



GUEST ITINERARY

CURATED CHINA JOURNEY
Dragon Discover







Shanghai

12 Days 11 Nights

Suzhou · Hangzhou · Classic Jiangnan Grand Tour

BEFORE YOU GO

Key Travel Prep

-  Please book your own international flights.
-  Please arrange your own travel and medical insurance.
-  Please arrange your own mobile data plan before departure.
-  Check visa requirements for your destination before booking.
-  Bring any personal prescriptions needed.
-  Please inform us of any dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions when booking.

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

Overview

Twelve days across the three cities that define the Jiangnan cultural region — Shanghai's modern skyline and old-world Bund, Suzhou's classical gardens and canal lanes, the lantern-lit water town of Wuzhen, and Hangzhou's West Lake.

The route opens in Shanghai with the Bund, a Huangpu River night cruise, the 100th-floor observation deck of Shanghai Tower, the Yu Garden bazaar, the maglev, and a science museum day for travellers who want more than postcards. Suzhou slows the pace with the Humble Administrator's Garden, I.M. Pei's Suzhou Museum, Hanshan Temple, and an evening on Shantang Street. A night at Wuzhen West Scenic Area lets you walk a 1,300-year-old water town after the day crowds leave. Hangzhou closes the route with West Lake at a walking pace, Lingyin Temple, a wetland boat through Xixi's channels, a Dragon Well tea-picking session, a silk tie-dye workshop, and a final evening of Qianjiang skyline lights.

Trip Snapshot

Accommodation

11 nights at 4-Star Equivalent hotels. Shanghai (4 nights), Suzhou (2), Wuzhen West Scenic Area (1), and Hangzhou (4).

Airport Transfers

Private airport transfers in Shanghai on arrival and departure.

Guide & Transport

Bilingual guide and private vehicle for 12 days across four cities. Maglev ride at 431 km/h on Day 3.

Meals

Daily breakfast plus 22 lunches and dinners across 12 days. Local Jiangnan menus, with one tea-garden lunch in Longjing.

Signature Experiences

Silk tie-dye workshop, Dragon Well tea-picking, Wuzhen overnight, Huangpu cruise, Xixi boat, Songcheng performance.

Trip Style

Boutique-paced Jiangnan classic — Shanghai's energy, Suzhou's gardens, Wuzhen at night, and Hangzhou's slower waters.

Where You'll Stay

4-Star Equivalent

Modern City Hotels

10 Nights

4-Star Equivalent properties across Shanghai (Minhang district, 4 nights), Suzhou (Shihu Lake area, 2 nights), and central Hangzhou (4 nights). Modern Chinese city brands with clean rooms, reliable service, and consistent standards.

Scenic Stay

Wuzhen West Scenic Area Hotel

1 Night

A 4-Star Equivalent property just outside the Wuzhen West Scenic Area entrance — close enough to walk back to your room when the canal lanes empty out after dark. The location is the whole point: very few travellers stay overnight here, so the evening walk feels like having Wuzhen to yourself.

Itinerary

Day 1 — Arrival in Shanghai & Settle In

Your guide meets you at arrivals in **Shanghai** — whether you land at Pudong International or Hongqiao, a private car is waiting. From here, everything is handled.

The drive to your hotel takes about an hour depending on traffic. After check-in, the rest of the day is yours to recover from the flight and adjust to local time. Your guide is available if you'd like a restaurant recommendation for dinner. No fixed programme today — the journey ahead is full enough.

Day 2 — Wukang Road · Nanjing Road · The Bund · Huangpu Cruise

 Wukang Road The Bund  Huangpu River Cruise +3 more

After breakfast, the morning opens on **Wukang Road** (*Wukang Lu*) — the leafiest stretch of the former French Concession, where plane trees arch over Art Deco mansions and 1920s apartment houses. The block centres on the **Wukang Building**, the ship-prow apartment block at the intersection of six streets, and the cafes spilling onto the sidewalks define one of Shanghai's quietest old-world textures. Your guide picks out the architectural details and tells the stories of the writers, actors, and exiles who lived along the road.

Lunch nearby, then a slow afternoon on **Nanjing Road Pedestrian Street** (*Nanjing Lu*) — Shanghai's main shopping artery for more than a century, where old Chinese department stores, century-old confectioners, and modern brand flagships line up shoulder to shoulder. A good stretch to feel the city's commercial rhythm without rushing.

As the light softens, the day shifts to **The Bund** (*Waitan*) — Shanghai's colonial riverfront, where 52 heritage buildings face the Pudong skyline across the Huangpu River. A walk along the promenade as the towers light up one by one is the simplest introduction to Shanghai's dual personality.

The evening closes with a **Huangpu River night cruise** — about 90 minutes on the water, with the Bund's neo-classical heritage row on one side and Pudong's lit-up skyscrapers on the other. The dual skyline is best from the boat.

Day 3 — Shanghai Tower · Yu Garden · Maglev · Xintiandi

 Shanghai Tower Yu Garden  Shanghai Maglev +4 more

The morning starts with the **Shanghai Tower** (*Shanghai Zhongxin Dasha*) — China's tallest skyscraper at 632 metres. A high-speed elevator carries you to the **100th-floor observation deck** for a full panorama of Lujiazui's skyscraper cluster, the curve of the Huangpu River, and the Bund's heritage row spread out below.

Lunch is at **Yu Garden** (*Yuyuan*) and the **City God Temple Bazaar** (*Chenghuang Miao*), where the lanes wind between Ming-dynasty pavilions and lattice windows. The garden itself is small but layered — a classical Jiangnan pavilion-and-pool design squeezed into the heart of Shanghai's old town. The surrounding bazaar is famous for

Nanxiang xiaolongbao (*Nanxiang Xiaolongbao*) — soup-filled steamed buns served in bamboo baskets — and other Shanghai snack-stand classics.

In the afternoon, a short detour to **Longyang Road Station** for a **Shanghai Maglev** ride — the world's first commercial magnetic-levitation line, covering the 30-kilometre run to Pudong International Airport in eight minutes at a top speed of 431 km/h. A round trip is included.

Later, the city's sightseeing **double-decker bus** covers a slow loop through the urban core for a different angle on the streets.

The evening lands at **Xintiandi** — a block of Shanghai's original shikumen townhouses (stone-gate lane dwellings) restored as a pedestrianised quarter of cafes, galleries, and independent boutiques. Dinner is here, in a 1920s lane building converted into a Shanghai-style dining room.

Day 4 — New-Energy Showcase & Shanghai Science Museum

 Shanghai Science Museum  New-Energy Showcase  +1 more

After breakfast, the morning opens at a **new-energy vehicle showcase** — a Shanghai exhibition centre dedicated to the wave of electric and hybrid cars now reshaping Chinese roads. Interactive displays cover battery technology, autonomous driving systems, and the design language of the latest models from Chinese makers. The visit is a glimpse of where the country's automotive industry is moving — a topic most travel itineraries skip.

Lunch nearby.

The afternoon belongs to the **Shanghai Science and Technology Museum** (*Shanghai Keji Guan*) — China's largest science museum, with permanent halls covering quantum physics, robotics, biodiversity, and space exploration. The hands-on exhibits and a **4D film** are the centrepieces; the layout is designed so curious adults and travelling families both find their own pace. About four and a half hours on-site lets you choose where to go deep rather than rush.

The early evening is free for an unhurried dinner near the hotel before another night in Shanghai.

Day 5 — Drive to Suzhou · Humble Administrator's Garden · Suzhou Museum · Shantang Street

 Humble Administrator's Garden  Suzhou Museum  Shantang Street  +2 more

A morning drive of about 90 minutes brings you to **Suzhou** — the canal-and-garden city built on a Tang-dynasty street plan. Lunch is **Suzhou-style cuisine** on arrival.

The afternoon moves to the **Humble Administrator's Garden** (*Zhuozheng Yuan*) — the largest of Suzhou's classical gardens and a UNESCO World Heritage site. Built in 1509 by a retired Ming-dynasty official, the garden covers 52,000 square metres of water pavilions, bridges, and connected islands, designed around the idea that wandering it should feel like moving through a Chinese landscape painting. Your guide traces the design logic as you walk — how each pavilion frames a different view, why the rocks are arranged the way they are, what the poetry carved on the lintels says.

Next door is the **Suzhou Museum** — the final major work of Chinese-American architect **I.M. Pei**, completed in 2006. Its white walls, geometric skylights, and grey-tile roofs translate the language of classical Suzhou gardens into a modernist museum. The collection focuses on regional paintings, calligraphy, crafts, and archaeological finds. The museum is free with advance booking, which your guide handles.

The day closes with an evening walk on **Shantang Street** (*Qili Shantang*) — a 1,200-year-old canal street commissioned by Tang-dynasty poet Bai Juyi when he served as governor of Suzhou. Red lanterns reflect on the water, and the night view of Shantang's stone bridges and shop-house facades is one of the city's classic scenes.

Day 6 — Hanshan Temple · Pingjiang Road · Jinji Lake by Night

 Hanshan Temple  Pingjiang Road  Suzhou Pingtan Performance  +3 more



The morning begins at **Hanshan Temple** (*Hanshan Si*) and the adjacent **Maple Bridge Scenic Area** (*Fengqiao Jingqu*) — the Tang-dynasty Buddhist temple immortalised by the poet Zhang Ji in *A Night Mooring by Maple Bridge*, one of the most-quoted classical Chinese poems. The bell tower, the stone-arched bridge, and the calligraphy stones from a thousand years of pilgrims make this the most literary of Suzhou's temples.

The rest of the morning unfolds on **Pingjiang Road** (*Pingjiang Lu*) — Suzhou's best-preserved canal-side lane, where the Song-dynasty street plan has survived unchanged for 800 years. Stone bridges arch over the canal at each block, and the lane is lined with tea houses, small craft workshops, and family-run shops. A traditional **Suzhou pingtan performance** — a regional storytelling and ballad form combining the pipa and the sanxian, sung in Suzhou dialect — is staged over tea at one of the lane's heritage tea houses. Your guide provides English context before the performance so the lyrical content lands.

Lunch nearby.

The afternoon shifts modern. The **Gate of the Orient** (*Dongfang Zhi Men*) — Suzhou Industrial Park's signature inverted-arch skyscraper — anchors a panoramic photo stop on the new-city skyline. Across the water, the **Jinji Lake** (*Jinji Hu*) waterfront opens out as the evening lights come up. A slow walk along the promenade and an illuminated lake-view dinner close the day.

Day 7 — Drive to Wuzhen · East Scenic Area · Overnight at the West Scenic Area

 Wuzhen East Scenic Area  Wuzhen West Scenic Area  +1 more


A morning drive of about two hours takes you out of Suzhou and into **Wuzhen** (*Wuzhen*) — the 1,300-year-old water town on the canal grid south of the Yangtze. Lunch is a local Wuzhen menu on arrival.

The afternoon walks the **East Scenic Area** (*Dongzha*) — the original lived-in side of Wuzhen, where stone-bridge alleys, dye-cloth racks, and a still-working **shadow-puppet theatre** sit alongside the home and museum of **Mao Dun**, the 20th-century writer who grew up here. The whitewashed walls, black-tile roofs, and willow trees over the canal define the look of Jiangnan water-town life.

The day's flagship is the **West Scenic Area** (*Xizha*) — the more atmospheric, more restored half of Wuzhen, where the canal lanes light up at dusk with red lanterns reflecting in the water. Most day-tour visitors leave by early evening;

because tonight's hotel is just outside the West Scenic Area entrance, you stay on. The lanes empty, the boats slow on the canal, and the photography hour begins. Dinner is at one of the West Scenic Area's canal-side restaurants.

Day 8 — Drive to Hangzhou · West Lake · Leifeng Pagoda

 West Lake  Three Pools Mirroring the Moon  Leifeng Pagoda  +6 more

A morning drive of about two hours brings you to **Hangzhou** — the southern Song-dynasty capital and home to the UNESCO-listed lake that has shaped a thousand years of Chinese landscape poetry. Lunch beside West Lake on arrival.

The afternoon belongs to **West Lake** (*Xihu*). A slow walk traces the lake's two historic causeways — the **Broken Bridge** (*Duanqiao*), famously associated with the winter-snow vista in *Legend of the White Snake*, marks the start; the willow-lined **Bai Causeway** (*Baidi*) and **Su Causeway** (*Sudi*) — the latter built by Song-dynasty poet Su Shi — lead across the water. A **lake-crossing boat** carries you to **Xiao Ying Zhou** (Small Fairy Island) for a view of the **Three Pools Mirroring the Moon** (*San Tan Yin Yue*) — the three stone pagodas in the water that appear on the back of the 1 yuan note. The **Flower-Viewing Pond at Hua Gang** (*Hua Gang Guan Yu*) finishes the lake circuit with carp and lotus reflections.

A short **West Lake bicycle ride** along the lake-edge path covers the stretch between the major scenic points.

As the light shifts gold, the day closes at **Leifeng Pagoda** (*Leifeng Ta*) — the recently rebuilt riverside pagoda whose Song-dynasty original collapsed in 1924 after standing for nearly a thousand years. The top floor gives a near-panoramic view of West Lake at sunset, with Baoshu Pagoda directly opposite on the northern shore.

Day 9 — Lingyin Temple · Xixi Wetland · Songcheng

 Lingyin Temple  Xixi National Wetland Park  Songcheng  +4 more


The morning begins at **Lingyin Temple** (*Lingyin Si*) — one of China's oldest and most important Chan Buddhist monasteries, founded in 328 AD. The approach is through a forest of old camphor trees, past the **Feilai Feng** (*Peak Flown from Afar*) cliff, whose limestone face carries **470 Song and Yuan grotto carvings** — one of the finest open-air Buddhist sculpture collections in the country. Inside the main hall, the 24-metre **Śakyamuni Buddha** — carved from camphor wood and finished in gold — is the largest seated wooden Buddha in China. A short uphill walk reaches the smaller **Lingshun Temple** (*Lingshun Si*) on the same mountain, where the woodland setting and prayer rituals make for a quieter, more reflective visit.


Lunch is a country-style menu near the Longjing tea fields.

The afternoon shifts to **Xixi National Wetland Park** (*Xixi Guojia Shidi Gongyuan*) — China's first national wetland park and the green counterweight to West Lake, covering 11 square kilometres of interlocking waterways ten minutes from central Hangzhou. A small **wetland boat** takes the group through the inner channels — flat water, willow-lined banks, and water birds lifting off as the boat passes. The boat is shared by up to six guests in your private party, and a traditional **tea-on-water experience** (*Wo Shui Wen Cha*) is served on board.

The evening lands at **Songcheng** (*Song Cheng*) — Hangzhou's Song-dynasty themed cultural park, where reconstructed Song-era streets, market stalls, and folk-arts demonstrations frame the park's flagship **Romance of the Song Dynasty** (*Songcheng Qiangqing*) live performance — a one-hour music, dance, and stagecraft spectacle telling the story of Hangzhou through the dynasties. Dinner is at the park.

Day 10 — Jiuxi Smoke Trees · Longjing Tea · Grand Canal

 Jiuxi Smoke Trees

 Longjing Tea-Picking

 Grand Canal Cruise

+3 more

After breakfast, the morning opens with the **Jiuxi Smoke Trees** (*Jiuxi Yan Shu*) — a forested valley above West Lake where nine streams converge, named for the morning mist that rises through the camphor and pine. The 2.5-hour walk follows a paved forest trail past tea-garden terraces and small waterfalls. The grade is mild and the air is the freshest in Hangzhou.

The trail emerges into the **Longjing tea hills** (*Longjing Cha Shan*) — the original tea gardens above Longjing village that have produced China's most famous green tea since the Tang dynasty. A **Dragon Well tea-picking session** is the morning's centerpiece: a local tea farmer shows you how to pick the young leaves correctly, demonstrates the simple wok-roasting process that follows, and pours fresh-roasted tea alongside a country-style lunch served at a tea farmer's family home. (Tea-picking is seasonal — best in spring and early summer; in other seasons the focus shifts to tasting, the tea-hills walk, and the demonstration.)

After lunch, free time in the tea hills for photographs and rest.

The afternoon moves to **Xiaohe Street** (*Xiaohe Zhi Jie*) — a restored old canal street in northern Hangzhou where the city's **Grand Canal** heritage is most visible. A short **Grand Canal cruise** (*Jing-Hang Da Yunhe*) covers a scenic stretch of the world's oldest and longest canal — the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal began under the Sui dynasty and is still a working waterway today. Dinner is on a small canal-side lane.

Day 11 — China Silk Museum · Robot Town · Qianjiang Skyline

 China National Silk Museum

Qianjiang New City

 Silk Tie-Dye Workshop

+3 more

The morning belongs to the **China National Silk Museum** (*Zhongguo Sichou Bowuguan*) — the only state-level silk museum in China, set in a parkland campus on the south shore of West Lake. Its collections span 5,000 years of silk weaving and dyeing, from Han-dynasty fragments through Song court robes to contemporary couture. After a curator-led walk through the galleries, you sit at a workshop bench and tie-dye your own silk scarf using traditional natural-pigment techniques. The finished piece is yours to take home.

Lunch nearby.

The afternoon visits the **Six Little Dragons Robot Town exhibition** (*Liu Xiao Long Jiqi Ren Xiao Zhen*) at **Xiaoshan Robot Town** — a Hangzhou industrial showcase highlighting six of the city's leading robotics companies, including humanoid-robot demonstrations and interactive automation displays. The exhibition operates with a 20-person group threshold; for private bookings below that threshold, your guide will substitute another Hangzhou cultural stop on the

day — typically additional time at the Qianjiang New City viewing platform, an extended Grand Canal cruise, or a tea-house afternoon.

The day closes at **Qianjiang New City** (*Qianjiang Xincheng*) — Hangzhou's new central business district on the north bank of the Qiantang River, redeveloped for the 2016 G20 summit. The **Civic Centre balcony** looks across the river to the Sun and Moon Pagodas, and as evening falls, the choreographed **light show** turns the skyscraper facades into a coordinated display visible across the river. A river-side dinner closes the Hangzhou chapter.

Day 12 — Departure

A relaxed breakfast and a slow morning to pack. Depending on flight schedule, your private transfer takes you to the airport — Hangzhou Xiaoshan International for direct return flights, or back to Shanghai (about 2.5 hours by road) for the international departure if no flight is available from Hangzhou. Your guide sees you through check-in and says goodbye.

Before Booking

✓ What's Included

Transport — Private airport transfers in Shanghai on arrival and departure, daily ground transportation by private vehicle throughout the 12 days, and the Shanghai Maglev ride at 431 km/h on Day 3.

Guide — Professional bilingual guide for the touring days, with private driver throughout.

Accommodation — 11 nights at 4-Star Equivalent hotels across Shanghai, Suzhou, Wuzhen West Scenic Area, and Hangzhou.

Meals — Daily breakfast plus 22 lunches and dinners across the 12 days, named in the itinerary. Local Jiangnan menus in each city, with one tea-garden country lunch in Longjing.

Entrance Fees — All scheduled sightseeing sites, including Shanghai Tower observation deck, Huangpu River cruise, Yu Garden, Shanghai Science Museum, Humble Administrator's Garden, Suzhou Museum, Hanshan Temple, Wuzhen East and West Scenic Areas, West Lake lake-crossing boat, Leifeng Pagoda, Lingyin Temple, Xixi National Wetland Park, Songcheng with cultural performance, China National Silk Museum, and the Grand Canal cruise.

Experiences — Huangpu River night cruise, Shanghai double-decker sightseeing bus, Sky-view from Shanghai Tower's 100th floor, Suzhou pingtan performance on Pingjiang Road, Xixi wetland boat ride, Dragon Well tea-picking session, silk tie-dye workshop at the China National Silk Museum, and the Songcheng cultural performance.

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 activity packages apply to this route.

Room-type options such as a single-room supplement can be added at booking if you are travelling solo — contact us when placing your order.


Note: the Day 11 visit to the Xiaoshan Robot Town "Six Little Dragons" exhibition is operated by the supplier with a 20-person group threshold. For private bookings below that threshold, your guide will substitute another Hangzhou cultural stop on the day — typically additional time at the Qianjiang New City viewing platform or an extended Grand Canal cruise.






Prepare for Travel

 Please book your own international flights.

 Please arrange your own travel and medical insurance.

 Please arrange your own mobile data plan before departure.

 Check visa requirements for your destination before booking.

-  Bring any personal prescriptions needed.
-  Please inform us of any dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions when booking.
-  Most scheduled venues accept international credit cards. For smaller shops, please have local cash or a local mobile payment app ready.
-  Gentle pace throughout. Most days are flat city walking, garden lanes, and canal-side streets. The Jiuxi smoke-trees walk on Day 10 is the only mild incline — about 2.5 hours on a paved forest trail. No altitude exposure.
-  Jiangnan has hot humid summers, mild damp winters, and comfortable spring and autumn shoulders. Light layers year-round, rain gear in spring and autumn, and sun protection for summer city walking days.

? FAQ

Where does the tour start and end?

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

How do we get around during the tour?

By private vehicle with a dedicated driver throughout the twelve days — Shanghai city driving, Shanghai to Suzhou (about 2 hours), Suzhou to Wuzhen (about 2 hours), Wuzhen to Hangzhou (about 2 hours), and back to Shanghai at the end if needed. Your bilingual guide travels with you. On Day 3 the itinerary includes a maglev ride at 431 km/h between Longyang Road Station and Pudong International Airport — a short scenic experience, not a transfer.

What kind of hotels are included?

4-Star Equivalent hotels across all four cities — new-generation Chinese city hotels matching 4-star service and facilities. The Shanghai hotel is located in the Minhang district (about a 40-minute drive to the Bund); the Suzhou hotel sits beside Shihu Lake in the west of the city; the Wuzhen hotel is just outside the West Scenic Area; the Hangzhou hotel is in the central downtown area. Outer-city Shanghai and Suzhou locations keep the price competitive while staying close to the route's daily start points.

How physically demanding is the tour?

Gentle throughout. Most days are flat city walking and garden lanes with frequent rest stops. The longest walks are the Jiuxi smoke trees forest trail in Hangzhou (about 2.5 hours, paved path, mild gradient) and the West Lake causeway walk on Day 8 (mostly flat). The Xixi wetland boat ride is a relaxed sit-down experience. No altitude, no overnight trains, no early mornings.

What is the silk tie-dye workshop like?

A guided session at the China National Silk Museum in Hangzhou — the only state-level silk museum in China, with collections spanning 5,000 years of silk weaving and dyeing. After a curator-led walk through the galleries, you sit at a workshop bench and tie-dye your own silk scarf using traditional natural-pigment techniques. The finished piece is yours to take home.

What is the Dragon Well tea-picking experience?

A morning at one of the tea gardens above Longjing village in the hills west of West Lake. You pick fresh leaves under the guidance of a local tea farmer, then watch the simple roasting process before tasting the result alongside a country-style lunch served at a tea farmer's home. The session is hands-on and seasonal — best in spring and early summer; in other seasons the focus shifts toward tasting and the tea hills walk.

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](#).

Should I book pre/post-tour accommodation?

Day 1 is a flexible arrival day — your guide meets you at either Pudong or Hongqiao and takes you to the hotel for rest, so any flight time works. Day 12 is a departure day with private transfer to the airport based on your flight schedule. If your international flight leaves Shanghai mid-morning, an extra night before Day 1 gives you a buffer.

Why is the Shanghai hotel in Minhang and not central?

The Minhang district hotel pairs a 4-Star Equivalent property with a more competitive price than central Bund-area hotels of equivalent comfort. Your guide and private vehicle handle the morning drive to the day's first stop — about 40 minutes — so you arrive rested rather than transit-tired.

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 — West Lake, the Humble Administrator's Garden, Lingyin Temple, and the Bund all restrict drone use. Inform your guide in advance if you plan to bring a drone.

Local Names

Waitan WAI-tan

The Bund — 52 heritage buildings facing Pudong's skyline across the Huangpu River

Wukang Lu woo-KAHNG loo

Wukang Road — Art Deco apartment houses and plane-tree sidewalks in the old French Concession

Yuyuan yoo-YWEN

Yu Garden — pavilions and pools squeezed into Shanghai's old town, ringed by a famous snack-stand bazaar

Xintiandi shin-tee-EN-dee

Shanghai's shikumen quarter — stone-gate townhouses turned cafes and galleries

Zhuozheng Yuan jwoh-JUHNG-ywen

The Humble Administrator's Garden — UNESCO-listed, built 1509, largest in Suzhou

Pingjiang Lu PING-jee-ahng loo

Pingjiang Road — Song-dynasty street plan unchanged for 800 years

Hanshan Si hahn-SHAHN suh

Hanshan Temple — Tang-dynasty monastery immortalised by Zhang Ji's Maple Bridge poem

Wuzhen WOO-juhn

Wuzhen — a 1,300-year-old canal town where you can stay overnight after the day crowds leave

Xihu shee-HOO

West Lake — UNESCO-listed Hangzhou lake that defined Chinese landscape poetry

Lingyin Si ling-YIN suh

Lingyin Temple — founded 328 AD beside a cliff carved with 470 Buddhas

Xixi shee-SHEE

Xixi Wetland — China's first national wetland park, 11 km² of water channels

Longjing long-JING

Longjing — Dragon Well tea hills, China's most famous green tea since the Tang dynasty