

See the Total Solar Eclipse July 22, 2009

China's 2009 Eclipse EXPEDITION

July 13-24, 2009

Come Explore With The Planetary Society!



Dear Members:

In 2009 the Planetary Society is offering a trip to China set to coincide with the **Total Solar Eclipse of July 22, 2009**. Join us on a journey to visit three of China's most important cultural sites—**Beijing, Xi'an & Hangzhou**—before seeing the eclipse, July 22, 2009 at the mouth of the Qiantang River near the city of Hangzhou.

Prior to the eclipse, we will visit several of the places for which China has always been renowned. Trip leaders will also ensure that the group gets an honest and intimate perspective of the daily lives of the Chinese people, both urban and rural.

In **Beijing**, we will visit landmarks like the **Forbidden City**, extensively renovated for the 2008 Olympic Games, and **Mutianyu**, where the **Great Wall** winds sinuously along steep ridges that once formed the northern frontier of China's "Middle Kingdom." **Xi'an**, our second major destination, was China's capital more than 2,000 years ago when the Qin Dynasty Emperor Huangdi interred several thousand life-sized horses and soldiers made of terra cotta clay. Xi'an is also the site of the recently-excavated Banpo neolithic culture site.

Hangzhou, in the lake country of Zhejiang, eastern China, has been a resplendent city since the time of



Marco Polo seven hundred years ago. We will spend a memorable day sampling the heritage of Hangzhou, and nearby **West Lake**, considered one of the most beautiful lakes in China.

At **Yanguan**, on the coast of eastern China, the Total Solar Eclipse of July 22, 2009 will have a duration of totality of five minutes and 48 seconds, an impressive span of time.

The eclipse's path of totality passes over a strip of Asia that extends from India to Shanghai. Although it will be potentially visible to many millions of people, there is always a possibility of cloudcover obscuring the eclipse. It is a mid-morning eclipse (about 9:30 a.m., local time) and mornings are more frequently sunny than other times of the day. Eclipse forecasters also believe that staying near the coast will give us the best eclipse-viewing weather.

Our program will conclude with a celebratory visit to **Shanghai**, the city which

expresses China's futuristic vision most extravagantly.

Sincerely,

Dr. Louis Friedman
Executive Director



THE
PLANETARY
SOCIETY

Itinerary

Days 1/2 USA to Beijing.

Depart for Beijing. Cross the International Date Line and arrive in China the following afternoon. Pass Immigration and Customs then transfer to the *Jinlongtan Hotel* (3 nights). Welcome dinner and brief trip orientation. D

Day 3 Beijing Tian'anmen Square, Forbidden City

& Kublai Khan's Observatory.

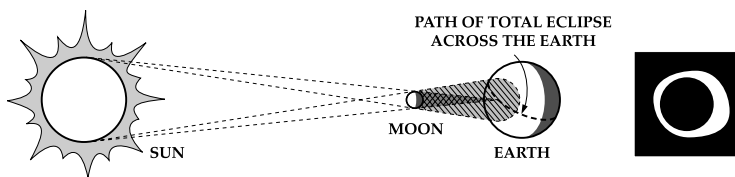
Morning excursion to Tian'anmen Square and the Forbidden City, the center of power of Imperial China from the 15th Century onward. After lunch at a local noodle restaurant, we will visit the site of an ancient observatory built in Kublai Khan's reign atop a watchtower in what is now downtown Beijing. Today the site holds an outdoor display of eight bronze astronomical instruments, developed from European designs, that date back to the 17th Century Ming Dynasty. Dinner in one of Beijing's historic *hutong* neighborhoods. B,L,D

Day 4 Summer Palace & Great Wall.

Depart Beijing on an excursion to the Great Wall, emblematic in so many ways of China's Middle Kingdom. En route to the Wall, we will pass Beijing's extensive "green belt" forests, and visit the Summer Palace, one of the largest, most beautiful imperial gardens in China. On arrival at Mutianyu, we will ride a cable car to the top of a ridge where we can walk along the Great Wall. It is possible to imagine the "Middle Kingdom" of China on one side, on the other, Barbarian wildlands stretching to Mongolia. Afternoon return to Beijing. Evening cultural performance. B,L,D

Day 5 Beijing to Xi'an.

Transfer to the airport for a two-hour morning flight from Beijing to Xi'an, the ancient capital of China. After lunch in a local restaurant, we will explore the city, including the restored old city wall, some Muslim neighborhoods, and Goose Pagoda, an important Buddhist Site during the Tang Dynasty, more than 400 years ago. *Belltower Hotel* (2 nights). B,L,D



The Total Solar Eclipse July 22, 2009

A total solar eclipse takes place when the Sun, Moon, and Earth are perfectly aligned and the Moon is the right distance from Earth. When the Moon passes in front of the Sun, it will cast a shadow on a portion of the Earth. When the Moon completely covers the Sun, we will see a Total Solar Eclipse. The moving shadow of the Moon on Earth creates the eclipse path. The 2009 eclipse will move across Asia from Mumbai (Bombay) to Bhutan, and then cross China just south of Shanghai. The duration of totality for this eclipse will be 5 minutes and 48 seconds.



Day 6 Xi'an—Terra Cotta Warriors.

Today we will visit Xi'an's museum of terra cotta warriors and horses, crafted during the Qin Dynasty more than 2,000 years ago. Most of these thousands of objects are displayed in situ. The most compelling have been relocated to a museum on site. Later, we will venture into the countryside for a picnic lunch, or eat in a local restaurant. In the afternoon, enjoy the ambiance of rural China among local farm families. Time permitting, we may visit a Banpo Neolithic site. We have planned dinner tonight at a restaurant that specializes in a wide variety of dumpling dishes for which they are famous. B,L,D

Day 7 Xi'an to Hangzhou.

This morning we will take a flight from Xi'an to Hangzhou. Situated next to a lake encircled by mountains, Hangzhou is widely considered to be the most beautiful city in China and it is reputed to have been Marco Polo's favorite. The protected scenic area of Xihu (West Lake) has been celebrated throughout China's long history. After dinner, there will be time for a walk in picturesque neighborhoods near our hotel to discover contemporary life in the city. *Lakeview Hotel* (2 nights). B,L,D

Day 8 Hangzhou.

Today we will explore the city of Hangzhou and West Lake, perhaps China's most revered body of water. In the morning we will visit historical and scenic sites around West Lake, including the Zhejiang Museum. After lunch at a traditional restaurant, we plan to visit Liuhe Pagoda, on a hill overlooking the Qiantang River, and the Hangzhou Silk Museum. B,L,D

Day 9 Yanguan.

Today we will drive eastward to Yanguan at the mouth of the Qiantang River, following a coastal by-way through towns that served during the pre-Communist years as traditional mercantile centers for close-knit clans of Zhejiang businessmen. The Qiantang River mouth is known locally for its tidal bore, a solitary wave which sometimes comes in on the New Moon. It may be possible to see this phenomenon associated with the solar eclipse. Afternoon free to explore Yanguan's well-preserved old town, which includes aristocrat's homes and temples. Prepare for tomorrow's Total Solar Eclipse. This evening there will be a presentation about the eclipse. *Haining Hotel* (1 night). B,L,D

**Day 10 YANGUAN TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE
July 22, 2009.**

This morning we will move to our eclipse-viewing site along the bank of the Qiantang River. Totality will occur mid-morning, at about 9:30 a.m. local time and will last for 5 minutes and 48 seconds. All participants will receive eclipse-viewing glasses.

We will look for special phenomena of the eclipse. As the Moon slowly comes between the Sun and the Earth, you will see the dark crescent of the Moon cross the Sun and slowly advance to block all of the Sun's direct rays. Just before the Moon blocks the Sun, the sunlight passes through lower surface features of the Moon, creating a phenomenon called "Baily's Beads." Sometimes the depression of the Moon is so great that it produces a larger phenomenon, called the "Diamond Ring." During the total eclipse, the rays of the Sun produce a corona, or crown of light radiating outward behind the dark globe of the Moon—this rare event can be seen only with a Total Solar Eclipse. The sky will remain blue but will be much darker. The air temperature will drop noticeably, and the activity and singing of birds will lessen dramatically. It will be an extraordinary experience!

After the eclipse is over, we will eat lunch in Yanguan, then drive onward to Shanghai for an introduction to the city. *Shanghai Hotel (2 nights)*. B,L,D

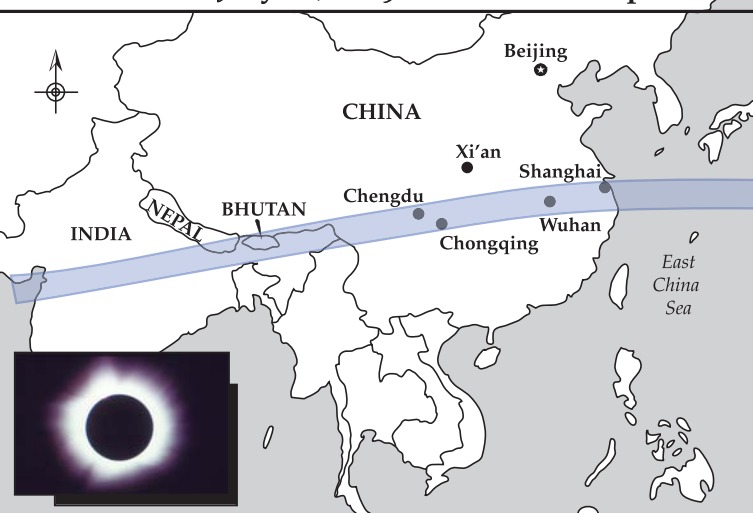
Day 11 Shanghai.

This morning we will visit the Shanghai Museum with many captivating exhibits. In the afternoon explore tree-shaded streets in Shanghai's old French Quarter, adjacent to Fudan University, or take a river boat excursion on the Pudong River with contrasting views of the historic Bund Riverfront, and the modern Pudong district of Shanghai. Enjoy a farewell dinner followed by a delightful acrobatic performance. B,L,D

Day 12 Shanghai to Home.

There will be free time this morning for shopping and exploring the busy streets of Shanghai. After lunch, we will transfer to the airport for our return flight to the U.S. Cross the International Date Line and arrive in the USA the same day. B

Path of the July 22, 2009 Total Solar Eclipse



As an alternative... join this great trip!
TIBET ECLIPSE – July 8-24, 2009

The Tibetan Plateau has long been a place of fascination for Western naturalists and explorers. Our first destination in Tibet is **Tsedang** near some of the oldest villages and sacred sites in Tibet. Then follow the Yarlung Tsangpo & Kyichu rivers upstream to **Lhasa**, historic center of the Tibetan world. See its sacred sites including the **Jorkang Temple**, the **Potala** and **Norbulinka Palace**, the winter and summer residences of the Dalai Lama, and **Ganden Monastery**, poised dramatically on a ridge above the Lhasa Valley. \$4,195 + air.



Reservations

#1087

Yes! I/we want to join the **China's 2009 Eclipse Expedition, July 13-24, 2009** offered by **The Planetary Society**. Please reserve _____ space(s). As a deposit, I/we enclose a check for \$ _____ (\$500 per person) payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s) _____ Age ____ Sex ____

_____ Age ____ Sex ____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone: H(____) _____ W(____) _____

Membership: Planetary Society AAAS Sigma Xi ACS

Accommodations Preference:

___ Twin ___ Single ___ Twin Share ___ with a friend *or*
___ Nonsmoker ___ Smoker ___ assign a roommate

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please Mail To:
China's 2009 Eclipse Expedition
Betchart Expeditions Inc.

17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5345

Costs & Conditions

Trip Fee:

\$3,695 per person (plus airfare of approximately \$1,295 + tax from San Francisco to Beijing with Shanghai return + \$450 in-tour flights).

Expedition Fee Includes:

Land transport; group airport transfers; accommodations twin share; all meals; tips to drivers and local guides; entrance fees; baggage handling; leadership; administration.

Expedition Fee Does Not Include:

International airfare and in-tour airfare (quoted separately); visas for China; gratuities to expedition leaders; personal items such as laundry, phone calls, alcoholic beverages, sodas, snacks, personal insurance; or foreign airport departure taxes.

What to Expect:

This expedition is planned for travelers who would enjoy seeing the Total Solar Eclipse and exploring the classic sites in Beijing, Xi'an, Hangzhou, and Shanghai. This is a great opportunity to discover the fascinating cultural heritage of China and see the Total Solar Eclipse. Leading the expedition will be excellent local guides. The group will travel 3 to 4 hours by bus or van on several days. On traveling days, we will take time for both planned and spontaneous stops to walk, photograph, and talk with local people. Food will include a varied Chinese menu. We will see the Total Solar Eclipse just south of Shanghai near the coast where meteorologists expect the best eclipse-viewing; however, cloudcover could obscure the eclipse. This expedition will be a tremendous opportunity for travelers to learn about China and see an eclipse. We will have a grand adventure of discovery. (No smoking in vehicles, during lectures or meals, please.)

Airfare & Airline Ticketing:

Airfare quoted is based on a group fare with United Airlines to Beijing with return from Shanghai. In-tour flights are on Chinese airlines. Group air bookings from the USA will be handled by Betchart Expeditions Inc. AIR FARES & FUEL SURCHARGES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.



Accommodations:

Are twin-share with private bath in comfortable hotels. Expect a good bed, showers, Western toilets, and carefully prepared food. If you want a single, or do not have a roommate, you must pay the single supplement of \$895.

Reservations, Deposits & Payments:

Please mail a deposit of \$500 per person with the completed reservation form to: **China's 2009 Eclipse Expedition, Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435.** The balance is due 90 days before departure.

Cancellations & Refunds:

The initial deposit is refundable up to 90 days before departure, less a handling fee of \$100 per person. There is no refund after the 90-day period unless your place is resold, then only the \$100 per person handling fee is withheld. There are no refunds for unused meals or other expedition features.

For reservations, please contact
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435
800-252-4910 (toll free in USA)
or **408-252-4910** (international calls)
Email: Info@betchartexpeditions.com
On the Web: www.betchartexpeditions.com

Responsibility: Betchart Expeditions Inc. and The Planetary Society act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and hotels, and exercise every care possible. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, delay, loss, accident or irregularity in connection with the services of any airplane, ship, motorcoach, or any other conveyance used in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to substitute another leader of similar expertise or reserve the right to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case the entire payment will be refunded with no further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The price of the program is based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, or fuel increases will be passed on to participants. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely. It is understood that the air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance.

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