

CHINA

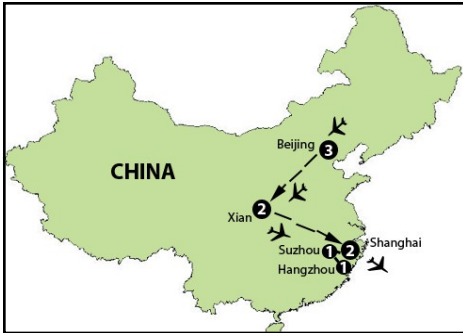
All Gay Ancient China Tour

10 Days

April 28—May 7, 2012 &
September 22—October 1, 2012

Beijing to Shanghai

From \$2795 USD



China took center stage during the Summer 2008 Olympics. And now it's time for its encore, starring you and your Hermes small group. What's on the playbill? How about an ancient wall 4,000 miles long ... a city once forbidden to visitors ... 8,000 stone warriors watching over an emperor ... serene gardens that seek nothing less than metaphysical perfection.



HIGHLIGHTS/INCLUDES

- **Beijing**, including the Great Wall of China, Ming Tombs, Summer Palace, Tiananmen Square, and Forbidden City
- **Xian**, including the Terra Cotta Soldiers
- **Hangzhou**, including West Lake and a tea plantation
- **Suzhou**, including the Master of Nets Garden and a silk factory
- **Shanghai**, including the Old Town, Jade Buddha Temple, Huangpu River cruise, the

- Bund, and Jinmao Tower
- All guiding and entrance fees included
- Accommodations for 9 nights in 5-star hotels
- Services of a Hermes Tours escort
- Services of an expert, local guide in all cities
- **\$100 per person savings if you reserve 5 months before departure!**

Trip Info

Dates: April 28—May 7, 2012 & September 22—October 1, 2012
Group Size: Maximum of 21.
Grade: Leisure **Transport:** Aircon mini-bus, 2 internal flights.
Accommodation: 9 nights in 5-star hotels.
Meals: Breakfast daily, 8 lunches and 8 dinners
Prices (USD):
 April 2012: \$2795
Single supplement: \$800. Or Hermes Tours can match you with another traveller and waive the single supplement.
Includes: All accommodations as listed, activities and meals as listed.
Not Included: International air to/from Beijing/Shanghai, visas if required, transfers to/from airport on designated days. Meals and activities not specifically included in itinerary. Any items of a personal nature such as telephone, laundry, alcohol as well as customary tips to your driver and tour guides and Hermes Tours escort.

Extension to Hong Kong:

Dates: May 7—10, 2012 & October 1—4, 2012
Accommodation: 1 night in a 4-star hotel.
Meals: Breakfast daily
Prices (USD): \$975 (flight not included).
 Single supplement: \$520. Or Hermes Tours can match you with another traveller and waive the single supplement.
Further Info: See our website: www.hermestours.com

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Day 1 – Saturday – Arrive in Beijing (D)

Plan to arrive at our Beijing hotel by 4:00 today. After you've settled in, we'll join our Hermes welcome banquet, complete with Peking Duck!

Day 2 – Sunday – Great Wall, Ming Tombs, and (B, L)

Today will be a highlight of your trip, and perhaps even your life! We'll journey to the Great Wall of China. This architectural marvel was built over centuries to keep Mongol invaders out of China. Today, this 4,000-mile behemoth welcomes visitors with open arms. We then visit the Ming Tombs and see how 13 imperial emperors planned for the afterlife.

Day 3 – Monday – Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven and Summer Palace (B, L)

We visit Tiananmen Square today. At 100 acres, it is the largest public plaza in the world. We'll also explore the 15th-century Forbidden City, whose 8,707 rooms and splendid halls are graced with imperial treasures now overseen by the Palace Museum. Later, we'll admire the beautiful Temple of Heaven, visited by the Ming and Qing emperors to pray for good harvests.

This afternoon, stroll the inviting grounds of the Summer Palace, a pastoral complex of pavilions, temples and galleries on the immense man-made, Kunming Lake.

Day 4 – Tuesday – Beijing to Xian (B, L, D)

This morning we fly to Xian, the eastern end of the famed Silk Road. We'll traverse its imposing, ancient City Wall dating to the Ming Dynasty, then visit the grand Wild Goose Pagoda. Then we discover the Bell Tower and Drum Tower. The former once rang its bronze-casted bells at sunrise; and the latter beat its drums at sunset.

Day 5 – Wednesday – Xian (B, L)

Today we marvel at the ancient Terra Cotta Warriors. In 1974, they were stumbled on by farmers digging a well. Today, their legion stands 8,000 strong—alongside 130 chariots and 670 horses—though many of them are still buried. For 2,000 years, they have faithfully stood guard over the tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Huang.

Day 6 – Thursday – Xian to Hangzhou (B, L)

This morning we fly to Hangzhou. In Hangzhou, one of China's most prosperous cities, we'll cruise the lovely padoga-lined shores of serene West Lake. You'll see why it's been regaled by poets and emperors for centuries. We then drive to a tea plantation to enjoy some of the best green tea in China, named Emperor Tea in the Qing dynasty

Day 7 – Friday – Suzhou (B, L)

We start the day with a visit to a silk factory. Afterwards we stop at the canal-laced water town of Xitang. Nine rivers converge here, and its endless charms and ancient ambiance played a supporting role to Tom Cruise in *Mission Impossible III*. The drive will take us about two hours. Enjoy a full day tour to Suzhou, China's city of gardens. We visit one of its most famous private gardens "Master of Nets Garden," a perfect fusion of art, nature, and architecture into what many consider a metaphysical

Day 8 – Saturday – Suzhou to Shanghai (B, L)

Transfer to Shanghai today. As we browse the Old Town, you'll sample ancient Ming and Qing dynasty style houses. But what may impress you most about this modern city is its energy; over 20 million people call metropolitan Shanghai home. Tonight, take it in from the perspective of the Huangpu River on a river cruise.

Day 9 – Sunday – Shanghai (B, L, D)

Pay a visit to the Jade Buddha Temple today. Then we explore the world-renown Bund, home to a remarkable mix of historic, colonial-era buildings and grand consulates that symbolize the city's once and current dramatic financial and political rise. For a quieter slice of life here, you might observe morning tai chi on the promenade.

We cross the river to ascend Jin Mao Tower, the tallest building on mainland China. From the 88th floor, we'll take in spectacular views of the city. This evening, Hermes Tours hosts a farewell banquet.

Day 10 – Monday – Depart or extend to Hong Kong (B)

Continue your China discoveries on our post-tour extension to Hong Kong. Otherwise, your Hermes tour ends today.

EXTEND YOUR VACATION IN HONG KONG!

Days 10-12 – Monday–Wednesday–Hong Kong (Daily B)

Hong Kong may have gained its sovereignty from Britain in 1997, but it retains a very Western flair. We'll spend two nights here, taking in its must-see sights like Victoria Peak and Repulse Bay. And you'll have ample time to explore this glittering metropolis on your own.

Day 13 – Thursday – Depart for Home (B)

Our tour ends today.

