CHINA AGRICULTURAL TOUR

18 DAYS

Departing 04 June 2018

DAY 1 Mon 04 Jun  
CHECK IN FOR YOUR FLIGHT (Inflight Meals)
Check in for your Singapore Airlines flight at Melbourne Tullamarine late this evening, or alternatively please advise if you would like flights from Sydney. Once you have checked in proceed through immigration and security, this can be a lengthy process, hence the 3 hour check in. Please check your boarding card and airport monitors for information relating to your gate and boarding time. Swagman Tours badges have been provided for easy identification. Overnight: In Flight

DAY 2 Tue 05 Jun  
MELBOURNE/SYDNEY – FLY TO BEIJING (D)
Depart Melbourne just after midnight on board our Singapore Airlines flight to Beijing via Singapore (Sydney passengers times TBA upon confirmation of flights). On arrival this afternoon at approximately 3:00pm we are met and transferred to our hotel for our three night stay in this bustling city. Overnight: Beijing

DAY 3 Wed 06 Jun  
BEIJING (BLD)
As our introduction to the imperial city take a stroll in Tiananmen Square, bordered by the Great Hall of the People. Then walk to the Forbidden City, the complex of the imperial palace, which was home to the Emperors for over 500 years. Grand halls and courts gradually give way to more intimate domestic quarters, giving an insight into the pampered isolation of the emperors. Afterwards we will drive to visit a large cattle farm with 3,500 head of beef cattle and time to walk around the feedlot as well as talking with manager of this farm. Be prepared for a surprise for lunch on the farm, we will have high quality Beef Hot Pot (an individual hot pot each). Then experience traditional Chinese tea culture and taste several types of tea. Back to Beijing and enjoy a traditional Peking Duck dinner near the hotel. Overnight: As Above
DAY 4  Thu 07 Jun  BEIJING  (BLD)
Today is one of the highlights of our tour: climbing the Great Wall of China (we will go to the beautiful section of Mutianyu Great Wall with fewer tourists). First built in the Warring States period (475-221BC) as a series of earthworks, the wall was erected by individual kingdoms as a defence against each other as well as from invasions from the north. The current wall remains from the Ming dynasty. After lunch visit one of the largest private sheep farms in Beijing with about 3500 sheep. **Overnight: As Above**

DAY 5  Fri 08 Jun  BEIJING – HOHHOT, INNER MONGOLIA  (BLD)
This morning visit a modern Agricultural Machinery Factory and after lunch visit an Agricultural High-Tech Demonstration Zone in the suburbs which occupies an area of approximately 80 hectares. See modern vegetable and fruit planting technology along with flowering and environmental protection technology. After dinner close to the railway station prepare to board an overnight Chinese first class Express Train to Inner Mongolia (twin share cabins, no single supplement). **Overnight: Train – Twin Sleeper Berth**

DAY 6  Sat 09 Jun  HOHHOT  (BLD)
Arrive early and transfer to our hotel for breakfast. Hohhot is the capital city of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, with a population of 3 million. The region has the biggest production of milk in China and the city is now honoured as China’s Milk Capital. This morning visit one of the biggest milk processing companies in China along with its dairy farm where their products are found throughout China. This afternoon is at leisure for rest or private sightseeing. **Overnight: Hohhot**

DAY 7  Sun 10 Jun  HOHHOT  (BLD)
It’s a short drive this morning to the beautiful grassland and pasturelands, to visit two different sheep farms and herdsmen families to learn about their sheep breeding and what measures are being taken to prevent overgrazing of the grassland. One of the farms has sheep raised in fenced areas and another has a herd of sheep roaming freely in natural grassland. Enjoy a typical Mongolian lunch of roast mutton with the local family and learn about their way of life on the farm. After lunch enjoy traditional Mongolian folk dance and singing, wrestling and horse racing. En-route today see the irrigation systems in the fields nearby the road and the area which has suffered from drought since last decade, hence digging a well to pump the water from beneath the ground is the popular way for irrigation in this region. We will talk about the situation of the underground water levels for example the changes in depth over the last few years. Return to our hotel late this afternoon. **Overnight: As Above**

DAY 8  Mon 11 Jun  HOHHOT – XIAN  (BLD)
This morning visit a wool and cashmere processing factory, then visit the renowned Dazhao Temple which was built in 1580 in the Ming dynasty. It is one of the biggest and best preserved temples in Hohhot. Afterwards fly to Xian, the cradle of ancient Chinese civilization dating back to 4000 BC and the capital of China for 11 dynasties from 1046 BC to 907 AD. It is from here that caravans started on the Silk Road to Europe, changing the Western world forever. **Overnight: Xian**

DAY 9  Tue 12 Jun  XIAN – TERRACOTTA WARRIORS  (BLD)
First thing this morning visit the Museum of the Qin Terracotta Warriors and Horses. This is one of the greatest archaeological discoveries in the world with three exhibition halls, the largest of which is 180 metres by 60 metres, housing the continuing excavation of an army of 8,000 terracotta soldiers and horses that guard the tomb of Qin Shihuang, the first emperor of the unified China and it is a stunning exhibition of ancient artefacts. After lunch drive back to town for a tour to the City Wall and this evening enjoy the spectacular Tang Dynasty Show with dinner. **Overnight: As Above**
DAY 10  Wed 13 Jun  XIAN  (BLD)
This morning drive about 1½ hours to visit the Shanxi Kingbull Livestock Company, which was founded in 2004 with the aim of crossbreeding Qinchuan cattle. Standardised fattening, large scale slaughter, processing and brand marketing using technology and science are all undertaken as part of this modern beef farm. Continue to a rural village to visit a couple of wheat farms to talk to the owners followed by a wheat processing factory. Afterwards return to the hotel in time for dinner.  

Overnight:  As Above

DAY 11  Thu 14 Jun  XIAN – CHONGQING – YANGTZE CRUISE  (BLD)
After breakfast transfer to the airport and fly to the scenic mountain city of Chongqing and this afternoon visit the Chongqing Zoo to see the Chinese Giant Pandas. The city is also famous for its hot Sichuan Cuisine and world-famous hotpot dishes. Street vendors as well as restaurants feature exciting spicy delicacies for the adventurous. Dinner will be in a restaurant to have local cuisine before boarding our cruise ship to start our three night cruise on the mighty Yangtze River. At 6,300 kilometres long it is the world’s third longest river, passing through three gorges on its way through the breathtaking and beautiful mountain scenery. Much of this spectacular scenery is changing as a result of the world’s largest dam project, which we will be visiting as we make our way downstream.  

Overnight:  Yangtze Cruise Ship

DAY 12  Fri 15 Jun  YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE  (BLD)
The Yangtze, which snakes its way from western China’s Qinghai-Tibet Plateau to the East China Sea, is a very important means of transport and we will see ships carrying all sorts of merchandise. Our first port of call is the remarkable city of Fengdu, believed in days gone by to be the abode of devils. The 700 temples with their bizarre statuary on Mingshan Hill bear testimony to the city’s notoriety as the “City of Ghosts”. This evening enjoy the Captain’s cocktail party followed by entertainment.  

Overnight:  As Above

DAY 13  Sat 16 Jun  YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE  (BLD)
Today navigate the magnificent Yangtze Gorges. In the morning at about 7:00am, pass through the shortest and narrowest gorge, Qutang Gorge (8km). At 8:15am enter the second gorge, Wu Gorge, (44km) with peaks rising to dizzy heights above the river. At 10:00am, take an exciting ride by small craft along the swift waters of the Shennong Stream, one of the many tributaries in this fertile area. Here the imposing mountains, dramatic precipices and crystal clear waters form a spectacular scene. Return to the boat around 4:00pm and enter the Xiling Gorge, which is the last and longest of the three Gorges, its 75km renowned for swift currents and dangerous shoals.  

Overnight:  As Above

DAY 14  Sun 17 Jun  YANGTZE CRUISE – SHANGHAI  (BLD)
After breakfast leave our cruiser behind at Yichang and disembark at 8:00am. Drive to visit one of mankind’s greatest engineering feats to date: the damming of the Three Gorges area. The construction formally began in 1994 and the body of the dam was finished in 2003 and the whole construction completed in 2007. The dam wall is 2,335 metres long, 185 metres high and 130 metres wide at the bottom, tapering up to 18 metres at the top. Spectacular views and scenery from the top of the dam wall constantly change as the water level continues to rise and this area offers some of the most magnificent natural scenery in China. After lunch some city sightseeing of Yichang before transferring to the airport for our evening flight to Shanghai, which is China’s largest city with a population of approximately 21 million people. On arrival transfer to our hotel.  

Overnight:  Shanghai
DAY 15  Mon 18 Jun  SHANGHAI  (BLD)
This morning go to the Shanghai Old Town, whose history dates back some 400 years. Visitors love this area due to the variety of commodities and shops available. Visit the Yu Garden, an island of tranquillity amid the hustle and bustle of the city. Covering nearly five acres, it contains over 30 pavilions and has numerous features characteristic of the architectural style of the Ming dynasty. Outside the Yu Garden there is an interesting market, the Yuyuan Bazaar with everything that you can think of for sale. Then visit the original waterfront area of the city known as the Bund. The river is the main shipping artery for the whole of southern China and the main form of transport for goods to and from the interior of the country and is China’s largest foreign trade port. Time for shopping on Nanjing Road and this evening enjoy a Huangpu River Cruise.  
Overnight: As Above

DAY 16  Tue 19 Jun  SHANGHAI  (BLD)
Today visit the local Shanghai community to meet with their management and enjoy a tour of the local wet markets, kindergarten and cultural centre. Here you will experience the local’s way of life and standard of living. This afternoon visit the silk museum and afterwards free time to shop or explore on your own before meeting back to enjoy our final farewell dinner together.  
Overnight: As Above

DAY 17  Wed 20 Jun  SHANGHAI – FLY HOME  (B)
After a leisurely morning transfer via magnetic train to the airport to check in and board our flight back to Melbourne/Sydney/Adelaide via Singapore.

DAY 18  Thu 21 Jun  ARRIVE HOME  (Inflight Meals)
Arrive home this morning, so ending a fascinating journey through China.

** Stopover packages are available in Singapore on the return journey; enquire for details  **

Tour Cost:  $7,995.00 per person, twin share*

*Tour cost is subject to air/tax increases plus currency fluctuations

Based on a minimum of 15 passengers travelling

Non-refundable deposit required:  $1,000.00 per person
Balance required no later than:  09 April 2018
Single Supplement:  $1,185.00 per person (not available on train)
Cancellation: In the event of cancellation, levies will apply. See Booking Conditions

Tour cost includes:
- Economy airfares and pre-payable taxes Melbourne/Sydney to Beijing and Shanghai to Melbourne/Sydney with Singapore Airlines.
- Three domestic China airfares (Hohhot to Xian, Xian-Chongqing, Yichang-Shanghai).
- Deluxe air-conditioned vehicle throughout with experienced driver.
- Train ticket Beijing-Hohhot (Twin Sleeper Berth only available – no single supplement).
- Twin share 4 star accommodation throughout with en suite facilities.
- 5 star boat cruise on Yangtze River.
- All meals as per itinerary and one complimentary drink per meal (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner). Please note: Most meals will be typical Chinese cuisine, not Western style.
- All entry fees as indicated in the itinerary.
- All farm visits and technical visits listed in the itinerary.
- An experienced and knowledgeable English speaking national tour guide, with local guides in each city.
- Gratuities for services provided by the driver/s, guides and Yangtze River Cruise.
- China visa and courier/processing fee.

Tour cost does NOT include:
- Travel Insurance – this is COMPULSORY to have in place prior to travel and travel documents will not be issued without a copy of travel insurance being provided. Swagman Tours can assist with insurance, please enquire for a quote.
- Items of a personal nature (eg laundry/phone/souvenirs) and any optional extras listed in the itinerary.
- Beverages and any meals not listed in the itinerary.
- Cost of passport or any mediation required.
- Tips on board the train paid locally in United States Dollars.
MULTIPLE NIGHT STAYS:
* Beijing – 3 nights
* Hohhot – 2 nights
* Xian – 3 nights
* Yangtze Cruise – 3 nights
* Shanghai – 3 nights

IMPORTANT NOTES:
The tour cost is subject to change due to currency fluctuations, visa fee increases, airfare, fuel surcharges and/or tax increases. As this is a group package, all passengers must travel on the same outbound flight to Beijing. Post touring options are available and will incur an amendment fee of $75.00 per person plus extra touring and insurance costs.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS
All travellers will require a full valid passport, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have valid visas for all countries visited on your holiday, and/or sufficient blank pages for any visas and for entry/departure stamps. Your passport must be valid for at least six months after the end of your holiday. If you have more than one passport, we recommend that you use one passport only for the entire journey. This will save problems and potential delays at border crossings. Requirements differ depending on your nationality - check with the appropriate embassies for details. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of the correct visas for your holiday and onward travel. Swagman Tours cannot accept responsibility for anyone who is refused entry to a country because they lack the correct documentation. Please check the actual requirements with the necessary embassy or your Travel Agent. Please also do not assume that any inaccuracies within your documentation will be detected or can be rectified - you must ensure, that your "paper-work" is in order. There will be times during the trip, when your passport will be collected e.g. by your tour leader, hotel reception staff, or police.

HOLDERS OF FOREIGN PASSPORTS: Travellers holding non Australian passports must have the relevant re-entry permit to return to Australia and must check with their National Consulate of any visa requirements to your holiday destination country(s).

VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR AUSTRALIANS: Australian passport holders – a China visa is required for this tour. Swagman Tours will be organising these on behalf of passengers. Application forms etc will be arranged in due course. New visa regulations apply – for those passports issued between 2014 – 2016 you may be required to forward a copy of your previous passport with your visa application. If you do not have the old passport you may need to apply in PERSON to obtain your visa at your nearest Chinese embassy, please provide a photocopy of your current passport upon booking.

NOTE: Passport and visa requirements are liable to change at short notice. Travellers are advised to check their entry requirements with their embassy or consulate.

FARM & TECHNICAL VISITS: A fully furnished list of confirmed visits both to farming properties and technical stops will be given with your ticket wallets approximately 3 weeks prior to your departure.* Changes and alterations may take place from details listed in the itinerary.*

TOUR ESCORT;

FOR BOOKINGS CONTACT:
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