Chongqing & the Yangtze Highlights

Chongqing - Yangtze River - Yichang - 6 days / 5 nights

Sample itinerary - Subject to availability

Travel style: small group

Overview

The mountain city, then the Three Gorges under way.

The journey

Six days that pair China's most vertical city with the river that made it - two days in Chongqing's stair streets and hot-pot lanes, then three nights downstream through the Three Gorges to the dam at Yichang. The classic Yangtze journey at a small-group pace.

Highlights

- Hongya Cave's stilt-house skyline at night
- Ciqikou old town and its teahouses
- Three nights on the Yangtze through Qutang, Wu and Xiling Gorges
- Lesser Three Gorges tributary cruise
- The five-stage ship locks and the Three Gorges Dam

Day by day



Day 1 - Arrive Chongqing

Met at the airport and driven to a central hotel near the monorail. The first evening is the city's own show: Hongya Cave's stilt-house stack lit over the Jialing, escalators that count as public transport, and a first hot pot with mild broths ordered alongside the real thing. Chongqing is built on stairs - take the first night gently and let the city introduce itself.

Meals: - - Hotel: Chongqing, city centre

Day 2 - Chongqing city

Ciqikou's stone lanes before the midday crowd: teahouses with covered-bowl tea, mahjong tiles clattering in the doorways, hand-pulled noodles being smacked against the boards. The Liziba monorail threads an apartment block to universal delight, Eling Park holds the peninsula view, and the Yangtze cable car crosses the river the way commuters actually cross it. Evening free in the lantern streets.

Meals: B, L - Hotel: Chongqing



Day 3 - Board at dusk

A quiet morning at the Three Gorges Museum - the Ba people's bronzes and the dam model that explains the week ahead - then lunch and the drive to the pier. Aboard by late afternoon: cabin keys, the deck plan, and sail-out at dusk as the city's lights slide past. The river begins tonight.

Meals: B, D - Hotel: Yangtze River, outside cabin

Day 4 - Shibaozhai or Fengdu, then Qutang

The morning's shore excursion follows the sailing schedule - Shibaozhai's twelve-storey wooden pavilion climbed against its own cliff, or Fengdu's temple courts - back aboard for lunch as the banks empty out. By evening the vessel enters Qutang Gorge at Kuimen, the gorge mouth every ten-yuan note is printed with; the sight happens from the deck, and the captain slows for it.

Meals: B, L, D - Hotel: Yangtze River, outside cabin



Day 5 - Wu Gorge and the tributaries

Dawn in Wu Gorge, the cloud sitting in it, then the small boats: up the Shennong Stream or into the Lesser Three Gorges, where the water turns green-grey and the cliff tracks of the ancient plank roads are still cut into the rock. The afternoon runs Xiling's long reaches; after dinner the cruise director briefs the lock transit and the deck fills early.

Meals: B, L, D - Hotel: Yangtze River, outside cabin

Day 6 - The dam, and disembark

Morning at the Three Gorges Dam walkover - the ship lift or the five-stage locks, as congestion on the day decides - then disembark at Yichang by early afternoon. Private transfer to Yichang East for the high-speed rail onward, or to the airport; the coordination team stays reachable until the onward leg is moving. Most groups extend the trip from here; the framework flexes either way.

Meals: B, L - Hotel: -

What makes this journey different

- Chongqing properly, before boarding - Ciqikou's teahouse alleys, the Liziba monorail through an apartment block and a hot-pot night among the locals.
- Three river nights, not the two-night speed version - the gorges get full days.
- A tributary cruise into the Lesser Three Gorges or Shennong Stream, in small boats.
- Shared departures with our China delivery partners keep the cabin price accessible for small groups.

Where you stay

Central Chongqing hotel near the monorail; three nights aboard a four-star Chinese river vessel in outside cabins - balcony cabins quoted as an upgrade on request.

Food & local life

Chongqing hot pot with mild broths ordered alongside the real thing, xiaomian breakfast bowls, Ciqikou street snacks, and full board on the cruise - Chinese menu, western options at breakfast.

Included

+ Accommodation in the agreed grade, with breakfast
+ Private guide and private vehicle on touring days
+ All internal transport between cities as stated - high-speed rail, internal flights and transfers
+ Entrance fees for the sites named in the itinerary
+ Meals as stated (B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner)
+ Drinking water in the vehicle, and a 24-hour emergency contact while the group is in China
+ Three-night Yangtze cruise, outside cabin, full board on board
+ Shore excursions as stated, led by the vessel's English-speaking guide

Not included

- International flights to and from China
- Chinese visa or visa-application costs
- Travel insurance, including medical and cancellation cover
- Meals not marked in the itinerary, drinks and personal spending
- Anything listed under subject to confirmation until it is confirmed
- Vessel upgrades - higher decks and balcony cabins - and onboard spa or drinks beyond the stated menu
- Optional shipboard excursions not listed in the itinerary

To be confirmed with suppliers

- cruise vessel name, deck level and cabin category for the travel dates
- shore-excursion programme (Fengdu or Shibaozhai) - set by the sailing schedule
- dam transit by five-stage locks or ship lift - decided by congestion on the day
- boarding pier (Chongqing or Fuling) and pier transfer times

Customisation

Every framework can be re-built around your client's dates, party size, hotel grade, pace and interests - or combined with scheduled small group departures where budget matters. Send us the brief and we will quote in writing.