



WALL, WARRIORS & NORTHERN LAOS WANDERER, (EBP)

Luang Prabang to Beijing 45 Days, departing 30th March 2022



TRIP OVERVIEW

Trip Style: Overlanding

Route: Luang Prabang to Beijing

Duration: 45 Days

Transport: Overland Expedition Vehicle, Private Bus, Ferry, Overnight Boat, Metro, Taxi

Accommodation: Comfortable Hotel 8 nights
Guesthouse 8 nights
Basic Hotel 24 nights
Multishare Hostel 2 nights
Overnight Boat 2 nights

Meals: Breakfasts x 16, Lunches x 1, Dinners x 1

Physical Challenge:



Your itinerary may include easy-paced day walks, bike rides, and other activities that are not too strenuous.

Lifestyle Challenge:



You may be camping some of the time but the pace of the trip is fairly relaxed and the facilities and road conditions are generally of a high standard.



DAILY ITINERARY

Day 1 - Luang Prabang (30th March 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Border Information: If joining in Luang Prabang, you will most likely enter Laos at Luang Prabang International Airport (IATA code: LPQ).

Today will be a free day to explore the beautiful city of Luang Prabang until the evening. There will be a group meeting today at 6:00pm - please look out for a note from your tour leader on arrival at the joining hotel with more information about this important meeting.

Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible for those with extra time in Luang Prabang before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Luang Prabang.

Accommodation: Sunway Hotel

Day 2 - Luang Namtha (31st March 2022)

This morning we drive through the stunning countryside of northern Laos to the small town of Luang Namtha.

In Luang Namtha we will have two free days to enjoy the many optional activities available in and around Luang Namtha and the nearby Nam Ha National Park. Popular activities here include hiking and trekking in the National Park.

Day 3 - Luang Namtha (1st April 2022)

Today is a free day for activities in and around Luang Namtha.

Day 4 - Luang Namtha (2nd April 2022)

Today is a free day for activities in and around Luang Namtha.

Day 5 - Mohan (3rd April 2022)

Border Information: Exit Laos at Boten, enter China at Mengla.

This morning we will cross the border into China and begin our journey through the southern Chinese region of Xishuangbanna. We spend the next few days overlanding through this beautiful area, stopping off at towns, villages and local markets along the way.

Tonight we will stay in the border town of Mengla while your crew finalise the paperwork to enter our truck into China.

Day 6 - Xishuangbanna (4th April 2022)

Today will be a full day's drive through Yunnan province towards Kunming, most likely reaching the town of Mojiang or Yuxi en route.

Day 7 - Kunming (5th April 2022)

This morning we will complete our drive to the incredible Shilin Stone Forest. We will have a free afternoon exploring the stunning and bizarre rock formations of the Stone Forest.

Day 8 - Kunming (6th April 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will drive to Kunming, the vibrant, modern capital of Yunnan province. We will have a free day to explore the city's sights.

Day 9 - Kunming (7th April 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Border Information: if joining in Kunming, you will most likely enter China at Kunming Changshui International Airport (IATA code: KMG).

There will be a group meeting today at 6:00pm - please look out for a note from your tour leader at the hotel reception with more information about this important meeting.

The rest of the day will be free to explore the city of Kunming, its museums and its parks.

Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible for those with extra time in Kunming before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Kunming.

Day 10 - Dali (8th April 2022)

Today our journey begins with a morning drive to the beautiful Naxi town of Dali, where we will stay for 2 nights.

Day 11 - Dali (9th April 2022)

Today we will have a free day to fully explore the area and for optional activities such as some short treks in the nearby Cangshan mountains or hiring bicycles to ride around the Dali lake.

Day 12 - Tiger Leaping Gorge (10th April 2022)

Today we drive further north through Yunnan province to the beautiful 'Old-China'-style town of Lijiang, the base for visiting the world-famous Tiger Leaping Gorge.

Day 13 - Tiger Leaping Gorge (11th April 2022)

These following 2 days we will have free time to explore the town of Lijiang and its surroundings. One very popular excursion here is to go on a 2 day/1 night trek along the high trail above the Tiger Leaping Gorge - this is by far the best way to see the gorge from some truly incredible vantage points, and we will have the opportunity to take this trek during our time here (staying in a local guesthouse on the trail on the first night and returning to Lijiang for the second).

Day 14 - Tiger Leaping Gorge (12th April 2022)

For those that haven't done the full trek, your crew will also be able to arrange a trip to the low sections of the gorge, where there is a flat walkway to various viewpoints.

Day 15 - Panzhihua (13th April 2022)

Today we have a long drive north through stunning mountain scenery towards China's Sichuan province.

Day 16 - Emei Shan (14th April 2022)

Today we will continue our drive to the small town of Emei Shan.

Day 17 - Emei Shan (15th April 2022)

Today we will have a full day to explore Emei Shan Mountain, one of the holiest sites in Chinese Buddhism and the site of hundreds of temples and an incredible golden statue of the deity known as Samantabhadra. It is possible to walk all the way up the stairs from the base of the mountain, joining the many pilgrims in their journey to the temple complex at the mountain summit, or take the cable car up instead!

Day 18 - Chengdu (16th April 2022)

Today we continue our journey north to the town of Leshan to visit to the Leshan Grand Buddha - at 71m tall, this statue is the largest Buddha rock carving in the world!

After our visit we will continue to the incredible city of Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province, where we will stay for 2 nights. On arrival we will have a free afternoon to explore the city's parks, streets, and museums, and visit the fascinating and incredibly photogenic Jinli Old Town.

Day 19 - Chengdu (17th April 2022)

Today we will have an included visit to the fantastic Chengdu Panda Breeding Centre. We'll then return to Chengdu for another free afternoon to further explore the city.

Day 20 - Dazu (18th April 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

From Chengdu we will continue to the small village of Dazu, where we visit the Bei Shan and Baoding Shan caves, famous for their brightly-coloured freizes and carvings.

Day 21 - Chongqing (19th April 2022)

Today we will drive on the Chongqing, where we will have time to explore the city and prepare for tomorrow's ferry

cruise on the mighty Yangtze River!

We will most likely stay in a local hotel in Chongqing tonight, but on occasion our ferry may need to depart tonight, in which case we will have a spare day later in the trip that we can use at our discretion.

Day 22 - Yangtze River (20th April 2022)

Today we embark on our Yangtze River Cruise. We travel on a local ferry boat used by local people, a much more authentic and interesting way of travelling than on a tourist cruise. We stay in shared cabins (4 members of the group to each cabin) with private bathrooms and air conditioning where possible.

The journey itself usually takes 3 days/3 nights and heads through some areas of stunning scenery, especially near the Three Gorges - the Qutang, Wu and Xiling Gorges. The boats usually stop at the Fengdu (Ghost City), Shibaozai Tower, home to the Lanruo Dian (Orchid Temple) and at the three Lesser Gorges at various points on the trip. However due to local conditions, stops cannot always be guaranteed.

Day 23 - Yangtze River (21st April 2022)

Second day of our Yangtze River Cruise.

Day 24 - Yangtze River (22nd April 2022)

We will arrive in the city of Yichang and disembark our ferry to rejoin our truck and co-leader and have some free time to explore Yichang and the surrounding area.

We will most likely have an included visit to the incredible Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world, on the last day.

Day 25 - Xiang Fan (23rd April 2022)

This morning we will have some free time in Yichang or visit the Three Gorges Dam if we did not have time yesterday. After lunch we will drive to the town of Xiang Fan, en route to Wudang Shan.

Day 26 - Wudang Shan (24th April 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will continue our journey with a drive to the beautiful Wudang Shan Mountain Reserve, the birthplace of the martial art of Taichi and the location of the filming of 'Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon'. We will also try to stop at the Purple Cloud Monastery en route if time allows.

Day 27 - Wudang Shan (25th April 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will have a full day to explore the mountain's sights, temples and martial arts schools.

Day 28 - Xi'an (26th April 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will drive to the amazing city of Xi'an, the ancient capital of Shaanxi province and the end of the 'Silk Road'! We will have a free afternoon on arrival to explore the city of Xi'an, its famous walls, bell and drum towers, pagodas and Muslim Quarter.

Day 29 - Xi'an (27th April 2022)

Border Information: if joining in Xi'an, you will most likely enter China at Xi'an Xianyang International Airport (IATA code: XIY).

Welcome to the amazing city of Xi'an, the ancient capital of Shaanxi province and the end of the 'Silk Road'!

There will be a group meeting today at 10:00am - please look out for a note from your tour leader at the hotel reception with more information about this important meeting.

This afternoon we head out of Xi'an on the truck to the site of the world-famous Terracotta Warriors, where we have an included visit and a guided tour.

Please note that many of the optional activities listed will only be possible for those with extra time in Xi'an before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Xi'an.

Day 30 - Xi'an (28th April 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will have a free day to explore the city of Xi'an, it's famous walls, bell and drum towers, pagodas and Muslim Quarter.

Day 31 - Yan'an (29th April 2022)

Today we make our way to the city of Yan'an. Yan'an is famous for being the ending point for those on the 'Long March', and became the CCP headquarters for a brief period. During our time here we have an included visit to the Revolutionary Museum and the CCP Headquarters site.

Day 32 - Lijiashan (30th April 2022)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we continue our journey to visit the ancient village of Lijiashan, famed for settlement of cave dwellers and still home to more than 600 families.

In Lijiashan we will stay in a cave room, run by a local family and set up for guests.

Please note that some caves include a traditional 'Kang Stove bed'. The Kang bed is a hollow platform made from bricks that is used both as a bed and as a work area, these are common in remote villages in Northern China. In winter a coal fire can be lit under the bed, providing a huge amount of warmth day and night and it is very common for the whole family to sleep on one large bed. This means there may be times that members of the group may have to share 1 large bed with others in the group.

Day 33 - Pingyao (1st May 2022)

We will set off early this morning for an included visit to the Black Dragon Temple just outside of Lijiashan. We will then drive to China's best-preserved ancient walled town, Pingyao.

Day 34 - Pingyao (2nd May 2022)

We will stay for 2 more nights in Pingyao, giving us plenty of time to explore this ancient town and surrounding sites such as the Mian Shan Mountain Resort and the Zhangbi Underground City.

Day 35 - Pingyao (3rd May 2022)

Today we will have another day to explore Pingyao and its surroundings.

Day 36 - Wutai Shan (4th May 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

This morning we continue to the stunning mountainous area known as Wutai Shan, one of the holiest sites of Chinese Buddhism and a major centre of pilgrimage in the country.

Day 37 - Wutai Shan (5th May 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will have a full day to explore the area and visit its incredible array of temples and religious sites.

Day 38 - Datong (6th May 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will drive to the city of Datong. We will have an included visit to the incredible Hanging Monastery en route.

Day 39 - Datong (7th May 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will head out of Datong in the truck on an included visit to the awe-inspiring Yungang Buddha Caves.

Day 40 - Jinshanling (8th May 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

This morning we will drive to one of the world's most incredible sights - the Jinshanling section of the Great Wall of China! We will have time this afternoon and the following morning to thoroughly explore and walk along the Great Wall.

Day 41 - Chengde (9th May 2022)

This morning we will spend some more time exploring the Great Wall of China. We will then continue with a short drive to the city of Chengde.

Day 42 - Chengde (10th May 2022)

On the following day we will have a full day to explore the Puning Temple and the famous Imperial Summer Resort.

Day 43 - Beijing (11th May 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we complete our journey to China's chaotic and evocative capital, Beijing!

Day 44 - Beijing (12th May 2022)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will head out on the Beijing metro to the city centre's famous Tiananmen Square, which we will walk through and then take a tour of the Forbidden City. We will then have a free afternoon to fully explore the many sights, sounds and flavours of Beijing.

Day 45 - Beijing (13th May 2022)

Border Information: if leaving in Beijing, you will most likely exit China at Beijing Capital International Airport (IATA code: PEK).

Today is the end day for passengers finishing their trip in Beijing. Please note there is no accommodation included on the trip tonight - please contact the Sales Team if you are interested in booking extra nights of accommodation in order to fully explore and take part in some of the optional activities listed below.

Accommodation:

ITINERARY DISCLAIMER

The routes, activities and places visited described in these notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only. By their very nature, overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We intend to follow the planned route but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed and it sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons; climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. Changes to the itinerary may occur with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to your trip.

Drive Times

Drive times are listed in the day-to-day itinerary. These are the approximate number of hours that the vehicle will be in motion, and does not include any time taken for coffee or lunch stops, border crossings, photo stops, activities en route, comfort breaks, shopping stops, toilet stops, etc. The times given are approximate estimates only and whilst given with the best of intentions, the drive times are heavily dependent on traffic, road conditions, weather, police roadblocks, and many other factors.

Accommodation and Meals Included

The type of accommodation and included meals are listed for each day of the itinerary. These listings show our intention and on most departures the listings will be accurate. However due to the flexible nature of overland itineraries, climatic, bureaucratic or road conditions may demand changes to our listed intentions or groups may simply decide to amend the plans from time to time.

Optional Activities

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Certain activities may not be available on your particular visit and it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination. It is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in some optional activities there. Prices listed are for entrance only and do not include transport costs to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated. The prices are displayed according to our latest information and in the best faith, but prices do fluctuate due to exchange rates, season, numbers of participants, and simple increases from the operator, and therefore any prices listed are a guide only and cannot be guaranteed. If you partake in any optional activities, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities. For more information around activity safety and insurance, please see the Essential Information document.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In the event of a real emergency once you have left your home country, please contact us on our out of office hours number. If you cannot get through on the phone, please leave a message with your name, reference number, contact details and a message with the help that you need and we will get back to you. Please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours, depending on the issue.

If your flight is delayed, please inform us as soon as you can and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in the Joining Point section of these notes.

Out of hours Number: +44 (0) 7985 106564

A FEW RULES

We expect all group members to act respectfully towards our staff and other group members. Bullying will not be tolerated.

Engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities, committing acts of violence or threatening violence towards local people, other group members or any member of our staff is not allowed. Any customer engaging in such activities will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

You must at all times comply with the laws, customs, foreign exchange and drug regulations of all countries visited and conduct yourself in accordance with our responsible travel policy. Any customer found contravening such laws or regulations will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Although we are aware that in some parts of the world taking, carrying or selling drugs, or carrying weapons may be legal, it is not acceptable for Dragoman customers and our tour leaders have the right to ask you to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price if you are found to be engaging in such activities.

ISSUES ON THE TRIP

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk.

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

IMPORTANT NOTES

OVERLANDING LIFESTYLE

Dragoman was founded in 1981, and has had many years of experience of leading overland trips across 4 continents. Overlanding is all about sharing a great travelling experience with like-minded people. On your trip you'll travel in one of Dragoman's purpose-built iconic expedition vehicles on an off-the-beaten-track adventure along rugged roads, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of the world up-close. Your journey will be overland, sometimes across vast distances, so some long days spent driving are inevitable - but these will be interspersed with breaks of a day or two at a destination or activity.

On an overland journey, you are more than just a passenger and everyone gets involved setting up camp - we supply the tent but it's up to you to pitch it! As part of your trip, you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting firewood or water, luggage loading, organising food, stores, etc. Like all great adventures, the more you put in the more you'll get out! For more details of how an overlanding trip works, please see the Essential Information document.

SAFETY STANDARDS

We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure. You should expect that some of these areas do not adhere to 'Western' safety standards. For more information, please see the Essential Information document

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN REMOTE AREAS

We will be travelling to areas in remote locations where medical assistance will not be available, and communications may be sparse. We do not carry satellite phones on our regular trips. Therefore, if you have a medical condition such as a heart condition that would put you at risk, we would suggest that this is not the trip for you. Also, please be aware that should an emergency occur, there is likely to be a considerable delay in accessing medical care, and by joining our trip you accept this risk.

VISAS, HEALTH, INSURANCE & MONEY

Before you travel there are vital things to consider such as:

- Any visas needed for your trip
- Any vaccinations needed (please consult your GP or travel clinic)
- Organising your local payment (the kitty)
- Buying travel insurance (insurance is compulsory to be allowed to join our trips)

For more information on these topics, please see the Essential Information Document.

LAOS NOTES

CHINA NOTES

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these notes. **These notes were printed on the 6th March 2021**