

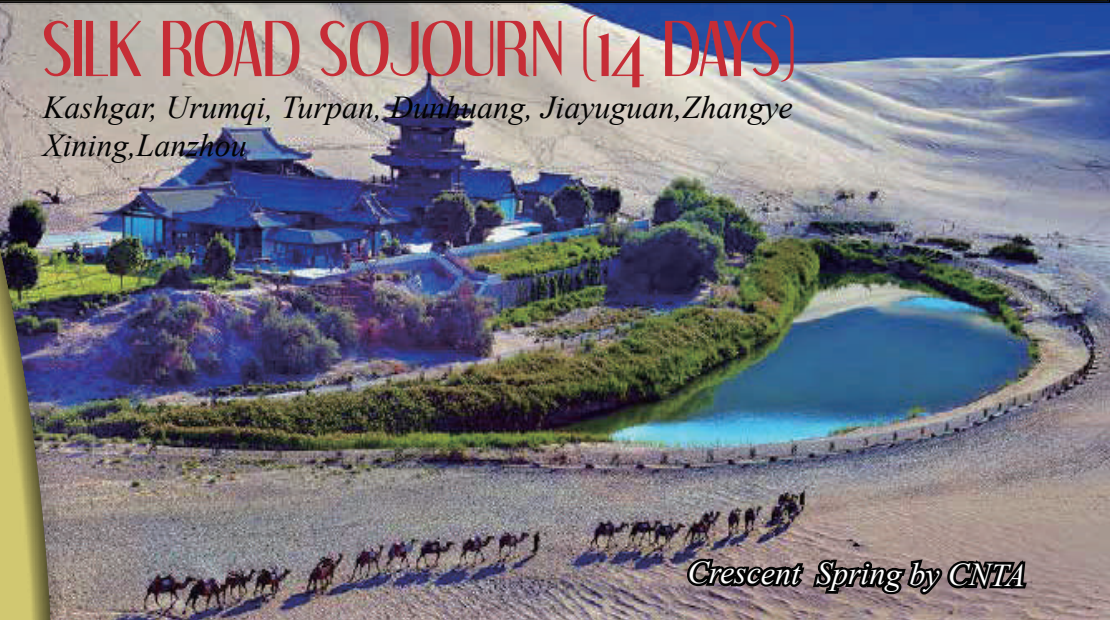
China Vacation

SK14E



SILK ROAD SOJOURN (14 DAYS)

Kashgar, Urumqi, Turpan, Dunhuang, Jiayuguan, Zhangye, Xining, Lanzhou



Crescent Spring by CNTA

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

Kashgar: Afaq Khoja Mausoleum, Grand Bazaar, Id Kah Mosque, Old Town, Banchao City

Urumqi: Heavenly Lake (Tianchi), Provincial Museum

Turpan: Karez Wells, Ancient City Ruins of Gaochang, Flaming Mountain

Dunhuang: Mogao Grottoes, Yangguan Pass, Humming Sandy Mountain, Crescent Moon Springs

Jiayuguan: Jiayuguan Pass (western end of the Great Wall)

Zhangye: Danxia National Geological Park, view of Zhenyuan Tower and Wooden Pagoda

Xining: Kumbum Monastery, Qinghai Lake, Sun Moon Mount, Provincial Museum

Lanzhou: Liujiaxia Valley, Bingling Temple, Yellow River Bridge

37 Meals: 13 Breakfasts (B)
 12 Lunches (L)
 12 Dinners (D)

Kashgar: Local cuisine

Urumqi: Han Style Banquet

Turpan: Roast Lamb

Dunhuang: Local cuisine

Zhangye: Local Specialties

Xining: Qinghai Hotpot

Lanzhou: Shish Kebab and Beef

Noodles, Local Specialties

HOTELS:

Kashgar: Radisson Blu Hotel

Urumqi: Jin Jiang International Hotel

Dunhuang: The Silk Road Dunhuang Hotel

Jiayuguan: Holiday Plaza Hotel

Zhangye: Tianyu International Hotel

Xining: Sofitel Xining

Lanzhou: Crowne Plaza

Day 1: Kashgar

Fly west across the country to Kashgar, capital of the South Xinjiang Province. Known as the "Pearl of the Pashmir," Kashgar was once the meeting point of the Northern and Southern silk routes and the gateway to the West. **If you bought air tickets yourself, please meet the group in the hotel.**

Day 2: Kashgar

Today you will visit the AFAQ KHOJA MAUSOLEUM, one of the best examples of Islamic architecture in China. Also known as Xiangfei's Tomb, this is also the burial place of the "Fragrant Concubine," whose body naturally produced a sweet scent. Then visit the ID KAH MOSQUE, the largest mosque in the Xinjiang province. Believed to be founded in 1738, the structure is built in the Central Asian style, making it appear different from the mosques found in Turkey and the Middle East. The OLD TOWN of Kashgar has a history of more than 2,000 years. You can take a walk through Old Town and experience the local culture for yourself. (B/L/D)

Day 3: Kashgar → Urumqi

Explore the bustling GRAND BAZAAR, one of China's most famous weekend markets. Taking place only on Sunday in Kashgar, local merchants sell everything from home appliances to fabric to

spices. Then travel to the MEMORIAL CITY OF GENERAL BANCHAO, who was famous for defeating the Huns and reopening the Silk Road during 73 A.D to 93 A.D. Later fly to Urumqi. (B/L/D)

Day 4: Urumqi → Turpan → Urumqi

Drive to TURPAN in the morning. This oasis town is famous for its grapes and melons, as well as being the lowest point in China. Sample some of grapes as you visit the KAREZ WELLS, an ancient underground well system that brings the town water from Mt. Tianshan. The canals channel water to the surface and are the main reason why Turpan became a major stopping point on the Silk Road. Then, visit the ancient ruins of GAOCHANG. Built as a garrison town in the 1st century AD, it became the capital of the Western Han Empire by the 4th century AD, but was abandoned during the early Ming dynasty. Walk through the ruins and imagine what life must have been like 700 years ago. Afterwards, visit the FLAMING MOUNTAINS, made famous in the Chinese novel "Journey to the West". In the novel, the mountains are said to be on fire, and at certain times during the day, the sun and shadows turn the rocks into a fiery red. Dinner is a Turpan specialty, roast lamb. (B/L/D)

Day 5: Urumqi

Visit the waters of TIANCHI, or the "Heavenly Lake." Lying at an altitude of



6500 ft, the lake is surrounded by dense pine forests and snow capped mountains. Take a boat ride around the lake and see some local nomadic Kazakhs herding their sheep. Return to Urumqi to learn about Islam in China at the XINJIANG PROVINCIAL MUSEUM. (B/L/D)

Day 6: Urumqi ➡ Dunhuang

Take the high-speed train to Dunhuang, the last oasis town before the Silk Road split into the northern and southern routes. (B/L/D)

Day 7: Dunhuang 🚗

Visit the MOGAO GROTTOES. Designated an UNESCO World Heritage site, these are China's oldest Buddhist grottoes. Housed in the 492 cave temples are over 2000 sculptures and 45,000 square meters of frescos. The statues and are painted and carved directly into the cave walls - the dry climate and the relative isolated location of these caves have preserved the works since the 4th century CE. Later, hear the sand dunes sing at HUMMING SANDY MOUNTAIN. Then, relax at the desert oasis the CRESCENT MOON SPRINGS, a small freshwater lake that has been a vital source of water here for thousands of years. Or, take an optional camel ride or sled down the sand dunes. (B/L/D)

Day 8: Dunhuang 🚗 Jiayuguan

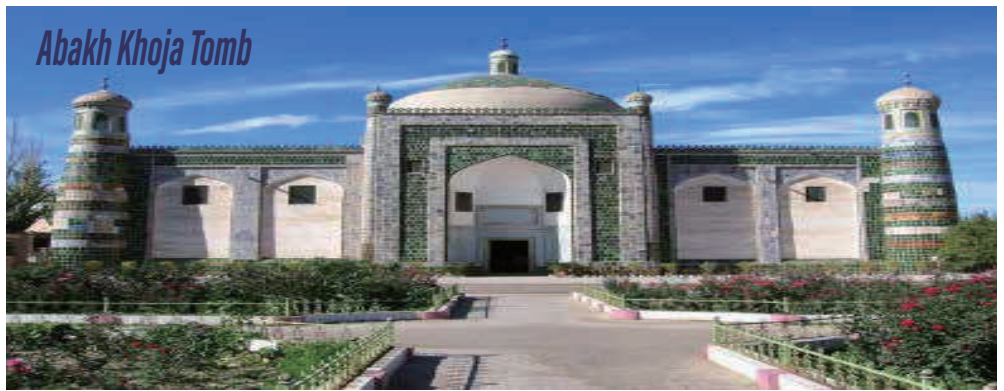
Explore the ruins of YANGGUAN. One of the major western passes on the Silk Road, Yangguan was rebuilt after it was abandoned over 1000 years ago. Drive to Jiayuguan City, home of the largest steel company in the Gansu Province. (B/L/D)

Day 9: Jiayuguan 🚗 Zhangye

Drive to JIAYU PASS to see the western end of the Great Wall of China. This is the most intact ancient military building along the entire Great Wall and was the only military and trade link between China and Central Asia. Continue your bus tour to Zhangye, which was a famous commercial port on the Silk Road. Catch a glimpse of Zhenyuan Tower and Wooden Pagoda. Enjoy the local specialties as your dinner. (B/L/D)

Day 10: Zhangye ➡ Xining

Extending along the northern slope of Qilian Mountain in west China, DANXIA NATIONAL GEOLOGICAL PARK is the best representative of China's colorful Danxia landform and the largest Danxia



landscape in an arid area, with a wide variety of landforms. Undulating fiery-red ridges together with amazing multicolored mountain folds transform the park into an immense sea of fire with rolling waves, earning it the reputation of China's Rainbow Mountains and also one of the "Top 10 Geographical Wonders of the World" selected by the National Geographic. Board the high-speed train to Xining, the Provincial City of Qinghai. (B/L/D)

Day 11: Xining 🚗

Drive to QINGHAI LAKE, the largest salt water lake in China. Many birds use the lake as a stop during migration. It is also considered a holy lake in Tibetan Buddhism; you can find many worshippers praying along the banks. Later, visit the "Sun Moon Mount," a memorial dedicated to the Tang Dynasty Princess Wencheng, who is credited as one of the people who brought Buddhism to this region. Upon returning to Xining, visit the PROVINCIAL MUSEUM. Tonight's dinner is a taste of Qinghai hot pot. (B/L/D)

Day 12: Xining 🚗 Lanzhou

Visit the KUMBUM MONASTERY, one of the most important Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in China. The founder of the

Yellow Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism was born here. Take coach to Lanzhou in the afternoon. (B/L/D)

Day 13: Lanzhou 🚗

The capital of the Gansu Province, Lanzhou is also known as the "City of Fruits." Travel by coach to Liujiaxia Hydropower Station and take a cruise to visit BINGLING TEMPLE to see the grottoes at the end of the reservoir. Then visit the YELLOW RIVER BRIDGE, known to give good luck to all who travel through Lanzhou. Enjoy shish kabob and beef noodle soup for dinner. (B/L/D)

Day 14: Lanzhou ➡ Home

Fly home or on to your next destination. (B)

**Some destinations on this program are located at an altitude of 5,000 ft or higher. Visitors with high blood pressure, respiratory, or heart problems are advised to consult their doctors before booking. Customers are expected to understand the risks that are involved when considering their travel plans.*

You have the option of purchasing international round trip air tickets via Grand American Travels. For more details, please inquire with our travel agents.

