



Friends of the Museums

Singapore

CHINA'S CULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS (XI'AN & SHAANXI): A 5-DAY STUDY TOUR Friends of the Museums (Singapore) APRIL 14-18, 2010

PACKING and OTHER TRAVEL NOTES

If we ALL travel light, we'll be able to check in and out of our hotels quickly and efficiently; have our luggage immediately to hand; avoid holding up the group while waiting for porters to collect bags, reduce losses, save money and have a far more enjoyable trip. Please try to limit yourself to one, manageable bag (with perhaps a folding smaller bag tucked inside for any end-of-trip overflow). For great packing tips, check out: www.onebag.com.

Recommended packing list:

1. Small daypack for everyday use to hold items #2-10 below (plus camera & accessories ++)
2. Small flashlight, rechargeable (e.g. plugs in an ordinary electric outlet to recharge—2 flat pins is the standard in China) is best; or you may prefer a headlight that you can wear to peer into the grottoes of Maijishan to keep your hands free; electricity is also at times erratic in China so a flashlight is often handy
3. A small roll of toilet paper
4. Personal medical supplies should include a short course of general antibiotic of the type taken with anti-diarrhea medication, a package of Imodium, 1 small bottle chloramphenicol eye drops, 1 tube antibiotic cream (for cuts, scrapes), assorted band aids, anything else you may need
5. Antiseptic handwash solution; small bottle Dettol (or any brand you like) or wet sheets; can also be used for wiping glass rims and chopsticks
6. Small portable umbrella (for rain, sun...)
7. Sun/rain hat (a sturdy sun hat with a good brim is perfect)
8. Sun block/sunscreen
9. Small notebook + pen
10. A warm sweater and a lightweight jacket that fits over the sweater
11. An alarm clock (by only one of the parties sharing a room)
12. Small bottles, or individual-sized packets of needed toiletries (shampoo, conditioner, face cleanser, etc.)
13. If you're fussy about soap, a plastic soap dish and your own bar of soap
14. Very casual, easy-to-care-for clothing based on:
 - a. 2 pairs of pants (wear one pair, pack one pair; jeans are fine), no shorts
 - b. A skirt for Xi'an city *if you like*,
 - c. 5-6 long-sleeved tops you can layer (substitute 1-2 short-sleeved as "under"-shirts for layering if you prefer),
 - d. PJs,
 - e. Underwear.

There's no need for any real "dress-up" clothing, but if you like, you're welcome to change into "smart casual" for dinner when we're in Xi'an.

15. Very comfortable walking shoes, plus one pair lightweight spare loafers or "Keds" "just in case" and for in-room/hotel, city & airplane travel days
16. If you love your morning coffee, pack a few of your own 3-1 or 2-1 Nescafe packets.
17. An iPod (or similar device) for listening to podcasts on the plane, bus, pre or post-site visits, I'll also add some nice Chinese music and Beginning Chinese lessons for you to listen to enroute.

Other notes:

1. **Personal Spending money: Your call.** Group budget covers all meals, bottled water, some bus snacks, and even some bottles of wine "on occasion". For general reference: Large art books 80-150 RMB. Fresh buns 1-3 RMB. Can of coke 5-7 RMB. A decent bottle of local wine bought in a grocery store is RMB 30-60-100; fruit and snacks 3-5 RMB. A flashlight 10 RMB. Rubbings from museums 30-250 RMB. A small silver box 1000 RMB. A nice necklace of semi-precious stones RMB 1000-1200. Better rates if you change at a money-changer and NOT at the airport (and definitely not the hotel).
2. Chinese domestic flights do not allow alcohol either as a carry-on or in your check-in baggage, even if carried in sealed duty-free bags (and they screen very carefully with x-rays and aggressively confiscate, which holds up the entire group), so please **do not bring any alcohol even if "duty-free bagged"** and no liquids larger than very small bottles. The local beer is good, cheap and easy-to-buy, and our Xi'an hotel has a good bar.
3. **No knives of any sort** either in check-in or carry-on luggage was the rule last year but once in a while small pocketknives seem to be OK. (Guess it depends on the checker.) A separate corkscrew is OK in your check-in.

Weather conditions: (www.weatherbase.com is a great site if you don't already know it)

Xi'an: Definitely chillier than Singapore: 46-68°F while we're there, average should be 57°F.

April monthly rainfall of 1.8" (cross your fingers for us!)