

## The Imperial Difference

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Imperial Tours was founded in 1999 by Guy Rubin and Nancy Kim, Westerners who have lived in China for over a decade. The company was established on the premise of delivering inspiring experiences that combine local expertise with high levels of service and quality expected from sophisticated travelers from around the world. The company's success is fueled by the founders' passion for cultural discovery in the intriguing nation, and the innovative design of its tours.

With a portfolio of scheduled tours, customized private programs, and themed excursions, Imperial Tours makes sure the 'best of the best' accommodations, dining, and sightseeing are just the beginning. The "Imperial Difference" is defined by three distinctions:

### **"Imperial Moments" – A Unique Perspective of China**

An "Imperial Moments" activity highlights the spirit of a destination and allows travelers to discover China in an exceptional way. "Imperial Moments" add a culturally enriching dimension to a China itinerary for an unequalled set of experiences, and they turn typical sightseeing into indelible lifetime memories. Some popular "Imperial Moments" include:

- *Not just climbing the Great Wall, but also indulging in a private white-linen banquet atop a secluded section of the ancient monument*
- *Exploring Guilin's iconic Li River and rustic countryside on intimate bamboo rafts, not on the pervasive 50-passenger river barges*
- *Playing table tennis with an Olympic gold medalist*
- *Taking part in a traditional horse-racing festival on the Tibetan Plateau*
- *Feasting on a banquet, prepared by the grandson of Chairman Mao's personal chef, which recreates the same menus that visiting dignitaries once enjoyed*

As an itinerary takes shape, Imperial's team of experts can recommend a range of "Imperial Moments," sightseeing opportunities and other inclusions such as a private martial arts performance, an escorted architectural walking tour, or a specialist lecture, to enhance the overall experience.

### **Pioneering the Concept of a 'Traveling Concierge'**

Each Ultimate China and small-group tour is accompanied by both a local guide and a Western bilingual "China Host." The China Host serves as a cultural bridge to help translate the exotic mysteries of Chinese traditions and society, coordinates flawless logistics, and functions as the tour manager/on-site concierge to ensure superior quality and service. While the impact a China Host can have on a tour is limitless, select highlights of past support include:

- *Translating high-level political discussions between a provincial leader and a senatorial guest*
- *Spontaneously organizing a soccer match between a visiting family and some local villagers*
- *Bringing a guest to the best place for silk cushions in Shanghai*
- *Coordinating a visit to a new state-of-the-art nuclear power plant near Beijing*
- *Arranging for a guest to go skiing in Shanghai during the middle of summer*

### **"Insider Access" to the Undiscovered in China**

Imperial Tours provides exclusive "Insider Access" so travelers can discover both well-known and off-the-beaten-path destinations in remarkable ways. Imperial Tours has personal connections with world-class hotels and restaurants as well as a striking understanding of the history, culture, arts, and little-known exclusive destinations within China. Tapping into this rich wealth of knowledge allows Imperial Tours to present an exciting collection of scheduled tours and infinite customized itineraries that are very authentic, and atypical of the services provided by other tour operators in China.



## Imperial Tours Programs

### Customized Private Tours

Imperial Tours offers two distinct private tour programs that cater to separate travel styles: **Ultimate China** and **China Escapades**. Tours of each program are specifically tailored to the individual traveler and feature the best hotels & restaurants, however the scope of services of the two programs varies:

ULTIMATE CHINA	CHINA ESCAPADES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unparalleled service and on-site support of a China Host</li> <li>• Absolutely seamless travel &amp; logistics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support of a Beijing-based, western Virtual Concierge</li> <li>• Creative itineraries enhanced with special activities</li> </ul>
<p>The Ultimate China tour is for those who seek the best of the best, a vacation without a care. At the core of Ultimate China service is the China Host, a versatile factotum who expedites the best service that money can buy.</p> <p>Ultimate China clients appreciate being in the hands of the China Host and have everything from itinerary changes to wake-up calls handled for a flawless experience.</p>	<p>The China Escapades tour is for those who demand luxury and quality, but prefer to dispense with the extra value and service that a China Host provides in favor of a more hands-on experience.</p> <p>China Escapades clients enjoy greater involvement in organizing their travels as a deliberate and integral part of cultural exploration.</p>

Imperial Tours deftly hand-crafts personalized journeys through China, and offers an unparalleled flexibility for individual travelers, small groups, or large corporate and incentive groups to discover China based on specific interests. Guests can tailor one of Imperial's regularly scheduled itineraries to their liking or incorporate new destinations into their China adventure. Themed journeys are also available for travelers or groups with particular interests such as, Chinese cuisine, shopping, golf, contemporary art, or Buddhist art.

As an itinerary takes shape, we will suggest additional improvements based on your interests. For example, when appropriate we may suggest a private martial arts performance, a lecture on Chinese traditional thought, a specialist walking tour of Shanghai's French Concession, or special access to China's historic sites such as the Terracotta Warriors Pit #1 and more.

### Escorted Small-Group Departures

In addition to Imperial's endless options of individualized private journeys to China, the company features four regularly scheduled group tours (with a maximum of 20 people per departure) at a value unrivaled by any other luxury tour operator in China:

- **12-night Imperial Tour** – An excellent introduction for people who've never been to China, this tour visits Beijing, Xian, Guilin, Hangzhou and Shanghai. (Monthly departures from March to October)
- **11-night Family Tour** – Ideal for families with young kids or teenagers and incorporates kite flying, pandas, boat rides, kung fu, shadow puppetry and more. Spotlighted destinations are Beijing, Xian, Guilin and Shanghai. (Annual summer departure)
- **9-night Unique Destinations** – This program offers an in-depth look at Southwestern China and Tibet – Chengdu, Lijiang, Shangri-la and Lhasa. (Annual autumn departure)
- **10-night Majestic Tour** – This abbreviated itinerary of the benchmark Imperial Tour visits Beijing, Xian, Guilin and Shanghai. (Departures in May and October, Spanish departure in August)

## Recognition For Excellence

A testament to its unrivaled knowledge and experience in planning luxury customized programs to China, Imperial Tours has been awarded the distinction of a 'top travel specialist' by *Condé Nast Traveler* in 2008, 2009 and 2010 and has been named to *Travel + Leisure's* 'A' List of Super Agents every year between 2002 – 2010. In addition to receiving top accolades, Imperial has been privileged to serve royalty and celebrities from around the world.

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