

ORIENT ODYSSEY 2009

Tour Code: GST

18 Day

Hidden Tribes, Shangri-la & Tibet

Featuring *Panda reserve and breeding center*

USA – Guiyang – Kaili – Anshun – Huangguoshu Water Fall – Kunming – Dali – Lijiang – Jade Dragon Snow Mountain – Tiger Leaping Gorge – Chongqing – Lhasa – Chengdu / Panda Reserve – USA

*****Escorted SMALL group with min. of 10 and max. of 18 passengers*****
Premium service with professional guides, deluxe hotels and sumptuous meals
 Private journeys with VIP service of a private guide, a private chauffeur and a car can also be arranged at extra cost

A rare chance to experience rural life of China! Spin beyond the tourist-trod paths for an extraordinarily look at the ethnically diverse villages and tribes

*Marvel at unspoiled sacred grounds, holy temples, and the residential palace of Dalai Lama
 Explore the unique costumes and life styles of ethnic minority tribes rarely discovered by outsiders
 See the beauty of Shangri-la with turquoise snow ranges and razor sharp cliffs
 Interact with locals – visit the tribal leader’s home and village schools, chat with farmers*

2009 Departure Dates	Tour Cost (US\$)				Land Only Includes domestic flights	Single Room Supplement
	Per person double occupancy departing from					
	Los Angeles San Francisco		New York			
	Tour Cost	Cash Discount Price	Tour Cost	Cash Discount Price		
Mar 23, Apr 13, May 11, Sep 7, Oct 5, 2009	4080	3880	4240	4040	3300	754
Jun 22, Jul 13, Aug 10, 2009	4260	4060	4400	4200	3300	754

US tax of \$98, Int'l flight fuel surcharge \$290, and China domestic air tax \$192 per person is extra
 Rates for departures from other major US gateway cities are available upon request.

Enjoy Cash Discount Price and save \$200 per person!

To qualify, you must be the first 10 passengers booked on your tour / departure
Initial deposit can be paid by check or credit card
Remaining balance of the tour cost must be paid by check or money order only

Operated by *Orient Odyssey*



*B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner, F-In flight meals,
 SL / SD-Special local flavor meal or banquet*

Day01 USA – Shanghai

Depart from Los Angeles, San Francisco, or New York. Enjoy award winning in-flight meals and services. Move the watch one day ahead as we cross the international dateline. *Prices for departing from other major gateway cities are available upon request. F

Day02 Arrive in Shanghai

We will arrive in Shanghai in the evening. After immigration and customs, the representative will greet and accompany us to the 4 star airport hotel: *Shanghai Airlines Travel Hotel*. Enjoy a restful night to recover from jetlag and get ready for tomorrow’s exciting adventure. F

Day03 Shanghai - Guiyang

We board *Shanghai Airlines'* flight FM9469, departing at 9:05 a.m., reaching [Guiyang](#) at 11:30 a.m.. Rarely featured in conventional tour packages,



[Guizhou](#) (meaning "[precious state](#)") is situated in southeastern China. This land locked province is among the least visited by the foreigners in the

country. Full of towering mountains, plunging ravines, spectacular rock stratum, and limestone caves of unbelievable grace, it encompasses China's most stunning landscape, with [Asia's largest waterfall](#) and rice terraces. It is home to over 17 [ethnic minority groups](#), each with own legacy of ancient culture, dress-style, and food. Be among the few outsiders to experience the primitive folklore and colorful dances. A scenic drive will take us to the serene [Qianling Lake](#), glistening like a pearl amidst a blue blur of mountains cocooned under a blanket of pines and cypresses. We will enjoy a leisurely stroll in the three-hundred-years old [Hongfu Monastery](#), then follow a [footpath](#) tucked away in a cluster of ancient trees twisting and turning downhill towards the lakeside. It is frequent to encounter [wild monkeys](#) on this route. Our next stop is the 500 years old [Jiaxiu Pavillion](#). Built in 1589, the majestic tower is connected by floating "[jade bridge](#)". We will check-in at the 4.5 star, deluxe, [Ramada Plaza Miracle Hotel](#), one of the best properties in town. B/L/D

Day04 Guiyang - Kaili

After breakfast, we will drive through the beautiful countryside to Kaili, the center of Miao culture in eastern Guizhou. Enjoy views of lush limestone mountains rising above the endless rice terraces, and pass unspoiled villages and markets. After check-in at the 4 star, deluxe, [Grand Dragon Hotel](#), we head to the fascinating [Qingman Village](#), home to the [Miao ethnic minority tribes](#). Miao's history dates back 4,000 years during the legendary fight between Yellow Emperor and Chiyou, a local tribal chief. It is believed that the Miaos are the descendants of Chiyou's defeated troops. They are mountain dwellers who built uniquely shaped wooden structures on stilts with balustrades. A large Miao village often contains over 1,000



families, with dwellings in overlapping rows and lines, covering an entire mountain slope. Though rarely visited by outsiders, Miaos are among the most hospitable ethnic groups. Today [we will be welcomed by village girls](#) dressed in their ceremonial best, wearing [intricate silver headdresses, ornaments,](#) and beautiful [embroidered costumes](#), glistening and jingling whenever they move. Guests are invited to taste the home made wine. Please sip only little from



each cup, as we may encounter up to 20 cups on our way in! We will then be entertained in the "[Bronze Drum Square](#)"

by colorful ethnic music and dances. Especially noteworthy is the traditional Lusheng, a music instrument made of Bamboo with hollow sounds. The largest Lusheng are usually played by the most respected elders. Through special arrangements by *Orient Odyssey's* "[People to People Contact](#)" program, we stroll on a village trail amidst the beautiful rice fields to a [school and the tribal leader's house](#), where we can [interact with farmers, students and teachers](#). They may not have many material possessions, but their lives are simple, their hearts are pure and their happiness is infectious. We will be greeted with wine, song and dance everywhere



we go. Our eyes will feasted on the colorful ethnic costumes. Our hearts will with the warmth of the genuine hospitality from the tribal members and their children. Late afternoon we continue on a beautiful drive to [Shiqiao village](#), where we observe the ancient technique of paper making still in use today. Tonight we savor on a special local style dinner featuring the delicious [Sour Fish Soup](#) and other delicacies! B/L/SD

*Based on local weather, road condition and logistics, we might visit different tribal villages than the ones mentioned in the itinerary. All of them feature spectacular costumes, welcome ceremonies, music and dances, and heart-warming hospitality. School visits and observing classes in session might not always be possible due to school schedules.

Day05 Kaili - Anshun

The morning program takes us to the [Jidao Miao Tribal Village](#). There are many different groups

of Miao, each with distinct costumes, dialects, and customs. We then embark on a magnificent drive through deep mountain valleys lined with rice terraces, rivers and verdant peaks. The highlight of the day will be “[a stroll back in time](#)”



to the [Sky Dragon Garrison Fortress](#), “[Tianlong Tunbao](#)”. Residents of the fortress wear long blue robes, speak a distinctive language. The fortress was established in the Ming Dynasty (around 1413) when the imperial court sent an army to control the indigenous people. These soldiers, originally from central and eastern China, settled and flourished in their ever expanding fortress.



Gradually separated from outside society they have meticulously maintained a [600-year tradition of culture, dress, architecture, art, and life style](#)! When first discovered, historians were amazed to see an [authentic ancient Ming Dynasty village in every](#)

[detail](#). All the houses here are made with stone including the walls, door frames, and windows panels. The roofs are thin and flat stone tiles. We will walk on the winding cobble stone alleys that cleverly connect the household. We will also witness the performance of [Ground Opera](#), the “living fossil” of an ancient art form exclusively preserved here. It can be traced back thousands of years to military rituals that sought to boost the soldiers’ morale to fight the enemy. During the performance actors tie embroidered war costumes around their waists, set fighting flags at their back, and cover their face with a black veil.



Wooden masks decorated with pheasant feathers are placed on their foreheads. No where else in the world can one hear such exciting drum beats and clear high pitched melodies, or observe the fancy fighting postures of a nearly lost ancient art form. Tonight we will stay at the 4 star, deluxe, [Grand Waterfall Hotel](#), the best property in town.

[B/L/D](#)

Day06 Anshun – Huangguoshu Water Fall - Guiyang

Today we visit the magnificent [Huangguoshu Water Fall](#), Asia’s largest with a height of 250 feet and a width of 280 feet. The [Baishui River](#) roars and foams as it leaps out of the mountain into giant fractures where it breaks into five columns that tumble down to the base. Upon hitting the bottom of the cliff, it sends up geysers of droplets that thicken the dense fog already present. A rainbow often appears in the mist. We hike to the “[Water Curtain Cave](#)”



behind the falls and get closer to the action. The cave, a 134 meters long corridor, has six unique [naturally formed “windows”](#) through which the falls can be watched, heard and touched! Listening to its thundering voice and stretching your hands to touch the columns of the cascading water is some unforgettable experiences! After lunch, we enjoy a spectacular drive through the verdant mountain valleys to explore the [Dragon Palace](#), an interesting [underground river](#) that threads its way through 20 mountains and many caves of varying sizes. We [board a small wooden sampan](#) and nose our way along a zigzagging water lane. Sometimes we enter gigantic caves with ceilings filled with stalactites; other times we travel alone the lanes so narrow that the boat can barely pass. Savor the serene experience. Only the dripping water, the oars, and the folksongs sang by our boat handler will disturb the peace. We return to Guiyang in the evening and check-in at the 4.5 star, deluxe, [Ramada Plaza Miracle Hotel](#). [B/L/D](#)

Day07 Guiyang – Kunming (6,200 feet)

Our [China Eastern Airlines](#)’ flight MU5886 departs at 10:35 a.m., arriving in [Kunming](#) at 11:40 a.m.. Check-in at the 4 star, deluxe, [Kunming Hotel](#). Welcome to Yunnan; “South of the Clouds”, a magnificent patch work of minority cultures stitched into a lush and dreamy landscape. Its north is overlooked by the roof of the world – Tibet; the jungles of Myanmar encroach from the west, while the flavors of Laos and Vietnam spill over from the south. It is home to 24 recognized minority nationalities. Their lifestyles and local ecosystems vary almost as much as their colorful ethnic costumes. The provinces’ sheltered locations endows it with

weather in both winter and summer; [Kunming](#), sits at 6,500 ft above sea level, is hence called “[the city of eternal spring](#)”.

We will visit the [Western Hills](#), a band of sheer cliff faces, rising 2,000 ft above the shore of [Lake Dian](#), with a series of paths, stairways, and tunnels that carved into the faces of the cliff, spiraling ever upward to the [Dragon’s Gate](#) at summit. We inspect the cliff side grottoes with Buddhist carvings and various temples, including [Huating Temple](#), [Taihua Temple](#) and [Taoist Pavilion of Sangqing](#). Here we can enjoy a majestic birds eye view of the [lake Dian Chi](#). The evening is free for us to explore the city at own leisure. B/L/D



Day08 Stone Forest Excursion

A day excursion takes us to the legendary [Stone Forest](#), a myriad of pinnacles reputed by ancient Chinese to be “*the most fantastic scenery under heaven*”. This geological wonder is composed of closely knit outcrops of dark gray limestone karst that have weathered into various shapes since their formation 270 million years ago beneath the sea. When seen from a distance, the vast area of jagged

stones dotted with green trees and colorful flowers has the look of a unique forest. Viewed up close, the oddly shaped rocks seem to take on a life of their own. The journey to the “forest” is as beautiful as the landscape that surrounds it. Scattered around are villages populated by several ethnic minorities. We will stop at a [Sani minority village](#) and study the “[Yi](#)” [people’s colorful ethnic dress and unique life style](#). We then drive back to Kunming and [enjoy a leisurely stroll](#) at [Cuihu](#), the [Green Lake](#), with scenic views of ornate boats and bright pavilions. If we are lucky, we may observe Tai Chi enthusiasts at their art, or those practicing their ballroom dancing and perhaps arranging an assignation. Tonight we enjoy a [special festive dinner featuring delicious local flavor dishes: Cross-bridge Noodles and Steam-pot Chicken](#). B/L/SD



Day09 Kunming – Dali (7,200 ft)

After breakfast we transfer to the airport for a short flight northwest. [China Eastern Airlines](#)’

flight MU5883 departs at 8:10 a.m., arriving in Dali at 9:20 a.m.. Dali is located at the crossroads to Burma and Tibet with an exquisite setting, strategically pinched in a narrow band between the beautiful [lake of Erhai](#) and the spectacular snowcapped [range of Cangshan](#). Once the ancient capital of Nanzhao Kingdom (738-902 AD), independent of Chinese control, it is now an Autonomous [Bai](#) Prefecture. We first visit the [Bai Ethnic Minority State Museum](#). Bai in Chinese means “White”, and Bai people refer to themselves as descendants of the White King. However, white is by no means the dominant color of dress. Bai women favor blue or red, and most still prefer colorful ethnic dresses to modern ones. We enjoy a leisurely stroll in the bustling [bazaar of Old Town](#), pass under the imposing [South Gate](#). We will stop at an old [Catholic Church](#) still in use today, comfortably tucked in to a traditional Chinese style building. Influences of western religion reached here as early as the late Ming Dynasty. We then drive to [Lake Er-Hai \(Ear Lake](#), named after its shape) for a boat ride and enjoy the tranquil sceneries.



A [photo stop](#) is planned in front of the famed [Three Pagodas](#). We will enjoy the beauty of three brick towers set against the snowcapped peaks, ancient city walls, and the azure blue Lake. Visitors are no longer allowed to go up the towers, so it is better to take pictures from afar. We overnight at the 4 star, deluxe, [Asia Star Hotel](#). B/L/D

Day10 Dali – Lijiang (Dayan Old Town) (7,872 ft)

Depart for Lijiang today through lush, flower-laden grasslands and dense forests. On route we [stop at fascinating villages](#) where we can see the unique [Bai architecture](#). Stroll in the [Bai Minority Bazaar](#) and enjoy a “[Three Course Tea](#)” show with ethnic singing and dancing. In [Zhoucheng Village](#) we check out the famous [wax print articles](#) and other ethnic artifacts at a family workshop. Around noon we reach [Lijiang](#), the “[Beautiful River](#)”, as it was so named by Kublai Khan in 1254, nestles at 7,874 ft above sea level. The big draw here is the 750-year-old [Naxi old town of Dayan](#), a World Heritage Site designated by UNESCO for its historic architecture and dramatic landscape. Frozen in time and retaining

its original lay-out and traditional architectural style, Dayan is the best and last of its kind in the country. The mysterious Naxi people migrated to Lijiang long ago from northeastern Tibet. Their culture evolved in relative isolation for the last 2,000 years. Naxi's original religion, "Dongba", resembles the nature worship and other concepts of pre-Buddhist Tibet. It has aroused the interest of scholars around the world because the manuscripts were written with Naxi's own pictographic script. In daily life Naxi women seem to be responsible for all the work – hauling, marketing, most of the field



work, and managing the family's money. After our check-in at the 4 star, deluxe, *Grand Hotel Lijiang*, we venture out to explore on foot. Walk past the waterwheel at the entrance, we enter a maze of traditional architecture with narrow cobblestone streets and canals lined with weeping willows, and beautiful arched bridges. We will reach the lively Old Market Square, and maybe stop for tea and conversation at one of the many teahouses. Tonight we will enjoy a marvelous traditional Naxi Folk Music Orchestra Performance. Naxi men have always maintained a musical tradition. The first classical Naxi orchestra was founded under Kublai Khan's patronage. Amazingly, the techniques and notes were passed on from generation to generation by written records in pictographs. Tonight's music has remain unchanged for at least seven centuries!
B/L/D

Day11 Lijiang



We will visit the majestic Jade Dragon Snow Mountain. Standing grandly at 18,355 ft, it has never been climbed by man. Many of its ravines, creeks, cliffs and meadows still have Naxi names and are the setting for the myths and legends of these people who have made the plain their homeland for a thousand years. From White Water Creek, a cable car ride takes us up to the steep slope of Yunshanping, a delightful meadow at 10,827 ft (based on local weather and logistics, we might visit another

highland meadow "Maoniuping" instead). Enjoy a leisurely stroll. Take in the magnificent view of green grasslands, tall firs, and glittering snow. After our descend, we go to the sacred Yufeng Temple, dedicated to Tibetan Buddhism. If we are lucky we will be blessed by senior monks, the abbot, or even the "Living Buddha" himself. Our next stop is the Baisha Village, once an important post and a bustling trade station on the Southern Silk Road which linked China and Tibet with Southeast Asia and on to Europe. It is the most interesting to see the vivid



colors and intriguing figures in the amazing ancient murals. The remaining of the afternoon is free for us to stroll the cobble stone streets and explore this town at our own pace. Feel free to enjoy a cup of tea at a local café, or inspect road side studios set up by artisans from all over the country. This region is commonly believed to be the exact place described as the mythical Shangri-la in **James Hilton's** novel "*The Lost Horizon*". The geographic location, climate and other details are all a perfect match to the descriptions in the novel. B/L

Day12 Tiger Leaping Gorge

Today we embark on a magnificent ride north, through unspoiled highlands and mountains. We travel along the Golden Sand River, the beginning of the mighty Yangtze. We stop for pictures for the amazing view of the spectacular "First Bend" where the Yangtze, cutting through several mountains, changes its directions in several 90 degree turns. We visit the quiet ancient "Shigu" – the "Stone Drum Town". Stroll on an old cobble-stone alley surrounded by centuries-old buildings and bridges. A highlight will certainly be the visit to the stupendous Tiger Leaping Gorge, one of the deepest and the most spectacular gorges in the world. The gorge is 12 miles long, with a natural drop of 623 feet. Legend says a fleeing tiger once escaped a hunter by leaping across the 98 ft gap (the narrowest point of the gorge) to safety. A thunderous roar can be heard miles away as water cascade through the narrow riverbed. We follow ancient pathways and descend to the bottom of the gorge, and enjoy a magnificent close-up view of sharp cliffs and roaring rushing water. In the evening we return to Lijiang.
B/L/D

Day13 Lijiang - Chongqing

Our first stop today is the [Mu Palace](#), the palatial residence of the then tribal leader Mu, showcasing the best of the ancient ethnic architecture. Later we walk to [Black Dragon Pool](#) where we can see majestic [Jade Dragon Snow Mountain](#) (“[Yulongxueshan](#)”), reflected in the peaceful waters of the lake between an arched marble bridge and a three storey pavilion. We then tour the [Dongba Culture Research Institute and Museum](#). Here is where Naxi scholars translate the old religious manuscripts, and is also the home to a remarkable collection of Naxi relics and cultural displays. Our afternoon flight on [Yunnan Airlines](#) 3U8678 will leave at 4 p.m., arriving in Chongqing at 5:10 p.m.. After dinner, we check-in at the 4 star, deluxe, [Holiday Inn North Chongqing](#) and enjoy a restful night. Get ready for tomorrow’s morning flight and exciting journey to Tibet, “Roof of the World”! B/L/D



Day14 Chongqing - Lhasa, Tibet (11,811 ft)

Our Yangtze cruise will end at [the mountain city of Chongqing](#) – [China’s largest metropolitan area](#) with a population of over 30 million. We will be greeted by the guide on the dock and transferred to the airport to check-in for [China Southern Airlines’](#) flight CZ3183, departing at 11:10 a.m., reaching [Lhasa](#), the spiritual heartland of Tibet at 1:30 p.m.. The flying journey itself is an unforgettable experience, with impressive scenes of [snowcapped mountains](#) over the [Tibetan Plateau](#), the earth’s highest ecosystem, and one of the last remaining great wildernesses and the source of Asia’s greatest rivers. We fly over the great white



citadel of [Gongga Shan](#) (24,783 ft), the [Hengduan Range](#), and the massive, deep, valleys of some of Asia’s greatest rivers, the [Mekong](#), and [the Yangtze](#). As we near the Plateau we can also see the 25,439-foot [Namcha Barwa](#), the easternmost rampart of the [Himalaya](#). Upon arrival at [Gongkar Airport](#) (a lofty 12,129 feet), we will be met by our Tibetan guide and driver. A scenic drive takes us along the mighty [Lhasa river](#). On route, we will enjoy [Orient](#)

[Odyssey’s](#) “[People to People Contact](#)” program and stop at [a Tibetan village and a school](#), where we have the opportunity to [interact with Tibetan peasants, teachers and students](#). Take pictures of traditional Tibetan houses, Buddhist murals, and the spectacular landscape of rivers, highlands and mountains. After arriving at the deluxe, 5 star, [Xinding Hotel Lhasa](#), one of the newest luxury properties in the region, we rest for couple of hours. It is important not overexert ourselves on the first day in Tibet. A good rest is necessary to acclimate to the high altitude (11,811 feet). Should the need arises, oxygen and Chinese herbal medicines are available at the hotel, which can help easing symptoms of AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness). Lhasa, the very name conjures up lofty and romantic images, rose to prominence in the 7th century AD when the great ruler Songtsen Gampo established his capital here and began to construct the spectacular [Potala Palace](#). Some of the most precious Buddhist relics, carvings and paintings were brought into Tibet as dowries for his Chinese and Nepali wives. Literarily means “country of the gods”, Lhasa is home of the [Dalai Lama](#), the [incarnation of Avalokiteshvara](#), the essence of compassion for all sentient beings. Tonight we enjoy a leisurely stroll on the bustling street on the way to our dinner restaurant. B/F/D

Day 15 Lhasa & Surrounding Area

Our unforgettable day begins with a visit of the majestic [Potala Palace](#). Its gold-clad roofs greet from afar. Stood on Marpori, the Red Mountain,



the Potala Palace was built in the 7th century by King Songtsen Gampo. Then after the completion in 1645, the Dalai Lamas resided here as religious and secular rulers. The section called White Palace was constructed first; half a century later, the red Palace was completed, rising like a huge tower from the sea of white-painted buildings. [Abbe Huc](#), wrote in 1845 in his book *Travels in Tartary, Tibet, and China*, “*The palace of the Tale (Dalai) Lama merits, in every respect, the celebrity which it enjoys through the world*”. The Potala Palace contains over 1,000 rooms, ceilings supported by more than 15,000 columns, numerous [ceremonial halls](#), [small chapels](#) and [meditation halls](#), each featuring [centuries-old wall paintings](#), [carvings](#),

and [ancient Buddhist scriptures written in 24 karat gold](#). There are eight vaults of deceased Dalai Lamas. They were lavishly decorated with gold, diamonds, turquoise, corals, and pearls. At roof of the Potala, we can enjoy a breathtaking view of the valley and city below. Here we also visit [the apartment of the current Dalai Lama](#), who came here as a young boy from eastern Tibet after being recognized as the reincarnation of Avalokiteshvara, the Buddha of Compassion. Next we go to [Tibet's holiest temple, the Jokhang](#). Built by King Songsten Gampo in 647 A.D., it is full of magnificent carvings and paintings, and is home to the [7th century Jobo Buddha statue](#), which is said to be one of the only three in the world blessed by Lord Buddha. The golden Jobo statue is richly decorated with jewels and usually covered with brocade and silk bands. At the feet of the Buddha, lamps made of heavy silver and filled with yak oil burn continually. **Guiseppe Tucci** once wrote *"An endless, three story high flight of chapels surrounds (the statue), decorated with the smiling and sneering Buddhist pantheon. Blissful and terrific gods fill the shade of the cells and peer unexpectedly out of their mystery."* The [Jokhang](#) is circled by [Barkhor Street](#), a sacred ritual path where pilgrims and traders gather every day. To gain merit, the pilgrims prostrate themselves in the dust and circle around the Jokhang; others turn their prayer wheels. The street throbs with action from dawn to dusk. We [observe Tibetans](#) in



colorful traditional robes chanting with their prayer wheel in hand; vendors selling their wares from religious crafts to daily needs; monks meditating at the side of the road; housewives and store keepers doing the cleaning; kids on their way to school. We will take our time to brose in this area and experience the heartbeat of Tibet! **B/L/D**

Day 16 Lhasa & Surrounding Area

Today we enjoy an excursion to two of the great monasteries of central Tibet; [Drepung Temple](#) and [Sera Monastery](#), both are considered among the most sacred. Each of them was once home to over ten thousand Lamas, and were the primary religious educational centers and pillars of the theocratic state. If we are lucky, we will see lamas morning [chanting of the sutras](#). Go behind the scenes we head to [the temple kitchen](#) where

once 5,000 dishes were prepared at each meal. We will see spectacular collection of priceless murals, carvings, and crafts. Feel free to chat with monks, who are always eager to answer our questions. **Orient Odyssey** had carefully planned the tour logistics so we will arrive at the right time to observe the rarely watched theatrical [monk debate](#). In the back yard of the monastery, hundreds of monks debate about Buddhist philosophy, using ritualistic body and arm movements to present their points. This afternoon we will also visit [Norbulinka, "Precious Stone Garden"](#). It is the Dalai Lama's exquisite and beloved summer palace from where his holiness went into exile in 1959. We will see the [magnificent wall paintings](#) in the [audience hall](#), describing in detail the experiences of the 14th Dalai Lama, framed by legends from the lives of the Buddha and Tsongkhapa. We also visit his holiness' [meditation room and bedroom](#), and the striking [God King's throne](#) in the [reception hall](#). The furniture has been untouched from the moment his holiness left the building in 1959. The clock on the wall was stopped and pointed at the very minute of his departure. The big radio in the living room is set on the station his holiness listened the very night he left his homeland. Tonight, through special arrangement of **Orient Odyssey's** ["People to People Contact"](#) program, we [visit a Tibetan family](#) and enjoy an [in-depth exploration of authentic local life](#). We will [sip the yak butter tea, and interact with household members](#). **B/L/D**



Day17 Lhasa – Chengdu

This morning, as we reminisce about our visit to the "roof of the world", [Air China](#) flight CA4404 departs at 10:35 a.m., arriving in [Chengdu](#) at 12:10 p.m.. We will be greeted and transferred to the 4.5 star, luxurious [Samsara Hotel Chengdu](#), one of the newest deluxe



property in town. The history of Chengdu can be traced back 2,000 years. Despite the rapid economic development, in contrast to other Chinese urban centers, Chengdu has preserved a traditional serene atmosphere. First we tour the United Nation sponsored [Giant](#)

[Panda Research and Breeding Center](#). We will witness the ambitious conservation effort to save the endangered species. Eighty percent of the world's 1,000 remaining giant pandas reside in this province. We will [see dozens of pandas](#) wandering through a semi-natural domain of bamboo groves and forest. A theatre presents a movie about the evolution, habits, habitats and conservation of Pandas. We can even [observe baby Pandas and cubs up close](#). It is the only place in the world where one can view the activities of young Pandas. Next, through **Orient Odyssey's** "People to People Contact" program, we visit one of many [traditional teahouses](#) scattered across the city where locals recline on bamboo armchairs, play mahjong and socialize. [Sample Sichuan-style afternoon tea](#) and [interact with local residences](#). Savor the unique panorama of Chinese social life, observing people playing cards, reading newspapers, practicing Sichuan opera, or playing Chinese chess. Our program ends at [Wangjianglou](#) – the [Park of Riverview Pavilion](#). Check out the ancient [Chongli Pavilion](#) with its [striking ornaments, green glazed tiles](#) and [red lacquered columns](#), surrounded by more than a hundred varieties of bamboo. A leisurely walk in the serene [bamboo forest](#) is an experience not to be missed! **B/L/D**



Day18 Chengdu – USA

We savor the memory of our **magnificent journey to the Shangri-la and Tibet**. The guide will assist our check-in for homebound flight (via Beijing or Shanghai), arriving USA the same day. **B/F**

***Optional Extension**

Our programs are flexible! You can extend the stay in Chengdu to discover the colossal Buddha image carved on Mt. Le Shan, one of the largest in the world, or travel on to Hong Kong, Macau, or even Silk Road! Please contact us for more information.

***International Flights**

Orient Odyssey features *Northwest / Delta Airlines, China Eastern Airlines, Asiana Airlines* or *Korean Airlines* as the international carrier for this package. Based on your departure cities and tour logistics, Orient Odyssey reserves the right to secure other major international carrier for your journey. Flight arrangements will be finalized at least 60 days before departure.

*Sample int'l flight schedules are as follows – note schedules are subject to change:

From Los Angeles (LAX):

DEP:	OZ203	Los Angeles – Seoul	0020 / 0520
	OZ361	Seoul – Shanghai	0940 / 1040
RTN:	OZ336	Beijing – Seoul	1530 / 1820
	OZ204	Seoul – Los Angeles	2000 / 1440

From San Francisco (SFO):

DEP	NW027	SFO – Tokyo	1340 / 1705
	NW029	Tokyo – Shanghai	1830 / 2140
RTN	NW030	Shanghai – Tokyo	0855 / 1405
	NW028	Tokyo – SFO	1600 / 0915

From New York (JFK):

DEP	OZ221	JFK – Seoul	0030 / 0410
	OZ331	Seoul – Shanghai	0940 / 1040
RTN	OZ336	Beijing – Seoul	1530 / 1820
	OZ222	Seoul – JFK	2000 / 2050

***Note**

Fuel surcharges and taxes are subject to change. Due to lowered fuel cost, actual fuel surcharge might be less than quoted. Updated and accurate amount will be advised before the final payment due date. Tour cost is quoted based on current foreign exchange rate as of Dec 1, 2008. Price is guaranteed once full payment is received.

Kindly refer to General Terms & Conditions

For inquiry, please feel free to call

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