China

**EXPLORE MONGOLIA** **THE HOME LAND OF GENGHIS KHAN**

**MAGIC NINGXIA** **OASIS IN THE LOESS HIGHLAND & HUI CULTURE**

Touring cities: Hohhot, Baotou, Ordos, Yichuan, Zhongwei, Wuzhong, Guyuan & Beijing

Tour Package Includes

- Direct Flight from Honolulu to Beijing
- 2 Domestic Air Flights
- Hotel Accommodations for 13 Nights (based on double occupancy)
- Admissions and 35 Meals as stated
- UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Temple of Heaven
- Mongolian Bonfire Party and 1 night experience in a Chariot Yurt
- Local Specialty Cuisine: Beijing Zhajiangmain, Mongolian Boiled Lamb & Mongolian Hotpot
- Camel Ride in Tengger Desert, one of the largest deserts in China
- Boat Tour on Shahu (Sand Lake)
- The China West Film Studio Tour
- Shuidonggou Ruins/Ming Great Wall Tour

**Traveling Dates:**

Jun 5 – 20, 2017 (16 Days)

Price per person: $2,988

Incl: Tax & Fuel Charge

Single Supp: $750

There exists a paradise where the chilly wind and the blue sky embrace you like a silk blanket. In this paradise, the desert sun warms your skin to your delight and the moonbeam shines brightly into the night like a phoenix. Here, you will feel the presence of yesterday’s culture and the promise of ongoing development. This is Inner Mongolia - where major attractions are the vast grassland and deserts. The autonomous region of Inner Mongolia looks like a long and narrow colorful picture scroll threading the east to the west, revealing its splendor and grandeur.

Ningxia, located in China’s geometric center, is a dazzling pearl in northwest China. Small in territory but rich in natural resources, Ningxia is endowed with magnificent and beautiful mountains and rivers as well as different national cultures and customs. Following the camel bell on the ancient “Silk Road”, bathing in the breeze of the Yellow River and listening to melodious Hua er, let’s embrace and experience amazing Ningxia – An Oasis in the Hinterland.
Day 1-2**June 5 - 6 Honolulu – Beijing

We start our vacation by boarding a Direct Flight to Beijing, the huge capital of China and an ancient city of great splendor whose history goes back 3 millennia.

Day 3**June 7 Beijing (L, D)

Arrive at Beijing International Airport. An Air & Sea travel representative will greet us and take us to the Temple of Heaven, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is widely regarded as the noblest example of religious architecture in all of China. This is where emperors came to worship heaven for a bountiful harvest. The design shows that heaven is high and the earth is low and reflects an ancient Chinese saying: ‘the heaven is round and the earth is square’. Today’s lunch features a local specialty, Beijing Zha-jiang-mian. Then, we can explore the city or enjoy free time before checking into our hotel.

Day 4**June 8 Beijing – Hohhot (B, L, D)

In the morning, take a short flight to Hohhot. Founded by a Mongolian king in the sixteenth century Hohhot once belonged to the Mongol empire and is now the capital of Inner Mongolia. Upon arrival, we will visit the Inner Mongolia Museum which offers an insight into the history and traditions of the Mongolian people with exhibits highlighting paraphernalia used by nomadic Mongols. After lunch, we will visit the Temple of the Five Pagodas in Hohhot, also known as the "Precious Pagoda of the Buddhist Relics of the Diamond Throne". The distinctive five pagodas are built on a temple that contains 1563 images of Buddha carved into its walls, each differing slightly from the others. Inside is a rare Mongolian cosmological map carved into a large stone which illustrates the zodiac and positions of numerous stars.

Day 5**June 9 Hohhot (B, L, D)

In the morning, we will visit Dazhao Temple, the oldest and the largest Buddhist monastery in the city of Hohhot. It is also called the Silver Buddha Temple (Yinfo Si) because of an astounding 10-foot high silver statue of Sakyamuni Buddha among the temple’s many treasures. Dazhao also has an impressive collection of musical instruments and dragon sculptures related to Mongol legends. Next, we will visit The Zhaojun Tomb, said to be the resting place of Wang Zhaojun, a female commoner from the Chinese Han Empire who married Xiongnu Chanyu, nomadic chieftain from the steppes. The tomb is also referred to by its Mongolian name, Temür Urkhu, meaning "Iron Wall". Another nickname, "Green Mound", refers to a legend that in autumn, when grass and trees wither, the only plants that remain green are on this cemetery mound. Lastly, we will visit a Milk Dairy Factory, one of the leading manufacturers of milk, yogurt and other dairy products in mainland China. Tonight, we will enjoy the famous Mongolian Hotpot.

Day 6**June 10 Hohhot – Baotou (B, L, D)

After breakfast, we will go to Xilamuren Grassland in Baotou, the largest industrial city in the Inner Mongolia. Meaning "yellow river" in Mongolian, the Xilamuren Grassland is the earliest grassland to have been developed as a tourism attraction in Inner Mongolia. It covers an area of 1,000 square kilometers, with an altitude of 1,700 meters and is a typical plateau of grassland with a chain of undulating hills around it. Upon arrival, we will participate in the ceremony of “Dismount Wine” and taste the local specialty – Mongolian Boiled Lamb. We can learn about the modern Mongolian people’s lives from activities on the grassland. In the afternoon, we can watch The Three Heroic Mongolian Sports: wrestling, horse racing, and rodeo events. After dinner, enjoy the Bonfire Party with Mongolian songs and dances. Tonight, we might have a chance to experience spending a night in the Chariot Yurts, an important means of transportation in Mongolia.

Day 7**June 11 Baotou – Ordos (B, L, D)

Upon arrival, take a bus to Ordos via Meidaizhao Village and Meidaizhao Lamasery. The lamasery (combination of a town and a temple) was built by Alatan Khan, chief of the Tumed Mongolian Tribe of the Ming Dynasty. The architecture is a mixture of Central Chinese style with Tibetan and Mongolian features. It was one of the most important centers for spreading Tibetan Buddhism in Inner Mongolia. Next, we will visit Resonant Sand Bay by Chairlift. This is a National 4A-Grade Natural Scenic Area located in the east section of Kubuqi Desert, China’s seventh largest desert. The sand makes a sound like an automobile or aircraft engine -- a natural phenomenon that nobody can explain. There are more exciting activities afterwards including: Camel ride, Mongolian-style Wedding Show, Sand-sculptures, and Train Ride in the desert.
Day 8*June 12  
Ordos – Yinchuan  
(B, L, D)

Inner Mongolia is the home of Genghis Khan (1162-1227), the Great Khan (Emperor) who founded the Mongol Empire, which became the largest contiguous empire in history after his death. He came to power by uniting many of the nomadic tribes of Northeast Asia and started the Mongol invasions that conquered most of Eurasia. By the end of his life, the Mongol Empire occupied a substantial portion of Central Asia and China. His Mausoleum, located about 71 miles south of Baotou, holds his clothing buried in his memory. This morning we will visit Genghis Khan’s Mausoleum. In the afternoon, we continue driving to Yinchuan, the capital of Ningxia province and the Ningxia HUI autonomous region. Ningxia is the home of Chinese Muslims called “HUI”.

Day 9*June 13  
Yinchuan  
(B, L, D)

This morning, we will visit The China West Film Studio, the National 5A-Grade Tourism Scenic Area. It is famous for being known as the studio from which Chinese movies started to go global. China West Film Studio is simple, bleak, raw and folklike compared to other studios in China. It produced “Red Sorghum” directed by Zhang Yimou which won the German Golden Bear Prize. Of the nearly 100 films produced here, outstanding ones include “A Chinese Odyssey” directed by Jeffrey Lau, “Ballad of the Yellow River” directed by Teng Wenji and winner of the Montreal Golden Prize, “Qiao’s Grand Courtyard”, “The Herdsman”, “Lovers’ Grief over the Yellow River”, “New Dragon Inn”, and “Ashes of Time”. Visiting this location will give you an idea of how Chinese movies are made and why they have received many awards at both domestic and international film festivals. Walking in the city, mysterious ancient ruins and rustic Hui customs will take you to a world that is far away from today’s modern world. On the way, we will visit the Western Xia Mausoleum, the royal family tombs nicknamed “the China Pyramids”. The nine emperor tombs and 207 minister tombs are the most massive and well protected tombs in China. Another highlight is Helan Mountain Rock Carving. Over 6,000 engravings have been documented at Helankou. The engravings have clearly been produced over a considerable period of time, somewhere between 3,000 and 10,000 years ago. The engravings depict human figures, animals and symbols. The human figures portray scenes of hunting, herding, sacrificialis, battle, dance and procreation. The animal engravings depict tigers, leopards, sika deer, sheep, cattle, horses, and camels. The symbols consist mainly of mask like faces, the most conspicuous of which is the Sun God engraving. The Helan Shan has acted as a boundary between the nomadic farmers to the north and the sedentary farmers to the south. As such, it has been a meeting place between the two lifestyles, and celebrated by the practice of engraving art in the rocks. Let’s explore the place like archeologists.

Day 10*June 14  
Yinchuan – Zhongwei  
(B, L, D)

Today, we will drive to Qingtongxia Scenic Area (Qingtong Gorge). A visit to the dam on this part of the Yellow River and a Boat Ride has been arranged for us in the morning. The impressive Pagoda 108 originally built in the Mongolian Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) is on the mountain slope of the western bank. Arranged in twelve rows in the shape of a large equilateral triangle – tapering from one to nineteen, the pagoda complex is a cenotaph for Buddhism with enduring mystery. The unique form, style and the great number of pagodas have never been seen before, giving rise to all kinds of enchanting tales. After lunch, we will drive to Tengger Desert, one of the four largest deserts in China. The local people have managed to harness the desert by planting grass in chessboard patterns. Travelers may venture into the Tengger Desert, a National 5A-Grade Tourism Scenic Area, by Riding Camels, or rafting down the Yellow River on sheepskin dinghies. This part of the desert is called “Shapotou Scenic Area”. After our fun in the desert, we will swing to Tonghu Grassland. It is well known as the “Green Eden in the desert”, another National 5A-Grade Tourism Scenic Area. The grassland represents a large variety of natural landscapes, such as salt lakes, wetlands, grasslands, migratory birds and fresh air. White Mongolian tents are seen around the area. Tonghu Grassland is endowed with massive Mongolian culture and is as beautiful as a colorful painting. Stay overnight at Zhongwei.

Day 11*June 15  
Zhongwei – Guyuan  
(B, L, D)

After eating breakfast & checking out of our hotel, we will visit the Xumishan Grottoes, National 3A-Grade Tourism Scenic Area. It has a collection of more than 130 Buddhist cave temples, built between the 5th and 10th centuries. Xumishan capitalized on its proximity to the Silk Road, the crucial trade artery between East and West that was a thoroughfare not only for goods but also for culture and religious beliefs. The teachings of Buddha traveled from India to China along this route, and with them came the cave temple tradition. Thus, human settlement has been driven by location. Ningxia Huoshizhai National Geological Park, National 3A-Grade Tourism Scenic Area (literally meaning fire rock village) is named because the mountains are dark red like burning flame balls especially under the shade of green trees. It is famous for its unique “Danxia” landform. Danxia, which means "rosy cloud", is a kind of special landform made from reddish sandstone that has eroded over time into a series of mountains surrounded by curvaceous cliffs and many unusual rock formations. In spring and summer, the hillsides are profuse with flowers, bees and butterflies and full of vitality. The arrow bamboo between the sparse trees add a bit of southern beauty to the northern landscape. Finally, we will drive to Guyuan and stay overnight.
Day 13**June 17

Guyuan – Yinchuan **(B, L, D)**

After breakfast, we will drive to **Yinchuan**, the capital of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. The name of the city literally means "silver river". Thanks to the Yellow River, Yinchuan enjoys beautiful natural scenery and favorable conditions for agriculture and has long earned the fame of a "River Side City in the Northwest" and "Home to Fishes and Rice". Yinchuan is now the permanent site for the China-Arab Expo, an international platform for cultural and economic exchanges between China and Arab countries. On the way, we will visit **The China Hui Culture Park**, the only theme park in China showcasing the ethnic Hui religion, traditions and culture, and the integration of Islamic and traditional Chinese culture from the Han and Tang dynasties. Opened in 2005, the 20-hectare park accommodates a Hui museum, a ritual palace, a Hui ethnic customs village and a Hui catering and performance center. The main attraction of the park is a white Islamic-style building encircled by a long corridor whose design is based on the Taj Mahal. We can explore the **HUI Ethnic Village** and the largest **Muslim mosque**. Since several villages are located in the park, we will have a chance to interact with some locals like the **Najia Family**.

Day 14**June 18

Yinchuan – Beijing **(B, L)**

We will explore **Shuidonggou** (water gully), a **National 5A-Grade Tourism Scenic Area**. Our first stop is the **Shuidonggou Ruins**, one of the oldest ruins in China with many artifacts from the late Paleolithic age. Belgian missionaries from Kent discovered these ruins in 1919. Fossils of dziggetai (Mongolian wild ass), rhinos, antelopes, cattle, pigs and other animals along with more than 11,000 different pieces of stone tools were found here. The exhumation of the ruins showed that human beings lived here more than 30,000 years ago in the Paleolithic age. The **Ming Great Wall** passes a small tributary which connects to the Yellow River nine kilometers north-west of here. In some places the wall is not much more than a pile of sand, but we will be impressed by the workmanship that has allowed the mud wall to survive for so many years. There is also a castle like place called **Hongshan Fort**. In a rocky gorge/valley/chasm near the fort, there are tunnels leading underground where soldiers hid and created medieval booby traps. We will drive over the **Yinchuan Yellow River Bridge** and through the **Unity Square**. This afternoon, we will fly back to Beijing.

Day 15**June 19

Beijing **(B)**

**Free at own leisure**. Tonight, we will transfer to the airport for our return flight home.

*** Depart to airport at 10:00PM. Our flight leaves at 1:50 AM midnight on June 20th.***  
*** Hotel room is reserved until the June 20th, so we do not need to check out till late at night.***

Day 16**June 20

Beijing – Honolulu **(B)**

Our flight to Honolulu leaves after midnight, ending our wonderful tour in China. 

**We arrive at Honolulu on June 19th at approximately 5:30PM.**

**** FREE 10-Yrs China Visa w / multiple entries is available NOW ****  
**** Call your Air & Sea Travel Agent for more details and conditions ****

We wish you a safe journey and many wonderful memories to share with family and friends! ☺  

**B: Breakfast | L: Lunch | D: Dinner**
Within 70 days before departure, the cancellation fee will be as follow:

** 69-31 days prior to departure, 50% of total price plus any other service fee caused from the cancellation;
** 30 days prior to departure or withdrawing during the tour shall be regarded as willingly giving up all rights concerned, 100% of total price, and request for other services as a substitute shall not be accepted.

We strongly recommend purchasing travel insurance when you make a reservation.