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Golden Eagle Silk Road Express: Voyage to the Roof of the World

12 Nights • Luxury Experience

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Overview

Thirteen days from Beijing to Lhasa aboard the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express*, ending on the Tibetan plateau by way of the highest railway on earth.

The first half is imperial China - the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, the Longmen Grottoes, the Terracotta Army, the pandas and opera houses of Chengdu. Then the journey turns west and climbs. At Xining the train joins the Qinghai-Xizang Railway, crossing the Tanggula Pass at 16,640 feet, before arriving in Lhasa for three nights and the Potala Palace.

Journey highlights

- The Great Wall at Badaling, the Forbidden City and Peking duck in Beijing
- The Longmen Grottoes and the Shaolin Temple at Luoyang
- The Terracotta Army at Xi'an, after a Tang Dynasty banquet the night before
- Giant pandas at Chengdu, and a privately reserved Sichuan opera with bian lian face-changing
- Kumbum Monastery at Xining, one of the most sacred sites in Tibetan Buddhism
- The Mogao Caves at Dunhuang and a camel ride over the dunes to Crescent Lake
- The Qinghai-Xizang Railway over the Tanggula Pass at 16,640 feet - or fly to Lhasa instead, if you would rather acclimatise slowly
- The Potala Palace, the Jokhang Temple and the Norbulingka summer palace in Lhasa

Two departures in 2027: 6 to 18 April, and 19 September to 1 October.

DAY BY DAY

Your Itinerary



DAY 1

BEIJING

Arrive in Beijing and transfer to the Four Seasons. The welcome dinner this evening is your introduction to the group you will spend the next fortnight with.

DAY 2

BEIJING

The Great Wall at Badaling in the morning - a restored section with long views along the ridges - and the afternoon free in the city. In the evening, a Peking duck dinner at one of the capital's specialists.





DAY 3

BEIJING

A full day on imperial Beijing: Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City where emperors ruled for nearly five centuries, and the Summer Palace with its lakeside pavilions. If you would rather see the modern city, the alternative takes in the Olympic Village, the CCTV Tower and the National Museum. This evening you board the *Golden Eagle Silk Road Express* for the welcome dinner on board.

DAY 4

LUOYANG



The train arrives at Luoyang, capital to thirteen dynasties and 4,000 years old. The Longmen Grottoes hold more than 100,000 Buddhist statues carved into the limestone cliffs above the Yi River; the Shaolin Temple, at the foot of Mount Song, is the birthplace of both Zen Buddhism and kung fu, and the monks still train in its courtyards. There is time in the old town for Luoyang's water banquet dumplings before the train runs on to Xi'an, where a Tang Dynasty banquet with music and dance is waiting.



DAY 5

XI'AN

Xi'an's city walls are among the most complete in the world, and you walk the ramparts for the view over the old town. After lunch, the Terracotta Warriors: over 6,000 life-sized figures buried to guard Qin Shi Huang, discovered by farmers sinking a well in 1974, each one modelled individually. Back on board afterwards.

DAY 6

CHENGDU



Breakfast on board as the train reaches Chengdu, then Kuanzhai Alley - a preserved grid of Qing dynasty lanes with teahouses, courtyards and craft shops. In the afternoon the Sichuan Opera Theatre is reserved for the group: silk costumes, fire, and bian lian, in which the performer's mask changes faster than the eye follows. Tonight you stay ashore at the Waldorf Astoria Chengdu.



DAY 7

CHENGDU

The morning is spent at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding, among the bamboo. Back to the train for lunch, and the afternoon is yours - the observation car has a 270-degree view, and the bar is open.

DAY 8

XINING

A slow morning crossing the Qinghai plateau before Xining. Kumbum Monastery is one of the most sacred sites in Tibetan Buddhism, and your guide takes you into its quieter corners as well as the main prayer halls, with butter tea and cookies in a courtyard afterwards. Then choose between the Qinghai Provincial Museum, strong on Silk Road material, and the Shui Jing Xiang market.





DAY 9

DUNHUANG

The Mogao Caves are cut into the cliffs at the edge of the Gobi - nearly 500 decorated grottoes recording a thousand years of Buddhist devotion, from the 4th century to the 14th. A guide takes you into a selection of the finest chambers, and local musicians and dancers perform. After lunch, a camel ride over the dunes to Crescent Lake, a spring-fed oasis that has outlasted the desert around it.

DAY 10

QINGHAI

After breakfast you transfer to the Qinghai-Xizang Railway, the highest in the world, for the 1,900-kilometre run from Xining towards Lhasa across grassland, salt lake and snow-capped range. If the altitude concerns you, there is the option of a direct flight to Lhasa instead, with extra time to acclimatise.





DAY 11

TANGGULA PASS

The line crosses the Tanggula Pass at 16,640 feet, its highest point, with the Himalaya on the horizon. After lunch you arrive in Lhasa and check into the St Regis for three nights. The afternoon offers an optional tour of the Jokhang Temple, the 13th-century heart of Tibetan Buddhism, and the Barkhor Market that circles it - or simply time to rest and let the altitude settle.

DAY 12

LHASA

The morning is at the Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama's summer palace, laid out in the 1740s as a retreat from the heat: gardens, lotus ponds and a great deal of quiet. Lunch is Tibetan, with folk music. In the afternoon, the Potala Palace - a 17th-century structure rising 300 metres above the valley, its red and white front visible from most of the city, and inside a warren of chapels, golden stupas and relics. The farewell dinner is this evening.





DAY 13

LHASA

Private transfers to Lhasa airport for your onward flight.

DATES & PRICING

Departure Dates & Rates

DEPARTURE DATE	CLASS / CABIN	SINGLE	DOUBLE (PP)
Apr 6, 2027	Superior Class	**$43,200**	**$25,900**
	Superior Class Early Bird	**$43,050**	**$25,750**
Sep 19, 2027	Superior Class	**$43,200**	**$25,900**
	Superior Class Early Bird	**$42,950**	**$25,650**
Apr 5, 2028	Superior Class	**$45,400**	**$27,200**
	Superior Class Early Bird	**$45,150**	**$26,950**
Sep 19, 2028	Superior Class	**$45,400**	**$27,200**
	Superior Class Early Bird	**$45,150**	**$26,950**

Rates shown are per person. Single rate applies to single occupancy; Double rate applies per person in double occupancy.

EARLY BIRD FARES

Book early, pay less

Plan ahead and you'll pay less for exactly the same journey. Every cabin on this tour has an Early Bird fare. Look for it in the booking calendar, right next to the regular fare: it is labelled "<cabin> Early Bird".

6 MONTHS OR MORE BEFORE DEPARTURE

Save $250

per person

3 TO 6 MONTHS BEFORE DEPARTURE

Save $150

per person

INSIDE 3 MONTHS

Regular fare

the Early Bird fare closes

CABIN	REGULAR DOUBLE (PP)	EARLY BIRD, 6+ MONTHS AHEAD	EARLY BIRD, 3–6 MONTHS AHEAD
Superior Class	**from $25,900**	**from $25,650** save $250	**from $25,750** save $150

Double fares per person, two sharing; "from" is the lowest fare across the departures listed above. The saving depends on the cabin's regular price per person: $250 / $150 on journeys from $8,000, $150 / $100 from $5,000, and $50 on shorter trips. It's the same cabin, the same itinerary and everything included as before. The only difference is the price. Early Bird fares are limited to the cabins on each departure and close automatically. If you already know your dates, now is the time to book.

🏷️ **Look for Coupons and Special Rates on our website.**

Visit https://www.palacetours.com/tour/golden-eagle-silk-road-express-roof-of-the-world for the latest information.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Terms & Conditions

Booking & Payment

- **Deposit:** 30% of the total tour cost is due at the time of booking. The deposit is non-refundable.
- **Final payment:** the balance is due no later than 125 days before departure.
- Bookings made within 125 days of departure are payable in full at the time of booking.
- Fares are per person. Your written confirmation shows the exact amounts and due dates.

Cancellation

- **125 days or more** before departure: 30% of the total tour cost (the deposit)
- **Less than 125 days** before departure: 100% of the total tour cost

Changes

- **Date change:** free of charge, subject to availability, when requested 125 days or more before departure; after that, a fee of 15% of the total tour cost applies.
- **Cabin upgrade:** only the fare difference between cabin categories applies.
- **Cabin downgrade or passenger name correction:** free of charge up to 35 days before departure; within 35 days, EUR 500 per change.

Changes or cancellation by the train operator

If the train operator cancels or materially changes a departure, you will be offered a new date or an amended booking, a credit toward a future journey, or a refund of the amounts paid.

All cancellation, change, or update requests must be submitted in writing by email to travel@palacetours.com. A request takes effect only once we have received and processed it, and we will confirm the outcome to you in writing. Timeframes are calculated by reference to local time and business days at the destination; a request received outside business hours is treated as received on the next business day.

We strongly recommend purchasing travel insurance, including cancellation cover, from the moment you pay your deposit. For information on available plans, please visit www.palacetours.com/insurance.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the Voyage to the Roof of the World from Beijing to Lhasa?

> The journey lasts 13 days and 12 nights. It includes 2 nights in a five-star hotel in Beijing, 7 nights aboard the Golden Eagle Silk Road Express, 1 night in a five-star hotel in Chengdu and 3 nights in a five-star hotel in Lhasa on the Tibetan plateau.

When are the 2027 departures of the Voyage to the Roof of the World?

> There are two departures in 2027: 6 to 18 April, and 19 September to 1 October. The exact fare and availability for each departure are shown in the departure list on this page.

How much does the Golden Eagle Silk Road Express Beijing to Lhasa journey cost?

> Fares start from around USD 25,650 per person sharing, with sole occupancy from around USD 42,950. The price depends on the departure and on whether you choose a Superior cabin or the Han Dynasty Suite, and the exact fare for each is shown on this page.

What is the route of the Voyage to the Roof of the World?

> The journey begins in Beijing, then continues by train to Luoyang, Xi'an, Chengdu, Xining and Dunhuang. From Xining it joins the Qinghai-Xizang Railway over the Tanggula Pass to Lhasa, where the tour ends with three nights and visits to the Potala Palace, the Jokhang Temple and the Norbulingka.

How high does the train go on the way to Lhasa?

> The Qinghai-Xizang Railway is the highest railway in the world, and its highest point is the Tanggula Pass at 16,640 feet, with the Himalaya on the horizon. The run from Xining towards Lhasa covers about 1,900 kilometres across grassland, salt lakes and snow-capped ranges.

Can I fly to Lhasa instead of taking the high-altitude railway?

> Yes. If the altitude concerns you, there is the option of a direct flight to Lhasa instead of the Qinghai-Xizang Railway, which gives you extra time to acclimatise. Please tell us when booking, and do discuss travel at altitude with your doctor.

What cabins are available on the Golden Eagle Silk Road Express?

> There are two grades. The Superior Cabin is 11 square metres, converts between twin beds and a double, and has a 2.5 square metre en-suite with a power shower and underfloor heating. The Han Dynasty Suite is 22.2 square metres, double the size, with a double bed.

What facilities does the Golden Eagle Silk Road Express have?

> The purpose-built train is the newest in the fleet. It has two restaurant cars, one Chinese and one Western, a lounge car, and an observation car whose floor-to-ceiling windows are the largest on any train in China. A doctor and medical facilities are on board throughout.

What will I see at Luoyang and Xi'an on this journey?

> At Luoyang you visit the Longmen Grottoes, with more than 100,000 Buddhist statues carved into limestone cliffs, and the Shaolin Temple, birthplace of Zen Buddhism and kung fu. That evening brings a Tang Dynasty banquet in Xi'an, and the next day you walk the city walls and see the Terracotta Warriors.

What is included in Chengdu on the Voyage to the Roof of the World?

> In Chengdu you explore Kuanzhai Alley, a preserved grid of Qing dynasty lanes, then enjoy a privately reserved Sichuan opera with bian lian face-changing. After a night in a five-star hotel, you spend the morning at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding before rejoining the train.

What is Kumbum Monastery and when is it visited?

> Kumbum Monastery near Xining, visited on day 8, is one of the most sacred sites in Tibetan Buddhism. Your guide takes you into its quieter corners as well as the main prayer halls, followed by butter tea in a courtyard, then a choice of the Qinghai Provincial Museum or the Shui Jing Xiang market.

What do I see in Lhasa at the end of the journey?

> You spend three nights in Lhasa. There is an optional tour of the Jokhang Temple and Barkhor Market on arrival, then a day at the Norbulingka summer palace, a Tibetan lunch with folk music, and the Potala Palace, which rises 300 metres above the valley. The farewell dinner is that evening.

What is included in the Voyage to the Roof of the World fare?

> The fare covers all accommodation, all meals, beverages with meals and from the lounge car, arrival and departure transfers, cabin attendant service with turndown, luggage porterage, guided excursions at every stop with entrance fees, a tour management team, an onboard doctor and all gratuities on and off the train.

What is not included on the Beijing to Lhasa journey?

> International flights are not included, and neither are the Chinese visa, travel insurance or items of a personal nature. You arrive in Beijing and depart from Lhasa airport, so our specialists can help you plan flights that suit both ends of the trip.

Which departure is the better time of year for this journey?

> The two departures run in spring (April) and early autumn (September into October). Both avoid the peak of summer, and your choice will mostly depend on your own calendar. Our specialists can share what to expect from each on the Tibetan plateau.

How much deposit is needed to book this Golden Eagle Silk Road Express journey?

> A deposit of 30 percent of the tour price confirms your cabin and is non-refundable. The balance is due 125 days before departure, and bookings made within 125 days of departure are payable in full at the time of booking. Your

Can children travel on the Voyage to the Roof of the World?

> Children can be booked, with child rates in two bands based on age at departure: under 5, and 5 to 11. Because the journey reaches high altitude, please speak with our specialists and your doctor before booking for a child.

Can I book the Beijing to Lhasa journey as a solo traveller?

> Yes. Sole occupancy fares start from around USD 42,950, depending on departure and cabin grade. The exact single fare is shown on this page, and our team can confirm availability.

What happens on the Dunhuang day of the journey?

> On day 9 a guide takes you into a selection of the finest chambers of the Mogao Caves, nearly 500 decorated grottoes spanning a thousand years of Buddhist devotion, while local musicians and dancers perform. After lunch you ride a camel over the dunes to Crescent Lake, a spring-fed oasis.

How do I ask a question or book the Voyage to the Roof of the World?

> Email travel@palacetours.com, call 786-408-0610, or message us on WhatsApp at https://wa.me/17864080610, where a travel specialist or our AI assistant will reply. The departure list on this page is bookable directly, with the current fare and availability for each cabin grade.

Ready to Book Your Journey?

Contact Palace Tours for personalized rates and departure dates

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