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Classic Silk Road Tour - 14 Days

Discover China's legendary Silk Road on a 14-day journey through Beijing, Xinjiang, Dunhuang, Xi'an, and Shanghai. Explore imperial landmarks, ancient trading cities, Buddhist art, desert landscapes, and the world-famous Terracotta Warriors. From the oasis towns of Xinjiang to the historic Silk Road heritage of Dunhuang and Xi'an, this tour offers a diverse introduction to China's history, culture, and landscapes, ending in the vibrant metropolis of Shanghai.

Tour Highlights

Explore Imperial Beijing: Discover Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, and the Great Wall, gaining insight into China's imperial history and architectural heritage.
Discover Xinjiang's Mountain and Oasis Landscapes: Visit Heavenly Lake near Urumqi and explore Turpan's ancient ruins, traditional underground irrigation system, historic minaret, and famous grape-growing region.
Experience the Silk Road Heritage of Dunhuang: Explore the Mogao Grottoes, admire the desert scenery of Crescent Moon Lake and the Singing Sand Dunes, and discover the historic frontier passes of Yumen and Yangguan through the region's ancient history.
Encounter the Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an: Visit the world-renowned Terracotta Warriors and Horses and the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, important landmarks of China's imperial and Buddhist heritage.
Discover Shanghai's Historic and Modern Sides: Explore Yu Garden, the Jade Buddha Temple, Shanghai Museum, and the Bund, where traditional Chinese culture meets the city's distinctive waterfront skyline.
Travel Across China with Convenient Connections: Combine guided sightseeing with domestic flights, high-speed rail, private transfers, and centrally located hotels for a comprehensive multi-city journey.

Date	Destinations	Attractions, Meals & Transport
1	Day 1 Beijing Arrival	airport - hotel transfer in Beijing

2	Day 2 Beijing | Forbidden City & Temple of Heaven	breakfast, lunch **Tian'anmen Square, Forbidden City (UNESCO), Temple of Heaven (UNESCO)** Stand in the heart of modern China at the world's largest public square, a site of profound historical significance and grand architectural scale. Walk into or drive through (sedan/minivan) Tian'anmen Square to marvel at its iconic surroundings, including the Monument to the People's Heroes and the Great Hall of the People. Constructed from 1406 at the very centre of Beijing, the Palace Museum is more widely known as the Forbidden City. Previously home to 24 different emperors, it is the largest palace complex in the world at approximately 720,000 square metres. Note: Closed on Mondays. In case of closure or ticket unavailability, the itinerary adjusts to Jingshan Park for a premier panoramic view overlooking the entire Forbidden City. Completed in 1420, the Temple of Heaven is the largest complex of sacrificial buildings in China that still stands to this day. The temple was visited by Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1636-1912) emperors on an annual basis to pray to the heavens for a good harvest. The subtle employment of acoustic principles used in the construction of the Echo Wall, Triple Sound Stone and Dialogue Stone reflects the advanced architectural technology in use in ancient China. **Good to know:** Usually the guide service for a full day tour is about from 9:00 to 17:00, and the evening time is on your own. If needed, your guide is happy to offer some tips or help you buy tickets for evening entertainment. **Ideas for leisure time:** If you are interested in Chinese Kung Fu, the Legend of Kung Fu is a good choice for tonight. It is stunning Kung Fu show with a great story line and martial arts skills.
3	Day 3 Beijing | Great Wall & Summer Palace	breakfast, lunch **The Great Wall (UNESCO), The Summer Palace (UNESCO), a cloisonné workshop en route** The Great Wall is the largest ancient defensive project ever undertaken in China and even the world. Built continuously over 2,000 years starting in the Western Zhou Dynasty (1046-771 BC), the Great Wall now snakes its way across vast areas of northern and central China and has a total length of more than 20,000 km. The wall is a physical illustration of the Chinese philosophy of defending and tolerating rather than expanding and invading. This Qing Dynasty (1636-1912) imperial palace and garden (1636-1912) is the largest and best-preserved imperial garden in China. Modelled on the West Lake in Hangzhou and borrowing design techniques and artistic ideas from the gardens of Jiangnan south of the Yangtze River, this landscaped park offers the perfect summer retreat. **Ideas for leisure time:** 1. Enjoy the Peking Duck dinner at time-honored restaurant - Quanjude or Bianyifang. The duck is characteristic with its crispy skin, tender meat and the fragrance from the fruit-wood. 2. Watch a breathtaking acrobatic show at Chaoyang Theater or Tiandi Theater.
4	Day 4 Beijing to Urumqi by Flight	hotel - airport transfer in Beijing, airport - hotel transfer in Urumqi breakfast

5	Day 5 Urumqi | Heavenly Lake & Erdaoqiao Bazaar	breakfast, lunch **Heavenly Lake, Erdaoqiao Bazaar** The Heavenly Lake is surrounded by the vastness of mountains and alpine meadows with an elevation of 2000 meters above sea level. If time permits, visit the Erdaoqiao Bazaar, which is believed to be the largest outdoor market in Xinjiang.
6	Day 6 Urumqi to Turpan | Jiaohe Ruins & Karez System	private transfer from Urumqi to Turpan, hotel transfer in Turpan breakfast, lunch **Jiaohe Ruins , Karez System, Emin Minaret** The Jiaohe Ruins reveals traces of a prosperous ancient trading center and military base 600 years ago. The Karez System (UNESCO), an underground irrigation system, is considered to be one of the three great ancient projects of China. Its main function is to deliver water from nearby snow capped mountains to Turpan and its agricultural fields. Emin Minaret, also known as Sugong Tower, is one of the most famous Islamic constructions and the only Islamic tower in China.
7	Day 7 Turpan | Astana Tombs, Flaming Mountains & Grape Valley	breakfast, lunch **Astana Tombs , Flaming Mountain, Bazelik Thousand Buddha Caves, Grape Valley** The Astana Tombs are known as the 'Underground Museum' and highly regarded by Chinese and foreign archaeologists and historians. More than 400 tombs have been excavated from there since 1950. Pass by the Flaming Mountain, which is famous in the Chinese classical literature “Journey to the West”. The Bazelik Thousand Buddha Caves has 77 caves and inside each cave is a rural of the Buddha painted on the ceiling along with hundreds of Buddhist sculptures and figures. With beautiful and elegant scenery, the Grape Valley is famous for growing all kinds of grapes and other fruits.
8	Day 8 Turpan to Dunhuang by Bullet Train	hotel - train station transfer in Turpan, train station - hotel transfer in Dunhuang breakfast
9	Day 9 Dunhuang | Mogao Grottoes, Crescent Moon Lake & Singing Sand	breakfast, lunch **Mogao Grottoes , Crescent Moon Lake & Singing Sand Dunes** The Mogao Grottoes (UNESCO) is one of the world's most important sites of ancient Buddhist Culture. The treasure house contains hundreds of sandstone caves holding more than 2,000 statues and 45,000 brilliantly bright paintings of Buddha and Chinese mythological figures. The Crescent Moon Lake & Singing Sand Dunes are famous attractions in Dunhuang. From a distance make sure to listen carefully for the whistling tunes among the sand dunes. If you are feeling adventurous, take an optional camel ride (on your own expense).
10	Day 10 Dunhuang to Xi'an by Flight	hotel - airport transfer in Dunhuang, airport - hotel transfer in Xi’an breakfast

11	Day 11 Xi'an | Terracotta Warriors & Big Wild Goose Pagoda	breakfast, lunch **Museum of Terracotta Warriors and Horses (UNESCO), Big Wild Goose Pagoda** Unearth the secrets of the world's most significant archaeological discovery. Face the silent ranks of over 6,000 life-sized warriors, archers, and bronze chariots that have guarded the tomb of China's First Emperor for over 2,200 years. The Big Wild Goose Pagoda, a Tang Dynasty landmark, is a seven-story pagoda initially constructed in 652 AD. One of the pagoda's many functions is to hold sutras and figurines of the Buddha that were brought to China from India by the Buddhist translator and traveler - Xuanzang. **Ideas for leisure time:** Enjoy a tasteful Dumpling Banquet followed by an exquisite traditional Tang Dynasty Show. **Good to know:** If you have an extra day in Xi'an, you could explore the Mount Hua and get impressed of its unique natural beauty. Or to take a day trip to Luoyang by bullet train and visit the Longmen Grottoes, one of the Three Most Famous Buddhist Grottoes in China.
12	Day 12 Xi'an to Shanghai by Flight | Ancient City Wall	airport transfer in Xi'an, airport - hotel transfer in Shanghai breakfast, lunch **Ancient City Wall** Located in the centre of Xi'an, the Xi'an City Wall was built in the early Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) over the previously existing palace walls of the Tang Dynasty. It is the best-preserved and largest city wall in China and extends a total of 13.74 kilometres. The wall has a moat, draw bridges, watchtowers, corner towers and other military defences.

13	Day 13 Shanghai | Yu Garden, Jade Buddha Temple & the Bund	breakfast, lunch **Yu Garden, Jade Buddha Temple, Shanghai Museum, The Bund** Built in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Yu Garden is a classic example of a Jiangnan region garden and the most famous of five classical gardens in Shanghai. The Yu Garden compound consists of more than 30 halls and is divided into six sections by "dragon walls", tall white walls with undulating grey tiled ridges each terminating in a dragon's head. Next to the garden is Yuyuan Bazaar, a labyrinth of small streets and lanes where you can find a large number of restaurants, tea houses and shops. The most popular restaurants are NanxiangMantou Restaurant, famous for its xiaolongbao, Lubolang Restaurant and Old Shanghai Restaurant. The Jade Buddha Temple is famous for its two precious jade Buddha statues brought from Burma, which are not only rare cultural relics but also exquisite artworks. The Shanghai Museum has a collection of 120,000 pieces of Chinese ancient treasures. Optional tour: Top of the Pyramid - The Exhibition of Ancient Egyptian Civilization is on display from July 19th, 2024 to August 17th, 2025. One of the city's most recognisable landmarks and the pride of Shanghai for over one hundred years, the Bund is a mile-long stretch of waterfront promenade along the Huangpu River. On the west side of the road stand 52 buildings of various architectural styles, including Gothic, baroque, and neoclassical styles. It is often called an outdoor museum of buildings. **Ideas for leisure time:** 1. Acrobatic Shows in Shanghai are known as the best in China. You can never imagine how exciting the show is. 2. Or you could take a Huangpu River Night Cruise which is the perfect way to enjoy the gorgeous night view of Shanghai.
14	Day 14 Shanghai Departure	hotel - airport transfer in Shanghai breakfast

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: What destinations are included in this 14-day Classic Silk Road Tour?
A: The tour covers Beijing, Urumqi, Turpan, Dunhuang, Xi'an, and Shanghai, combining imperial landmarks, Silk Road heritage, desert scenery, Buddhist art, and modern city attractions.

Q: How do I travel between the destinations?
A: The itinerary combines domestic flights, high-speed rail, and private road transfers. Domestic flights connect Beijing with Urumqi, Dunhuang with Xi'an, and Xi'an with Shanghai, while the route from Urumqi to Turpan and the train journey to Dunhuang are arranged by road and rail respectively.

Q: What are the main Silk Road highlights of this tour?
A: Key highlights include Turpan's ancient ruins and Karez System, the Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang, the desert landscapes around Crescent Moon Lake, and the historic Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an.

Q: Are accommodation, meals, and entrance tickets included?
A: The original package includes centrally located hotel accommodation with breakfast, Chinese lunches as listed, entrance tickets to the scheduled attractions, and the domestic flights and train tickets specified in the itinerary. Please check the final quotation for the exact meal arrangements and any optional activities.

Q: Can I customize this Classic Silk Road Tour?
A: Yes. CITS offers tailor-made travel services to suit your interests and schedule. You can extend your stay, add attractions, or arrange visits to other destinations in China, subject to availability and additional charges.

Tour Includes :

-- Private tour guide
-- Private air-conditioned coach
-- Land transfers between airport or railway station and hotel
-- Entrance tickets as listed
-- Chinese lunch as listed
-- Centrally located hotels with breakfast
-- Domestic flights with taxes and train ticket (2nd class seat) as listed
-- Service charge & government taxes

Tour Excludes :

-- International flights with taxes
-- Personal expenses such as laundry, drinks, phone bills, optional activities
-- Tips for guides and drivers
-- China Visa
-- Travel insurance

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