Grasslands & the Great Wall: Inner Mongolia & Beijing

INNER MONGOLIA · BEIJING

9D 7N | 25–30 PAX | STARTS KUALA LUMPUR | MALAYSIA AIRLINES

Go beyond Beijing on a nine-day journey that places Inner Mongolia's grasslands and desert at the centre of the experience. After the Summer Palace, take high-speed rail to Hohhot and continue to the Xilamuren Grassland for a yurt stay, Mongolian milk tea, traditional dress and an evening bonfire. Explore Ordos, Genghis Khan's mausoleum and Xiangshawan Desert by camel, cable car and mini-train before returning to Beijing for Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, the Great Wall and an acrobatic performance. Return Malaysia Airlines flights, four-star accommodation, daily meals, ground transport, experiences and tipping are included. Halal arrangements throughout make this a distinctive and accessible alternative to the standard China circuit.

DAY

01

BEIJING · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 2

Kuala Lumpur — depart KLIA for Beijing

The tour begins at KLIA. Check in for the Malaysia Airlines flight to Beijing and board when called. The flight time is approximately six hours. No sightseeing today — arrival in Beijing is the objective, and rest before the itinerary begins tomorrow is the right approach.

OVERNIGHT

Beijing

DAY

02

BEIJING · OVERNIGHT 2 OF 2

Beijing — Summer Palace and Niujie Muslim Supermarket

The first full day in Beijing begins with a stop that matters practically and culturally, then moves into one of the city's most considered imperial sites. Two stops, well-chosen — the pace is deliberate before the heavier travel days begin.

Niujie Muslim Supermarket — Located in Beijing's oldest Muslim neighbourhood, Niujie is where the city's Hui community has been centred for over a thousand years. The market is a good introduction to halal food culture in northern China: local snacks, specialty goods and a morning crowd that reflects the neighbourhood.

Summer Palace (Yiheyuan) — The Qing Dynasty imperial retreat on Kunming Lake, northwest of the city. The 728-metre Long Corridor running along the lake's north shore is one of the longest painted galleries in the world. Empress Dowager Cixi used this as her primary residence in the late Qing period. Plan for 2–3 hours; the grounds are large.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Beijing

DAY

03

XILAMUREN · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 1

Beijing to Xilamuren Grassland — high-speed train and yurt overnight

This is the day the itinerary shifts. The 2nd class high-speed train from Beijing to Hohhot takes roughly two hours — the landscape flattens and dries as you move north and west into Inner Mongolia. From Hohhot, a coach runs out to the Xilamuren Grassland, one of the more accessible sections of the Mongolian steppe from the capital. The evening is the highlight of the day.

Xilamuren Grassland — A working pastoral landscape 90 kilometres north of Hohhot, used by herders for centuries. The group checks into yurts (traditional felt-covered circular dwellings) and the evening includes a bonfire party, Mongolian milk tea, and the chance to wear traditional Mongolian dress. It is genuinely different from anything else on this itinerary.

Note: Yurts are available between 15 April and 20 October only. Outside those dates, accommodation moves to a hotel in the Hohhot city centre.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Xilamuren Grassland

DAY

04

ORDOS · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 1

Grassland to Ordos — Genghis Khan Mausoleum and Kangbashi

The coach heads south from the grassland through Inner Mongolia's Ordos plateau — an elevated, semi-arid region that holds some of the most architecturally distinctive urban development in China. Two very different stops punctuate the day before the night view in Kangbashi.

Hohhot Grand Mosque — One of the oldest mosques in Inner Mongolia, located in the old quarter of Hohhot. A working place of worship and an architectural point of reference for Islamic heritage in this part of China. Photo stop included.

Kangbashi New District — Ordos's planned urban extension, built in the 2000s on a scale that exceeds the city's current population. The Architectural Complex in the civic centre includes monumental public buildings by Chinese and international architects. It looks different from any other city in the world — worth understanding why.

Kangbashi evening — A night view of the illuminated district rounds out the day.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Ordos

DAY

05

ORDOS · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 1

Ordos — Genghis Khan Mausoleum and Xiangshawan Desert

Two of the most distinctive stops on the entire itinerary sit on this day. Both require some movement and physical engagement — the mausoleum involves walking the complex, and the desert requires getting on a camel. Neither is strenuous, but it is worth knowing that this is the most active day of the nine.

Genghis Khan Mausoleum — Located in Ejin Horo Banner, this is the ceremonial mausoleum built to honour the founder of the Mongol Empire. The complex includes three connected Mongolian-style domed halls and the surrounding steppe landscape. A buggy transfer is included within the site.

Dongsheng Mosque — A visit to the mosque in Dongsheng, one of the main towns in the Ordos region, is included before heading to the desert.

Xiangshawan Bay (Resonant Sand Gorge) — A desert gorge in the Kubuqi Desert, named for the sound the sand makes when disturbed. The included activities are cable car across the gorge, camel riding on the dunes, and a desert mini-train. Plan for 2–3 hours.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Ordos area

DAY

06

HOHHOT · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 1

Daqi to Hohhot — Mengliang Ethnic Culture Park

A transitional day — the group moves from the Ordos area back north to Hohhot, with two stops along the way that fill the afternoon without demanding too much after the previous day's activity. It is a reasonable pace before the train back to Beijing tomorrow.

Mengliang Ethnic Culture Park — A cultural site in the Daqi area dedicated to the ethnic heritage of the region, covering Mongolian and other Inner Mongolian minority traditions. The park includes performance spaces and heritage displays.

Xianghe Mall (Kaoxiangzhi) — A local shopping and food destination in the Hohhot area. Opportunity for independent browsing and a local meal.

The drive from Daqi to Hohhot takes approximately 2 hours depending on traffic.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Hohhot

DAY

07

BEIJING · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 2

Hohhot to Beijing — high-speed train back to the capital

The 2nd class high-speed train returns the group to Beijing — roughly two hours from Hohhot. The afternoon and evening are spent on two of the capital's most significant sites, with an Acrobatic performance to close the day.

Great Wall of Youjunguan — One of the less-visited sections of the Great Wall, located northwest of Beijing near Zhangjiakou. Less crowded than Badaling and arguably more atmospheric for it. The wall at Youjunguan passes through a mountain gorge; the section is steep in places — sensible footwear recommended.

Bird's Nest Stadium (National Stadium) — The lattice-steel Olympic stadium built for the 2008 Beijing Games, designed by Herzog & de Meuron. Exterior visit included.

Water Cube (National Aquatics Centre) — Now operating as a water park. Exterior photo stop included.

Acrobatic Performance — A Beijing acrobatic show, one of the city's established evening entertainments. Venue is a dedicated performance theatre; the show typically runs 60–80 minutes.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Beijing

DAY

08

BEIJING · OVERNIGHT 2 OF 2

Beijing — Tiananmen Square, the Palace Museum and Beijing Mosque

The penultimate day is Beijing's historic core — the axis that runs from Tiananmen Square through the Forbidden City is the defining urban sequence in China, and it is worth treating it as such rather than rushing. The addition of the Beijing Mosque gives the day a second register.

Tiananmen Square — The square on the south side of the Gate of Heavenly Peace: 440,000 square metres, flanked by the Great Hall of the People and the National Museum of China. Exterior visit; the square itself is accessible.

Palace Museum (Forbidden City) — The Ming and Qing imperial palace complex, built from 1406 and home to 24 emperors. The complex covers 72 hectares and contains 980 buildings. Entry ticket is included. Allow a minimum of 2 hours for a meaningful visit; the axial route from the Meridian Gate to the Gate of Divine Might takes 90 minutes at a steady pace.

Beijing Mosque (Niujie Mosque) — The oldest and largest mosque in Beijing, located in the Niujie neighbourhood visited on day two. A working place of worship with Tang Dynasty origins and Ming-era architecture.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Beijing

DAY

09

BEIJING

Beijing — depart for Kuala Lumpur

Breakfast at the hotel, then check out and transfer to Beijing Capital International Airport for the Malaysia Airlines flight back to Kuala Lumpur. The flight time is approximately six hours. Your guide will advise on departure timing and airport check-in procedures the evening before.

MEALS

Breakfast

YOUR TRIP AT A GLANCE

What's Included

DEPARTS FROM	FLIGHTS	GROUP SIZE
Kuala Lumpur	**Malaysia Airlines**	**25–30 pax**

INCLUDED

- check Return economy class flight by Malaysia Airlines with 30kg luggage allowance
- check Airport tax, check-in baggage and economy class seat
- check 7 nights accommodation in 4-star hotel with daily breakfast
- check Lunch and dinner throughout as per itinerary
- check Return 2nd class high-speed train (Beijing–Hohhot–Beijing)
- check Air-conditioned coach with experienced driver throughout
- check Tipping for driver and guide
- check Mongolian milk tea and traditional dress experience at the grassland
- check Grassland bonfire party — included
- check Camel riding, cable car and desert mini-train at Xiangshawan
- check Buggy transfer at Genghis Khan Mausoleum

NOT INCLUDED

- Travel insurance
- Entrance fees not specified in the itinerary
- Gondola or optional activities at own expense
- Laundry, minibar and personal expenses
- Any meals not listed in the itinerary
- Any other services not specified in the itinerary