



# China-Mongolia Study Tour 2011

## DRAFT ITINERARY

July 3 departure

Date	Activity	Overnight
<b>DAY 1</b> <b>Sun, Jul 3</b> <b>(Meals on plane), D</b>	Morning departure Australian ports for Shanghai. On arrival, transfer to our hotel, freshen up and then dinner.	<b>Shanghai</b>
<b>DAY 2</b> <b>Mon, Jul 4</b> <b>(B,L)</b>	We have a city tour of Shanghai including the Bund, Oriental TV Tower/Jinmao Tower (the highest building in Asia) and Pudong Developing Area – an outstanding example of a city that “wasn’t there yesterday”. Lunchtime meeting with Austrade officials before a free afternoon (maybe some bargain hunting) and evening.	<b>Shanghai</b>
<b>DAY 3</b> <b>Tues, Jul 5</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	This morning we board a bullet train for a 45 minute ride west to Suzhou, on the mighty Grand Canal. The Grand Canal is man-made and 1800 km in length – the world’s longest – and once linked Beijing in the north with Hangzhou in the south. It is a striking example of Chinese engineering prowess and was built 1400 years ago! We enjoy lunch and a tour in one of Suzhou’s world famous, classical gardens before visiting a silkworm farm to the south of the city with a chance to view and purchase some of the exquisite local silk fabrics, the finest in China. Later in the afternoon we continue south for 2 hours by charter coach to Hangzhou, widely regarded as China’s most beautiful city. Marco Polo famously said: “In heaven there is paradise, on earth Suzhou and Hangzhou.” Dinner and overnight in Hangzhou.	<b>Hangzhou</b>
<b>DAY 4</b> <b>Wed, Jul 6</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Morning tour of Hangzhou’s main sites including the beautiful West Lake. Afternoon flight to Yichang in China’s Hubei Province. Yichang is near the dam for the famous Three Gorges project on the mighty Yangtze River. Detailed visit to the site of the massive dam. Inspection cruise on the Yangtze River to the first of the three gorges and the most spectacular. The dam has been constructed to help mitigate the annual and devastating Yangtze floods, to provide safer navigation and to generate a staggering amount of hydro-power.	<b>Yichang</b> China Eastern Airlines 9365 12:45 Depart Shanghai (SHA) 2.40pm Arrive Yichang (YIH) Duration: 1hr 55mn
<b>DAY 5</b> <b>Thur, Jul 7</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Morning flight to Beijing. On arrival we are transferred to our hotel for check-in and lunch and then a guided tour of some of the sights of Beijing. Over the next two days we will visit the Palace Museum, Tiananmen Square, Temple of Heaven, the Forbidden City, Ming Tombs etc. This evening we enjoy a world famous Peking duck dinner.	<b>Beijing</b> Air China 1804 10:35am Depart Yichang (YIH) 12:30pm Arrive Beijing (PEK) Duration: 1hr 55mn
<b>DAY 6</b> <b>Fri, Jul 8</b> <b>(B,L)</b>	More Beijing guided sightseeing and then free time this afternoon and evening. A performance of the Peking Opera is an option this evening.	<b>Beijing</b>
<b>DAY 7</b> <b>Sat, Jul 9</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Today we enjoy a guided tour to the Great Wall at Mutianyu, return to Beijing by mid-afternoon.	<b>Beijing</b>
<b>DAY 8</b> <b>Sun, Jul 10</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Early flight this morning to Ulaanbataar, the capital of Mongolia. We have arrived at the beginning of Nadaam, the major festival of Mongolia. It celebrates the three sports of wrestling, archery and horse racing. Riders and competitors travel for thousands of km – the final of the wrestling stops the nation. The pride of Mongolia is the wrestler. The men participating in the Nadaam are revered by all Mongolians and the winner is given the most prestigious title of ‘lion’. Much skill and training goes into the wrestling and it takes years to understand the sport, let alone master it.	<b>Ulaanbataar, Mongolia</b> Air China 901 8:35am Depart Beijing (PEK) 10:50am Arrive Ulaanbataar (ULN) Duration: 2hr 15mn

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<b>DAY 9</b> <b>Mon, Jul 11</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	The Nadaam celebrations really get underway today. Highlights of the ceremony include dancing and acrobatic acts, and the formal escort of the horsetail standard of the army of Genghis Khan from the Parliament to the stadium. The whole ceremony is punctuated with parades and musical entertainment, showing off the spirit of the event which is close to the heart of all Mongolians. The whole thing is a great insight into Mongolian life and culture. In the evening we have a huge Naadam Festival Gala dinner with traditional Mongolian performance concert. As much activity goes on behind the scenes at Naadam as in the actual competitions. Tents are erected all over the grasslands and singing and drinking go on long into the night.	<b>Ulaanbataar</b>
<b>DAY 10</b> <b>Tues, Jul 12</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	After breakfast we board our charter coach and drive west to the imposing Khogno Khan Mountain region where we enjoy breathtaking panoramic 200 km views of the surrounding farmlands and steppes. We will also visit the Mongol Els Sand Dunes and tour the small Ovgon Monastery, nestled in the mountain cliffs. While travelling through this region of Mongolia we will meet with local broadacre wheat farmers and see their farms as well as visits to wheat storage facilities and agricultural research trials. We will also meet with nomadic farmers (gers) and will be comfortably accommodated in their villages.	<b>Ger camp</b>
<b>DAY 11</b> <b>Wed, Jul 13</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	We continue west today where our next stop is Karakorum, the former capital of the world's greatest land empire, established by Genghis Khan. Here we will visit the fascinating Erdene Zuu Buddhist Monastery, a religious complex which, at its peak, was home to over 1000 monks. The original monastery was destroyed in the communist purges of the early 20th century but work has been carried out to rebuild the monastery. The site has some of the best works of religious art and architecture in Mongolia.	<b>Karakorum</b>
<b>Day 12</b> <b>Thurs, Jul 14</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Today we travel east from Karakorum city to spend the day in the grassy, fertile valleys of Khustain Nuruu National Park – a sanctuary for wild horses, wolves, and other rare species. We'll meet with Park Rangers and learn about the internationally-acclaimed project to reintroduce the Przewalskii (Takhi) horse into the wild. This is the world's last species of wild horse. We will also visit the local cheese factory as well as farms in this region.	<b>Ger camp</b>
<b>Day 13</b> <b>Fri, Jul 15</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	This morning we have about a 1 hour drive back to Ulaanbataar airport for our direct flight to Beijing and connection through to Xian – once the capital of ancient China and situated at the eastern end of the famed Silk Road. We have a short evening tour of Xian including the magnificent Xian City Wall.	<b>Xian</b> Air China 902 11.50am Depart Ulaanbataar 2.00pm Arrive Beijing Duration: 2hr 10mn Air China 1225 3:25pm Depart Beijing 5.20pm Arrive Xian Duration: 1hr 55mn
<b>Day 14</b> <b>Sat, Jul 16</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Today we visit the famous Terracotta Warriors and Horses as well as a visit to a local farm in this rich agricultural region. This evening we enjoy a world class dumpling banquet – a specialty of Xian.	<b>Xian</b>
<b>Day 15</b> <b>Sun, Jul 17</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	This morning we have a direct flight to Urumqui, China's most westerly industrial and agricultural outpost. We are in Xinjian Province which has a fascinating agricultural and political history complete with ancient silk traders and Russian incursions. This region is home to around a third of the nation's 35 million bale annual cotton crop as well as one of China's biggest irrigation construction projects. Xinjiang is also a major grain and sugar producing area with wheat, rice, millet and sorghum all grown in the region. In short, this area of Western China is one of the most significant agricultural production regions in the world. During our time in Xinjian we will meet with local agricultural officials and visit some of the modern, broadacre farms in the province. On arrival at Urumqi we have lunch and then board our charter coach and continue onto Turpan, two hours to the southeast. Our short journey takes us through spectacular countryside, Gobi desert and Uygur villages. Turpan is literally an oasis 154 metres below sea level – and one of the most amazing farm settlements on earth. Turpan was a vital re-supply point for the 'caravans' travelling the Silk Road.	<b>Turpan</b> Air China 4633 10:35am Depart Xian (XIY) 1.50pm Arrive Urumqi (URC) Duration: 3hr 15mn
<b>Day 16</b> <b>Mon, Jul 18</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	The region is confronted by an extreme climate with virtually zero rainfall and huge evaporation. Snow melt from the surrounding Tian Shan Mountains feeds a 4000 km network of irrigation tunnels that have been burrowed by hand into the mountains. All this occurred several thousand years ago long before any excavators – or even dynamite – were on sale at the local co-op. We also visit the ancient city of Jiaohe (Yarkhoto). Corn, wheat and sorghum is grown in the region and we meet with local growers and inspect their unique irrigation system. Return to Urumqi this afternoon.	<b>Urumuqi</b>

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<b>Day 17</b> <b>Tues, Jul 19</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Today we journey through a vast farm area to visit a large cotton corporation and its farm and meet with the local agronomists. We also visit a large sheep farm today before a late afternoon return to Urumqi. Back at our hotel we will meet with officials from the Xinjiang Agriculture Bureau.	<b>Urumqi</b>
<b>Day 18</b> <b>Wed, Jul 20</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Today we will enjoy a boat cruise on Tian Chi (Heaven Lake), cradled majestically in the lap of the Tian Shan Mountains. On our way to the lake we will visit an animal market. Scattered across the spruce covered slopes are the yurts (circular tents) of the indigenous Kazakh people. Evening flight south to Chengdu in Sichuan province.	<b>Chengdu</b> Air China 4154 8:15pm Depart Urumqi 11.15pm Arrive Chengdu Duration: 3hrs
<b>Day 19</b> <b>Thur, Jul 21</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Famous for stunning scenery, fiery cuisine and pandas, Sichuan province is known as 'Heaven's Granary' and produces a large proportion of China's grain, cotton and sugar. Agricultural officials will take us for a tour of the Dujiangyan Irrigation Project which is over 2200 years old and now irrigates over 3 million hectares. It was started in the 3rd century BC by the engineer Li Bing to divert the fast flowing Min River – the Yangtze's biggest tributary – into irrigation canals. Before the advent of steel or explosives, thousands of labourers cut canals (using fire) through the mountains to irrigate the Chengdu Plains. Li Bing's most brilliant idea was an annual maintenance system to remove silt build up – a system which has stood the test of time. There is an option tonight to attend the Sichuan Opera - which has very little singing but lots of fire breathing, acrobatics, traditional music and humour.	<b>Chengdu</b>
<b>Day 20</b> <b>Fri, Jul 22</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	Morning visit to the Giant Panda Breeding Research Base – the base, particularly at morning feeding time – is the best place to see a panda. After lunch, check out the shops and the famous Sichuan embroidery using ancient silk looms. Evening flight to Guilin and transfer to our hotel.	<b>Guilin</b> Air China 4323 7:50pm Depart Chengdu (CTU) 9.35pm Arrive Guilin (KWL) Duration: 1hr 45mn
<b>Day 21 (B)</b> <b>Sat, Jul 23</b> <b>(B,L,D)</b>	This morning we board our coach and tour through small rural villages, dryland and irrigated farming areas enroute to Yangshuo. Farm visit on the way. At Yangshou we will view the spectacular karst formations and towering limestone cliffs of the Li River. Our travels will also take in The Big Banyan Tree and Moon Hill. Farewell dinner this evening back in Guilin.	<b>Guilin</b>
<b>Day 22</b> <b>Sun, Jul 24</b> <b>(B)</b>	Free time this morning before our short flight to Shanghai airport and our early evening flight home to Australia. Arrival in Australia, early Monday morning (July 25).	<b>On plane</b>