summer.

Your guide adjusts the route to the group's fitness level — a half-mountain walk for a gentler pace, or the full circuit for those who want the complete experience. Along the way, ancient Daoist temples and hermitages appear between the trees, and your guide draws the connection between the mountain's spiritual history and the philosophy you encountered at Qingyang Temple two days earlier.

Lunch is mountain-style snacks along the trail — the simple food that has sustained pilgrims and walkers here for centuries.

By late afternoon, you descend and transfer to a hot spring hotel at the foot of the mountain. After check-in, the evening is a **hot spring evening** — a long soak in the hotel's mineral pools as a recovery ritual after a day in the forest. Dinner is self-arranged at the hotel.

Day 11 — Tibetan Manuscripts & Craft Workshop

📍 Rongfu Tibetan Culture Museum

🌟 Tibetan craft workshop

+2 more

After breakfast at the hot spring hotel, the group drives to **Wenjiang** — a district on the western edge of Chengdu — for a full day at the **Rongfu Tibetan Culture Museum**. This private museum houses an unusually deep collection of Tibetan manuscripts, sutras, and religious art that bridges the cultural overlap 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.

Lunch is a featured local meal at the museum.

The afternoon is the day's centrepiece: a four-station **Tibetan craft workshop** rotating through **Tibetan incense making**, **tsa-tsa moulding** (small clay votive tablets), **thangka tracing** (religious painting on canvas), and **scripture rubbing** (reproducing carved text with paper and ink). Each station is guided by a specialist, and you take everything you make home with you.

By early evening, the group returns to central Chengdu for the final hotel stay near Chunxi Road. Dinner is self-arranged. A **spa massage session** is included in the optional **Wellness & Health Package** — select when booking.

Day 12 — Departure from Chengdu

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

Your driver takes you to **Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport**, **Chengdu Tianfu International Airport**, or **Chengdu East Station**, timed to your flight or train. The driver assists with luggage and an on-call coordinator confirms your return details before the journey closes.

Before Booking

✓ What's Included

Transport — Private SUV or 7-seat business vehicle for the full 12 days, plus airport or station transfers in Chongqing on arrival and Chengdu on departure. Driver assists with luggage at every transfer.

Guide — Professional bilingual guide for the full journey, including escort on the Chongqing–Chengdu high-speed rail segment.

Accommodation — 11 nights at smart-home boutique hotels (4-Star Equivalent) across Chongqing, Chengdu, and Dujiangyan, plus one night at a hot spring hotel near Mount Qingcheng.

Meals — Daily breakfast plus included main meals featuring a Day 1 welcome dinner, Chongqing hole-in-the-wall eateries, Sichuan home cooking, riverside Dujiangyan dinner, and mountain trail snacks on Mount Qingcheng.

Entrance Fees — All scheduled sightseeing including the Crown Escalator, Hongya Cave, Shancheng Lane, Ciqikou Ancient Town, Liziba Monorail, Eteling Second Factory, the Chongqing Robot AI Centre, Sanxingdui Museum, the Chengdu Panda Base, Qingyang Temple, Kuanzhai Alley, Dujiangyan Irrigation System, Mount Qingcheng, and the Rongfu Tibetan Culture Museum.

Experiences — Mortise-tenon joinery demo on Shancheng Lane, Chen Mahua handmade-candy demo at Ciqikou, Chongqing tuo tea session at Eling Park, Robot AI Centre interaction, a full bathhouse afternoon with buffet dinner, covered-bowl tea at Qingyang Temple, Dao De Jing scripture-copying, and a four-station Tibetan craft workshop (incense, tsa-tsa, thangka tracing, scripture rubbing).

Rail — Chongqing–Chengdu second-class high-speed rail tickets included.

WiFi — Portable WiFi provided for the group throughout the trip.

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


Wellness & Health Package (per person)


Four wellness experiences bundled into a single package — select when booking. All sessions are pre-arranged before departure; none are offered on the day by the guide.


- **Traditional Chinese Medicine** (Day 5, Chongqing) — Acupuncture and tuina massage session with a TCM practitioner during the bathhouse rest day.
- **Traditional Chinese Massage** (Day 8, Chengdu) — Evening session using traditional gufa anmo techniques.
- **Premium Health Screening** (Day 9, Chengdu) — Comprehensive health check at a Chengdu medical centre, replacing the free morning at People's Park.
- **Spa Massage** (Day 11, Chengdu) — Evening spa session in central Chengdu after the Tibetan craft workshop.


Single-Room Supplement — Available for solo travelers or those who prefer a private room throughout the journey. Select when booking.

Prepare for Travel


 Book your own international flights to Chongqing (arrival) and out of Chengdu (departure).


 Please arrange your own travel and medical insurance — this tour does not include it.


 Portable WiFi is provided for the group throughout the trip, so a separate data plan is optional.


 Check China visa requirements for your nationality before booking.

 Bring any personal prescriptions you need — pharmacies in China rarely stock Western brands.

 Tell us about allergies or dietary needs at booking — Sichuan and Chongqing cooking is spicy by default and we adjust per guest.

 Major venues take international cards, but carry some cash or set up a Chinese mobile-payment app for street food, candy stalls, and small teahouses.

 Mostly gentle city walking. The one demanding day is Mount Qingcheng — forest stone steps, half-mountain or full-mountain route picked in the morning. Bring shoes with grip.

 Chongqing and Chengdu are humid subtropical: hot sticky summers, mild damp winters, drizzle possible most months. Light layers and a packable rain shell year-round.

? **FAQ**

Where does the tour start and end?

Starts in Chongqing and ends in Chengdu. Private airport or station 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](#).

Is there a single-room supplement?

Yes. Select the single-room option when booking — pricing adjusts automatically.

Can I fly a drone during the tour?

China requires all drone operators (including foreign visitors) to register with the CAAC before flying. Many heritage sites and city centres are no-fly 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 at the Chongqing hotel is usually available. If departing late on Day 12, we can adjust your drop-off timing. For longer stays at either end, we can recommend nearby hotels.

How physically demanding is the Mount Qingcheng day?

The route is adjusted to the group's fitness level — your guide can run a half-mountain or full-mountain walk

depending on how everyone feels in the morning. Forest trails on stone steps, no technical climbing. Comfortable walking shoes with grip are recommended.

What does the bathhouse afternoon actually involve?

A full afternoon at one of Chongqing's premium bathing centres — hot pools, steam rooms, rest lounges, and a buffet dinner included. This is a genuine local ritual rather than a tourist spa: Chongqing residents spend whole afternoons here, and the pace is meant to be unhurried.

What booking options are available?

This tour offers one optional package and one room option, both selected when booking. The **Wellness & Health Package** bundles four sessions: Traditional Chinese Medicine in Chongqing (Day 5), traditional Chinese massage in Chengdu (Day 8), a premium health screening in Chengdu (Day 9, replacing the People's Park morning), and a spa massage in Chengdu (Day 11). The package is all-or-nothing at a single per-person price. A single-room supplement is also available for solo travelers or those who prefer their own room.

Local Names

Chongqing chohng-CHING

China's vertical city — a neon-lit metropolis where monorails thread through apartment buildings

Chengdu CHUNG-doo

China's tea-garden capital — pandas, Sichuan cuisine, and a famously slow daily pace

Hongyadong hohng-YAH-dohng

Hongya Cave — the 11-storey cliff stilthouse complex that lights up like a Miyazaki film at night

Ciqikou tsuh-chee-KOH

A Ming-era river trading port still pulling candy and grinding chilli paste by hand

Liziba lee-zuh-BAH

Liziba Monorail — the spot where Line 2 cuts straight through the sixth floor of an apartment block

Sanxingdui sahn-shing-DWAY

Sanxingdui Museum — 4,000-year-old bronze masks from a culture older than the Shang dynasty

Kuanzhai Xiangzi kwahn-JAI shahng-zuh

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

Qingyang Gong ching-YAHNG gohng

Qingyang Temple — Chengdu's oldest Daoist temple, where locals still drink covered-bowl tea between the prayer halls

Dujiangyan doo-jee-ahng-YEN

A 2,200-year-old irrigation system, built in 256 BC, still feeding the entire Chengdu Plain today

Qingcheng Shan ching-CHUNG shahn

Mount Qingcheng — one of the birthplaces of Daoism, wrapped in dense subtropical forest

Shancheng Xiang shahn-CHUNG shahng

Shancheng Lane — the old mountain-city stairway where Chongqing's original cliff-face life still hangs on

Jiefangbei jee-eh-fahng-BAY

Chongqing's downtown landmark — a 1940s liberation column now ringed by glass towers

Huangguan Da Futi hwahng-GWAHN dah foo-TEE

Crown Escalator — a 112-metre escalator climbing 52.7 metres between Chongqing's upper and lower city