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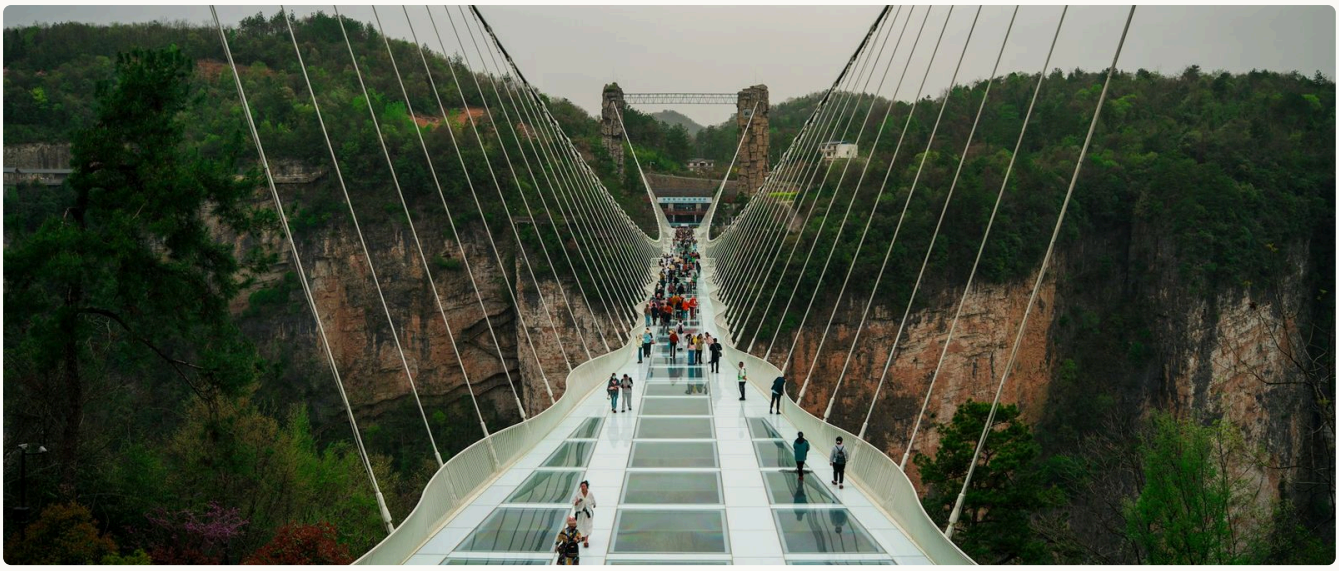

The Mountains That Inspired Avatar: Zhangjiajie & Hunan

CHANGSHA · FENGHUANG · ZHANGJIAJIE

7D 5N | 25–30 PAX | STARTS KUALA LUMPUR | MALAYSIA AIRLINES

Enter the extraordinary landscapes of Hunan over seven days, centred on Zhangjiajie's thousands of sandstone pillars—the inspiration behind Avatar's floating mountains. Travel from Changsha by high-speed train to Fenghuang's riverside old town, continue through waterfall-built Furong Town, then spend three full days exploring Zhangjiajie. Ride Tianmen Mountain's cable car, cross elevated glass walkways, descend by the Bailong Elevator, follow Golden Whip Stream and step onto the Grand Canyon Glass Bridge. Return Malaysia Airlines flights, accommodation, daily meals, high-speed rail, ground transport, guiding and tipping are included. Halal meals are arranged throughout, including packed meals where restaurants are unavailable. This journey suits travellers who want China's most cinematic mountain scenery paired with historic minority towns.

Printed 28 October 2026. Details of this itinerary are accurate as of the printing date — visit nextrip.my/tours/zhangjiajie-avatar-fenghuang-changsha for the most up-to-date information.

DAY

01

CHANGSHA · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 1

Depart Kuala Lumpur — arrive Changsha in the early hours

Malaysia Airlines MH520 departs KLIA at 20:00 and arrives in Changsha Huanghua International Airport at 01:05 the following morning. Check in at KLIA at least 3 hours before departure. Your guide meets you at arrivals and transfers you to the hotel. The late arrival is by design — you land, sleep, and start the real journey properly in the morning.

KLIA Departure — MH520 includes 30kg checked baggage. Changsha is Hunan's capital and your gateway into the province — you will return here on the final night before flying home.

OVERNIGHT

Changsha

DAY

02

FENGHUANG · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 1

Changsha to Fenghuang — a Tujia river town that still works

After breakfast, the high-speed train west to Fenghuang takes approximately 2.5 hours in 2nd Class. Fenghuang — Phoenix Ancient Town — was built along the banks of the Tuojiang River by the Tujia and Miao peoples, and most of what you see today was built in the Ming and Qing dynasties. The wooden stilt houses built over the water, the old city walls, the drum towers: these have been maintained rather than reconstructed.

High-Speed Train, Changsha to Fenghuang — 2nd Class, approximately 2.5 hours. Included in the tour.

Fenghuang Ancient Town — A UNESCO-listed ancient town founded in the 8th century. The old town is compact and walkable — the main sights cluster along the riverbank and the lanes behind it. Rainbow Bridge (Hong Qiao) gives the best elevated view over the stilt houses and the river.

Tuojiang River Boat Ride — A punt along the river at dusk, passing the ancient city walls, the Jumping Rock Bridge (Tiaoyanjian) and the illuminated stilt houses. Allow 30–40 minutes. The light at this hour is the reason to go in the evening rather than the afternoon.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Fenghuang

DAY

03

ZHANGJIAJIE · OVERNIGHT 1 OF 3

Fenghuang to Zhangjiajie — via Furong Town waterfall

The drive from Fenghuang to Furong Town takes about 1.5 hours. Furong Town is a Tujia settlement built into a hillside on the Youshui River, with a history of over 2,000 years and a two-tiered waterfall that runs directly through the centre of the old streets. The waterfall is substantial — wide enough to walk behind, which the path lets you do. The 1.5-km ancient street that descends alongside it is the town's main artery. Note: there are no halal restaurants here; packed halal lunch is provided.

Furong Town Waterfall — A two-tiered cascade where the upper fall drops approximately 60 metres into the river. The path behind the falls is included in the entrance. Allow 60–90 minutes for the waterfall area and the old street descent.

Youshui River Cruise — A short boat ride through the river canyon below the town. The gorge walls close in on both sides; best in the afternoon light.

Coach to Zhangjiajie — Approximately 2.5 hours northeast.

72 Tujia Stilted Buildings (72 Qilou), Zhangjiajie — A Guinness-listed structure of 72 connected stilt buildings in the old city district, illuminated after dark with traditional music and Tujia performances. A brief evening visit before hotel check-in.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Zhangjiajie

DAY

04

TIANMEN MOUNTAIN · OVERNIGHT 2 OF 3

Tianmen Mountain — cable car, cliff walk and the 99-Bend Road

Tianmen Mountain is today's centrepiece. Ride the 7.5-kilometre cable car from Zhangjiajie to the summit at 1,518 metres, crossing forested ridges and steep cliff faces. Tickets are included.

Cliff Hanging Walkway and Sky Walk — Follow the 1.6-kilometre walkway fixed to the mountain at around 1,400 metres, including glass-bottomed sections above the drop. Wear sensible footwear; protective overshoes are provided. Allow around 60–90 minutes.

Tianmen Gate — Reach the mountain's defining natural arch, measuring 131 metres high and 57 metres wide. Escalators provide the standard approach, while the 999-step staircase is optional.

99-Bend Road — Descend by shuttle bus along 99 hairpin turns, revealing the scale of the mountain and surrounding valley.

Baofeng Lake — Take an included boat ride across this reservoir, enclosed by sheer gorge walls rising directly from the water. The cruise lasts approximately 30–40 minutes.

Herbal Factory — Complete a compulsory shopping stop of approximately 30 minutes. Browsing is required as part of the programme, but there is no obligation to purchase.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Zhangjiajie

DAY

05

YUANJIAJIE · OVERNIGHT 3 OF 3

Yuanjiajie & Tianzi Mountain — the real Avatar landscape

The Wulingyuan Scenic Area is where the Avatar connection lives. The 3,000+ sandstone pillars of the national park are what the Hallelujah Mountains of Pandora were modelled on, and Yuanjiajie is the area where the tallest and most dramatic of them are concentrated.

Tianzi Mountain Cableway — The ascent to the Tianzi Mountain summit area. From the top, the rock formations of Fairy Bouquet Peak and Royal Pen Peak are visible across the valley.

Yuanjiajie Scenic Area — The section of the national park where the Avatar production team photographed the landscape. The Hallelujah Mountain itself — officially renamed Avatar Hallelujah Mountain in 2010 — is the central pillar.

Bailong Elevator — A 333-metre outdoor glass elevator built against the cliff face, descending from Yuanjiajie to the valley floor. The world's tallest outdoor sightseeing elevator.

Ten Mile Gallery Scenic Tram — A tram along the valley floor through the pillar formations, covering approximately 8km. Good for orientation and the low-angle views of the columns above.

Golden Whip Stream — A 7.5km riverside path along a clear stream through the forest at the base of the pillars.

Jade Store — A compulsory shopping stop as part of the tour programme. Allocation is approximately 30 minutes.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

OVERNIGHT

Zhangjiajie

DAY

06

CHANGSHA

Grand Canyon Glass Bridge — then the drive back to Changsha

The morning is spent at Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon, the final major site before the drive back to Changsha. The Glass Bridge is the headline: 430 metres long and suspended 300 metres above the canyon floor, it held records for both length and height when it opened in 2016. Less discussed but worth noting: the canyon itself, with its forested walls and the river at the bottom, is a good walk independent of the bridge.

Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon Glass Bridge — Built from 99 panels of triple-laminate glass across a steel cable structure. The bridge sways slightly in wind — this is by design. Tickets included. Arrival before 10:00 is recommended to avoid peak footfall.

Grand Canyon Walking Trail — A path through the canyon below the bridge, following the river through the gorge. Allow 60–90 minutes at the lower level.

Drive to Changsha — Approximately 4.5 hours with a prayer and lunch stop at Changde Mosque en route.

Huangxing Pedestrian Street — Changsha's main commercial strip, good for a final hour of local snacks and last-minute shopping before the airport transfer.

Airport Transfer — Malaysia Airlines MH521 departs Changsha at 02:05. Transfer to the airport after the evening meal.

MEALS

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

DAY

07

CHANGSHA

Fly home — Changsha to Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia Airlines MH521 departs Changsha at 02:05 and arrives at KLIA at 06:50. The tour ends on arrival. Seven days, three river towns, one set of the world's most copied rock formations, and a glass floor 300 metres above a canyon.

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 ticket (MH520/MH521) with 30kg luggage allowance
- check 5 nights hotel accommodation with daily breakfast
- check High-speed 2nd Class train from Changsha to Fenghuang
- check Lunch and dinner throughout the package
- check Air-conditioned transportation with experienced driver
- check Tipping for driver and guide
- check Compulsory shop visits: Jade Store, Herbal Factory

NOT INCLUDED

- Personal expenses and optional purchases
- Travel insurance
- Visa fees (if applicable)
- Any meals not stated in the itinerary
- Entrance fees not mentioned in the itinerary