



OLLI China Culture Trip

October 10 – 23, 2019

Thanks to all China Cultural Tour Members (both OLLI and Non-OLLI) who contributed to this presentation. Special thanks to Cherry Postic the OLLI Tour Coordinator and Susan McNamara who performed the initial editing.



Arriving in Beijing - October 11, 2019



Robot at the Wanda Realm Hotel Beijing

An OLLI member requested a bottle of water at the hotel and the robot knocked on the door and delivered the water.

Beijing Hutong Tour

A hutong is a lane or alley formed by traditional courtyard compounds lining both sides. These hutongs range from little alleys 40 centimeters wide to streets 10 meters wide.

The compounds that line the lanes and alleys are called "siheyuan" The word means: 'four joined-together courtyard.' They are old buildings arranged on four sides around a courtyard, and the buildings and the courtyard are enclosed by a wall.

The hutong streets and alleys crisscross with each other and meander in confusing ways. The OLLI group enjoyed their walk in the hutong

October 12, 2019



Road and Lake by the Hutong



Tiananmen Square

Tiananmen Square is the seventh largest city square in the world (and the fourth largest in China in 2019), at 440,000 square meters (109 acres) in size. It can hold about 1 million people for public celebrations or gatherings. Some of the flower decorations from National Day October 1 remain on display.



At Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City with our Tour Escort Richard Liu



Forbidden City

- The Forbidden City took **14 years** to build (from 1406 to 1420).
- It was built by over **1,000,000 workers**, including more than 100,000 craftsmen.
- It was the imperial palace of China for **492 years** (1420–1912).
- It was the home of **24 emperors** — 14 of the Ming dynasty and 10 of the Qing dynasty
- It covers **0.72 sq km** (0.28 sq mi), of which 15 hectares (38 acres) are floor area.
- It has **980 buildings** in over 70 palace compounds, with over 8,700 rooms.
- It is **961 meters long** from south to north and 753 meters wide.
- It is surrounded by a **10-meter-high wall**, which is 3.4 km (2 miles) long.
- It has a **52-meter wide moat** round it.
- It hosts **14 million visitors** per year, a maximum of 80,000 visitors per day.



Forbidden City, Our Local Guide Shelly (flag lower right)



Forbidden City



Moat Surrounding the Forbidden City



Summer Palace Beijing

The Summer Palace's landscaped gardens, temples, and pavilions were designed to achieve harmony with nature, to soothe, and to please the eye.

During the hot Beijing summers, the imperial family preferred the beautiful gardens and airy pavilions of the Summer Palace to the walled-in Forbidden City. **Dowager Empress Cixi** took up permanent residence there for a time, giving rise to some wonderful tales of extravagance and excess.





Summer Palace



An Old Man Drawing on the Walkway at the Palace also drew Linda Myott



GREAT WALL

The Great Wall of China — **the longest wall in the world**, an awe-inspiring feat of ancient defensive architecture has a history of more than 2300 years. Its winding path (13170 miles) over rugged country and steep mountains takes in some unbelievable scenery

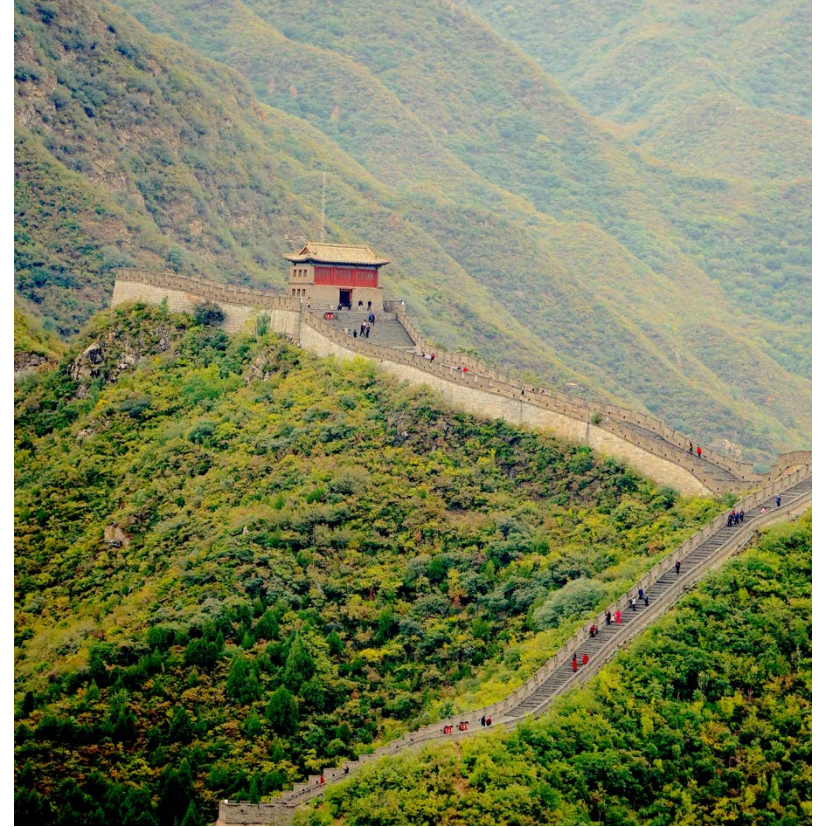
October 13, 2019





**Tour Members at
the GREAT WALL**

“HE WHO HAS NOT BEEN ON
GREAT WALL, IS NOT TRUE
MAN”



Great Wall outside of Beijing

Beijing Street at Night

Flying Beijing to Xi'an





Xi'an Terracotta Warriors Museum

OCTOBER 14, 2019

Terracotta Army

The Terracotta Army refers to the thousands of life-size clay models of soldiers, horses, and chariots which were deposited around the grand mausoleum of Shi Huangdi, first emperor of China and founder of the Qin dynasty, located near Lishan in Shaanxi Province, central China. The purpose of the army was likely to act as guardian figures for the tomb or to serve their ruler in the next life. The site was discovered in 1974, and the realistic army figures provide a unique insight into ancient Chinese warfare from weapons to armor or chariot mechanics to command structures. Shi Huangdi was desperate for immortality, and in the end, his terracotta army of over 7000 warriors, 600 horses, and 100 chariots has given him just that, at least in name and deed. The site of the mausoleum is a UNESCO World Heritage Site even if the inner tomb itself has yet to be excavated.

Map shows layout of the tombs



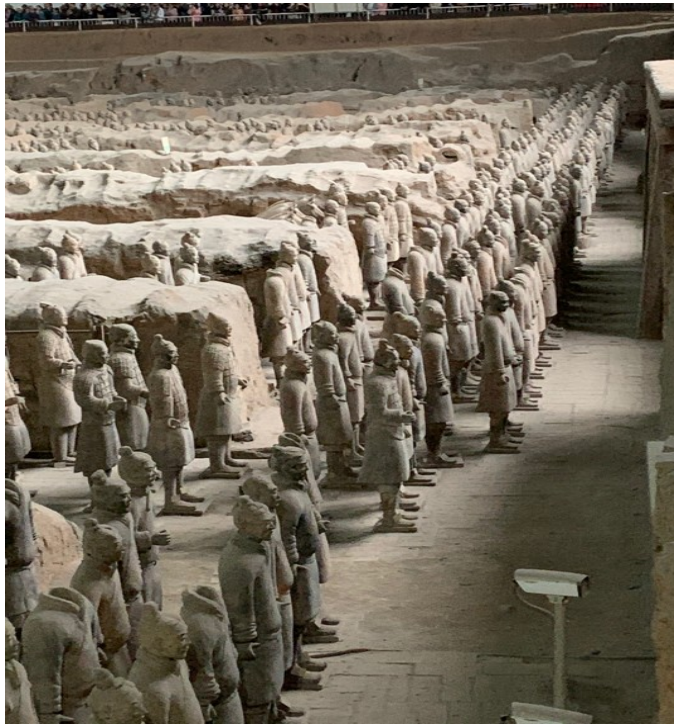
Shi Huangdi's Mausoleum

The mausoleum of Shi Huangdi, actually an entire multi-burial complex which covers an incredible 35 to 60 square kilometres, was discovered in 1974 CE buried at the foot of the artificial Mt. Li near Lishan (modern Lintong), 50 km east of the Qin capital Xianyang in Shaanxi Province, central China. The tomb itself remains unexcavated but its spectacular army of terracotta defenders has, in part, been revealed and already earned the site the title of “Greatest Tomb in the World”.



The Terracotta Warriors

To protect his tomb or perhaps even to ensure he had a handy bodyguard in the next life, Shi Huangdi went a whole lot better than his predecessors. Rulers in ancient China commonly had two or three statues to stand as guardians outside their tombs but Huangdi went for a whole army of them. The Terracotta Army is actually one of only four in all likelihood as that portion so far excavated - 1.5 km distant from the mausoleum - is on the eastern side and is probably duplicated on the other three sides. Even this one-quarter section has not been fully excavated with only three of its four pits having been fully explored by archaeologists. Below are pictures from pits 1-3.



Other Discoveries: Bronze and Wood Chariots pulled by Teams of Four Bronze Horses



The Army

Besides infantry, the army includes 600 horses and almost 100 chariots which carry officers and riders and have either a two, three, or four-horse team. The soldiers were set in regular rows and are depicted in different postures - most are standing while some are crouching. Their mix and particular arrangement of officers (slightly taller than everyone else with their general being tallest of all), cavalry, crossbowmen, skirmishers, archers, charioteers, and grooms give the illusion of a complete battlefield army ready for action. There are light infantry units with archers positioned at the flanks and front, the heavy infantry behind them, while chariots bring up the rear with their officers, matching the troop deployments mentioned in ancient military treatises.

The scale of the enterprise must have required a huge quantity of firewood to fuel the pottery kilns that made the figures, not to mention the countless tons of clay from local deposits needed to make figures weighing up to 200 kilos each.

Xi'an, Big Wild Goose Pagoda

Big Wild Goose Pagoda is one of the most famous Buddhist pagodas in China. The pagoda was built on the site in 589 A.D. in the Sui Dynasty. It was called Wu Lou (Five Story) Temple. It was not until 648 A.D. that Li Zhi, then still a crown prince, sponsored a renovation project on the temple in memory of his mother's kindness, after she suffered an early death.

October 15, 2019



Xi'an, Big Wild Goose Pagoda

Folks dancing and ribbon kite flying in the morning. Also see Xi'an Dance videos



Big Wild Goose Pagoda



Xi'an City Wall

Xi'an was originally a walled city, and even today the wall is considered a landmark dividing the city into the inner part and the outer part. The city wall is massive — tall, long and thick. The South Gate and North Gate are the two main entrances to the inner city. The city itself is neatly arranged along the city wall.

Cycling on the wall makes for a great way to get some terrific views of the city and a great way to get some exercise. The wall is 13+ km (8+ miles) long.



Xi'an City Wall





Later in the Day we travelled via Hi-Speed Train from Xi'an to Chengdu

Food on the Hi-Speed Train



Fresh Fruit and our Dinner Restaurant in Chengdu



Visit to the Chengdu Panda Breeding Research Center



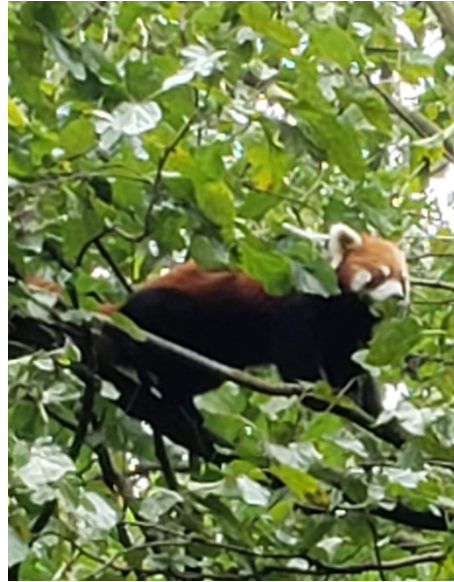
OCTOBER 16, 2019

- The research center was founded in 1987, starting with 6 pandas rescued from the wild.
- Although Pandas are technically carnivores their diet consists mostly of bamboo, but they will consume grasses and other shrubs, fruits (apples are a special treat) and even small birds and rodents. Pandas get so little nutrition from bamboo, when they are not eating they spend most of their time napping, often in trees. Today the estimated number of captive pandas worldwide is over 500. Zoos in 27 countries enjoy pandas, on loan, from the Chinese. There are an estimated 1800 pandas in the wild and with the success of the Chinese breeding program have been downgraded from endangered to vulnerable. The goal of the research center is to release captive pandas into the wild. To date about 10 pandas have been released with 7 still surviving.
- PLEASE VIEW THE GIANT AND RED PANDA VIDEOS TAKEN BY THE TOUR GROUP

Walking the Paths in the Research Center past the Panda Enclosures



THE CENTER ALSO HAS RED OR LESSER PANDAS. RED PANDAS ARE DISTANTLY RELATED TO GIANT PANDAS BUT HAVE BEEN CLASSIFIED INTO THEIR OWN UNIQUE FAMILY. LIKE GIANT PANDAS, THEY EAT BAMBOO, GRASSES, ROOTS AND BERRIES AND MAY EAT SMALL BIRDS AND RODENTS. THEY REST AND SHELTER IN TREES.



Two Baby Pandas (55 Day Old Panda and Another Playing Outside)



THERE WERE MANY TOUR GROUPS AT THE CENTER INCLUDING MANY SCHOOL CHILDREN WHO GREETED US WITH “HELLO” AND MANY SMILES AND WAVES





Jinli Old Street is **one of the oldest shopping streets in Sichuan Province**, and it can be traced back to the Three Kingdoms Period, over 1,800 years ago

After the research center we visited the Jinli folk culture street, where we enjoyed lunch, a little shopping and a few of us visited the local Starbucks.

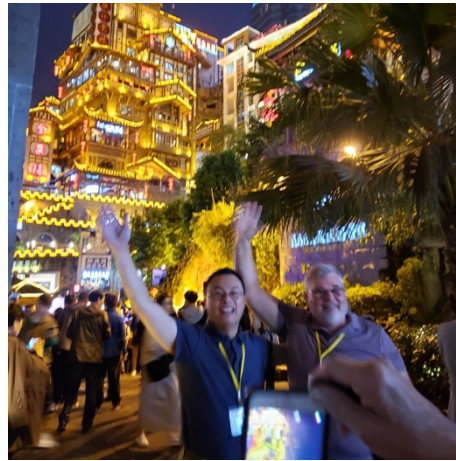


**After visiting the Jinli Old Street we travelled two hours by
Hi-Speed Train from Chengdu to Chongqing**

WE VISITED A
BUSTLING MULTI-
STORY SHOPPING
AND DINING CENTER
FOR DINNER



WALKING PAST
SHOPS TO THE BUS
AFTER DINNER
HEADING FOR OUR
YANGTZE RIVER
CRUISE





Our Cruise Begins

October 17, 2019

From Chongqing

- Fengdu (Ghost City)
- Shibaoshai Pagoda
- White Emperor City
- Qutang Gorge
- Shennong Stream

To Yichang

Fengdu (Ghost City) OCTOBER 18, 2019





The Bridge

Couples Cross the Bridge Slowly to keep Evil Spirits Away and to have a Long Life Together

Gondola Ride to the Ghost City, the Ghost City Pagoda, Torture Pits and the Courtyard

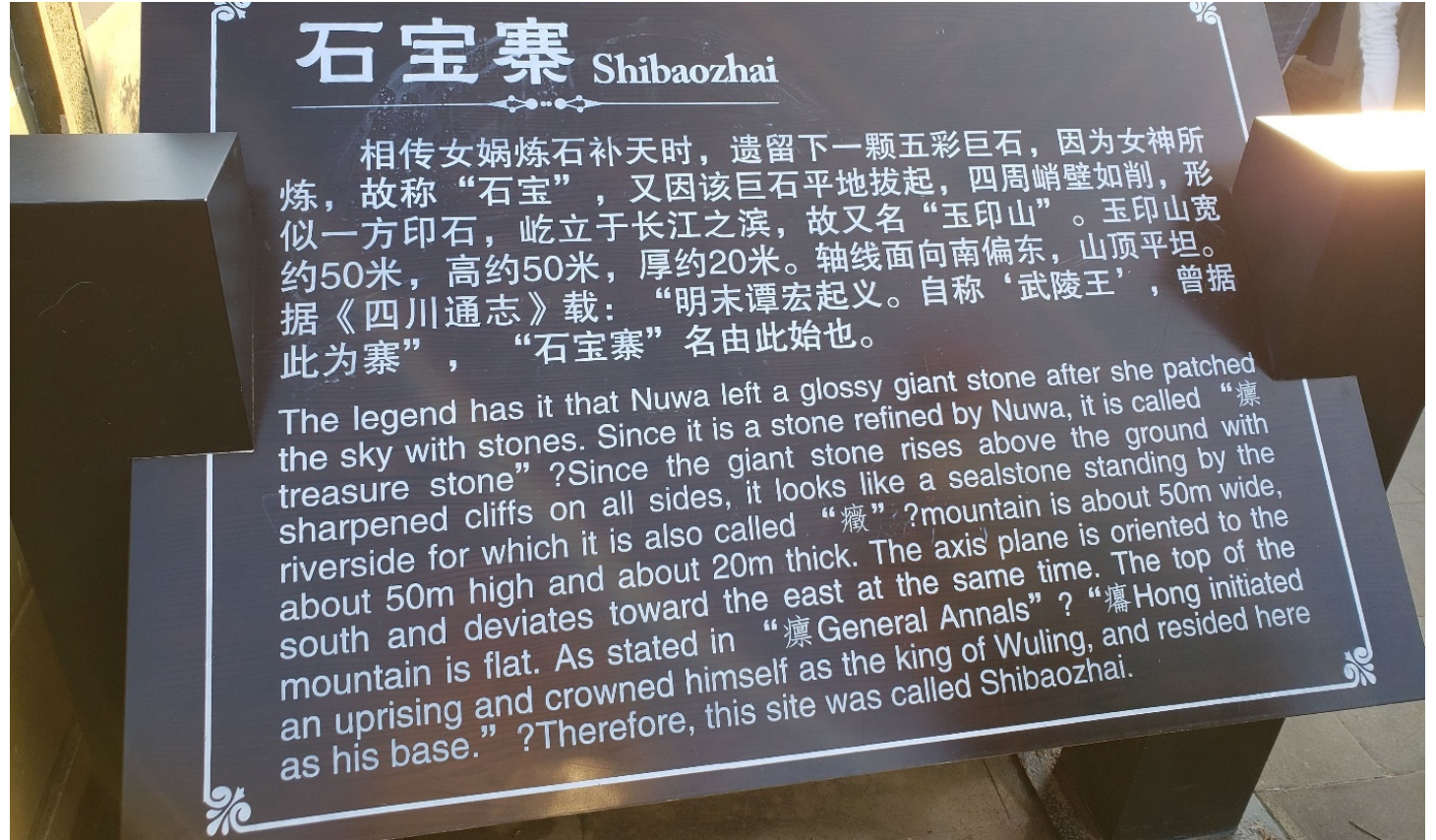


HA! HA! HA!
(SHOUT TO SCARE AWAY
THE GHOSTS AS YOU
WALK THROUGH THE
GATE AS YOU LEAVE THE
CITY)





SHI BAO ZHAI



The Shibaozhai looks like a strangely-shaped pagoda hugging a hill. The hill is on the bank of the Yangtze River that has steep sides. It is about 200 meters or 700 feet tall. On the hill, a three story temple was built that looks like it sits on the building structure, but it doesn't. People were hauled up to the temple until the stairway and the floors below were built.



Views from the Pagoda



Views at SHI BAO ZHAI

White Emperor City

Baidi Cheng (White Emperor City) is situated at the entrance of Qutang Gorge, north of the Yangtze River. The mini city sits on top of Baidi Hill and has many temples and gates. It is within the boundary of Fengjie County, Chongqing. Baidi Cheng is surrounded by water on three sides, and by mountains on the left side. Standing among magnificent and steep mountains and waters, Baidi Cheng is extremely beautiful with imposing images. There are nearly 1000 steps to reach the top of the mountain—Baidi Cheng Top. From there, the view is that of the majestic Kui Gate (the western tip of Qutang Gorge) and the Caoting River winding down from Baidi Cheng Mountain into the Yangtze River

OCTOBER 18, 2019

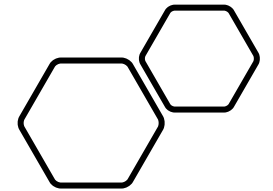


Group Picture at White Emperor City





Views at the Bottom of Baidi Cheng Hill





Long Trek to the Baidi Temple

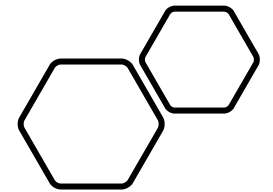
One could Walk or buy a Ride to the Top

Murals On the Ground

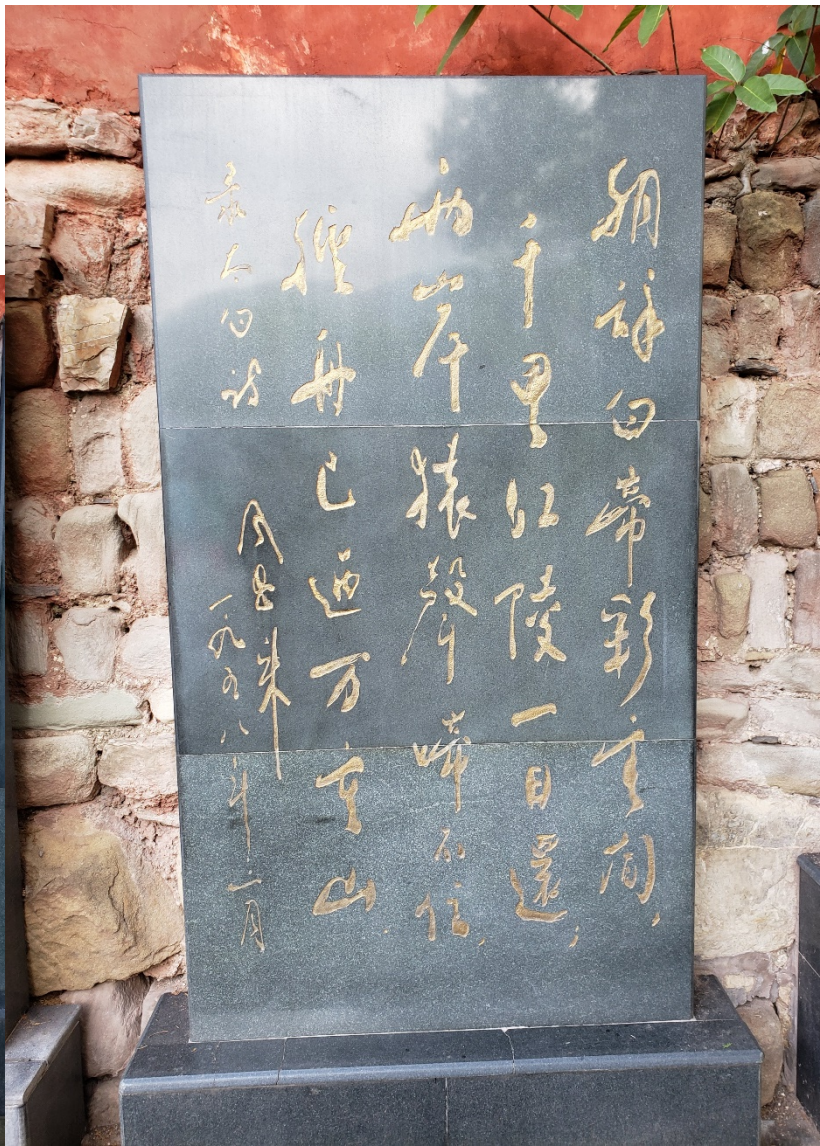
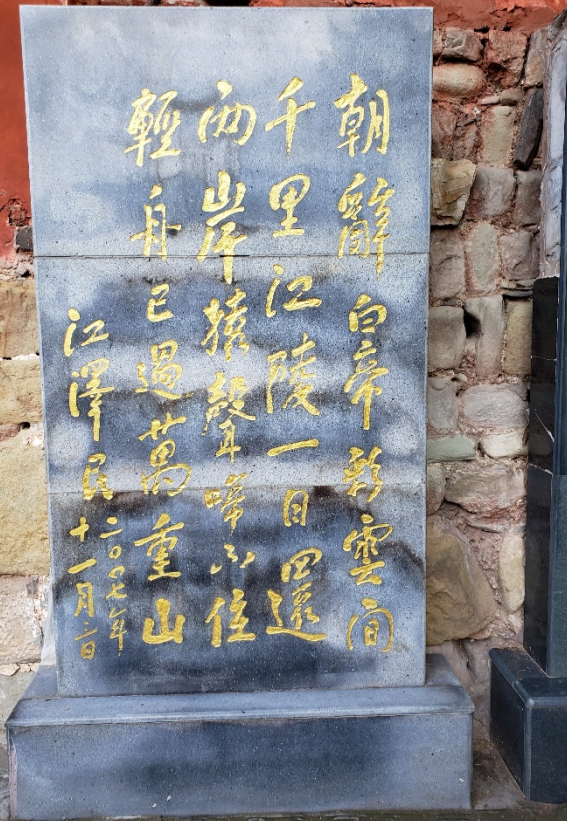




Dragon and Crane Sculptures



(Poem) Calligraphy by Chinese Communist Party Chairmen: Mao Ze-Dong, Jiang Ze-Min, Prime Minister: Zhou En-Lia





BAIDI CHENG TEMPLE WAS BUILT DURING THE WESTERN HAN DYNASTY, AND UNDERWENT REPAIRS DURING THE MING AND QING DYNASTIES. MINGLIANG TEMPLE, THE MAIN BUILDING OF BAIDI TEMPLE, WAS BUILT IN THE 12TH YEAR OF JIAJING EMPEROR'S DOMINANCY (1533).



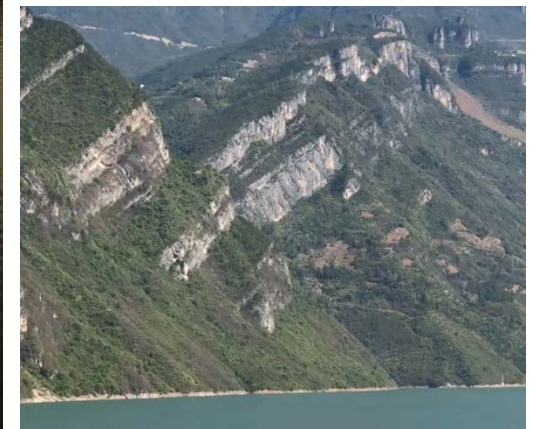
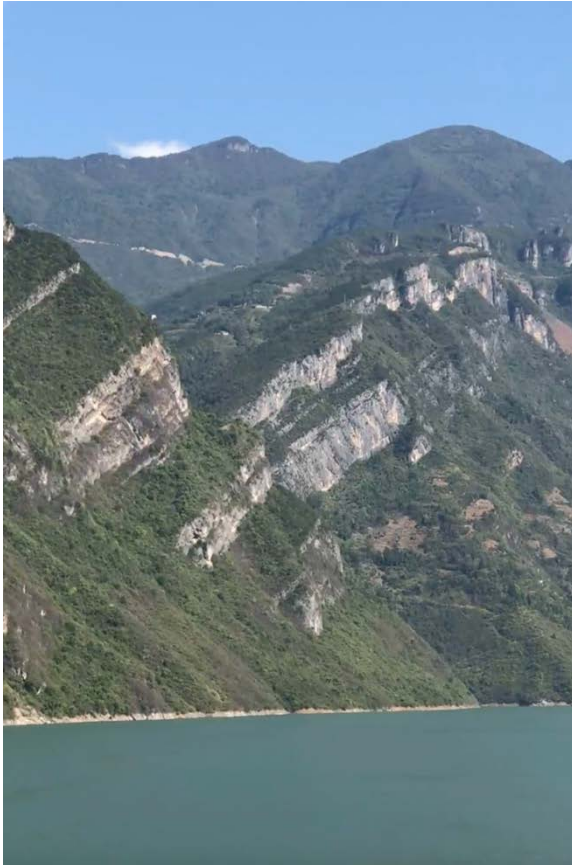
Gardens and Views at the Bottom of the Hill



YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE THREE GORGES

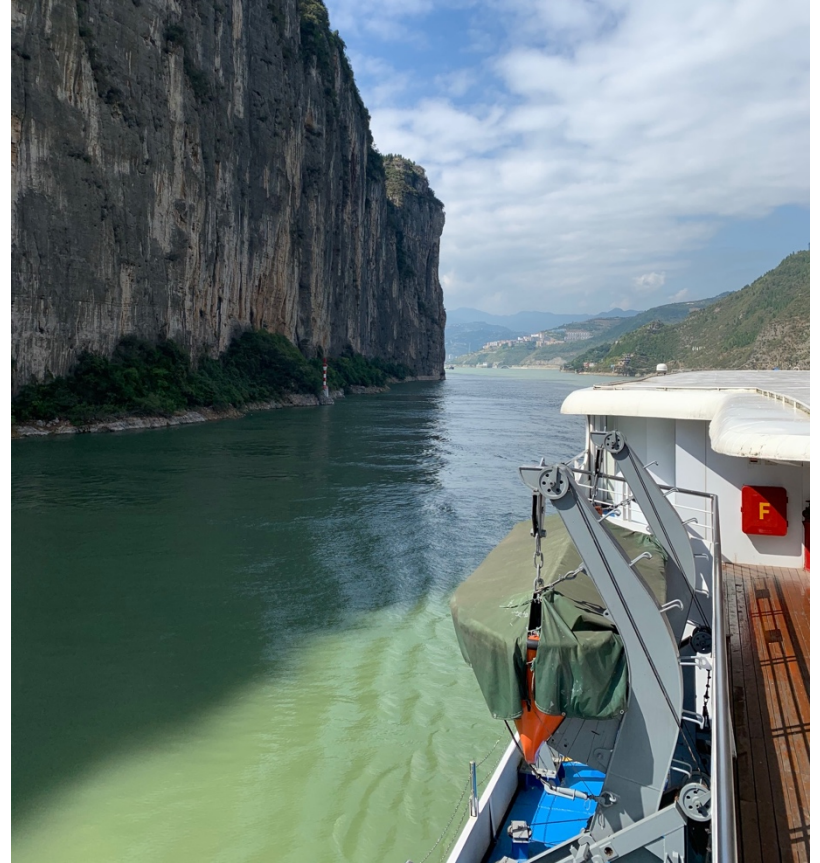
- The Three Gorges are world famous as the most scenic section of the navigable reaches of the Yangtze, and the location of the Three Gorges Dam. They form a series of natural and cultural attractions on a Yangtze Cruise between Chongqing and Yichang on the middle reaches of the Yangtze
- The Three Gorges were once a dangerous stretch of the river, nevertheless frequently used for shipping, with the inland industrial center of Chongqing as the hub.
- Since the construction of the Three Gorges Dam (structurally complete in 2006) the river level has been raised by up to 180 m (590 ft), and the river has become much quieter and more navigable.
- The Three Gorges Dam, the **world's largest dam** and hydroelectric power station, is **in Xiling Gorge**.
- The earlier Gezhou Dam (completed in 1988) is at Yichang City, the Three Gorges Dam is 35 km (23 mi) upriver.
- Cruise ships now travel between Chongqing and Yichang on placid, **lake-like waters**, enclosed by **steep cliffs**, giving passengers a better chance to see the beauty of the gorge

Along the Yangtze





Three Gorges Cliff Coffins



Gorges, Bridges, Temples, Hillsides



Shennong Stream, also called Yandu River, is the first tributary that feeds the Yangtze River after it comes out of the Wu Gorge and flows into Xiang Stream (Wang Zhaojun's birthplace — Zigui County) Broad Valley. It is known as the "Jade Waterway" of the Three Gorges. We took a traditional rowed boat trip up the river

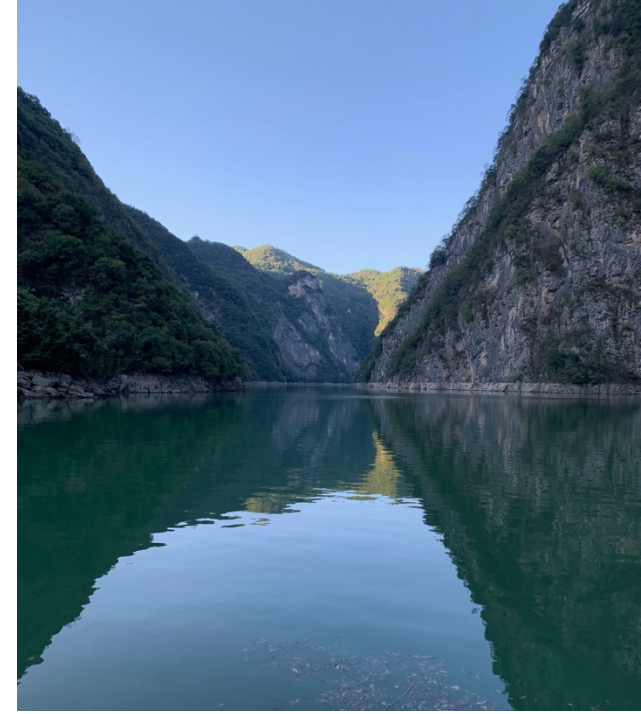
The old man rowing above is 80 years old. Men and some women wander down from hill villages to earn money rowing

OCTOBER 18, 2019



Boats on the River

Children use the suspension bridge in the picture above to get to school



**The Scenery along the River
was Extremely Beautiful**

Boats on the River (See the Shennong Videos)





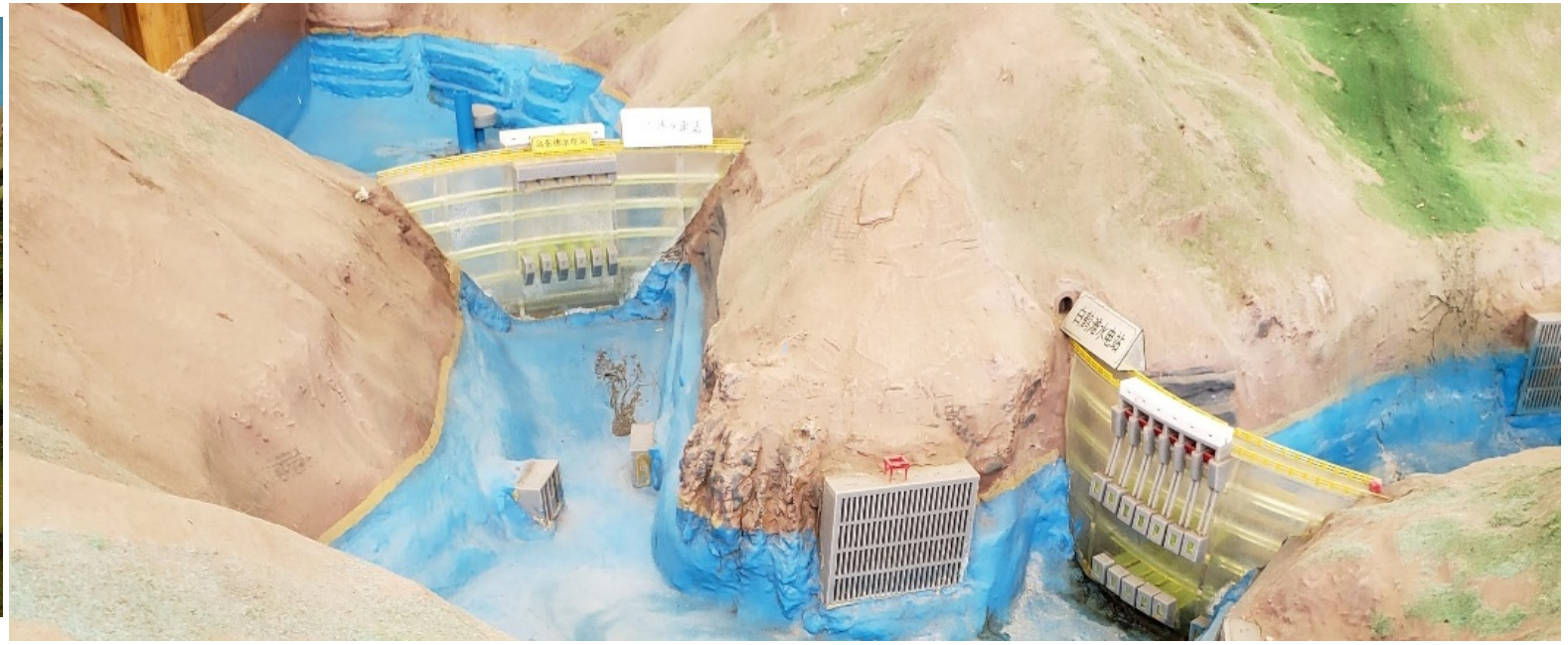
**Cruise pictures and leaving our
cruise ship President #7 in Yichang
City**



Three Gorges Dam

OCTOBER 19, 2019

Model of the Three Gorges Dam





Three Gorges Dam – The Locks





This rock was in the Yangtze River for 1 billion years and is now on display at the Three Gorges Dam viewing area

Hi-Speed train from Yichang to Suzhou: a 7-hour Journey



Suzhou, Home of Classical Gardens

OCTOBER 20, 2019



Lingering Garden, Suzhou

Suzhou is a charming network of canals, bridges, and classical gardens. The city is rightly known as the city of gardens and four of them have been included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Our group visited the Lingering Garden which is as famous for its architecture as for its garden design.





Worthy of framing – the view onto the garden . . . and our portrait!



The Grand Canal, Suzhou

The Grand Canal construction started in 486 BC and was built in sections over the next 1,000 years with the aim of linking the Yangtze with the Yellow River. It remains the world's largest man-made waterway with a length of 1,794 kilometers (1,115 miles).



VIEW THE GRAND
CANAL CRUISE
VIDEO AND WATCH
US CRUISE ON THE
GRAND CANAL!

SILK & EMBROIDERY INSTITUTE

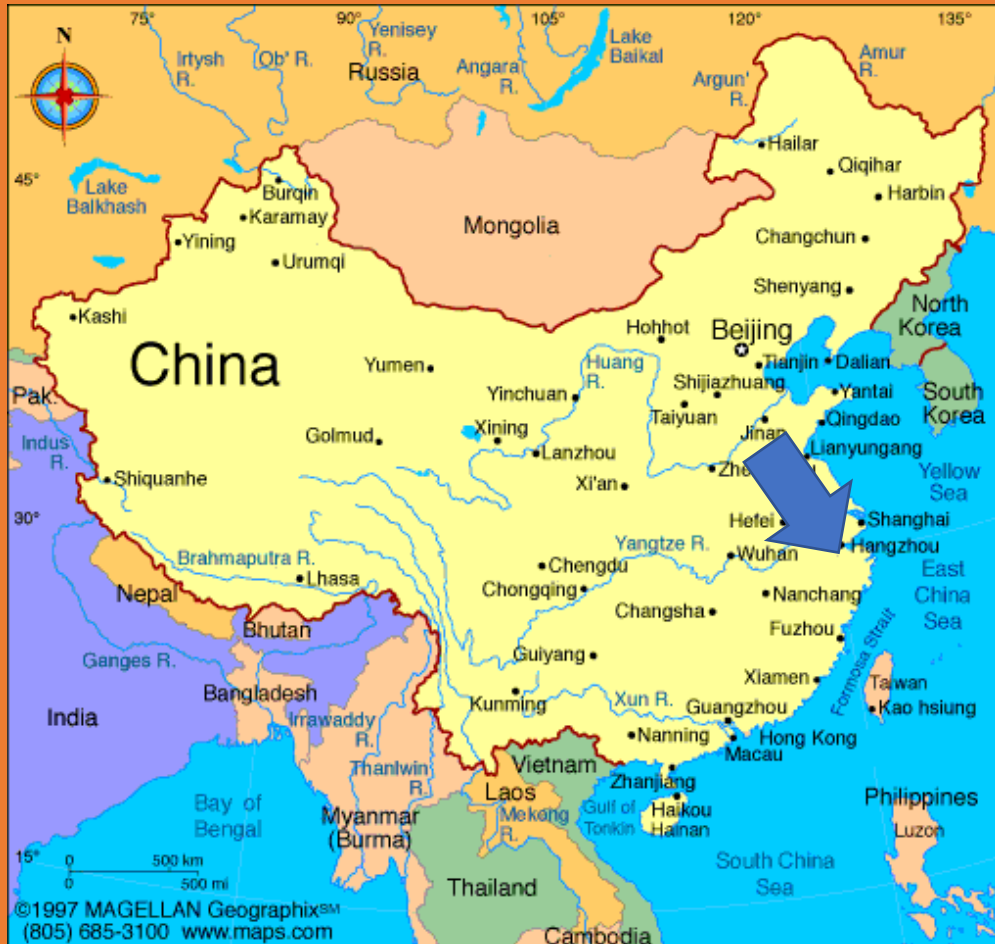


This institute specializes in two-sided embroidery pieces. The cat on the front of this work of art is orange and the cat on the back is black.



On to Hangzhou and West Lake

OCTOBER 21, 2019





West Lake is considered one of the scenic wonders of China. The lake covers over 3 square miles and is surrounded by gentle green hills. Willow trees and lotus blossoms add to the beauty. Marco Polo allegedly visited Hangzhou and described it as "the City of Heaven, the most magnificent in all the world."

West Lake in Hangzhou

This West Lake scene is pictured on the back of the banknote, 1 Renminbi.





Dragon Well Tea Plantation Hangzhou

Hangzhou, is also known as Heaven on Earth for its wonderful tea plantations. Hangzhou grew to prominence as the southern terminus of the Grand Canal and has been one of the most renowned and prosperous cities in China for much of the last millennium.

Tea is an important part of Hangzhou's economy and culture. Hangzhou is best known for originating Longing, a notable variety of green tea. The city is a picturesque wonderland surrounded by hills with a large area of tea bushes and trees.



There are an assortment of tea pavilions, as well as tea houses, where you could relax and enjoy tea. You could also wander around the tea terraces, catch glimpses of the different stages of production – cutting, sorting, and drying – and also purchase the tea. After the tea leaves are picked, part of the processing involves the roasting of the tea leaves to a temperature in excess of 900 degrees. We were lucky enough to have 2 locals demonstrate this process for us.



We found out that the substance in tea that provides the tea's anti-oxidants is polyphenol. It is recognized as the essence of green tea. Tea polyphenol has become recognized as one of nature's best anti-oxidants. The Chinese believe that green tea can help delay the aging process, improve immunity, and extend our longevity.



Shanghai

We drove from Hangzhou to Shanghai, our last stop on our China expedition. Shanghai means *above the sea* and this city straddles both sides of the Huangpu River. Shanghai is close to the mouth of the Yangtze River and is the nation's largest and most dynamic city. More than 24 million people live here.

OCTOBER 22, 2019





Shanghai Sights

(See Shanghai videos Skyline, Huangpu River, Acrobat Show)

Pictures clockwise:

Nanjing Road Shopping, our Shanghai Hotel - Courtyard Marriott, Site of the First Communist Party Congress, French Quarter Shops, Nanjing Road Police Robot on Patrol,



We took a 7 min one-way trip ride on the Maglev train from downtown Shanghai Pudong to the international airport, a distance of 30.5 km (19 mi). The train reached the speed of 431 km/h (270 mph).



Group portrait on the Shanghai Bund a waterfront area in central Shanghai. A view of the modern skyline is in the background.

**Night view of
the city
skyline from
the Shanghai
Bund**





HOME

October 23, 2019