

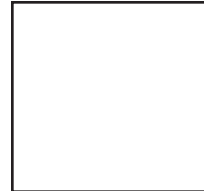


BETCHART EXPEDITIONS Inc.

17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435



Join us and discover...
China's Unique Heritage!
From Pandas to Terra Cotta Warriors
Feathered Dinosaurs to the Dawn Redwoods
November 6-22, 2008



FIRST CLASS

Costs & Conditions (CONTINUED)

What to Expect:

This expedition is planned for travelers who would enjoy exploring the unique cultural heritage and natural history of China including Beijing, Xi'an, Dazhu, and Shanghai, and you will also have a chance to see the giant pandas, feathered dinosaurs, and China's dawn redwoods. Our adventure will include a relaxing and fascinating Yangtze River cruise.

Leading this trip will be an excellent local guide and an American scientist with years of experience in China. The group will travel 4 to 6 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. Walks will be at a leisurely pace suitable for cultural discovery and natural history study; binoculars are suggested. Food will include a varied Chinese menu.

Weather will be fall-like, with midday temperatures in the upper 40s' to 60's and colder nights. This expedition will be a tremendous experience for travelers with an appetite for adventure who would enjoy a chance to explore culturally and biologically rich areas in China. Please be flexible concerning time schedules, hotels, food, roads, and mechanical breakdowns. With this in mind, we will have a grand adventure

of discovery. (No smoking in vehicles, during lectures, or meals, please.)

Air Fare & Flights:

This expedition is designed to begin with a welcome dinner November 6, 2008 in Beijing. If you will be flying to China to join this trip, you must depart the USA on November 5th.

Please book flights directly with United Airlines or other carriers to arrive in Beijing by mid-afternoon on November 6th and to depart from Shanghai on November 22nd. If you have any questions, please contact Betchart Expeditions, (800) 252-4910.

Accommodations:

We will occupy first class Chinese hotels in the cities, and good Chinese hotels in outlying locations. We will travel on the first class *M/V Victoria* or equivalent on the Yangtze River. Accommodations are twin-share with private bath. Expect a good bed, showers, Western toilets, and care-fully prepared food. In non-tourist locations, some hotels are modest (the locations are worth it!). Only Asian toilets may be available between hotels (some "clean" and some not). Single accommodations are available for a supplement of \$795.

Reservations, Deposits & Payments:

Please mail a deposit of \$500 per person with the completed reservation form to:

**China's Unique Heritage
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road
Cupertino, CA 95014-5435**

The balance is due September 6, 2008.

Cancellations & Refunds:

The initial deposit is refundable up to 60 days before departure less a handling fee of \$100 per person. There is no refund after the 60-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.

Responsibility: Betchart Expeditions Inc. acts only as agent for the passenger with respect to transportation and hotels, and exercises 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, acts of God, terrorism, 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 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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Map and illustrations by April Milne.

CHINA's Unique Heritage

November 6-22, 2008

**From the Great Wall to Terra Cotta Warriors
Feathered Dinosaurs to the Dawn Redwoods!**

Dear Travelers:

We invite you to join us in 2008 on this expedition as we explore China's unique cultural and natural heritage!

This extraordinary journey will allow you to discover fascinating cultural sites, as well as the exciting natural history of China... from **Beijing** to the **giant pandas...** **Xi'an** to the **feathered dinosaurs...** the **dawn redwoods** to the **Yangtze River** and **Shanghai**.

Our expedition will begin in Beijing with highlights both historical and contemporary, as we explore **Tiananmen Square**, the ancient hutongs (historic neighborhoods), and the **Great Wall**.

At **Beijing's Museum of Paleontology** we will have an introduction to the spectacular fossils of feathered dinosaurs, the species at the transition from reptile to bird, recently discovered in China and first described by researchers in 2003. This is an extraordinary find and is of great significance to science.

We will travel north from Beijing to the **Chaoyang Basin** in remote Western Liaoning Province where late-Jurassic shales hold fossils that have contributed much to what we know about the evolutionary transition from reptiles to birds. Chinese scientists will join us in the field.

A short flight will take us to **Xi'an**, site of some of the most ancient cities in the world. Its history begins in the Bronze Age 3,000 years ago. From 1,000 BC to 1,000 AD, Xi'an was the imperial capital of China for 11 dynasties. A prosperous city



with many fine universities, today Xi'an is renowned for the extraordinary 2,300-year-old terra cotta warriors which guarded the tomb of Qin Shi Huang.

Near **Chengdu**, we will visit other cultural highlights, including recently discovered **Sanxingdui**, an archaeological site where hundreds of fascinating early bronze-age artifacts have been unearthed, and the Buddhist grottoes at **Dazu** which are filled with ancient Buddhist carvings.

The giant pandas will hold our attention at Chengdu's wonderful breeding facility.

A special backroads adventure will next take us into an area totally off the Chinese or international tourist scene! We'll venture south of the Yangtze into the **Wuling Mountains** in search of the home of the Chinese dawn redwoods. Discovered by science in 1941, these ancient conifers were thought to only exist as fossils. Near Modaoxi we will find the type specimen for the species, and then venture over the mountains to **Shuishanba**, the **Dawn Redwood**

Valley. Here we will see the "seed trees" for the species, and hike to an old forest.

Our adventure will conclude with a voyage on the **Yangtze River** and a visit to Shanghai.

Leading the expedition will be **Dr. Chris Carpenter**, an ecologist with a sound understanding and appreciation of the cultural and natural heritage of China.

We will learn about and visit sites of global importance and will confront fascinating questions about the heritage of China. We will take advantage of the opportunity to meet local people, both in scheduled exchanges with scientists and local experts, and spontaneous meetings with villagers and merchants in cities and small towns.

We hope you will join us for an unforgettable visit to a fascinating part of the world.

Sincerely,

Margaret

Margaret M. Betchart
President, Betchart Expeditions Inc.

Itinerary

Day 1 Beijing

All participants arrive at our Beijing hotel by late-afternoon on November 6, 2008. Welcome dinner and trip orientation. (3 nights)

Day 2 Beijing Cultural Heritage

This morning, we'll visit two important sites for understanding contemporary China, **Tiananmen Square**, the heart of Beijing and of China, and the **Forbidden City of the Emperors**. Tiananmen Square is one of the largest public squares in the world—a modern creation superimposed on the ancient city. To the north is the Forbidden City, for five centuries the heart of power of 24 emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Following lunch in a traditional Beijing noodle restaurant, we'll explore some of Beijing's historic neighborhoods or *hutongs* for a fascinating look at the historic part of the city.

Day 3 Museum & Great Wall

This morning, we'll visit the Museum of Vertebrate Paleontology to meet experts and learn about the singular importance of China's recently discovered feathered dinosaur fossils. In January 2003, researchers described a feathered reptile with gliding wings on each of its four legs. Such an unexpected creature strengthens the theory that avian flight evolved from "the trees down" rather than from "the ground up." We'll meet some of China's top scientists in this field. We'll then depart for the Mutianyu section of the Great Wall, northeast of Beijing. Here the Great Wall passes along a ridge with forested hills. We'll walk on the Great Wall, and then enjoy a cable car ride down!

Day 4 Beijing to Chaoyang

A morning flight will get us to Shenyang, an historic city in China's northeastern Manchurian region. Here we will visit the Qing Imperial residence (analogous to Beijing's Temple of Heaven) before driving in the afternoon to the town of Chaoyang. This dry, hilly region will provide us an insight into the old China, off the beaten track and largely untouched by the economic development that is occurring in the prosperous southern regions. *Chaoyang Hotel (2 nights)*.

CHINA



Day 5 The Chaoyang Basin Feathered Dinosaur Site

In the morning we will drive to Beipiao, a small town near Sihetun which is probably the world's most important site for feathered dinosaur fossils. The excavation site is partially enclosed and it is possible to see numerous plant and insect fossils in-situ, although the dinosaur fossils themselves are excavated and removed for research as they are uncovered. We'll see feathered dinosaur fossils on display at the Beipiao Museum of Paleontology, then drive back to Chaoyang and visit the "fossil city," a fossil market in the old city center.

Days 6/7 Chaoyang to Xi'an Terra Cotta Warriors

We'll depart on a morning flight from Chaoyang to Shenyang and Xi'an, the historic ancient capital of Qin Dynasty China in the 3rd century BC. Here we will visit the world renowned terra cotta warriors, an army of more than 6,000 life-sized clay figures buried in tribute to the emperor Qin Shihuang who ruled this part of the Middle Kingdom 2,300 years ago. In the afternoon, we will explore the hinterlands of Xi'an for rural and village life. *Xi'an Hotel (2 nights)*.

Day 8 Xi'an to Chengdu

We will fly to Chengdu this morning and then drive north to Sanxingdui, an archaeological site where hundreds of fascinating early bronze-age artifacts have been unearthed. Enigmatic masks

and bronze trees confirm the existence of the near-mythical Shu civilization at the dawn of Chinese history nearly 5,000 years ago. The craftsmanship is striking and idiosyncratic, but the strange and hauntingly beautiful artifacts give little information about the character of these ancient peoples. Sichuan Opera this evening. *Jianjiang Hotel*.

Day 9 Giant Pandas & Dazhu

Certainly, China's giant pandas, which are found in the wild in Sichuan Province, are one of the most beloved animals

in the world. There are three very successful breeding centers in Sichuan, at Wolong, in Chengdu, and a relatively new facility southwest of Chengdu. This morning, we'll visit the Chengdu panda breeding center, where we may have a chance to see several giant pandas in their natural surroundings. This will be your opportunity to hold a panda (for a donation to the center)! We will then pass through Chinese countryside and villages en route to Dazhu which is renowned for hundreds of Tang Dynasty Buddhist carvings in cliff-side grottoes. *Dazu Hotel*.

Day 10 Dazhu to Chongqing & Wanzhou

This morning, we will explore the Buddhist grottoes of Dazhu. The oldest scenes date from the beginning of the Tang Dynasty, 650 AD, a period when Buddhism thrived across China. In the afternoon, we will drive via Chongqing, an important industrial municipality on a hilly outcrop where the Fuling joins the Yangtze River, making it large enough for ship navigation. We will continue to the bustling town of Wanzhou, where many residents have been relocated in anticipation of flooding upriver due to the Three Gorges Dam. *Wanzhou Hotel*.

Day 11 Modaoxi & Lichuan China's Dawn Redwoods

This morning, we will cross the Yangtze River and head on remote backroads into the Wuling Mountains to Lichuan, an area totally off the tourist circuit. En route, we will visit the towns of Huilongcun ("Returning Dragon") and Changtan ("Long Beach") and see their busy Monday markets. We will pass spectacular sandstone cliffs with waterfalls and through Modaoxi town. Here we will see the large, ancient conifer recognized in 1941 as the Chinese dawn redwood. We will enjoy the ambiance of this rural area, as we head for Lichuan. *Lichuan International Hotel (2 nights)*.

Day 12 Dawn Redwood Valley

This morning, we'll depart Lichuan in special vehicles and follow the upper Qingjiang River, past where

Feathered Dinosaurs

In January 2003, researchers described a feathered reptile with gliding wings on each of its four legs. Such an unexpected creature strengthens the theory that avian flight evolved from "the trees down" rather than from "the ground up." On this itinerary, an expert from the Museum of Paleontology will introduce us to the extraordinary fossil finds of feathered dinosaurs, the species at the transition from reptile to bird. We will then travel north to the Chaoyang Basin in remote Western Liaoning Province where late-Jurassic shales hold fossils that have contributed much to what we know about the evolutionary transition from reptiles to birds. Here the Yixian formation continues to revolutionize the origins of flight.

it emerges from a spring at the base of the mountains. We will continue on an old cobbled road to the top of the pass and the beginning of Shuishanba, the Dawn Redwood Valley. Many large dawn redwoods (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) are scattered about this broad, 10-kilometer-long valley, amidst an agricultural landscape. Near the primary school is a cluster of large old *Metasequoia* that are protected by the state as special "seed trees." We will be able to hike to a forest of old *Metasequoia* above the school. After a picnic we will enjoy a walk through the beautiful countryside.

Day 13 Lichuan to Enshi & Chongqing

Today we will enjoy a scenic drive through mountainous limestone country to the city of Enshi for a flight to Chongqing, the embarkation port for vessels which travel through the Yangtze River's Three Gorges. *M/V Victoria or equivalent (3 nights)*.

Days 14/15 Cruising on the Yangtze River

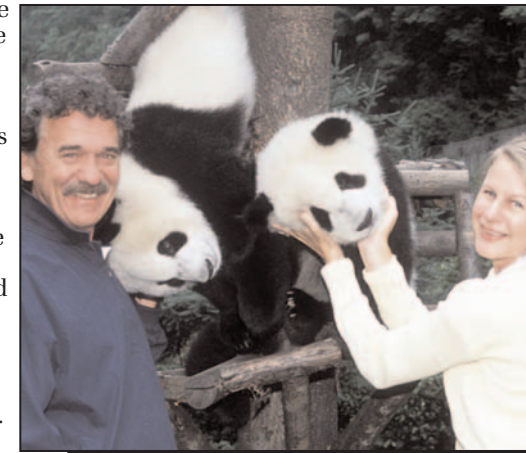
We will awaken en route to the Three Gorges. At first, we will pass low-lying hills of the Sichuan Basin, then the surrounding ranges will begin to enclose the river, culminating in a spectacular series of narrow chasms through which the boat sails. Stops en route include the Ghost City of Fengdu. A tributary known as the "Little Three Gorges" also makes a scenic side trip. Here the ridgelines of the gorges are spectacular—a classic Chinese landscape. Although the recently completed Three Gorges dam has been filling for some time, the impoundment behind the dam will not attain its maximum depth for several more years.

Day 16 Yichang to Shanghai

This morning, our vessel will traverse the locks of the Three Gorges Dam, then arrive in the historic city of Yichang. We will enjoy a short tour of Yichang before boarding our afternoon flight to the city of Shanghai, located near the mouth of the Yangtze River. We will enjoy a farewell dinner and acrobatic performance in celebration of our journey. *Hotel in Shanghai*.

Day 17 Shanghai to USA

Fly to the USA today. Arrive home the same day.



Costs & Conditions

Trip Fee:

\$3,995 per person (plus in-tour air fare of \$695). Limited to 30 paying participants. Single supplement is \$795.

Questions? Please call Renée at Betchart Expeditions Inc.,

Phone (800) 252-4910 or (408) 252-4910

Fax (408) 252-1444

Email:

renee@betchartexpeditions.com

Look on the Web:

www.betchartexpeditions.com

Expedition Fee Includes:

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

Expedition Fee Does Not Include:

International air fare or in-tour flights (quoted separately); China visa fee; gratuities to expedition leaders; personal items such as laundry, phone calls, alcoholic beverages, sodas, snacks, personal insurance; or foreign airport departure taxes. OVER

Reservations

#1057

Yes! I/We want to join the **China's Unique Heritage Expedition, November 6-22, 2008** offered by **Betchart Expeditions Inc.** Please reserve _____ space(s) on the expedition. As a deposit, I/we have enclosed a check for \$ _____ (\$500 per person), payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s) _____ Age _____ Sex _____

_____ Age _____ Sex _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home (_____) _____

Work (_____) _____

Email Address _____

Membership (please circle): AAAS Sigma Xi ACS Planetary Society

Accommodations Preference:

___ Twin ___ Single ___ Twin Share with a friend or ___ assign a roommate

___ Nonsmoker ___ Smoker

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please Mail To:



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Cupertino, CA 95014-5435**

China's Dawn Redwoods

Until 1941, China's dawn redwoods (Metasequoia glyptostroboides) were thought to only exist as fossils from the Mesozoic Era. In 1944, living trees were discovered in Modaoxi. The dawn redwood was described as a new living species of Metasequoia in 1948, and Harvard's Arnold Arboretum sent an expedition to collect seeds, which were then distributed to various universities and arboreta worldwide. More seed-collecting expeditions in the 1990's have broadened the genetic diversity of cultivated Metasequoia. These ancient conifers are now recognized as one of several ancient conifer species that persist south of the Yangtze River. The only other two redwood species are in California where the dawn redwood is only found in the fossil record.