



## Theme Tour: Legend of Good Earth Culture

### Destination Information

#### Beijing

As the capital of the People's Republic of China, Beijing is the nation's center of government, economy, culture, and international activities, as well as serving as a transportation hub to the entire country. With a population of 11 million people, Beijing contains 18 districts and counties covering an area of 10,450 square miles. The suburbs contain: Dongcheng, Xicheng, Xuanwu, Chongwen, Chaoyang, Haidian, Fengtai, and Shijingshan. An outer suburban area consists of: Fangshan, Mengtougou, Changping, Tongxian, Shunyi, Daxing, Huairou, Miyun, Pinggu, and Yanqing.

Beijing City is an independently administered municipal district located in the northeastern part of China at an elevation of 143 feet above sea level. Beijing has a continental climate. January is the coldest month with an average temperature of 24 degrees Fahrenheit. At an average temperature of 79 degrees Fahrenheit, July is the warmest. The best time to visit Beijing is May, September and October.

Beijing has a long history. As early as 500,000 years ago, ancient "Peking Man" lived at Zhoukoudian 30 miles southwest of Beijing. King Wu of the Zhou Dynasty was the first to declare Beijing the capital city in 1057 B.C. Established in 1045 B.C., Beijing is an ancient cultural city, serving for 800 years as the capital of the Liao, Jin, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties.

Beijing was also known as Peking by the Western world before 1949. In the early 1920s, Beijing became the cradle of China's new democratic revolution. The May Fourth Movement against imperialism and feudalism began in 1919. On October 1st, 1949, Chairman Mao announced to the world the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Beijing is also known as a tourist city for its many places of interest, including ancient architecture, royal gardens, mansions, towers, temples, palaces, and modern structures. It is a gathering place of artists and other talented people.

#### Chengde

The city of Chengde is approximately 143 miles from Beijing. In addition to being one of the first ancient cities to be recorded by the government, it is also one of the ten esteemed national-class scenic spots. There are many places of interest in and around Chengde, such as the magnificent Mountain Resort and the Eight Outer Monasteries. Chengde has convenient transportation, and is easily accessible by either train or long-distance bus. Tourist trains and regular buses shuttle between Chengde and Beijing on a daily basis.

### **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.

### **Dunhuang**

Dunhuang, a desert treasure trove famed for its historical cave-paintings, is one of the most important oasis towns on the Silk Road.

Dunhuang used to be called Shazhou and was one of the "four counties in Hexi Corridor" in Gansu Province. Dunhuang adjoins Anxi to the east, and borders Aksay all the way to the neighboring Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in the northwest. There are many tourist attractions in Dunhuang, including the world famous Mogao Caves which were put into the "World Heritages" by UNESCO in 1987. Dunhuang is listed as a state historic and cultural city.

### **Gansu Province**

Gansu Province is located in the northwestern China. Gansu covers an area of 175,289 square mile with a population of 24 million. The capital city is Lanzhou. The province lies between Qinghai-Tibet and Inner Mongolia and rises 4,921 feet above sea level.

To the west of Lanzhou and west of the Yellow River is the famous "Hexi Corridor," an important strategic passage on the ancient Silk Road stretching to the west. This area abounds in rich historical and cultural heritage, including grottoes, ancient buildings and other cultural relics.

Many ethnic minorities congregate in Gansu, which makes it a unique tourist destination with a variety of folk customs. The scenes of grassland, the Gobi desert, and snow-capped mountains add beauty to this mysterious land.

### **Hangzhou**

Hangzhou is the capital of Zhejiang Province. It is located along the banks of the Qiantang River, at the southern end of the Beijing Hangzhou Grand Canal.

One of the seven capitals of ancient China, Hangzhou is an ancient cultural city and a well-known tourist city. It is most famous for the beautiful scenery of the West Lake. With an area of 6,047 square miles inhabited by a population of 5.2 million, it embraces six urban districts and seven suburban counties, namely Yuhang, Xiaoshan, Fuyang, Tonglu, Lin'an, Jiande and Chun'an. The Fuchun and Xin'an rivers and Thousand Island Lake are national scenic areas. In the 13th century, Marco Polo praised Hangzhou as the most beautiful city in the world. Hangzhou is also famous for its silk and tea products.

### **Hotan (Khotan)**

Hotan, a city in southwest Tarim Basin in Xinjiang, bordered by Karakorum Mountains and Tibet to the south, was the part of Keriya Kingdom in ancient times, and the centre of Buddhism for Xinjiang in the earliest days. It is a charming oasis that abounds in jade, silk and carpets.

### **Huangshan**

The city of Huangshan, founded in 1983, is located in southern Anhui Province. It has three districts and four counties. Hefei, the capital of Anhui Province, is 194 kilometers from the city of Huangshan. The Huangshan Airport has flights to Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Hong Kong. Huangshan also has convenient land transportation.

Mt. Huangshan (Yellow Mountain) is the name of the 72-peak range lying in the south of Anhui Province. Mt. Huangshan is one of the mountainous scenic spots listed among China's ten most famous scenic spots. Mt. Huangshan is celebrated for having all the wonders of mountain scenery: spectacular rocky peaks, odd-shaped pines, crystal-clear mountain springs, and seas of clouds. Mt. Huangshan enjoys worldwide fame for its beauty. There are many places of interest around the mountain, such as typical Chinese houses, archways, temples, bridges, and streets. Famous local products include ink stones, hui ink, loquat fruit and maofeng tea. It has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Natural and Cultural Heritage. There are cable cars to the top of the mountain.

### **Jiayuguan**

Jiayuguan City is located at the central part of the Hexi Corridor. Jiayuguan Pass was once a magnificent pass which has served as an important strategic pass for over 160 years. Although it is a booming industrial city now, there are many rich tourist resources, for example the Jiayuguan Pass, the Suspended Great Wall, and the Great Wall Museum. Other attractions include the Mural Tomb of the Kingdom of Wei and Jin Dynasties, Qiyi Glacier and Jiayuguan Glide Range.

### **Jiuquan**

Jiuquan was one of the "Four Counties in Hexi Corridor". It has a variety of historic and cultural sites including the Jiuquan scenic spot dating back to the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC- 25 AD) and the many murals from the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420) tomb. It is also a well-known wine glass production city.

### **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.

### **Kuqa**

It is a city in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and is under the administration of the Aksu Prefecture. It was once the home of an ancient Buddhist Kingdom of Kucha and played a vital role on the ancient Silk Road.

### **Lanzhou**

Lanzhou is the capital city of Gansu Province in northwest China. It is situated in the upper course of the Yellow River, where the river emerges from the mountains. It was once called "Gold City" in the ancient times.

Lanzhou has been a center since early times, being at the southern end of the route leading via the Hexi Corridor across Central Asia, playing a vital role in economy and cultural exchange between the East and the West. With a history of more than 2,000 years, Lanzhou is a city hub of the northwest China nowadays

### **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.

### **Nanjing**

Nanjing, known as Jinling in ancient times, is the capital of Jiangsu Province and it lies on the south bank of the Yangtze River. Nanjing served as the capital for ten dynasties. It covers an area of 2.5 thousand square miles and has 5.06 million residents. It is one of the important communication hubs in China. Its well-developed transportation network, railway, highway and aviation makes Nanjing's port the biggest port of the inland rivers. Nanjing is the famous ancient city in China with many interesting scenic spots. A lot of Chinese ancient monarchs took here as their capital city, such as Wu Dynasty, Jin Dynasty, Song Dynasty and Ming Dynasty. Confucian Temple and the Mausoleum of Sun Yat-sen are the national major places of interest in Nanjing.

### **Qinghai Province**

Qinghai is in the northeastern part of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and its name comes from Qinghai Lake, the largest inland lake in China. The Yangtze, the Yellow and Lancang Rivers all have their origins there, so Qinghai is also known as the birthplace of rivers. Qinghai is over 9,842 feet above sea level. It is rich in tourist resources and possesses an ideal ecological environment. The people of the region have a unique religious culture and traditional folk customs, which also makes Qinghai a fascinating destination.

In the remote past, there was a branch line of the ancient Silk Road which stretched west from Lanzhou in Gansu to Qinghai, through Xining, Golmud, and then north to Dunhuang, finally converging with the main road. Along the Silk Road in Qinghai main scenic spots include Qinghai Lake and Birds Island, the Salt Lake and the famous Ta'er Lamasery.

### **Shanghai**

Shanghai, located along the coast of the East China Sea and the southern banks of the mouth of the Yangtze River, is a city under the direct jurisdiction of the Central Government. It has a population of over 13 million people and is the largest metropolis in China and one of the most historically significant cities. It is a flourishing international metropolis, known worldwide for its highly developed industrial, commercial and financial components.

Shanghai is an ideal "shopping paradise". Nanjing Road, known as "China's No.1 Street", the reconstructed Huaihai Road, Jinling Road, East and North Sichuan Road, the Yuyuan Garden shopping and tourist area, the Ever Bright City Commercial Center, Xujiahui Commercial Center, and Zhangyang Road Commercial Center in Pudong are all packed with rows of shops. Shanghai is also a paradise for gourmets. There are over a thousand restaurants serving the famous 16 styles of Chinese food, such as Beijing, Sichuan, Guangdong, Yangzhou, Fujian. They are also French,

Russian, Italian, English, German, Japanese, Indian and many other tantalizing types of foreign cuisine, genuine Muslim food and vegetarian food. In Shanghai you have the world at your fingertips.

### **Shaoxing**

Located in Zhejiang province, Shaoxing is regarded as City of Waters, City of Bridges, and City of Calligraphy. Associated with a profound history of more than 2,500 years, it is also honored as a renowned ancient cultural city in China. Here is a museum without walls, a home for a lot of celebrities such as the world-famous writer Lu Xun, ancient great calligrapher Wang Xizhi and distinguished poet He Zhizhang. Shaoxing boasts rich resources of tourist attractions. Its wealth of history, culture and landscape offers a fabulous appeal. Of numerous sightseeing sites, age-old towns present an overview of the lost stories of the past. Keqiao, Anchang and Dongpu are named Zhejiang's cultural and cultural ancient towns. Old-fashioned architecture, rivers and piers, streets, rural folk customs, and sites of historical personages are well preserved and combine to constitute a unique sight for visitors to enjoy.

### **Shenyang**

Shenyang is the capital and largest city of Liaoning Province in northeast China. Shenyang was first adopted by the Manchu people as their capital in the 17th century and is today's biggest city in the northeast. Along with its nearby cities, Shenyang is an important industrial centre in China, and it serves as the transportation and commercial hub of China's northeast – particularly with Japan, Russia, and Korea.

### **Suzhou**

Located along the side of Lake Taihu in the Yangtze River region, 62 miles east of Shanghai, Suzhou is an ancient cultural city built 2,500 years ago.

Suzhou is crisscrossed by rivers and enjoys a mild and humid climate, easily accessible by water, land and air transportation. Many cloistered gardens were built during and after the Song Dynasty, making the city famous for its awe-inspiring classical gardens. The natural scenery of hills and streams in Suzhou is as charming as a delicate flower. Streets and alleys in Suzhou run parallel to centuries-old canals. Small bridges and flowing waters, white walls and dark gray roof tiles match one another in tranquil elegance. There are many historical sites which are extremely attractive for visitors.

Most of the gardens in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province were private gardens built in ancient China. They are tranquil, exquisite, elegant, and created to be in complete harmony with nature. The creators of these gardens invented ingenious techniques to put a cramped space to best use. There are flowers and trees, pools, hills, bonsai works and pavilions within the boundaries, forming a natural yet richly landscaped environment. The most famous gardens in Suzhou are the Humble Administrator's Garden, the Lingering Garden, the Wangshi Garden, and the Lions Grove.

### **Taklamakan Desert**

Taklamakan Desert is located in the Tarim Basin in the south of Xinjiang. It is the second largest desert in the world and the largest in China. Its moving sands continue to shape the desert during the wind season. Due to its mysterious landscape, Taklamakan Desert is also called "Sea of Death" – people got in would hardly find the way out in the old days.



### Tunxi

Tunxi, a beautiful mountain city and an ancient city with a long history, is about an hour's drive to the Huangshan Scenic Area.

Tunxi Ancient Street, built in the Song Dynasty (960-1279), was paved with maroon flagstones with a total length of about 1,200 meters. Shops on both sides are mostly of two or three floors, featuring the local Hui style of stone base, brick construction and tile roof. Once a professor from America was amazed by Tunxi Ancient Street and commented he had found an Oriental Ancient Rome.

The street is lined up with antique shops, medicine shops, teahouses, restaurants and galleries. Nearly all the shops here sell traditional Chinese painting stationeries, where you can find the "Four Treasures of the Study" - writing brushes, ink sticks, ink slabs and paper. The shops, workshops and residences have continued to maintain the characteristics and operational layout of ancient stores such as "shops in the front and workshops or houses at the back". These stores also continue to use the same methods of production, display and operation as they did in ancient times.

### 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.

### 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.

### Wuwei

Wuwei, one of the "four counties in Hexi Corridor," was called Liangzhou in the past. It is located at the eastern edge of the Hexi Corridor and borders Qilian Mountain to the southwest and Tenggeli Desert in the north. It is an important stop on the way west from Lanzhou. Ancient Liangzhou was a large city; Monk Xuanzang preached Buddhist doctrines here. Wuwei has many places of interest, such as the Eastern Han Tomb in Leitai Temple, Haizang Temple and Tiantishan Grottoes.

### **Xian (also Xi'an)**

Xian, the capital of Shaanxi Province, is located in the heart of the Guanzhong Basin, with the Weihe River running along the northern border of the city. It is the largest metropolis in northwestern China. Known as Chang'an in ancient China, Xian is a world-renowned ancient capital.

For 1,062 years beginning in the 11th century B.C., Xian was the capital of 13 dynasties including the Western Zhou, Qin, Western Han, Eastern Han, Sui, and Tang. The continuous dynastic occupation kept the city beautiful and magnificent. More than two hundred and seventy palaces and temples were built during its heyday, such as the "Three Han Palaces" in the Han dynasty, namely Changle, Weiyang, Jianzhang Palaces, and numerous other palaces and watch towers. The most well-known among these is the Tomb of Emperor Qin Shihuang, with the Terracotta Warriors and chariot. Xian is also the starting point of the ancient Silk Road.

### **Xidi**

The South Anhui ancient villages, with Xidi and Hongcun as their representatives, are located east of Yixian County, Anhui Province. Xidi measures 13 hectares in area with a history of more than 950 years, and now has 3 ancestral temples, 1 honorific archway and 224 civilian residences dating back to fourteenth century to nineteenth century. Still having preserved typical Ming-Qing ancient village stylish pattern to date, Xidi has the repute of "Living Museum of Ancient Civilian Residences". First built in 1131, Hongcun now has 137 Ming-Qing ancient buildings existing in it. In 2000, they were inscribed in the "World Cultural Heritage List".

### **Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region**

Xinjiang is located the northwest China and covers 617 thousand square miles. Its population is about 17 million. It contains one sixth of the total area of China, and is inhabited with 47 ethnic minorities and nationalities including Uygur, Han, Kazak, Hui, Mongolian, Kirgiz, Xihe, Tajik, Uzbek, Manchu, Daur, Tatar, and Russian. It is one of the five autonomous regions in China.

Xinjiang is far from the sea and is surrounded by snow-capped mountains, boundless deserts and vast grasslands. There are many basins and oases scattered over the region. The dry climate has created the peculiar natural scenery such as the Gobi Desert and salt deserts.

After entering the border of Xinjiang, the Silk Road splits into three routes: the north, middle and south. Many ruins of ancient cities, watchtowers and numerous historical sites of the Han and Tang dynasties that have been swallowed by the sand remain along the routes. There are also important cities and towns such as Urumqi, Turpan, Kuqa, Hotan, Taxkorgan and Kashgar along the ancient Silk Road.

### **Xining**

Located in 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.



## Silk Road Travel Management Ltd 絲路旅遊管理有限公司

Licence no. 牌照號碼: 352017

(文化資源開發有限公司成員機構)

### Zhangye

Located in the central part of the Hexi Corridor, Zhangye was one of the four counties in Hexi Corridor. It was known as Ganzhou in the past and was the hub for politics, economic, cultural and diplomatic activities in the northwest region. There are 26 ethnic minorities in Zhangye. The Mati Temple and the sleeping Buddha in the Giant Buddha Temple are must-sees in Zhangye, Visitors can also travel to the prairie in south Gansu to ride horses and tame deer on the grasslands with the hospitable Uygur people. Be guests of a Uygur family and sing and dance with them.