

Hong Kong to Lhasa on *The Shangri-La Express*

CHINA AND TIBET BY PRIVATE TRAIN WITH THREE GORGES CRUISE



Lhasa's Potala Palace

RAIL JOURNEY BY PRIVATE TRAIN

17 Days

4 nights hotels, 4 nights aboard cruise ship,
8 nights aboard *The Shangri-La Express*

2009 Trip Details

Westbound: Hong Kong to Lhasa

September 1-17

Land Tour Cost

Per Person:

Heritage Class, twin share	\$12,795
Heritage Class, single	\$17,995

Stay a little longer... Extend your stay in China. Contact us for details.

This journey begins in exciting Hong Kong on the South China Sea, and rolls through Guilin with its saw-toothed green peaks, Kunming with its Stone Forest of massive limestone pillars and Chengdu with its Giant Pandas. Cruise through the Three Gorges, admiring some of the country's most spectacular scenery and the world's largest dam project. Visit Xi'an's army of Terra Cotta Soldiers before arriving in the holy city of Lhasa high on the Tibetan Plateau.

Day 1: Hong Kong Check into a five-star hotel in Hong Kong for a one night stay and enjoy some free time in the city before a welcome dinner in the evening.

Day 2: Guangzhou Stop in Guangzhou (formerly Canton), exploring China's first international seaport before boarding the *Shangri-La Express*.

Day 3: Guilin In Guilin, cruise the Li River among the jagged crags and caves of the limestone karst formations, and visit the 600,000-year-old Yudi Lan (Reed Flute) Cave on the outskirts of the city.

Days 4-5: Yunnan Stone Forest, Shilin, Kunming Walk among the naturally formed pillars of the Yunnan Stone Forest, which look like animals, plants and humans, before spending time in Kunming where a visit includes the Golden Temple, coated with 250 tons of burnished copper.

Day 6: Chengdu Arrive in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province and home of China's rare Giant Panda. Admire the city, touring its charming streets, and drop in at the Giant Panda Research Base.

Days 7-10: Chongqing, Three Gorges Cruise Arriving in Chongqing, take a short tour and sample the local cuisine before transferring to a five star riverboat for the trip through the spectacular Three Gorges. The cruise includes stops at the Western Xinling gorge; Fengdu Ghost City, a man-made version of the afterlife built from ideas in Taoist mythology; five-mile Qutang Gorge, the narrowest and most breathtaking of the Three Gorges; and at the Three Gorges Dam site, where we reboard the *Shangri-La Express* bound for Golmud.

Day 11: Xi'an Inspect the armies of Terra Cotta Warriors, guarding the grave of an emperor since 200 BC. In the evening, enjoy a Tang Dynasty dinner show before continuing by train.

Days 12-13: Lanzhou, Xining Visit the Majishan Grottoes complex filled with carved Buddhist statues before stopping in Lanzhou, an ancient Silk Road city along the Yellow River. Continuing on to Xining, take the entire day to explore the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau in one of the most diverse parts of China.

Day 14: Golmud, ascend to Lhasa Board the high-altitude train created specifically for regularly scheduled trips on the unique rail line between Golmud and Lhasa. Embark on the ascent to the "Roof of the World" and pass through the Tangula Pass which, at 16,640 feet (5,072m), makes this the highest rail line in the world. Arrive in Lhasa and transfer to a premier hotel for a three-night stay.

Days 15-17: Lhasa After some time to acclimate, tour Lhasa, with its thousand years of cultural history. Visit Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama's Summer Palace. The following day, explore the Jokhang Temple, Tibet's most sacred shrine, and circle the adjacent Barkhor Market. Enjoy lunch and a folk performance before visiting the 17th century Potala Palace, the white and red edifice that dominates the city's skyline. The Potala Palace was the seat of Tibet's government until 1950 when the Chinese arrived, and the home of the Dalai Lama until he fled in 1959. Toast the journey with a farewell dinner.