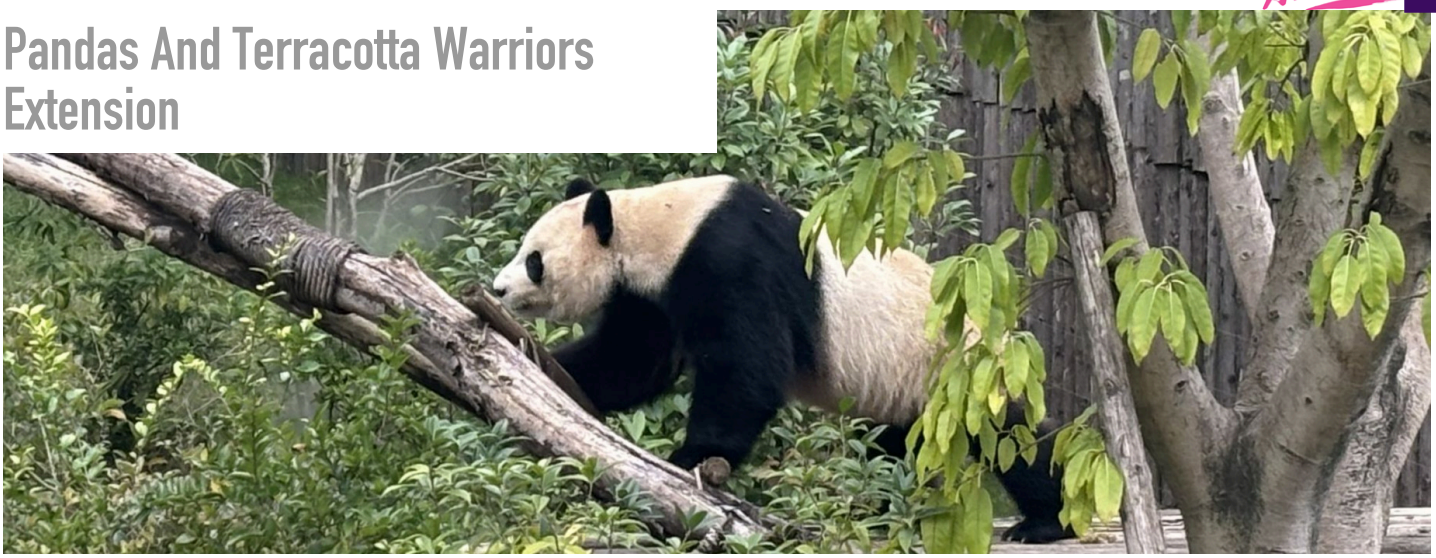
Pandas And Terracotta Warriors Extension



DURATION:

6 days

Extend your stay and discover more of this fascinating country and its culture – including two very different, but undisputed highlights: the world-famous Terracotta Warriors, and China's most iconic wild creature, the giant panda.

Despite their world renown, the Terracotta Warriors were only discovered in 1974 when local farmers were digging a well. Buried for over 2000 years, the ranks of soldiers that can be seen today are one of the most amazing sights in China, and are considered by many to be the eighth wonder of the world – yet were never intended to be seen by the public. There's time in Xi'an to see more of this ancient city, before moving on by train to Chengdu.

Encountering giant pandas in the wild isn't possible, but we visit a sanctuary and research centre with large, natural enclosures that mimic the bamboo forests of their remote mountain homes. Here, pandas are cared for and rehabilitated back to the wild where possible. Seeing these unique, magnificent creatures in their own region is, for most of us, a once-in-a-lifetime experience!

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Beijing Sightseeing; Overnight train to Xi'an

(main group departs China)

Spend the morning visiting one of the main cultural sites in Beijing – usually the impressive lakeside Summer Palace, but occasionally an alternative is visited. Later, after a tasty local lunch, you'll transfer through the busy Beijing streets to the railway station, and catch your overnight train (soft-sleeper) to Xi'an.

Breakfast & Lunch provided; Dinner not provided. Train journey approx. 13 hours.

Please note: The soft-sleeper standard is a carriage with 4 beds and is clean and comfortable. Meals on the train (dinner and breakfast) are not provided - you should take food and drink onto the train. There are small supermarkets at the station. Boiled water is available on the train (you may like to take your own tea bags!)

Day 2: Explore Xi'an

Arrive in Xi'an early morning and transfer to the hotel, where you can freshen up and have breakfast before heading out to explore the city. Xi'an was the imperial city for 13 Chinese dynasties – over 1000 years – and is the start-point of the famed Silk Road. Its old city walls are some of the best-preserved in the country, and a great way to orientate yourself as you take in modern and ancient landmarks of the city. Many people opt to hire a bike to circle the Walls (approx. 2 hours, at own cost), or you can simply enjoy walking a section atop the walls. Then head to the Big Goose Pagoda, a 7-storey Buddhist pagoda; over 1300 years old, this is the symbol of Xi'an. You can also visit the Great Mosque, an impressive blend of Muslim and Chinese architecture unlike any traditional mosque you'll have seen before! It offers a peaceful place to wander, set in the midst of the bustling narrow alleyways of the small Muslim quarter. Full of markets and interesting shops, these are great place to explore for souvenirs. The hotel is close by, and there is a wide choice of eateries for dinner. Night Hotel.

Breakfast & Lunch provided; Dinner not provided

Day 3: Terracotta Warriors

The incredible Terracotta Warriors lie at the tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Hung, 25km east of the city. Thousands of life-size terracotta figures of warriors, horses and chariots stand in battle formation, designed to follow their emperor into immortality. The figures have different facial expressions and marks of rank, and are incredibly lifelike. Originally, they carried real weapons such as bows, swords and crossbows, many of which remain – and were still sharp when first uncovered. There are three 'pits' to explore – the vaults excavated so far – as well as a museum, and you can wander at your own pace throughout this fascinating and absorbing site. There are still many statues beneath the earth, as the authorities investigate ways to preserve them. The figures are brightly painted, but the colours fade quickly after being uncovered and very few remnants of colour remain on the Warriors you can see today. Back in Xi'an, there is the option to experience a colourful cultural show with traditional Tang Dynasty singing and dancing. Night Hotel.

Breakfast & Lunch provided; Dinner not provided

Day 4: Xi'an – Chengdu

A morning high-speed train takes you to Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province – famous for its spicy food! Known for its laid-back vibe (despite being a fast-growing megacity), Chengdu is the best base to see giant pandas, unique to China. This afternoon you can visit the ancient Wenshu temple, a complex of colourful shrines and peaceful gardens. Though over 1400 years old, this Buddhist temple is still an authentic, active centre of worship. You can also visit People's Park, the largest of Chengdu's city parks, where among the tea-houses, lake and mahjong-playing locals, there is a well-established marriage market! This evening you are free to browse the many shops, cafés and food-stalls at Wide and Narrow Lanes. Night Hotel.

Breakfast & Lunch provided; Dinner not provided

Day 5: Dujiangyang Panda Base

Pandas live wild only in the isolated mountain ridges of Sichuan and neighbouring regions. These reserves are heavily-protected for conservation reasons. The best way to see pandas is to visit a sanctuary created especially

for them. Dujiangyang Panda Base lies approx. 1.5 hours from Chengdu; this isn't the closest option, but its location at the foot of the mountains makes it quieter, offering a more peaceful viewing experience. The base cares for giant pandas and the smaller, endangered red panda; some have been rescued, and are re-taught the skills to survive in the wild, while older pandas who cannot be rehabilitated receive specialised care. It is also a research and education centre, and you'll gain an insight into the challenges faced by wild pandas, and the efforts being made to save them. We return to Chengdu via the ancient Dujiangyang Irrigation System, a marvel of engineering that dates back to the 3rd Century BC and still provides irrigation and flood control today. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is a beautiful place to visit, with fast-flowing blue-green waters, densely-forested mountain slopes dotted with Taoist temples, and snow-capped peaks beyond. Night hotel.

Breakfast & Lunch provided; Dinner not provided

Day 6: Fly to London

Morning transfer to the airport at Chengdu for your flight back to London.

Breakfast provided.

When registering on this extension, **a photocopy or scan of your current passport details page is required** in order to book the overnight train. Please send this to us at the same time as booking.

This extension requires a minimum of 3 people to operate (it may be possible to operate this for 2 people but a supplement will be payable).

Contact the office for pricing and availability.

NB: It is advisable to book early to guarantee availability and avoid any disappointment.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Accommodation: 2 nights in Xi'an and 2 nights in Chengdu, in 3-4* hotels in shared twin/double room
- Meals as indicated in itinerary, including hotel breakfasts and meals in local restaurants
- Entrance fees to sites in itinerary
- Overnight train to Xi'an in soft-sleeper carriage; high-speed second-class train to Chengdu
- All transfers in private vehicle
- Local English-speaking guide in each city

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED?

- Meals as indicated
- Optional activities (eg bike hire, cultural show)
- Personal spending, tips, drinks, etc

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Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 24 Nov 2026, and the challenge is subject to change.