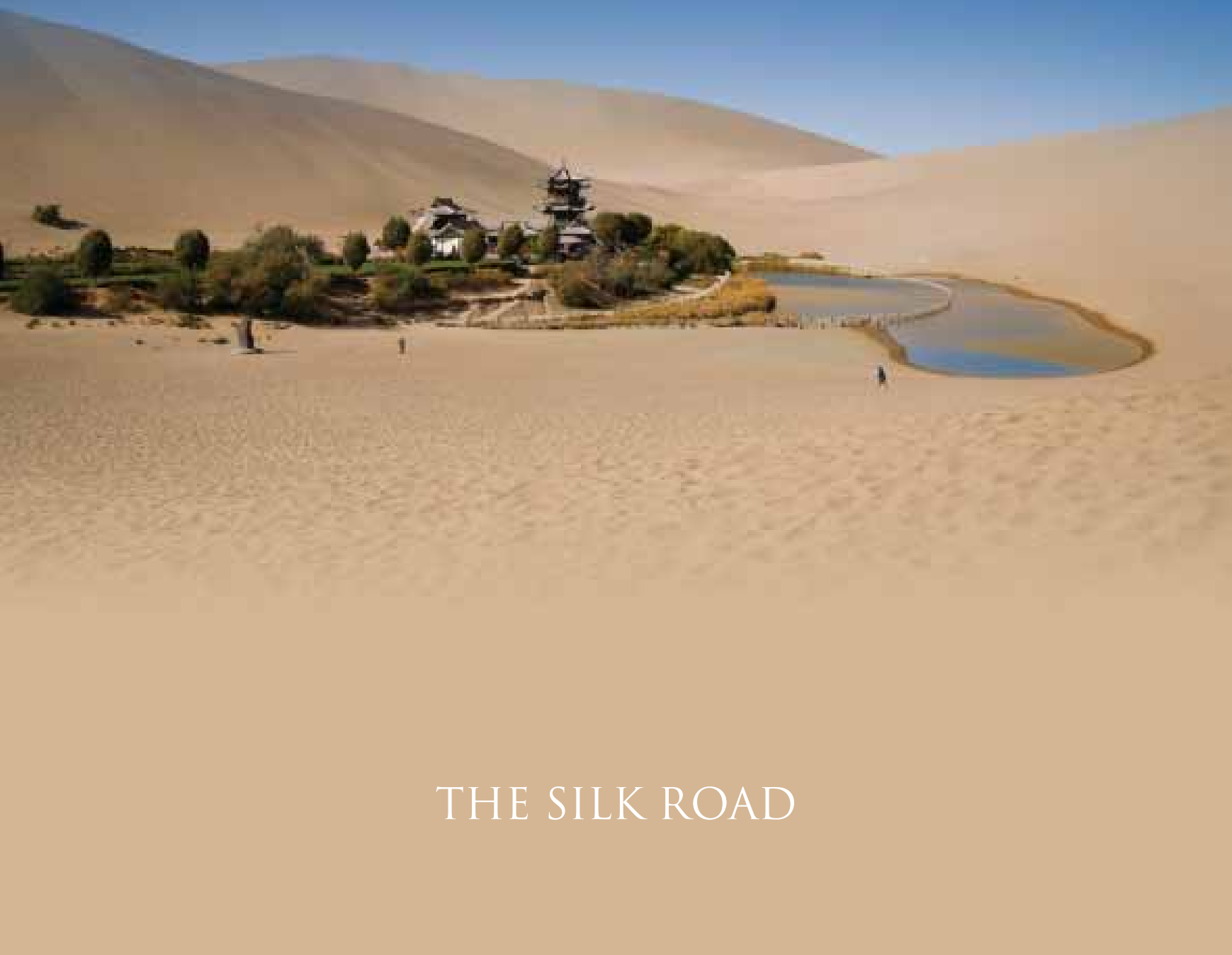




# GOLDEN EAGLE LUXURY TRAINS

VOYAGES OF A LIFETIME BY PRIVATE TRAIN™



## THE SILK ROAD







# GOLDEN EAGLE & SHANGRI-LA EXPRESS

## THE SILK ROAD

MOSCOW - VOLGOGRAD - KARA KUM - KHIVA - ASHGABAT - MERV - BUKHARA  
SAMARKAND - TASHKENT - ALMATY - URUMQI - TURPAN - DUNHUANG  
JIAYUGUAN (EASTBOUND ONLY) - LANZHOU (WESTBOUND ONLY) - XIAN - BEIJING



Retracing one of the most important trading routes of ancient civilisation, the Silk Road follows in the footsteps of such legendary figures as Alexander the Great and Marco Polo. For centuries, merchants and adventurers journeyed to and from China on ancient routes through some of the most testing landscapes in the world trading silk, spices and perfumes. These 'highways' – stretching some 4,000 miles (6,400 km) – collectively came to be called the 'Silk Road'.

Crossing both Russia and China as well as some of the remotest former Soviet Republics our epic journey onboard the *Golden Eagle* through Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan and the *Shangri-La Express* (see page 60) from the Kazakh border to Beijing across the Gobi Desert and through an ever changing landscape, will take in some of the most magnificent yet little visited sites and oasis cities from the ancient world.

We travel a total of 6,800 miles (11,000 kilometres) across five countries and six time zones through areas only accessible by train. Whilst the journey may present great difficulties for the independent traveller, our tour provides the opportunity to travel in comfort and safety. A true feeling of adventure and pioneering awaits on this unique 21-day tour by private train.

# GOLDEN EAGLE & SHANGRI-LA EXPRESS

## THE SILK ROAD



### TOUR SCHEDULES

#### EASTBOUND 2014

September 19 – October 9

#### WESTBOUND 2014

September 23 – October 13  
October 21 – November 10\*

#### EASTBOUND 2015

September 19 – October 9

#### WESTBOUND 2015

March 31 – April 20  
September 23 – October 13  
October 22 – November 11

\* This Silk Road departure operates with an alternative private train in China and a revised itinerary. Please contact us for further information.

### TOUR INCLUDES

2 nights in Moscow | 10 nights onboard the *Golden Eagle*  
5 nights onboard the *Shangri-La Express* | 3 nights in Beijing

### A TASTE OF THE SILK ROAD

A short tour option between Moscow and Almaty (13 days)

2 nights in Moscow | 9 nights onboard the *Golden Eagle* | 1 night in Almaty

#### EASTBOUND 2014

September 19 – October 1

#### WESTBOUND 2014

October 1 – October 13  
October 29 – November 10

### DAILY TOUR ITINERARIES

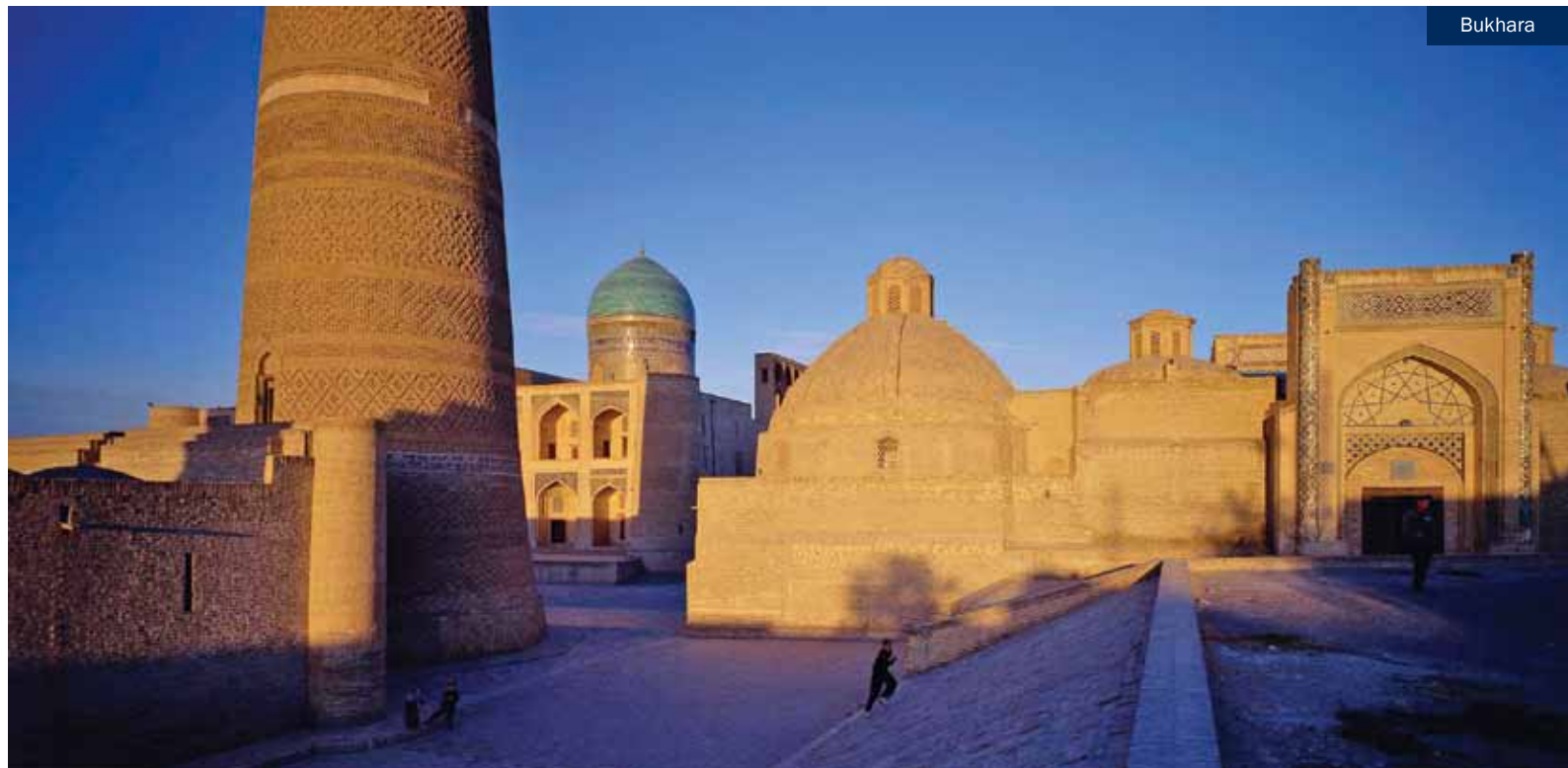
#### EASTBOUND

Day 1 Arrive Moscow  
Day 2 Moscow  
Day 3 Depart Moscow  
Day 4 Volgograd  
Day 5 Onboard  
Day 6 Khiva  
Day 7 Ashgabat  
Day 8 Merv  
Day 9 Bukhara  
Day 10 Samarkand  
Day 11 Tashkent  
Day 12 Almaty  
Day 13 Border Crossing  
Day 14 Turpan & Urumqi  
Day 15 Dunhuang  
Day 16 Jiayuguan  
Day 17 Xian  
Day 18 Arrival into Beijing  
Day 19 Beijing  
Day 20 Beijing  
Day 21 Depart Beijing

#### WESTBOUND

Day 1 Arrive Beijing  
Day 2 Beijing  
Day 3 Beijing  
Day 4 Depart Beijing  
Day 5 Xian  
Day 6 Lanzhou  
Day 7 Dunhuang  
Day 8 Urumqi & Turpan  
Day 9 Border Crossing  
Day 10 Almaty  
Day 11 Tashkent  
Day 12 Samarkand  
Day 13 Bukhara  
Day 14 Merv  
Day 15 Ashgabat  
Day 16 Khiva  
Day 17 Onboard  
Day 18 Volgograd  
Day 19 Arrival into Moscow  
Day 20 Moscow  
Day 21 Depart Moscow

MOSCOW - VOLGOGRAD - KARA KUM - KHIVA - ASHGABAT - MERV - BUKHARA - SAMARKAND - TASHKENT - ALMATY  
URUMQI - TURPAN - DUNHUANG - JIAYUGUAN (EASTBOUND ONLY) - LANZHOU (WESTBOUND ONLY) - XIAN - BEIJING



“  
*Fantastic countries, convivial people, amazing landscapes and the sheer epic nature of a 7,000 mile overland journey in often challenging environments are the real highlights of the Silk Road.*  
”



## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



### MOSCOW

Москва

RUSSIA

Our touring programme of Moscow principally takes us to the grandeur of the Kremlin – the spiritual, historical and political heart of Moscow – and to see the treasures of the Tsars in the Armoury Chamber. We also visit Red Square, an iconic symbol of Russia's former military and political might with its eclectic mix of fascinating architecture, such as the ornate St Basil's Cathedral's magnificent onion-domed spires, the beautiful façade of the world famous GUM department store, constructed in Tsarist times, and the sombre and evocative site of Lenin's tomb.

With our *Freedom of Choice* touring option you may instead wish to travel out of the city centre to Sergiev Posad, home to one of the most beautiful monasteries in Russia and the historical and spiritual centre of the Russian Orthodox Church or visit the famous State Tretyakov Gallery (National Museum of Fine Art).

Our *Golden Eagle* train, on selected departures, will be hauled by a Russian steam locomotive for the first/last section of the journey. With the opportunity to photograph the locomotive in Moscow Kazansky Station it makes for an unforgettable way to start, or end, your journey onboard Russia's premier train, the *Golden Eagle*. Included in our time spent in Moscow is one night at the five-star Marriott Royal Aurora, or similar. Located in Moscow city centre, and within walking distance of Red Square and the Bolshoi Theatre, this luxury hotel offers spacious accommodation with butler service for each guest room – the only hotel in Moscow to offer this fine service.

Why not extend your stay in Moscow with additional nights to explore more of the city at your leisure or have time to take in a performance at the world-renowned Bolshoi Theatre? *Tickets need to be pre-booked and are subject to schedule and availability.*

### VOLGOGRAD

Волгоград

RUSSIA

Standing on the banks of the Volga, Stalingrad, as the city was known in Soviet times, was the dramatic scene of one of the most important Second World War battles. The Russians heroically turned back the Nazi advance here to alter the course of the war. We visit the poignantly sobering Mamayev Kurgan war memorial, followed by an informative museum visit.

#### GUEST SPEAKER ANNOUNCEMENT

##### **Major JGH Corrigan MBE The Silk Road - September 2014**

The history of Central Asia and beyond is set to be brought to life as guests will be treated to the lectures of guest speaker and military historian Major JGH Corrigan MBE. The Silk Road is a magnificent journey and the talks of our onboard guest speaker will bring an added dimension to the tour as we delve through some key events in world history, such as the Russian Revolution, The Battle of Stalingrad and the more recent break-up of the Soviet Union.



Khiva

## KHIVA

ХИВА

UZBEKISTAN

From Urgench we travel to the ancient city of Khiva, founded 2,500 years ago. As one of the Silk Road's most important trading posts and now a World Heritage Site, it lies at the crossroads of the routes between Mongolia, Russia, China and Persia.

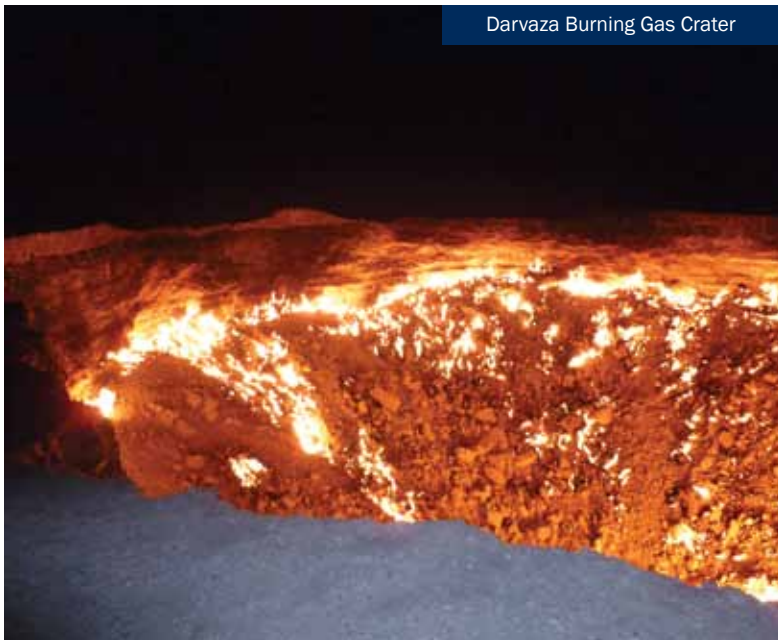
A truly magnificent sight to behold, it rises out of the desert to reveal a wealth of impressive architecture. Stepping back in time, we discover its impressive mosques, madrassas, bazaars and minarets within Khiva's ancient walls.







Ashgabat



Darvaza Burning Gas Crater



Ashgabat

## DARVAZA BURNING GAS CRATER

Газовый Кратер Дарваза

WESTBOUND ONLY

The *Golden Eagle* makes a brief scheduled stop at Ichoguz, where we have the option to leave the train and make a short journey to Darvaza's famous burning gas crater, a spectacular sight best seen at night.

Located in the middle of the Kara Kum desert where the area is rich in natural gas, the 70 metre-wide crater is known by the locals as the 'Door to Hell' and has been burning for over 40 years. A unique experience that is not to be missed.

## ASHGABAT

АШХАБАД

TURKMENISTAN

Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan is known as the 'Las Vegas of the Kara Kum'. Situated between the Kara Kum desert and the Kopet Dag mountain range, Ashgabat is a relatively modern city built upon the ruins of the Silk Road city of Konjikala and the Soviet city built after the devastating earthquake of 1948.

The city's extravagant fountains, golden domes and towering modern buildings appear strangely incongruous in this desert setting. Highlights on our visit include a visit to the National Museum and Kipchak Mosque.





Architecture on the Silk Road

## MERV

Мерв

TURKMENISTAN

From Mary we transfer to the ancient and mainly unrestored remains of Merv. Once an important stopping point on the Silk Road, it claims to have briefly been the largest city in the world during the 12th century.

1794 saw the demise of Merv, after the Emir of Bukhara destroyed the dam which the population depended on for its water.

## BUKHARA

БУХАРА

UZBEKISTAN

Bukhara is quite simply outstanding. Like Khiva, UNESCO sponsored the renovation of much of the city for its 2,500th anniversary in 1999. The highlight of this wonderful tour is a visit to The Ark, a fortified residence of the Emirs of Bukhara – the despotic and ruthless leaders who ruled until Soviet times.

We then travel out of the city to experience the Emir's enchantingly named, Palace of the Moon and Stars. This evening, weather and time permitting, we will enjoy a barbecue on the station platform before our train departs.



## SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

- ✦ Evening drinks reception on the beautifully lit Registan Square, Samarkand
- ✦ See the world's oldest Koran in Tashkent
- ✦ Ride camels through the sand dunes to Dunhuang's Crescent Moon Lake
- ✦ Look in awe at the Terracotta Warriors in Xian
- ✦ Climb the Great Wall of China

## SAMARKAND

CAMAPKAHΔ

UZBEKISTAN

Just the mention of Samarkand instantly conjures up evocative images of the Silk Road, more so than any other town. Founded in the 6th century BC, Samarkand's stunning architecture hints at its former status as one of the most important cities in Asia and is particularly noted for its architectural remains from the 14th to the 17th century, when it flourished as the fabled capital of the Mongol empire of Timur and his successors.

Today we will visit some of its most significant sites including Registan Square, the refined elegance of the beautifully proportioned Bibi Khanum Mosque and the Ulag Beg observatory, one of the earliest Islamic astronomical observatories built in 1428. Before dinner we will return to the now illuminated and awe-inspiring Registan Square.









Tashkent

## TASHKENT

ТАШКЕНТ

UZBEKISTAN

Tashkent is the capital city of Uzbekistan and we spend time touring this modern Soviet-style city which was rebuilt following the devastating earthquake of 1966. Our tour of the city includes the Old Town, where traditional homes and religious buildings line the narrow streets and here in a small library we'll be privileged to see one of Islam's most sacred relics – the world's oldest Koran. This is followed by a visit to the Railway Museum and the Museum of Applied Arts.

## ALMATY

АЛМА-АТЫ

KAZAKHSTAN

Almaty is the largest city in Kazakhstan and is notable for its wide tree-lined boulevards. Surrounded by the majesty of the Tien Shan Mountains, this beautifully verdant city derives its name from 'alma' meaning 'apple'. Just a short distance from the city, apple orchards thrive in abundance.

Our city tour includes a visit to Panfilov Park where we have the opportunity to visit the Zenkhov Cathedral which was built entirely of

wood. We'll also go out of the city to the Chimbulak resort, where a cable car ride will give you spectacular views of Almaty and the mountains.

## URUMQI

乌鲁木齐

CHINA

Urumqi is located in a verdant oasis between the lofty ice capped Bogda Peak, the vast Salt Lake, the pine covered Southern Hill and the alternating fields and sand dunes of the Zunggar Basin. Urumqi boasts an entry in the Guinness Book of Records for being the city furthest from any sea in the world – a staggering 1,400 miles (2,500 km) from the nearest coastline. This morning we visit the renowned 3,500 year-old mummy exhibition at the Xinjiang Provincial Museum.

## TURPAN

吐鲁番

CHINA

Turpan is the location where the Flaming Mountains create a magnificent backdrop. We take a fascinating tour to the ancient underground irrigation system that has successfully fed the rich orchards and vineyards for centuries. Our final destination is the elegantly decaying sand city of Jiaohe that was founded in 108 BC.





Crescent Lake, Dunhuang

## DUNHUANG

敦煌

CHINA

In the small oasis city of Dunhuang we will visit the fascinating Magao Thousand Buddha Cave Complex. This impressive site contains almost 500 grottoes, carved between 700 and 1,700 years ago. Inside we will see an amazing collection of beautiful sculptures and murals depicting the evolution of Buddhist religious art over this 1,000 year period.

In the afternoon we explore the vast natural beauty of the Gobi Desert by camel. Here we discover Crescent Lake. Hidden amongst towering sand dunes, it has sustained life in this region for millennia. Tonight we experience dinner and a local folk performance in this magical setting.

## JIAYUGUAN

EASTBOUND ONLY

嘉峪关

CHINA

Jiayuguan is most famous for being the first pass at the most westerly point of the Great Wall of China; it was given the rather poetic name, 'The first and greatest pass under Heaven'. Our tour takes us to the

perfectly restored fortress at the end of the Great Wall which dates back to 1372. Considered one of the greatest sites in north-west China, we spend time here and visit its excellent museum.

## LANZHOU

WESTBOUND ONLY

兰州

CHINA

Lanzhou is a vital city on the Silk Route due to its principal crossing point of the mighty Yellow River. A visit to the Gansu Provincial Museum here provides evidence of the kind of goods that moved in an eastward direction along the Silk Route and the famous 'galloping horse' dating from the Eastern Han period that was found in a nearby tomb.



Tang Dynasty Show, Xian



## XIAN

西安

CHINA

Our fascinating journey of discovery takes us to Xian. We will have several hours to explore the world famous Terracotta Warriors, discovered by peasants only 40 years ago. The 6,000 terracotta figures and their horses are one of the greatest archaeological finds of the 20th century.

Alternatively, as part of our *Freedom of Choice* programme we will offer a visit to the Han Yangling Museum. This tomb, dating back 2,000 years with its adjoining museum, is one of China's best kept secrets.

In the evening we enjoy the Tang Dynasty Dinner, Music and Dance Show, a wonderful performance of ancient entertainment.

## BEIJING

北京

CHINA

Beijing mixes both ancient and modern and is where we spend three nights staying at the five-star Regent Beijing hotel, which is located in the historical centre of the city. This luxurious Beijing hotel is minutes from the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, Wangfujing shopping street, the Oriental Plaza and picturesque hutongs (old lanes).

In our extensive touring programme of the Imperial City, we visit Tiananmen Square and explore the magnificently restored Forbidden

City which was built in the early 14th century and was home to the emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Our cultural exploration continues at the Temple of Heaven, built during the Ming Dynasty to offer sacrifices to the heavens, which is the grandest of the four great temples situated in Beijing. Here we experience enchanting displays of traditional dancing, singing and the delicately precise ancient art of calligraphy. We'll also explore the small 'hutong' lanes of old Beijing by rickshaw and visit a local family in a traditional courtyard house.

Alternatively, with our *Freedom of Choice* touring programme we offer a tour looking at Beijing's modern architecture with visits to the Olympic Village and the Bird's Nest stadium, the National Centre for Performing Arts, colloquially known as The Egg, the CCTV Tower and the Capital Museum.

## THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

During our three-night stay in Beijing we devote a day to the most awe-inspiring site in the whole of China – The Great Wall. This amazing edifice is perhaps the most evocative symbol of Chinese skill and precision. Originally built to protect the Chinese Empire from raids by nomadic tribes, it is the world's longest man-made structure in the world and part of the UNESCO World Heritage List.

We have the privilege of walking along a portion of the wall – the perfect opportunity to take some memorable photographs with your fellow guests.





The Great Wall of China



Forbidden City, Beijing