Voyage to the Roof of the World: Beijing to Lhasa

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Overview

The Highlights

- Six nights on board the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express;*

- Accommodation at five-star Four Seasons Beijing (or similar) for two nights;

- Accommodation at St. Regis Lhasa Resort (or similar) for two nights;

- Accommodation at Waldorf Astoria Chengdu (or similar) for one night;

- Experience the world’s highest stretch of track (3 miles above sea level) at Tanggula Pass;

- Tour the UNESCO site **Potala Palace**, former seat of the Tibetan government;

- Camel ride through the sand dunes to magical Crescent Lake;

- Thousand Buddha Cave Complex of Dunhuang, site of 500 grottoes carved up to 1,700 years ago;

- Fully inclusive meals, drinks, gratuities, touring, & transfers;

- On board doctor.

The Tour

Board the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express* for an immersive 13-day journey from Beijing to Lhasa. This unforgettable adventure takes you through some of the most remote and captivating landscapes of China and Tibet. Take in the wonders of the Silk Road as you discover the history and culture of this breathtaking region.

Begin by exploring the imperial grandeur of Beijing before heading southwest, taking in the historical treasures of Luoyang and X'ian, and the natural wonders of Chengdu, Xining and Dunhuang. Take a trip on the Qinghai-Tibet railway, reaching 16,640 feet above sea level at the Tanggula Pass -- the highest point on any railway in the world -- before reaching the Tibetan capital of Lhasa.

Itinerary

Day 1: Beijing, China

Upon arrival at Beijing airport, you'll be greeted and transferred to the five-star Four Seasons Hotel for a two-night stay.

In the evening, join a welcome reception dinner, offering the perfect opportunity to meet your fellow travelers and prepare for the exciting journey ahead.

Day 2: Beijing, China

Step into history with a visit to the Great Wall of China today. Walk along the restored Badaling section of the wall and marvel at the stunning views of the surrounding countryside. Return to Beijing for a leisurely afternoon.

In the evening, indulge in a traditional Peking Duck dinner at one of Beijing's most celebrated restaurants.

Day 3: Beijing, China

Enjoy a full day tour of Beijing, including visits to the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, and the Summer Palace, with its ornate pavilions and lakeside gardens.

Alternatively, explore Beijing's modern architecture, including the Olympic Village, CCTV Tower, and National Museum.

This evening, board the luxurious *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express* and settle into your cabin before a special welcome dinner on board.

Overnight on board.

Day 4: Luoyang & Xi'an, China

Awaken in your cabin as the train arrives into Luoyang, a city with over 4,000 years of history and once the capital of 13 dynasties.

After breakfast on board, your day begins with a visit to the awe-inspiring Longmen Grottoes, a UNESCO World Heritage Site where more than 100,000 Buddhist statues are 60 stupas are carved into the limestone cliffs along the Yi River.

Continue onto the legendary Shaolin Temple, situated at the foot of Mount Song. Wander the beautiful courtyards where monks still train and practice martial arts. Head back into town for lunch featuring local specialties such as water banquet dumplings.

In the evening, rejoin the train to continue onto the ancient city of Xi'an, where a Tang Dynasty-style banquet dinner of traditional cuisine, music, and dancing awaits.

Day 5: Xi'an, China

After breakfast, set out to explore Xi'an's ancient city walls, one of the oldest, largest, and best-preserved structures in the world. Stroll along the ramparts where imperial guards once stood, and admire the panoramic views of the old town.

Following lunch at a local restaurant, visit the Terracotta Warriors - 6,000 life-size figures standing guard over the tomb of China’s first emperor. The figures include soldiers, horses and chariots, and each is unique. Discovered by farmers in 1974, this subterranean army is considered one of the greatest discoveries of the 20th century,

Dinner and overnight onboard the train.

Day 6: Chengdu, China

Today, the train continues on to Chengdu, Sichuan's capital.

After breakfast onboard, explore Kuanzhai Alley, a charming network of Qing Dynasty lanes filled with traditional teahouses, boutiques, and historic courtyards.

Later, gather at the Sichuan Opera Theatre for an exclusive traditional opera where you will

witness radiant silk costumes and the art of bian lian - featuring dramatic, quick mask-changing techniques - in an intimate performance.

In the evening, you are transferred to the Waldorf Astoria Chengdu (or similar) for a one-night stay.

Day 7: Chengdu, China & On board

Your day begins at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding, where you'll encounter China's beloved pandas in a peaceful sanctuary.

Afterward, return to the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express* for lunch as the journey continues. The afternoon is yours to relax onboard. Perhaps indulge with a cocktail in the panoramic Observation Car, taking in the ever-changing scenery.

Day 8: Xining, China

Enjoy a leisurely morning aboard the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express* as it winds through the breathtaking landscapes of the Qinghai Plateau towards Xining, the capital of Qinghai Province.

On arrival, disembark for a visit to Kumbum Monastery, one of China's most sacred sites. Your expert guide unveils the monastery's spiritual legacy, offering exclusive access to quieter corners for a meditative moment. Enjoy Tibetan herbal tea and delicate butter cookies in the courtyard while you soak in the serene ambiance.

After your visit, you may choose between two options: delve into Qinghai's heritage at the Provincial Museum, home to fascinating exhibits of ancient Silk Road artifacts and Tibetan culture; or opt to explore the vibrant Shui Jing Xiang Market for a glimpse into local life.

Later in the afternoon, return to the train for dinner and overnight on board.

Day 9: Dunhuang, China

Following breakfast, disembark to explore the Mogao Caves, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, often referred to as the "Cave of a Thousand Buddhas." The caves are set dramatically against the cliffs of the Gobi Desert. Inside, nearly 500 richly adorned grottoes, vivid murals and painted sculptures chronicle spiritual tales and cultural exchange from the 4th to the 14th centuries, forming one of the world's most remarkable collections of ancient art.

The experience is made even more special with an exclusive live performance by local folk musicians and dancers.

After lunch, take a camel trek in the Gobi Desert - along the paths once traveled by Silk Road merchants - to Crescent Lake, a stunning natural oasis.

Rejoin the train for drinks, dinner, and overnight on board.

Day 10: Qinghai-Tibet Railway

After a final gourmet breakfast aboard the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express*, your journey continues aboard the legendary Qinghai–Tibet Railway—the highest railway in the world, reaching 16,640 feet at Tanggula Pass. A marvel of modern engineering and stretching over 1,180 miles (1,900 kilometers) from Xining to Lhasa, this iconic route offers a rare opportunity to glide through some of the most remote and dramatic landscapes on earth.

Settle into your comfortable seat and watch as the scenery shifts from the edge of the Tibetan Plateau to sweeping grasslands and shimmering salt lakes, all framed by distant snow-capped peaks.

Alternatively, guests may opt for a direct flight to Lhasa, allowing extra time to relax and begin acclimatizing in the mystical capital of Tibet.

Day 11: Tanggula Mountain Pass & Lhasa, Tibet

This afternoon, visit Jokhang Temple, a 13th-century sacred sanctuary that stands as the spiritual nucleus of Tibetan Buddhism. Here, the scent of incense fills the air, with murmured prayers echo off ancient stones from pilgrims who have travelled far and wide.

Afterwards, soak up the vibrant rhythms of Barkhor Market, Lhasa’s oldest market, where stalls overflow with traditional crafts, prayer beads, and colorful thangka paintings.

Day 12: Lhasa, Tibet

Enjoy a full day discover of Lhasa, beginning with the tranquil Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama’s Summer Palace, built in the 1740s as a retreat from the sweltering summer heat. Meaning ‘jewel garden’ or ‘precious garden,’ this peaceful oasis remains a sanctuary from the bustling city, with its beautifully manicured grounds and serene atmosphere.

For lunch, you'll savor authentic Tibetan flavors while accompanied by the enchanting sounds of traditional folk music.

In the afternoon, embark on a tour of the iconic Potala Palace, a monumental 17th-century masterpiece and former seat of the Tibetan Government. Once the winter residence of the Dalai Lama, this awe-inspiring palace dominates the Lhasa skyline with its towering walls and intricate architecture. The Potala Palace is one of the world’s most magnificent architectural wonders, offering breathtaking views and an extraordinary glimpse into Tibet’s regal and religious past.

In the evening, you will conclude this unforgettable day with a farewell dinner, a fitting tribute to the incredible experiences shared on this journey.

Day 13: Lhasa Tibet

This morning, you are transferred to your departing flight for home.

Dates & Prices

2027 Dates

April 6 - April 18
September 19 - October 1

Accommodation	Double	Single	Deposit
Superior Cabin Twin/Double	$25,900	$43,200	25%
Han Dynasty Suite	On request	On request	25%

All prices are per person.

2028 Dates

April 5 - April 17
September 19 - October 1

Accommodation	Double	Single	Deposit
Superior Cabin Twin/Double	$27,200	$45,400	25%
Han Dynasty Suite	$72,000	$144,000	25%

All prices are per person.

More

A Chinese visa and a special permit for travel into the Tibet Autonomous Region are both required for this journey (for U.S. citizens). We will obtain the Tibet permit on your behalf.

Travelers should be aware that journey involves high altitudes.