



## Theme Tour: Highland Culture

### Destination Information

#### Chengdu

Chengdu is the capital of Sichuan Province in southwest China. It is an ancient city with a history of over 3,000 years. The population is about one billion. The city is richly endowed with fantastic natural resources and historical heritages. It is home to China's living treasures – Giant Pandas. The famous Sichuan Wolong Giant Panda Nature Reserve, the biggest of its kind in the world, is only 130 km from Chengdu.

#### Kashgar (Kashi)

The meaning of Kashgar is "Jade". It is situated at the southwestern part of Xinjiang and is located in the western extremity of China, near the border with Tajikistan. It is the constellating point of Chinese and Western cultures.

#### Lhasa

The Tibet Autonomous Region is known by many as the "Roof of the World" due to its elevation of over 13 thousand feet above sea level. Tibet is a charming place to visit, with its beautiful landscapes, brilliant culture, and mysterious folklore. Lhasa, the capital of the Tibet Autonomous Region, is located along the banks of the Lhasa River, a tributary of the Yarlung Zangbo River.

It has a history of more than 1,300 years. Lhasa ("the sacred place") has an abundance of sunshine; hence its reputation as the Solar City. It is a center of politics, economy, transport, and religious activities. There are many places of interest in Lhasa, such as the Potala Palace, Sera Monastery, and the Jokhang Monastery. Lhasa's original appearance and traditional lifestyle are largely intact at Barhkor Street in the old part of Lhasa, where all sorts of arts and crafts are on sale. Flights leave on a regular basis from Lhasa to Beijing, Chengdu, Chongqing, Xi'an and Kathmandu. The Qinghai-Tibet and Sichuan-Tibet highways are the main routes to the region °

#### Turpan

Turpan, located in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, has the lowest elevation of any place in China. It is a basin in the mountains of east Xinjiang. Aydingkol Lake is 505 feet below sea level and is the second lowest area of the world, behind the Dead Sea in Jordan. The temperature in the summer can get as high as 50°C, which is why it is also known as "The Fire Prefecture".

Famous historical sites include the ancient cities of Jiaohe and Gaochang, and the Bezeklik Thousand Buddha Caves. It is 113 miles from Urumqi with expressways linking the two cities.



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### Urumqi

Urumqi means "a beautiful pasture land" in ancient Mongolian used by the Junggar tribe. It is the capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in China. Urumqi was an important town on the new northern route of the Silk Road, which made vital contributions in promoting Sino-foreign economic and cultural exchanges 2,000 years ago.

Urumqi is a city where ethnic minorities live in compact of mixed communities. They are the Uygur, Han, Hui, Kazak, Mongolian, Kirgiz, Xibe, altogether over 40 ethnic groups of people. It is interesting that Han people are the major ethnic group in China, but in Xinjiang, they are minority group. The city's uniqueness, the strong colorful ethnic life styles and local customs are quite attractive to visitors.

### Xigaze

A 500-year-old cultural city with an elevation of 3,900m, Xigaze is the site of the Panchen Lamas' residence in the Tashilunpo Monastery, the foremost emblem of the city. The world-famed 8,848m Mt. Qomolangma stands to the south of the city.

### Xining

Located on the northeastern part of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, Xining is the provincial capital of Qinghai. It is the hub of Lanzhou-Qinghai and Qinghai-Tibet Railways, and sits astride the main route to the hinterland of Qinghai and Tibet. Xining is 7,463 feet above sea level and is a typical example of a plateau city.

Xining has unique and beautiful scenery and many places of interests. The Ta'er Lamasery which holds plenty of precious relics and good editions of Tibetan scriptures. Major attractions include the world-famous Qinghai Lake, Bird Island, Sun & Moon Hill, Jin Yin Tan plain and mysterious Atom City.