



STATUE IN YU YUAN GARDEN BY PATRICK DENKER

CHINA | Gardens, Culture, History, People, & Nature

13 DAYS from \$5,880 | Choose your dates | Best season to travel: **MAY, SEP-OCT**

SEE how 7,000 years of continuous civilization find beautiful expression in the legendary gardens of China. Our journey spotlights a variety of classical Chinese gardens, nature reserves, and botanical gardens whose biodiversity is complemented by the distinctive characters of cities like monumental Beijing, futuristic Shanghai, and ethnic Kunming. Your itinerary includes visits to six UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the Great Wall and six of the nine Classical Gardens of Suzhou. Achieve a few travel milestones while witnessing the best of Chinese horticulture.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- See the Classical Gardens of Suzhou, which date to the 11th century and constitute a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Behold the iconic treasures of Beijing, from the Forbidden City to the Great Wall and more.
- Explore 2,222-acre Menglun Tropical Botanical Garden, a research facility of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, whose 13,000 tropical plant species thrive in 35 living collections.
- Visit the Wild Elephant Sanchahe Nature Reserve and its expanse of forests, including tropical rainforests and subtropical evergreen broad-leafed forests, and the over 400 species of flora within.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Specialist guides
- Private transportation
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Meals
- Beverages with meals
- Bottled water on the bus
- Carbon offsetting



HUMBLE ADMINISTRATOR'S GARDEN



GREAT WALL OF CHINA BY MARCIN BIALEK

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

Day 1 (Tuesday) | **Beijing**

On arrival in Beijing, after clearing customs and immigration, you will be met and transferred to the Bamboo Garden Hotel, a classical Chinese courtyard-style structure in a quiet lane west of the Drum Tower in Beijing. The halls and pavilions in the building are linked by long corridors, with a tranquil and elegant surrounding of bamboo groves, rockeries, and fountains. *Overnight at Bamboo Garden Hotel*

Day 2 | **Beijing**

This morning go to the Northeast area of Beijing to visit the Fragrant Hills, location of the Beijing Botanical Gardens. Tour the gardens in the morning including exhibition greenhouses as well as WoFoSi Sleeping Buddha Temple. Have lunch at the I.M. Pei designed Fragrant Hills Hotel. After lunch visit the Qing Dynasty Summer Palace. Cruise on Kunming Lake and stroll through the royal gardens. Return to the hotel and go out for dinner at a special Peking Duck restaurant. *Overnight at Bamboo Garden Hotel (BLD)*

Day 3 | **Beijing**

This morning visit Daguanyuan Gardens, which were completed in 1988 as a film set to replicate a re-known Qing Dynasty Imperial Garden for a television series based on the classic Chinese novel, "A Dream of Red Mansions." In the afternoon, go outside the city to visit the Great Wall of China, the largest defensive structure ever built. Scholars estimate that the Wall once stretched for 6,200 kilometers. Your visit will focus on Mutianyu, a rugged, somewhat less visited section of the Wall with cable car availability and striking, panoramic views. On return to the city, stop at the Olympic Park to see

the Birds Nest Stadium and the Water Cube. Dinner tonight at the restaurant attached to the Peking Opera Museum. There will be an opportunity to see a short selection of Peking Opera highlights in a traditional North China teahouse setting after dinner. *Overnight at Bamboo Garden Hotel (BLD)*



BEIJING BOTANICAL GARDEN

Day 4 | **Beijing/Kunming**

This morning check out of the hotel and visit Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City, the abiding symbol of dynastic China. Originally built in 1406, the Imperial Palace Museum now houses a collection of antiquities and art from China's last dynasty. After lunch fly to Kunming, known as China's "Spring City" for its year-round moderate weather. On arrival, transfer to the Grand Park Hotel. *Overnight at Grand Park Hotel (BLD)*

Day 5 | **Kunming**

This morning drive to see The Stone Forest, a natural formation of Karst rock formations and the home of the Sani, one of Yunnan Province's ethnic minorities. After lunch, return to Kunming and visit the Horticultural Expo Garden.

Built in 1999, it has halls and pavilions with a vast collection of plants from China and the world. This evening fly to Jinghong, set along the Lancang (Mekong) River. Jinghong is the capital of the Xishuangbanna Prefecture, which is a subtropical lowland that borders Laos and Burma. Dinner is on own this evening. *Overnight at New Tai Garden Hotel (BL)*

Day 6 | **Jinghong**

This morning visit the Wild Elephant Sanchahe Nature Reserve, located on 369 hectares of rainforest just 47 kilometers north of Jinghong. The reserve is abundant in various natural resources including subtropical forests, tropical rainforests (these are found in the valleys below 800 meters above sea level), half-deciduous rainforests (distributed between 800-900 meters above sea level), and subtropical evergreen broad-leafed forests. There are the naturally-occurring wild animals in these various forest habitats, as well as over 400 species of flora. After your time in the reserve, you will return to Jinghong for overnight. *Overnight at New Tai Garden Hotel (BLD)*

Day 7 | **Jinghong**

Today you will have the opportunity to take a boat ride on the Lancang [Mekong] River, visiting a minority nationality village on the way. This afternoon visit the Menglun Tropical Botanical Garden. Within the garden, which belongs to the Chinese Academy of Sciences, you will find many unique and rare plants. The dragon dracaena (*Dracaena draco*) with big leaves was cultivated by Prof Cai himself. The tree is the main ingredient for an herbal drug called dragon's blood, which can effectively invigorate the circulation of blood and stop bleeding. You will also find the upas tree (*Antiaris toxicaria*), which is extremely poisonous. When going hunting, the local people used to mix the juice from an upas tree and other toxicants and coat the arrow head with the mixture. The wild animal hit would die in seconds. Another interesting plant is called dancing grass (*Codariocalyx motorius*). Each of its stalks has three leaves: one long leaf and two short leaves. Each morning, the long leaf stretches out from the drooping stamen and the short leaves move up and down as if a girl were dancing. There are also fragrant bamboo, which the Tai ethnic people use to make delicious rice, talipot palm (*Corypha umbraculifera*) whose leaves were used for writing by the Tai people, ylang-ylang (*Cananga odorata*), the most precious perfume in the world. *Overnight at New Tai Garden Hotel (BLD)*

Day 8 | **Kunming**

Today you visit a local market and the Octagonal Pavillion. Jingzhen Octagonal Pavilion is a Buddhist landmark, and home to numerous faithful adherents of Buddhism on

account of its close proximity to the birthplace of Buddha (also known as Sakyamuni). To pay homage to Buddha, residents here constructed this temple in 1701 (1063 on the Dai calendar), the shape of which was said to be inspired by the octagonal shape of Sakyamuni's golden cap. In the afternoon take a walking tour of a tea garden at Nannuo Mountain. This evening you will be transferred to the Jinghong airport for a flight back to Kunming. *Overnight at Grand Park Hotel (BLD)*

Day 9 | **Shanghai**

This morning you will fly to Shanghai. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to the Yu Garden (Yu Yuan) and the Old Town area including the Temple of the City God. After lunch tour the Shanghai Botanical Garden (Zhiwuyuan).

Shanghai Botanical Garden is the largest municipal botanical garden in China. It consists of a dozen spacious sections, featuring magnolias, peonies, azaleas, roses, *Osmanthus* spp., ferns, bamboo, maples, and conifers. Visitors can find more than 5,000 species of plants in the garden, including 108 rare species of which are on the verge of extinction. It has become a comprehensive base combining plant research, production, tourism and nature science education, and has won many prizes in international flower shows. Dinner will be on own this evening. *Overnight at Okura Garden Hotel (BL)*



Day 10 | **Suzhou**

Start your day with a visit at the Urban Planning Exhibition and

Shanghai Museum, a world class museum with a collection of bronzes, jade, pottery, ceramics, paintings, calligraphy, old coins and furniture. Have lunch in the Xintiandi area before driving to Suzhou. Founded in 514 BC, Suzhou has over 2,500 years of history, with an abundant display of relics and sites of historical interest. *Overnight at Nanlin Hotel (BLD)*

Day 11 | **Suzhou**

In the morning tour the Lingering Garden (Liuyuan) and Tiger Hill Pagoda (Huqiu Shan), including the Bonsai (Panji) Nursery on the grounds of Wanjing Villa. After lunch visit the Master of the Nets Garden (Wangshi Yuan) and Blue Wave Pavilion (Canlang Ting). *Overnight at Nanlin Hotel (BLD)*

Day 12 | **Suzhou/Shanghai**

Today you will visit the Humble Administrator's Garden (Zhouzheng Yuan) and the Lion Grove Garden (Shizilin) before lunch. Also tour the I.M. Pei designed, Suzhou Museum. Drive back to Shanghai and return to the Okura Garden Hotel. This evening enjoy a special farewell dinner

followed by a cruise on the Huangpu River. *Overnight at Okura Garden Hotel (BLD)*

Day 13 (Sunday) | **Depart**

This morning you will check out of the hotel and then transfer to the observation deck of the Pearl TV Tower and the history diorama exhibit at the base of the tower. Then continue to the terminus of the Mag-Lev Train while the luggage goes to the airport. For the transfer, take the magnetic levitation high speed train at speeds up to 240 mph, floating to the airport in about seven minutes for the departure transfer to the Shanghai International Airport and your flight back to the States.



LAND PRICING

\$5,880 per person, double occupancy, based on 14 participants (plus 1 complimentary from Los Angeles, single occupancy). *Single supplement: \$850.*

Cost includes: Accommodations, meals as indicated, specialist guides, transportation, gratuities for guides & drivers, activities per itinerary, carbon offset, bottled water on bus.

Cost does not include: International & internal airfare, items of personal nature, optional activities, visa fee.
Price valid until Nov. 2018.

THE FINE PRINT

A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due to secure your reservation. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure. Non-refundable final payment is due at 95 days prior to departure. Travell/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174 or visit travelinsured.com. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.

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