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Silk Road Exploration on Bullet Train - 10 Days

Discover China's Silk Road heritage on a 10-day journey from Lanzhou to Urumqi by high-speed train and road. Explore ancient frontier passes, the Mogao Grottoes, Dunhuang's desert landscapes, and Turpan's historic oasis sites. Along the way, experience the region's Buddhist art, ancient irrigation systems, and dramatic landscapes while following one of China's most celebrated historic trade routes.

Tour Highlights

Follow the Silk Road by High-Speed Train: Travel through China's historic northwest, combining rail journeys with scenic road transfers between Lanzhou, Jiayuguan, Dunhuang, Turpan, and Urumqi.
Discover Ancient Buddhist Art at the Mogao Grottoes: Explore Dunhuang's UNESCO World Heritage Site, renowned for its Buddhist murals, sculptures, and centuries of cultural exchange along the Silk Road.
Explore the Historic Frontier at Jiayuguan: Visit Jiayuguan Pass and the First Beacon Tower of the Great Wall, important landmarks of China's ancient frontier defense system.
Experience Dunhuang's Desert Landscapes: Admire Crescent Moon Lake and the Singing Sand Dunes, with the option to enjoy a camel ride across the desert.
Discover Turpan's Oasis Heritage: Explore Jiaohe Ruins, the ancient Karez irrigation system, Emin Minaret, Flaming Mountains, and Grape Valley, revealing the region's history, architecture, and agricultural traditions.
Enjoy Lanzhou's Yellow River Scenery and Xinjiang's Mountain Landscapes: Visit Bingling Temple Grottoes along the Yellow River and Heavenly Lake near Urumqi, combining cultural heritage with striking natural scenery.

Date	Destinations	Attractions, Meals & Transport
1	Day 1 Arrival in Lanzhou	airport - hotel transfer in Lanzhou
2	Day 2 Lanzhou | Bingling Temple Grottoes	breakfast, lunch **Bingling Temple Grottoes** Pay a visit to the Bingling Temple Grottoes, which can be reached after a 75 km drive from Lanzhou by car and then by boat. The grottoes are cut on steep cliffs along the Yellow River, about 2 km long in a honeycomb pattern. There are now nearly 800 sculptures in stone, clay and clay-covered stone and 900 square meters of murals preserved in 183 cases.
3	Day 3 Lanzhou to Jiayuguan by Bullet Train	train station transfer in Lanzhou, train station - hotel transfer in Jiayuguan breakfast, lunch **Waterwheel Garden** The Waterwheel Garden is a highlight along the Yellow River in Lanzhou. The unique waterwheels will provide you an insight into the irrigation tools of ancient China.

4	Day 4 Jiayuguan to Dunhuang | Jiayuguan Pass & First Beacon Tower	private transfer from Jiayuguan to Dunhuang breakfast, lunch **Jiayuguan Pass, First Beacon Tower of the Great Wall** The Jiayuguan Pass, the western end of the Great Wall, is known as the most strategic point along the ancient Silk Road. Take a visit to the First Beacon Tower of the Great Wall. The beacon tower was an important part of the defense system in Jiayuguan Pass.
5	Day 5 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).
6	Day 6 Dunhuang to Turpan by Bullet Train	hotel - train station transfer in Dunhuang, train station - hotel transfer in Turpan breakfast
7	Day 7 Turpan | Ancient Ruins, Karez System & Emin Minaret	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.
8	Day 8 Turpan to Urumqi by Bullet Train	train station transfer in Turpan, train station - hotel transfer in Urumqi 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.

9	Day 9 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.
10	Day 10 Urumqi Departure	hotel - airport transfer in Urumqi breakfast

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: What destinations are included in this Silk Road tour?
A: This 10-day tour travels from Lanzhou to Urumqi, with stops in Jiayuguan, Dunhuang, and Turpan. Highlights include ancient frontier passes, the Mogao Grottoes, desert landscapes, historic oasis sites, and Heavenly Lake.

Q: How do I travel between destinations?
A: The itinerary combines high-speed train journeys and private road transfers. The route includes rail travel between Lanzhou and Jiayuguan, Dunhuang and Turpan, and Turpan and Urumqi, with road transfers for sightseeing and connections between selected destinations.

Q: Can I ride a camel at the Singing Sand Dunes?
A: Yes. Camel rides are available as an optional activity at Crescent Moon Lake and the Singing Sand Dunes, subject to availability and additional charges.

Q: Are accommodation, meals, and train tickets included?
A: The original package includes hotel accommodation with breakfast, meals as specified in the itinerary, entrance tickets to listed attractions, second-class domestic train tickets, and scheduled transfers. Please confirm the final quotation for the exact meal arrangements and included services.

Q: Can I customize this Silk Road tour?
A: Yes. CITS offers tailor-made travel services according to 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 and dinner as listed
-- Centrally located hotels with breakfast
-- Domestic train tickets (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

About Shopping or No-shopping Tours

Since October, 2013, CITS offers truly alternative prices of tours with or without shopping. Exceptionally, some tours only have one type price, such as seat-in-coach, hiking, self-driving and luxury tours, etc. Click here know more details.