

SPLENDOURS OF CHINA BY RAIL

High Speed Train Plus Yangtze Cruise

Scott McGregor's

**RAILWAY
ADVENTURES**

19 DAYS: Monday 11 September - Friday 29 September 2017

• BEIJING • PINGYAO • XIAN • CHENGDU • CHONGQING • YANGTZE RIVER •
• YICHANG • WUHAN • HONG KONG •

OVERVIEW

Rich culture, amazing architecture, bustling cities, serene landscapes full of natural beauty, and efficient transport systems are just a few reasons travellers are drawn to this fascinating corner of the world. This tour will have you experiencing the extremes that make this destination truly unique from the 2000 plus year old Terracotta Warriors to the ultramodern and sleek bullet trains.

You'll stand in awe of the steep cliffs of the Three Gorges and marvel at the cute yet endangered Giant Pandas. This tour encapsulates all of China's most amazing experiences whilst also showing you a more intimate side of the country when you get to mingle with the locals.



WHY TRAVEL WITH US :

- **Small group size** – with a maximum of 20 passengers you are guaranteed an intimate experience with less queuing time, more time with your guide and better access to sightseeing spots
- **Unique Itineraries** – each itinerary has been worked on meticulously by a team who has a number of years experience in each destination. You are guaranteed to experience the best the destination has to offer
- **Local Authentic Experiences** – whether it be a little known yet impressive steam railway or a small boutique property which will be a tour highlight, know that you will experience something special on our tours
- **Expert Local Guides** – our partners on the ground have in-depth knowledge and are professional and entertaining
- **Customer Satisfaction** – Thousands have travelled with us in the past and 98% of those say they would travel with us again

The joy of travelling no longer has to be constricted to a destination. Railway Adventures offer a truly exclusive point of view to some of the world's most spectacular holiday destinations, with the assurance that the journey to reach them in itself is just as magical and unforgettable!

THE RAILWAY ADVENTURES STORY

A passion for train travel can manifest itself in many ways and founder and director of Railway Adventures, Scott McGregor, has managed to make much of his obsession over the years. "Travelling to boarding school on the Mudgee Mail gave me a sense of how an active social life and long distance trains can make a good combination." Building a rural retreat out of a collection of vintage railway carriages in the early 1980s gave Scott a new perspective on rail heritage and during this time he also operated his first tour, The Antipodean Renaissance Express, an experience he has never forgotten. Trading in vintage memorabilia and furniture sourced largely from the railways was also a source of great inspiration. Scott travelled far and wide trading and collecting for his Sydney shop, Off The Rails. Being the host of a couple of series of TV documentaries about great train journeys paved the way for tour leading. An enjoyable part-time hobby, "getting paid to do what I love", has, naturally enough, led to a more substantial commitment to great rail journeys and resulted in the launch of this dedicated train travel and touring company.

MEET YOUR TOUR LEADER

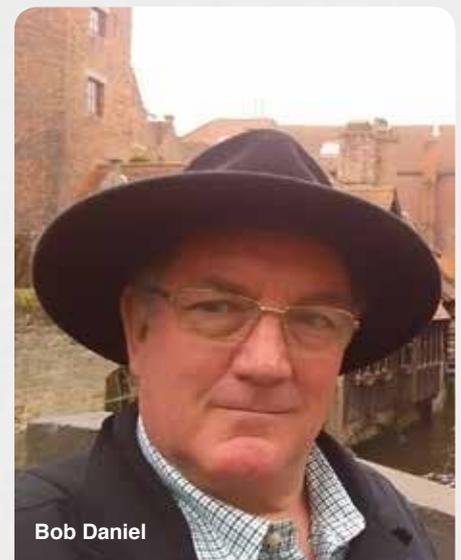
Bob Daniel has been fascinated with trains all his life, his father having engineered the construction of many of the famous Australian trains during the 1950's and 60's such as the Southern Aurora and The Sunlander. Bob is also the founder and original owner of Guidepost Tours nearly 40 years ago, which now operate niche market tours to many destinations around the world. He regularly travels by rail on local trains throughout South East Asia and many other countries, discovering how the spread of rail routes has led to the development and enhancement of culture and life in rural communities and cities, even in undeveloped regions.

Bob has travelled to Indonesia many times. This has given Bob an in-depth knowledge of the Indonesia Archipelago and an appreciation of which trains are a must to experience, the most scenic routes, and how to use a mix of train travel and other transport modes to feel the love for the country, the people and the culture.

Whilst still involved with the development of itineraries for Guidepost Tours and Railway Adventures, Bob is heavily involved with Heritage Rail Groups in New South Wales, is qualified in Rail Safety and Track Awareness, and travels regularly on steam and diesel tours as train manager or in other capacities.



Scott McGregor



Bob Daniel

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Travel around the country on bullet and high speed trains
- 2 night Yangtze River Cruise
- Visit the Giant Panda Breeding Research Base in Chengdu
- Tick off all the must see sights of China including the Great Wall of China, the Terracotta Warriors of Xian, Tiananmen Square, Temple of Heaven, and Victoria Peak, Hong Kong
- The tour ends with a flight and sightseeing in impressive Hong Kong

WHERE YOU WILL STAY:

The properties we have selected have been hand-picked based on their location, customer feedback, value and atmosphere. Here's some of what you can expect on this tour:



Grand Park Xian



Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing



Pingyao International Financier Club



Shangri La-Wuhan

HOW YOU WILL TRAVEL:

Being rail enthusiasts we know that the journey itself is often more important than the destination. On this journey you will experience a variety of travel methods from air, water, the famous Chinese bullet trains and even an overnight train. Here is an example of what you will experience:



Cruise



Bullet Train



Cable Car

TOUR PACE / LEVEL OF FITNESS:

Our tours have a reasonable amount of activity built into them each day, which is why we call them adventures. Our philosophy is to experience the most of a destination whilst you are there. That being said we do incorporate some time at leisure so you have an opportunity to explore on your own, take a break from the group or just catch up on some rest.

We recommend you consider your luggage carefully when packing as you will at times be required to carry your own luggage onto and off trains.

Day 1 • Monday 11 September: Arrive Shanghai

Upon arrival in Shanghai, you will be met and taken to the station for the Maglev train from the airport to Longyang Station in the city. You will then be transferred to your hotel.

In the evening enjoy a welcome dinner.

Overnight: Central Hotel, Shanghai (D)

Day 2 • Tuesday 12 September: Shanghai

Dominating the Yangtze Delta, Shanghai is the pulsating commercial heart of China. Walk along the famous Bund past the facades of the colonial buildings lining the Huangpu River and look across to the fantastic skyscrapers of the Pudong district on the opposite side. Visit the beautiful restored Yu Garden, an outstanding example of a classical garden dating from the 16th century, now surrounded by the bustling Yu Garden Market.

Later you will ascend the Shanghai World Financial Centre Observatory Tower (100th floor), one of the world's tallest buildings, for an astonishing view over the whole city.

In the evening you will be entertained by one of Shanghai's famous acrobatic troupes.

Overnight: Central Hotel, Shanghai (B,D)

Day 3 • Wednesday 13 September: Shanghai-Beijing

Today you will be transferred to train station to take a high-speed train to Beijing. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. As an introduction of the city, you will visit Tiananmen Square, look across the vast space to the Great Hall of the People and stand before the massive Tiananmen Gate bearing a huge portrait of Mao Zedong, where he proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic on 1 October 1949. This evening you will enjoy a traditional Peking Duck dinner.

Overnight: Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing, Beijing (B,D)

Day 4 • Thursday 14 September: Beijing

Today you will visit the Temple of Heaven. Set in a huge park planted with conifers, the beautiful blue-tiled buildings represent the epitome of Ming architecture. You will also see locals engaging in community activities of all sorts. It's a colourful and quite unique experience.

Then you will be taken north today to pace the ramparts of China's famed Great Wall at Mutianyu, originally constructed over 2000 years ago to keep northern invaders at bay. Afterwards, you will visit the China Railway Museum, preserving locomotives built in the People's Republic of China since 1949.

Overnight: Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing, Beijing (B,L)

Day 5 • Friday 15 September: Beijing

After breakfast you will visit the Forbidden City, as the former imperial palace is called, where the magnificent marble courtyards, huge halls, gilded temples and ornate pavilions, the residence of the emperors and their families, are now open to your wonderment. Then there is a visit to Nanluoguxiang, a well-preserved ancient part of the town in Beijing with traditional architectures.

Overnight: Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing, Beijing (B,L)

Day 6 • Saturday 16 September: Beijing-Pingyao

After breakfast you will be transferred to the train station for your high-speed train to Pingyao. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Enjoy a local cuisine for dinner.

Overnight: Pingyao International Financier Club (B,D)



Beijing - the Temple of Heaven



Shanghai - Yu Garden

Day 7 • Sunday 17 September: Pingyao

The past is alive in Pingyao. As the morning sun bathes its grey city walls in warm tones, you will find yourself flung back in time, as your eyes behold a Ming Dynasty fortress built by the Ming Emperor Hongwu in 1370 AD, in all its imposing glory. Today you will visit Rishengchang, the first bank in China, followed by the visits to Pingyao City Walls and Shuanglin Temple.

Overnight: Pingyao International Financier Club, Pingyao (B,L)

Day 8 • Monday 18 September: Pingyao-Xian

Today you will experience a high speed bullet train trip to Xian. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to hotel.

Over 1,000 years ago, Xian was the capital city of the Tang Dynasty and the largest then most cosmopolitan city in the world. You will visit the famous Bell Tower and this evening you will enjoy a traditional dumpling dinner.

Overnight: Grand Park Hotel, Xian (B,L,D)

Day 9 • Tuesday 19 September: Xian

Today you will visit the army of some 6000 life-size Terracotta Warriors and their Horses made and buried, lined up facing east in battle array, over 2000 years ago to guard the tomb of Qinshihuang, the first emperor who died in 210 BC.

In the afternoon, you will walk along the massive Xian City Wall, which encircles the old central part of the city and one of the best preserved in China.

Overnight: Grand Park Hotel, Xian (B,L)

Day 10 • Wednesday 20 September: Xian

The morning you will visit the Shaanxi Museum, acclaimed as “the Gallery of Chinese Culture” where you will see priceless, ancient bronzes, porcelains and exquisite objects of silver and gold. Then visit the Small Goose Pagoda, picturesquely sited in a walled enclosure filled with trees.

Grand Park Hotel, Xian (B,L)

Day 11 • Thursday 21 September: Xian - Chengdu

Transfer to airport for your flight to Chengdu. Upon arrival, met and transfer to hotel. In the afternoon, you will visit the Spice Market to check out the region’s renowned fiery chillies and stroll in People’s Park and watch countless Tea Houses and observe local people’s customs and life. Tonight you will enjoy the famous and colourful Sichuan Opera with unique “changing faces”.

Overnight: Crowne Plaza, Chengdu (B,L,D)

Day 12 • Friday 22 September: Chengdu-Chongqing

Today you will experience one of the most unique and special moment on this trip - a visit to see the pandas at the Giant Panda Breeding Research Base in the northern suburbs of Chengdu. Sichuan Province is home to China’s most celebrated animal.

In the afternoon, you will take high-speed train to Chongqing, an enormous modern city which is now the industrial and commercial hub of an independent municipality with a population of over 30 million. After a city orientation tour, you will be transferred to pier to board on your luxury cruise ship.

Overnight: Victoria Cruises along Yangtze River (B,D)

Day 13-14 • Saturday 23 September & Sunday 24 September: Yangtze River Cruise

You cruise the famous Yangtze River in a superb cruise ship as it winds its way through the spectacular scenery of the Three Gorges. For many people, a cruise along this famous river is a lifelong dream. At 6300km, the Yangtze is the third longest river in the world, made famous today by its spectacular Three Gorges and the controversial Three Gorges Dam. The Three Gorges stretch for 193km, along which are many historic sites such as Baidi City, cliff inscriptions, suspended coffins of the Bai Tribe, tombs of the Han Dynasty (prior to 220 AD), and battlefields of the Three Kingdoms period. Where the river widens, terraced fields spread out up mountain slopes, interspersed with orange orchards and tea gardens.

The mist-shrouded landscape of the Yangtze Gorges is as lovely as a traditional Chinese painting. Along the way you stop and visit interesting places.

Overnight: Victoria Cruises along Yangtze River (B,L,D)

Day 15 • Monday 25 September: Yichang - Wuhan

Morning visit to the Three Gorges Dam at Sandouping, the largest in the world.

Disembark at Yichang in the late morning and transfer to the train station for bullet train to Wuhan. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to your hotel.

Overnight: Shangri-La Hotel, Wuhan (B)

Day 16 • Tuesday 26 September: Wuhan

After breakfast, you will visit the famous Yellow Crane Tower. The tower’s five storeyed structure with flying eaves was rebuilt in 1985, which provides a panoramic view of the city of Wuhan with the Yangtze Bridge sitting astride the mighty river that flows right across the city. Then visit the Hubei Museum that houses of nearly 20,000 cultural treasures, most of them associated with local history and revolution. The better known of them include a group of Warring States bell chimes and the sword of Gou Jian, the king of the state of Yue. (Breakfast/Lunch)

Overnight: Shangri-La Hotel, Wuhan (B,L)

Day 17 • Wednesday 27 September: Wuhan - Guangzhou - Hong Kong

Transfer to the train station for high-speed train to Guangzhou. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to pier for ferry to Hong Kong.

Overnight: Park Hotel, Hong Kong (B)

Day 18 • Thursday 28 September: Hong Kong

Discover a pristine beach, a traditional fishing village, lush valleys, soaring mountains and spiritual enlightenment with a full day tour to Lantau. Begin with a ferry ride through Victoria Harbour to Silvermine Bay, Lantau. Then we travel to the beautiful Cheung Sha Beach and on to the unique Tai O fishing village, where many homes are built on stilts. Continue on the winding road up the mountain to Ngong Ping Plateau where the Giant Buddha sits majestically close to the Po Lin Monastery. After the visit to the Giant Buddha and the Po Lin Monastery we end the day with a spectacular ride aboard the Ngong Ping cable car offering stunning views going down to Tung Chung near the airport.

In the evening you will enjoy a dinner at the Peak Lookout at Victoria Peak.

Overnight: Park Hotel, Hong Kong (B,L,D)

Day 19 • Friday 29 September: Depart Hong Kong

Transfer to the airport for your departure flight. (B)



Shanghai - Bund



INCLUSIONS:

- 16 nights' accommodation at well located 4-5 star quality hotels
- 3 nights' Victoria cruise in a superior twin-share cabin on Promenade Deck with all meals on board and shore excursions and complimentary house wine and beer at dinner
- Transport mentioned in the itinerary including flight from Xian to Chengdu, ferry from Guangzhou to Hong Long, 1st class seat on Bullet Train Pingyao-Xian// Yichang-Wuhan, 1st class seat on High Speed Train Shanghai-Beijing-Pingyao// Chengdu-Chongqing and 1st class seat from Wuhan to Guangzhou
- Airport transfers on arrival and departure
- Meals as stated in the itinerary
- Private air-conditioned coach with an English speaking guide in each city
- Comprehensive sightseeing with expert local guides
- Excursions / entrance fees to attractions listed in the itinerary
- Gratuities to guides and drivers

EXCLUSIONS:

- International airfares from Australia to China
- China visa fee
- Excursions / entrances listed as optional in the itinerary
- Items of a personal nature e.g. telephone, laundry, mini bar
- Porterage in the hotel*
- Service charges on Victoria Cruise**
- Travel insurance

TOUR PRICES

Per person twin share.....	\$8,395
Single Supplement	\$1,949

****Porterage:**

In China it will be easier and quicker to take own luggage to room on arrival and bring luggage down to the lobby on departure at each hotel. Alternatively if people would prefer the porters to send luggage to the room, it will take more time, and also the porter will expect some small personal gratuity of \$1.00 per bag.

****SERVICE CHARGE ON VICTORIA CRUISE:**

Victoria Cruises will charge RMB 150 (approximately US\$24.00) to be billed on passengers' credit cards upon check-in (these amounts are lower than the current suggested tipping guideline). As with their current suggested tipping guideline, this service charge does not include a gratuity to the river guide or cruise director, which September be given at passengers' discretion based on their satisfaction with services received, as can gratuities for additional special services requested by passengers.

SUGGESTED FLIGHTS

We have recommended flights for this itinerary depending on your departure point from Australia and your pre and post tour activities in Asia and / or stopovers en route. We can investigate your preferred airline and offer you a solution based on connection times and price.

Contact 1300 733 323 to discuss your options.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Travellers must have a valid passport and many countries require at least 6 months validity from your date of return. If you need information regarding visa and other travel document requirements for your trip please let us know. At time of printing Australian passport holders DO require a visa to enter China.



Xian - City Wall

HOW TO BOOK

Contact Guidepost Tours on 1300 733 323 or enquiries@guidepost-travel.com for a booking form. Submit the booking form along with your \$1000pp deposit to secure your place on tour.

DETAILS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

We endeavour to have all details of our tours correct at the time of printing however sometimes factors beyond our control such as the availability of requested hotels, the operation of trains and other services September affect the final inclusions and price. Therefore items mentioned in the brochure such as quoted prices, hotels and inclusions are subject to change.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

We can assist you with your flights, pre- and post-travel including extended stays and travel insurance. Call our office on 1300 733 323 if you would like to discuss options.

YOUR TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION

Final travel documentation will be posted to you approximately 2 weeks prior to tour commencement.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For more information on factors that September affect your ability to participate in the tour such as fitness levels, fees and charges, payment schedules, please refer to the Terms and Conditions that accompany the booking form. Terms and Conditions can also be requested at any time.

KEEP UP TO DATE

Want to be kept up to date with the latest tour news and testimonials? Just send your email address to enquiries@guidepost-travel.com.au and we will add you to our list of fellow rail enthusiasts who receive our regular e-newsletter.



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**RAILWAY
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