



Discovering Our Planet Together



Wild China Photo Expedition

Photograph Giant Pandas, Golden Monkeys & Dramatic Mountain Landscapes



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Trip Details:

Days

14 Days /
Mar–Apr,
Oct–Nov

Price

From
\$16295

Wild China Photo Expedition

Photograph Giant Pandas, Golden Monkeys & Dramatic Mountain Landscapes

The wild side of China holds rare animals and stunning landscapes few travelers are privileged to photograph, revealed on our singular itinerary led by expert photographer-naturalist guides. In remote nature reserves deep in the mountains of Sichuan, clear rivers rush through deep gorges, and lush forests shelter some of Earth's most endangered creatures. This is the last wild habitat of the giant panda, which subsists almost entirely on the bamboo protected in these remote sanctuaries. Supported by WWF, these little-visited wilderness enclaves also harbor rare moon bears, golden snub-nosed monkeys, Chinese goral, takin, blue sheep and exquisite birds, including elegant golden pheasants. Photograph pandas up close at renowned panda research and breeding bases—plus cultural subjects in traditional villages, and the Terracotta Army in the ancient Silk Road city of Xi'an.

Trip Highlights

Watch and photograph giant pandas at close range at three world-renowned panda research centers, each offering a unique setting and visitor experience

Special permits allow us into a virtually unvisited national reserve where elusive wild pandas live and breed freely—we don't expect to see them, but other rare wildlife is on view

Get delightful images of endangered golden snub-nosed monkeys, charming blue-faced primates found only in a small area of temperate forest in central China



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Itinerary At A Glance

Day 1

Xi'an, China — Ancient City Wall

Day 2

Xi'an—Terracotta Army / Lesser Wild Goose Pagoda

Day 3

Bullet Train to Guangyuan / Scenic Drive to Minshan Mountains

Day 4

Golden Monkey Nature Reserve / Qing Xi / Wild Panda Nature Reserve

Day 5

Exclusive Photography Opportunities in Wild Panda Nature Reserve

Day 6

Scenic Drive to Dujiangyan / Night Walk

Day 7

Dujiangyan Panda Base / Dujiangyan Panda Valley

Wild China Photo Expedition Itinerary

Photograph Giant Pandas, Golden Monkeys & Dramatic Mountain Landscapes

XI'AN

Day 1: Photograph Xi'an's Ancient City Walls & Imperial Heart

- Arrive in Xi'an, China's ancient imperial capital and gateway to the Silk Road
- Capture sweeping views from the Ming-era city walls overlooking both the historic center and modern skyline
- Join your Photo Expedition Leader for a welcome dinner featuring regional Chinese cuisine

Arrive in the ancient imperial capital of Xi'an, one of China's earliest regions to be settled, and transfer to our hotel in the Yanta District where we find a number of iconic cultural sites including the Wild Goose Pagodas. Xi'an is where China's first emperor united the disparate warring tribes of the vast realm in the 3rd century B.C. to launch one of the world's most extraordinary civilizations. The capital of 13 dynasties, Xi'an's walled city and narrow streets hark back to a time when it was a center for cultural, religious and economic interactions between East and West at the east end of the Silk Road traveled by Persian and Arab traders 1,300 years ago.

After lunch, we visit a portion of the ancient city wall. Xi'an is one of the few cities in China where the old city walls still stand, with most sections carefully restored or rebuilt. Constructed originally in 1370 during the Ming dynasty, the imposing 40-foot-high walls are surrounded by a dry moat and form a rectangle with an 8.6-mile perimeter. Atop the city walls, photograph the old city within its confines, and get panoramic shots over modern-day Xi'an beyond. This evening, gather for a welcome dinner, the first of many delectable Chinese meals.



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Itinerary At A Glance

Day 8

Gengda Wolong Panda Base /
Rilong

Day 9

Siguniangshan (Four Sisters)
National Park

Day 10

Baoxing Valley—Jiajinshan Forest

Day 11

Labahe Nature Reserve

Day 12

Red Panda Photography in Labahe

Day 13

Labahe Nature Reserve / Chengdu

Day 14

Chengdu / Depart

XI'AN

Day 2: Discover the Terracotta Warriors & Xi'an after dark

- Capture the remarkable Terracotta Army, with thousands of life-size soldiers guarding China's first emperor
- Explore the UNESCO-listed Lesser Wild Goose Pagoda and its peaceful gardens
- Photograph Xi'an's illuminated city walls, pagodas and historic streets on an evening photo outing

Depart early this morning to photograph Xi'an's most famous sight, the Terracotta Warriors. Unearthed in 1974 in the suburbs outside the walled city, the stone army is one of the world's most remarkable archaeological discoveries. Consisting of 8,000 life-size soldiers, 130 chariots and more than 500 horses, none identical, the army was built to guard the massive mausoleum complex of Qin Shihuang (259–210 B.C.), the pivotal leader who became China's first emperor. The figures vary in height according to their rank, the tallest being the generals. The majority of the figures remain in situ in the pits near the mausoleum, while other non-military terracotta figures were found in adjoining pits, including officials, acrobats, strongmen, and musicians. The Terracotta Army was discovered by a group of local farmers who were digging a well near the Qin Emperor's tomb mound in a region laced with underground springs. Subsequent excavation and research via ground-penetrating radar have revealed that the Army is part of a much larger necropolis covering 38 square miles, part of the emperor's imperial palace compound surrounding his tomb.

Continue to Lesser Wild Goose Pagoda, the smaller of two impressive towers built in Xi'an in the 8th century during the Tang dynasty. The site was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2014 as part of the Silk Roads Network. The well-preserved Buddhist temple is surrounded by a tranquil park and gardens, which we wander through before returning to our hotel. After dinner, head out to discover Xi'an after dark, capturing photos of the cityscape lit up at night.



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GUANGYUAN / MINSHAN MOUNTAINS

Day 3: Journey into the Minshan Mountains

- Board the bullet train for a swift journey to Guangyuan
- Travel into the Minshan Mountains, a stronghold for giant pandas and red pandas
- Pause for panoramic views as 18,000-foot peaks rise above the surrounding landscape

This morning, board the bullet train for a swift 2-hour journey to Guangyuan, where we disembark to meet our bus. Continue on a scenic drive into the Minshan Mountains. This range in northern Sichuan stretches 250 miles from north to south with its highest peaks rising above 18,000 feet. It's a wild enclave of lush, densely forested slopes and deep river gorges that shelters an abundance of rare and endangered Chinese wildlife. We stop along the way at impressive photo viewpoints as we journey deep into the mountains, eventually arriving at our hotel where we unwind and anticipate our first wildlife encounters tomorrow.



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GOLDEN MONKEY NATURE RESERVE / WILD PANDA NATURE RESERVE

Day 4: Photograph rare Chinese wildlife & a secluded mountain village

- Hike to a habituated troop of golden snub-nosed monkeys for exceptional close-up encounters
- Wander Qing Xi, a 300-year-old Muslim village lined with historic wooden homes
- Visit a little-known giant panda reserve rarely visited by outsiders

Rise early this morning to visit a secluded nature reserve that's home to a large, lively band of golden snub-nosed monkeys. The sanctuary, which covers nearly 40,000 acres, lies near a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve in the Minshan Mountains. Encompassing large tracts of virgin forest, pristine lakes, rivers and waterfalls, it is home to 46 different rare animal species, of which the golden monkeys are arguably the most charming. To reach them, we walk uphill on a forested trail for about 30 minutes, depending on where the monkeys are located today, with rest stops en route. We expect excellent close-up shots, as the monkeys are habituated to humans and unfazed by our presence. They live in highly social groups, and their animated interactions at close range delight us. With blue faces, a small, upturned nose, and covered with a mantle of long, shaggy reddish-gold fur, they are hardy creatures, tolerating winter snow and colder temperatures better than any non-human primate. They inhabit high mountainous forests at elevations up to 10,000 feet, descending to lower altitudes in winter.

After our morning with the monkeys, we head into an even more remote sector of these misty mountains, stopping en route in the Muslim village of Qing Xi. We have time to wander its narrow lanes, capturing scenes of street life amid 300-year-old wooden buildings that date to the Qing dynasty. It's a peaceful setting, with a stream coursing through the center of the village. Just beyond the small town lies a secret slice of Chinese wilderness, a chain of nature reserves little known to outsiders and visited by a mere handful of Westerners. Our destination is a national wildlife sanctuary that harbors a vital population of wild giant pandas. We don't choose to name it, as it is virtually undiscovered by tourists, and we are likely to be the only visitors there. As we follow a rushing river up a narrow valley to reach the reserve, keep an eye out for nocturnal wildlife starting to emerge as dusk descends. Eventually, we reach our hotel, tucked away in the forest along the river, in a setting where our nearest neighbors are mostly wild animals that thrive in these remote protected environs.



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WILD PANDA NATURE RESERVE

Day 5: Search for wildlife with exclusive access to remote panda habitat

- Travel into remote giant panda habitat using Nat Hab's special access permits
- Look for takin, macaques, musk deer, serow and other mountain wildlife
- Watch for golden pheasants amid bamboo forests, waterfalls and limestone peaks

Our focus today is an isolated 100,000-acre national reserve with a densely forested ecosystem that is among the most diverse and intact in Asia. This wildlife sanctuary, rated Grade I by WWF as a global biodiversity hotspot, holds healthy populations of some of the world's most endangered and vulnerable animals, including at least 60 giant pandas. Among its 430 mammal species, the reserve harbors more than 1,200 takin—a large, shaggy relative of wild sheep and goats—as well as more than 2,400 different kinds of plants.

Pursue photos of China's unique wildlife on morning and evening excursions, stopping to drink in stunning vistas of waterfalls, boulder-strewn gorges and mist-shrouded limestone peaks. This is prime panda habitat, and while sightings of this famously elusive mammal are extremely rare, our exclusive permits allow us into distant areas of the reserve where they live and breed freely, affording us the best possible chance to spot signs of them in the wild. Even though we are highly unlikely to spy them in the heavy bamboo understory, just knowing we are in their midst is exhilarating. Search for other species within the reserve's verdant recesses, too, including Tibetan and rhesus macaques, golden and Sichuan takin, musk deer, muntjac, serow, wild boar and blue sheep. More rarely, we may see endangered moon bears and red pandas. Birding is superb, with more than 150 species in the reserve—the elegant golden pheasant is a photographer's prize. We can often capture images of all of these from the remote roads and trails we explore, although dense vegetation and weather can affect our sightings.



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DUJIANGYAN

Day 6: Take a scenic drive from the Tibetan Plateau to Sichuan

- Travel from the Tibetan Plateau through mountain villages, Buddhist temples and dramatic alpine scenery
- Capture images of a traditional Sichuan market overflowing with seasonal produce and local specialties
- Photograph Nanqiao Bridge glowing above a 2,500-year-old Dujiangyan Irrigation System

A spectacular drive is in store as we make the full-day journey south from the edge of the Tibetan Plateau to Dujiangyan. Winding through this mountainous region, we pause periodically along our route to photograph dramatic landscapes, rural villages and Buddhist temples. Along the way, pass through the town of Mianyang, known as Fujun in ancient times, with a 2,200-year history that spans the Qin and Han dynasties. We also stop at a local market to capture colorful images of rural life, showcasing the bounty of fruit and vegetables harvested in the Sichuan Basin. Enjoy a traditional dinner this evening, then rest up from the day's journey at our elegant new resort hotel in Dujiangyan. Either tonight or tomorrow night, we'll take a night walk to photograph Nanqiao Bridge, built in traditional Chinese architectural style and spectacularly lit up after dark. The bridge crosses a canal that slices through the center of the city, part of an ancient irrigation system of dams and canals still in use 2,500 years later.



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DUJIANGYAN

Day 7: Witness giant panda conservation in action

- Go behind the scenes at Dujiangyan Panda Base, with a chance to assist panda keepers
- Visit Panda Valley, where giant pandas prepare for life back in the wild
- Look for playful red pandas alongside their famous black-and-white cousins

Close encounters with China's beloved giant pandas are in store today as we visit two panda conservation facilities in Dujiangyan. Dujiangyan Panda Base, which opened in 2013 with the arrival of 10 pandas, focuses on rescue, disease control and prevention, and rehabilitation of injured and ill wild pandas. It has expanded its mission, and its numbers, to encompass care for senior and disabled pandas as well as healthy pandas that are part of the preventive research program. A highlight of our time is a special opportunity to volunteer in their care (though it is not guaranteed and depends on the status of the pandas at the time of our visit). Conditions permitting, we'll have the chance to interact with pandas at close range as we help their keepers care for them, including tasks such as preparing their food and cleaning enclosures.

This afternoon, visit Dujiangyan Panda Valley, a new facility that is both a panda research and breeding base and a center for conservation education. This quiet setting, landscaped with flowers, provides a natural environs where pandas are gradually habituated and returned to the wild. Reintroduction training experts from around the world gather here for collaborative research. We may see pandas in transitional concrete-block "dens" that are learning to live on their own in the surroundings that mirror their wild habitat. We often have a chance to photograph many red pandas here as well.



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WOLONG / RILONG

Day 8: Travel from panda country to the Tibetan highlands

- Visit Wolong Panda Center, where giant pandas are bred and prepared for release into the wild
- Travel into the Four Sisters Mountains, often called the "Chinese Alps"
- Experience the unique culture of the Jiarong Tibetans in the high-altitude village of Rilong

Today we visit Gengda Wolong Panda Center in the Wolong Nature Reserve, a base that integrates scientific research, captive breeding and reintroduction of pandas into the wild. More than 30 pandas reside at the center, which includes a 680-acre bamboo forest. Get close-up photos of giant pandas in this natural habitat that features a striking mountain backdrop. Then continue to Rilong, a Tibetan village famous as a base camp for climbing 20,505-foot Mount Siguniang. Translating to Four Sisters Mountain, this imposing massif encompasses four separate peaks and is often referred to as the "Chinese Alps." In Rilong, we are immersed in Tibetan culture, with traditional architecture on display and yak butter tea for sale by local vendors. This high-altitude village, 10,000 feet above sea level, is the center of the Jiarong Tibetan culture, found only in this region of Sichuan province. The rural Jiarong people are known for their intricately embroidered costumes and agricultural lifestyle, and we find many subjects for creating memorable cultural images.

SIGUNIANGSHAN NATIONAL PARK

Day 9: Photograph China's alpine wilderness

- Explore Shuangqiao Valley beneath the soaring, snow-capped Four Sisters Mountains
- Wander among alpine lakes, waterfalls and colorful rock formations at 10,000 feet
- Watch for endangered red pandas in the high-altitude forests of Siguniangshan National Park

Early risers may catch glorious landscape shots of the sunrise behind the peaks in Rilong, a vista renowned for its singular beauty. We spend the day photographing the dramatic scenery of nearby Siguniangshan National Park. Entering the 25-mile-long Shuangqiao Valley, snow-capped peaks rise in every direction, with Four Sisters Mountain towering above. The valley floor is 10,000 feet above sea level, and the highest mountains nearly double that. Explore the colorful geological features and mirror-like lakes of this subalpine terrain, following boardwalk trails that weave among occasional pagodas and prayer flags. This high-altitude forest is also native habitat for the endangered red panda. Deeper into the valley, we reach the Ginsenguo flatland, with a viewing deck overlooking highland swamps and snowy peaks, and Jiuja Lake, which is actually a group of four seasonal lakes and nine perennial ones—the legendary bathing pools for the "four sisters." After a full day of photography in the park, travel back down the valley to spend a second night in Rilong.



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BAOXING VALLEY

Day 10: Hike the Misty Forests of the Baoxing Valley

- Search for elusive red pandas in the UNESCO-listed Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries
- Photograph lush mountain landscapes filled with bamboo, moss-draped trees and rushing streams
- Watch for endemic birds and other wildlife in one of China's most biodiverse forest reserves

Explore the lush Baoxing Valley today as we hike in a wild, little-visited forest reserve that forms a critical part of the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries—comprising the natural, contiguous habitat for threatened and endangered species like the giant panda and red panda. Here in the mist-cloaked Jiajin Mountains we find more than 30% of the world's giant pandas, although they are very rarely seen, hidden in the heavy bamboo understory. Red pandas, however, are frequently spotted, and we have good chances to see them within this large, undeveloped national forest that is one of the seven nature reserves and 11 scenic parks that comprise the World Heritage area. Once in a while, a moon bear may also make a rare appearance. The rugged region is one of the botanically richest sites in the world outside the tropical rainforests, with 5,000 to 6,000 species of flora and 365 endemic bird species. Fresh-flowing streams lace the valley, lined with moss-furred trees, rhododendrons and wildflowers.

The famous Red Army Long March passed very near here, and our simple guest house at the foot of Jiajin Mountain is named for it: the Red Army Post Station. The march, occurring from 1934-1935, was a 6,200-mile, year-long military retreat northwest to Shaanxi by the Chinese Red Army in the face of Chiang Kai-Shek's advancing Kuomintang troops during the Chinese Civil War. The Red Army's trek, which crossed 18 mountain ranges and 24 rivers, established Mao Zedong as the undisputed head of the Chinese Communist Party by the time the troops reached their destination.



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LABAHE NATURE RESERVE

Day 11: Discover wild red panda country

- Journey through the Hengduan Mountains, stopping for sweeping vistas and mountain birdlife
- Search one of China's best wild habitats for the elusive red panda
- Look for water deer emerging at dusk near your secluded forest hotel

Depart this morning for Labahe Nature Reserve located southwest of Chengdu in the Hengduan Mountains, stopping en route for magnificent mountain vistas, birding opportunities and lunch. Once we reach our destination and check in to our hotel, it's time to enter the reserve for further photography adventures. Labahe is one of China's top spots to capture images of the elusive and endearing red panda, and while sightings are never guaranteed, we often find excellent chances to photograph them in these alpine forests. As the day draws to a close, we may get shots of water deer coming down to a salt lick just outside our hotel.

LABAHE NATURE RESERVE

Day 12: Photographing red pandas in Labahe's forests

- Spend a full day searching one of China's best wild habitats for elusive red pandas
- Look for golden takin, leopard cats, Tibetan macaques and giant flying squirrels
- Explore the reserve by private vehicle, stopping to photograph panoramic mountain views

A full day is dedicated to photographing wildlife, especially red pandas, in the Labahe reserve. Although giant pandas also live here, we are much less likely to see them. Comprised of mixed forests and pockets of dense bamboo, the reserve's diverse vegetation and altitude create ideal habitat for the red panda, which is adapted to environments above 7,000 feet. A wide variety of other mammals and birds thrives here, too, and we hope to capture images of Tibetan macaque, Chinese leopard cat, hog badger, serow, sambar deer, golden takin, and red and white giant flying squirrels. Notable birds include the golden-breasted fulvetta, Lady Amherst's pheasant, crimson-breasted woodpecker and three-toed parrotbill. In our private vehicle, we have the freedom to explore different parts of the reserve, including opportunities for striking landscape photography from higher mountain locations.



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LABAHE / CHENGDU

Day 13: Return to Chengdu and toast the adventure

- Enjoy a final relaxed morning in the forests of Labahe Nature Reserve
- Drive back through mountain scenery to the outskirts of Chengdu
- Gather for a farewell dinner with your Expedition Leader and local guide

Enjoy a leisurely last morning before we depart Labahe Nature Reserve and drive back to the outskirts of Chengdu, where our hotel is conveniently located at Tianfu Airport for homeward departures tomorrow. This evening, join your Expedition Leader, local guide and traveling companions to celebrate our adventures at a farewell dinner.

CHENGDU

Day 14: Depart Chengdu after your China photo expedition

- Enjoy a final breakfast at your hotel near the airport before homeward flights

After breakfast at our hotel, a transfer is included to the nearby airport terminal to meet departing flights as our China photography odyssey comes to a close this morning.



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Accommodation Details:

Shangri-La Xian

Courtyard by Marriott Jiuzhaigou

Wild Panda Reserve Hotel

Tianfu Source Hotel

Jiarong Tibetan Qingcheng Hotel

Red Army Guesthouse

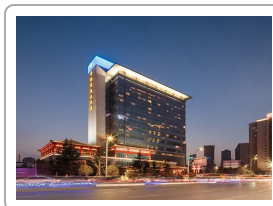
Labah Lanshuijing Hotel

JoyHub Air Hotel

For detailed descriptions, visit
nathab.com/asia-adventure-travel/wild-china-panda-photo-expedition/accommodations

Wild China Photo Expedition Accommodations

Photograph Giant Pandas, Golden Monkeys & Dramatic Mountain Landscapes



Shangri-La Xian

Blending contemporary luxury with details that hark back to Xian's ancient Silk Road heritage, this 5-star hotel offers spacious rooms overlooking the city skyline or surrounding gardens.



Courtyard by Marriott Jiuzhaigou

Modern comfort meets natural beauty at this stylish hotel near Jiuzhaigou National Park, with serene guest rooms, regional dining and airy spaces designed for relaxation and ease.

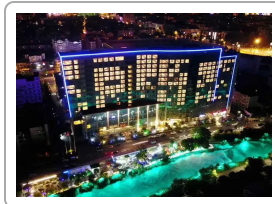


Wild Panda Reserve Hotel

The sole lodging within this remote national nature reserve offers modern accommodations in chalets along a river, and a large dining room for family-style meals.



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Tianfu Source Hotel

With its prime location in Balan Square and close proximity to scenic and natural areas near Dujiangyan, this contemporary hotel is an ideal base for exploration.



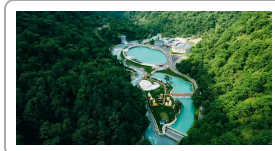
Jiarong Tibetan Qingcheng Hotel

Offering a rare glimpse into authentic Tibetan culture and rural mountain life, this simple, cozy and charming local hotel provides a comfortable stay with big views.



Red Army Guesthouse

Located in Baoxing Valley at the foot of Jiayinshan, this simple guest house offers rare access to one of China's richest wildlife reserves, home to red pandas, giant pandas and pristine mountain forests.



Labahe Lanshuijing Hotel

This modern mountain chalet is situated inside the Labahe Nature Reserve, where the river and broadleaf forest meet, and wildlife abounds.



JoyHub Air Hotel

Enjoy exceptional convenience and deluxe view rooms at this sleek new luxury hotel offering first-class airport accommodations for international departures into and out of Chengdu.



Photograph a Hidden Side of China as You Travel “Behind the Scenes”

Book any other photo tour to China, and you'll likely shoot the classics: the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square. But as a nature photographer, you want a different approach China. On our one-of-a-kind Photo Expedition, you'll go deep into hidden wilderness enclaves few Westerners can access—including native wild panda habitat and a spectacular national park in western Sichuan that's virtually unknown outside China. You'll also document authentic scenes of rural and village life, rarely included on standard tours. Find out more about what makes our China photo odyssey so exceptional:

1

A Rare Opportunity to Search for Wild Giant Pandas

We hold exclusive permits to enter a remote, little-visited nature reserve, with access to areas where wild giant pandas live and breed freely. Though their numbers are few in this vast reserve and they are *highly* elusive—we won't expect to see them—it's a thrill to be able to look for them in their native wild habitat.

2

A Virtually Unvisited Reserve Offers Exclusive Wildlife Photo Opportunities

In addition to wild pandas, the reserve described above is home to many other species including red panda, blue sheep, civet, leopard cat, Tibetan and rhesus macaque, muntjac, serow, moon bear, golden and Sichuan takin, and more than 150 species of birds, including the golden pheasant. Due to a half-century of protection from hunting, they are often visible from roads and trails. However, it is important to note that vegetation is heavy, weather can affect wildlife visibility, sightings are highly unpredictable, and we generally see wildlife at a distance.

3

Get Close-Ups of Giant Pandas on Three Separate Panda Bases Visits

If it's panda photos you're after, we're certain no other tour offers the panda immersion this one does. We make sure you get all the close-range shots you hope for. On extended visits to three different panda bases, you'll photograph pandas in different settings, from enclosures ensuring good close-ups to natural, open environs where pandas may climb trees or otherwise engage in typical "in the wild" behavior.

4

Photograph Golden Monkeys in a Mountain Nature Reserve

China's other hallmark species is the golden snub-nosed monkey, and we include a visit to a golden monkey reserve where a large habituated troop provides endless entertainment from just feet away. Though they are not truly "wild," neither are they enclosed, and we are thus able to get wonderful close-ups of their wizened faces and charming behavior.



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5

A Full Day for Nature Photography in Siguniangshan National Park

We spend the entire day photographing the dramatic scenery of Siguniangshan National Park as we traverse the high-altitude Shuangqiao Valley, ringed by snow-capped peaks, including Four Sisters Mountain, rising to 20,000 feet. Colorful geological features, mirror-like lakes, pagodas and prayer flags make for captivating photography subjects. Few if any western travelers regularly set eyes on this stunning landscape. Our Expedition Leader offers guidance along the way to help you get exceptional shots.

6

Photograph Scenes of Traditional Tibetan Culture

Our travels include an overland traverse along the edge of the sprawling Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, where small villages, prayer flags and chortens dot the landscape. We'll learn more about this deeply traditional culture, which offers a dramatic counterpoint to the urban Chinese setting of Chengdu.

7

Visit Ancient Xi'an to Photograph the Terracotta Army

Of course, we would not omit the chance to visit this extraordinary archaeological site, where you'll have a chance to get close-up shots from a wide range of angles of the thousands of hand-carved warriors, horses and chariots unearthed here more than 2,000 years after their intricate creation—no two statues are exactly alike!

8

Our Small Group Allows Us to Adapt to Changing Conditions

Because we limit this trip to 10 guests, you'll get plenty of personalized attention and photography coaching from our Expedition Leader. A small group also means we're able to get everyone up and out early in the morning to chase the best light. We'll have the flexibility to remain at a site longer if it shows a lot of photographic potential, or move on to a new destination if it doesn't.

9

An Accomplished Photographer Expedition Leader, Plus Expert Local Guides

Your Nat Hab Expedition Leader is not only a naturalist but also an expert nature and wildlife photographer, offering tips and techniques for challenging forest photography conditions, with plenty of time and enthusiasm to answer all your questions. We are also accompanied by an outstanding Chinese naturalist guide. With a tremendous depth of experience, plus additional training and resources provided by WWF's top scientists, our staff will make your trip a learning adventure as well as a photography quest. **See Expedition Leader bios** with traveler comments regarding the quality of our leaders.

10

Accommodations Selected to Optimize Photo Opportunities

From a quiet group of mountainside chalets in a remote nature reserve where other travelers are few, to a simple hotel in a traditional ethnic village on the Tibetan Plateau, our comfortable lodgings place you in close proximity to the highlights of each region we visit, whether that's wildlife, evocative landscapes or scenes of traditional life.



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11

Dine on Outstanding Local Cuisine

While photography may be your primary interest, food lovers will be thrilled by the culinary delights you'll discover. Sichuan province is famed for its piquant cuisine, and offer a wide selection of restaurants and dishes, carefully selected by our local Chinese guide to appeal to Western palates and preferences. Since food is typically served family-style at a large round table, multiple tastes and dietary preferences can be catered for (though be sure to make special needs known to us ahead of time). We make a point to choose locations that are popular with local people, for a truly authentic Chinese dining experience.

12

An Opportunity to Volunteer with Panda Care When Conditions Permit

At Dujiangyan Panda Base, we may have an optional opportunity to help with aspects of the pandas' care. This could involve preparing their food or other tasks that place us directly into the daily activities of the pandas' caregivers at this research base. *Please note that this volunteer opportunity is intermittent and depends on the pandas' situation at the time, and it will not always be available.*

13

Our Quality-Value Guarantee Ensures Your Outstanding Photography Expedition

Natural Habitat Adventures offers an exclusive guarantee that clearly states that we will meet the high expectations we set forth in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company.

14

Feel Good About the Way You Travel

We all care about the planet, and you can travel with us knowing that the emissions from your trip are 100-percent carbon-offset. Natural Habitat Adventures is the world's first carbon-neutral travel company and a leader in sustainable practices throughout its operations abroad and at home.

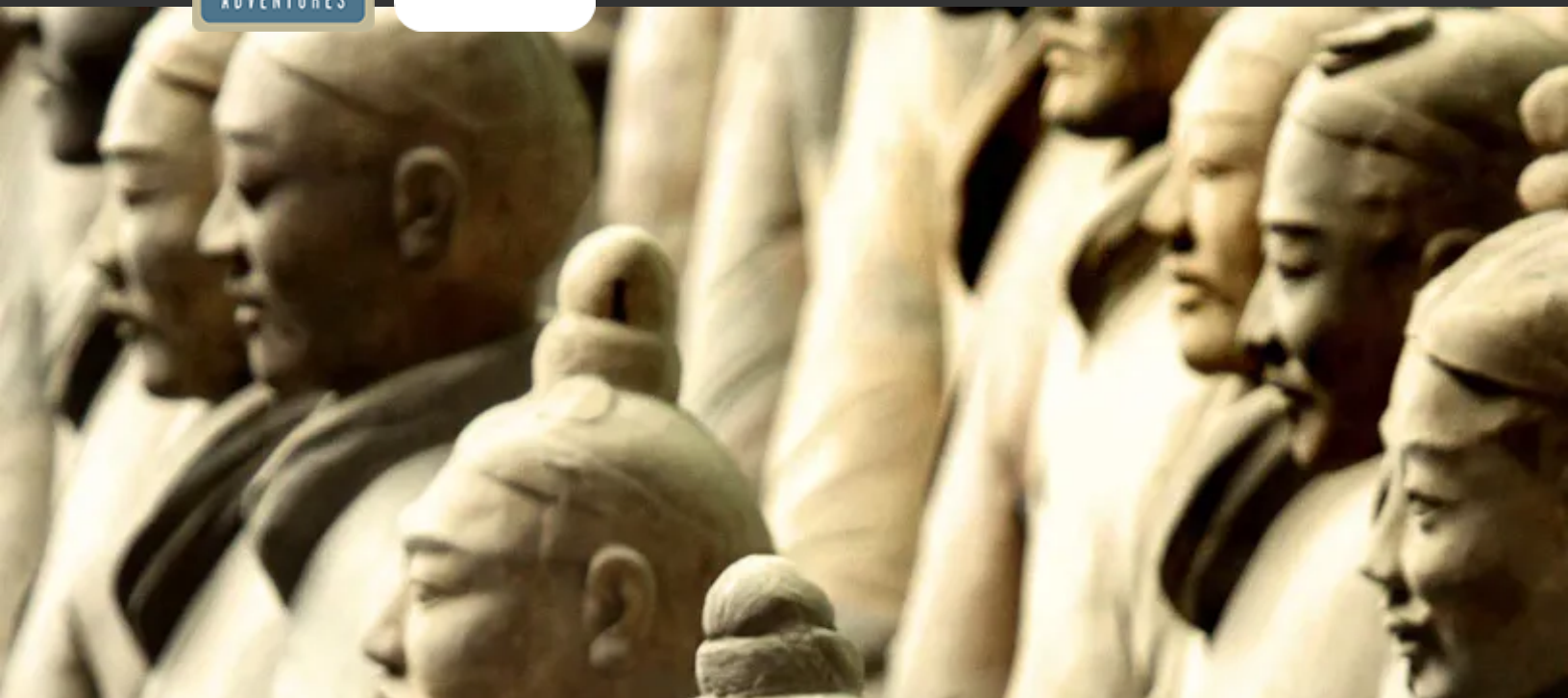
15

Natural Habitat Adventures Is World Wildlife Fund's Travel Partner

Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our small-group nature adventures, World Wildlife Fund, the world's leading environmental conservation organization, has named Natural Habitat its worldwide travel partner—a designation that makes us exceedingly proud!



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Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices:
From \$16295

Group Size:
Limited to 10
Travelers

Wild China Photo Expedition Dates, Pricing & Info

Photograph Giant Pandas, Golden Monkeys & Dramatic Mountain Landscapes

2026 Departures

DEPARTURE → RETURN	PRICING	NOTES
Oct 18 - Oct 31, 2026	\$16295	Fall Foliage Season
Oct 26 - Nov 8, 2026	\$16295	Fall Foliage Season

2027 Departures

DEPARTURE → RETURN	PRICING	NOTES
Mar 23 - Apr 5, 2027	\$16995	Wildflower Season , Natural Habitat Explorers Pricing Available
Apr 8 - Apr 21, 2027	\$16995	Wildflower Season
Oct 10 - Oct 23, 2027	\$16495	Fall Foliage Season



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Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices:
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Travelers

DEPARTURE → RETURN	PRICING	NOTES
Oct 12 - Oct 25, 2027	\$16995	Fall Foliage Season
Oct 28 - Nov 10, 2027	\$16495	Fall Foliage Season

2028 Departures

DEPARTURE → RETURN	PRICING	NOTES
Prices not confirmed for 2028		
Mar 21 - Apr 3, 2028	From \$16995	
Mar 27 - Apr 9, 2028	From \$16995	
Apr 11 - Apr 24, 2028	From \$16995	
Oct 14 - Oct 27, 2028	From \$16995	
Oct 26 - Nov 8, 2028	From \$16995	
Nov 4 - Nov 17, 2028	From \$16995	

Pricing

See <https://nathab.com/asia-adventure-travel/wild-china-panda-photo-expedition/dates-fees> for the latest pricing details.

Included

Trip price includes: Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s) and local guides, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, still camera fees, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, passage aboard the bullet train from Xi'an to Guangyuan, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees, optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, etc.), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.



Discovering Our Planet Together

Important Information About This Trip

Among many travelers, China tends to be known more for its history and culture than its nature. But we focus on the natural treasures most visitors miss, including an in-depth experience with the pandas of Sichuan province and a remote, rarely visited wildlife reserve where wild giant pandas live and breed, as well as a host of other rare animals and birds. Our staff who helped create the itinerary commented: "This itinerary trades time spent in polluted air, traffic, crowds and airports for beautiful, pristine mountain country. But we don't always have 5-star restaurants or services, and English-speaking locals and hotel staff do not exist in many areas. Parts of the trip are more rustic, but the nature rewards are so worth it!"

That said, however, **it's important to note that there is a fundamental difference between the wildlife experience in China and what you would experience on a typical African safari**, for instance. Terrain here is heavily forested, and while wildlife abounds in natural areas, animals are not always easy to see or photograph. Many are expertly camouflaged or hidden within the vegetation, making them challenging to spot. To date, we have never seen a giant panda in the wild, as they are exceptionally elusive. But rangers have seen them, and we have seen signs of them, including chewed bamboo and scat. Guests should not come to China *expecting* to see wild pandas, but it is exhilarating nonetheless to know we are in their midst. Weather can also affect wildlife sightings, and when it is inclement, animals may be more likely to take cover in the deep forest. However, our itinerary is carefully designed to capitalize on the very best opportunities to see rare Chinese wildlife, maximizing your chances. Our seasoned Expedition Leaders and local guides are experts at locating wildlife—and we encourage our guests to understand that the privilege of stepping into a wild, untouched world inside China is a reward in itself.

We do have multiple opportunities to see giant pandas up close, though—a highlight of our trip. These encounters occur not in the wild, but at China's panda research bases where the pandas live within a constructed setting that contains or mimics elements of their natural habitat. While the environment is more zoo-like, it provides a rare chance for hours of observing many pandas at close range, a privilege very few people get to enjoy. It's a moving opportunity not available anywhere else but Sichuan.

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to on this trip are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require medical evacuation insurance for our guests' safety. If you decline the medical evacuation insurance coverage offered by Natural Habitat, we request that you send us documentation of the independent coverage you have selected. We will add the cost of a medical evacuation policy to your tour invoice until you provide our office with proof of coverage including your insurance company's name, contact number and your individual policy number. Thank you for understanding that our policy exists exclusively in the interest of our guests' safety.



Discovering Our Planet Together

Getting There & Getting Home

This trip begins in Xi'an and ends in Chengdu. Because this is a long international journey with significant travel time, **we recommend that you arrive the night before Day 1** to rest from your travels and begin the trip refreshed. For guests who come in early, recommended hotels will be included in your pre-departure materials.

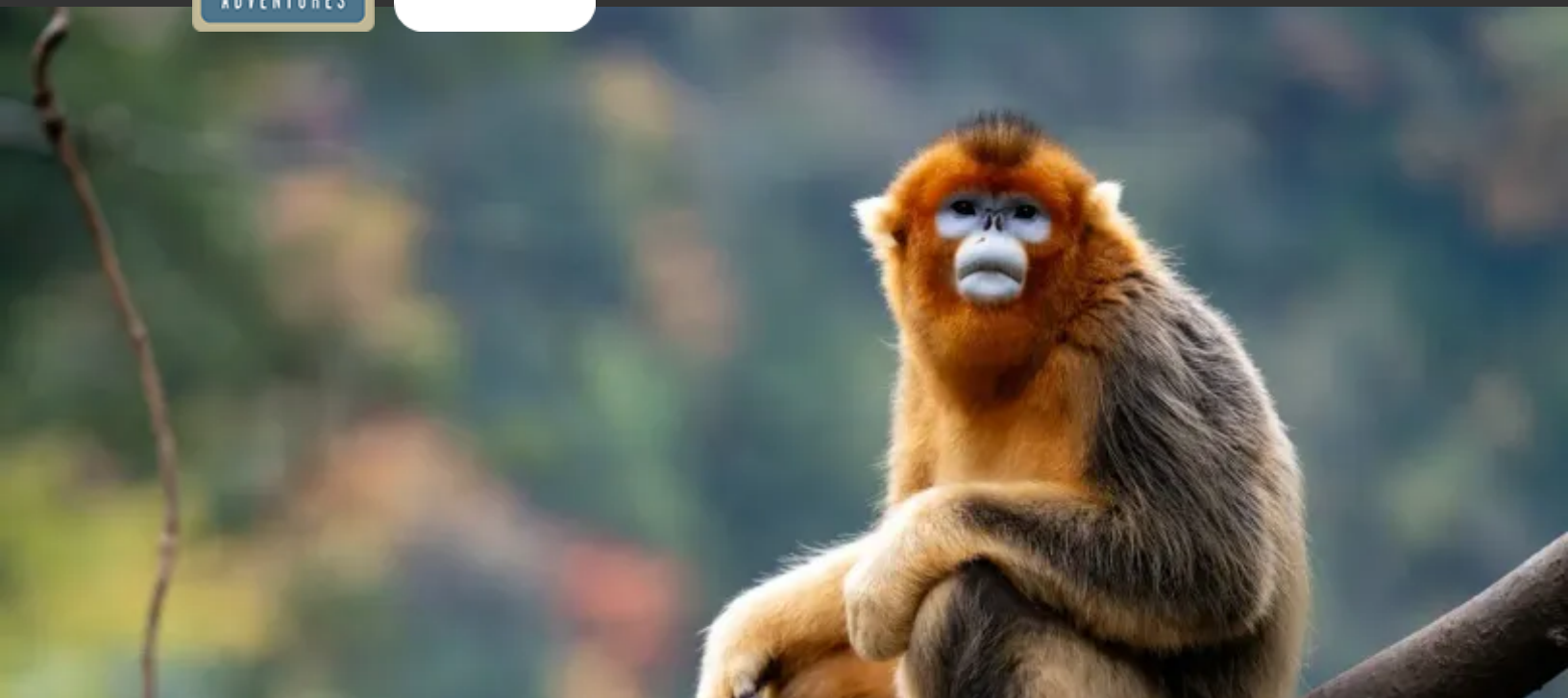
If you plan to arrive on Day 1, you must arrive in Xi'an by 9 am in order to participate in activities beginning at 11:30 am.

You may depart Chengdu at any time on the final day, and we recommend using Chengdu Tianfu International Airport (TFU) for your departure flights.

Our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk can best assist with your travel reservations, as our staff is familiar with the specific requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient itinerary. Please call us at 800-543-8917. While we offer the best available rates to us on airfare and additional nights' accommodations, you may occasionally find special web rates or lower fares online.



Discovering Our Planet Together

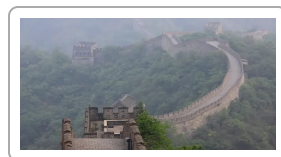


Extension Details:

Beijing & the Great Wall Extension
\$2495

Wild China Photo Expedition Extensions

Photograph Giant Pandas, Golden Monkeys & Dramatic Mountain Landscapes



Beijing & the Great Wall Extension

Don't miss a chance to walk along the 2,000 year-old Great Wall and experience a taste of China's vibrant capital—discover its dynamic history, stroll through a night market and dine on Peking duck.

\$2495 (+air)



Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together

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WWF's membership travel program is operated by Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab). To date, Nat Hab has provided more than \$6 million in support of WWF's mission and will continue to give 1% of gross sales plus \$175,000 annually through 2028. WWF® and ©1986 Panda Symbol are owned by WWF. All rights reserved.