

CHINA

Seattle-Urumqi-Dunhuang-Jiayuguan-Lanzhou-Xian-Beijing

Terracotta Warriors: Discovered accidentally in 1974, this incredible army of over 7000 soldiers, archers, horses and chariots in full battle array has guarded Emperor Qin's tomb since 210BC.

Each figure is unique, and the painstaking repair and excavation continues in 3 pits which are protected inside huge hangars. 1.5 hours from Xian, there is also an excellent museum and film about the history of the vaults. Photos (no flash) are allowed. Wear comfortable walking shoes.



Huaqing Pool boasts the natural hot springs. The favorable geographical condition and natural environment make it one of the cradles where ancient people settled and it was also a favorite place for emperors to build their palaces as a resort. Since ancient times, it has ever been a famous bathing and tourist destination.



The Jiayuguan Pass: This Ming Dynasty fort guards the strategic Jiayuguan pass, at the western end of the Great Wall – this was the last section built by the Ming Dynasty. It was built in 1372, and subsequently enlarged and strengthened, and was known as 'the strongest pass under heaven'.

Mogao Grottoes: Constructed over a millennium, from the 4th to the 14th centuries, the caves hold the world's richest treasure house of Buddhist sutras, murals and sculptures. Cameras are not permitted.

Choing-Sand Mountain: Crescent Moon Spring is 6km south of Dunhuang in the Singing Sands Mountains and is quite literally an oasis in the desert. The spring's name derives from the crescent moon shape taken by the small pool of spring water between two large sand dunes. Although the area is very dry, the pool doesn't dry up as one might expect.



Grape Valley: With its shady vineyards and trees, this provides a welcome place of relaxation amidst the hundreds of square miles of sand. You may take a seat under the vintage frames, savor various grapes, enjoy the beautiful Uigur girls in their ornate costumes, and be fully intoxicated by this refreshing palace of grapes. Taking a walk along the grape corridor, you will find drying rooms on nearby slopes. Every year over 300 tons of raisins are made here.



The Flaming Mountain: The Flaming Mountain is located on the northern verge of Turpan Basin, more than 10 kilometers away from Turpan city. It is the cradle of the Turpan ancient civilization and oasis agriculture. Eighty percent of the total natural landscapes and human landscapes in Turpan are located here.

In the middle of Bogda Peak, 110 km (68 miles) east of Urumqi, nestles Heavenly Lake. Covering 4.9 square kilometers (1.89 square miles), this crescent-shaped lake deserves its name, Pearl of Heavenly Mountain (Tianshan Mountain). With melted snow as its source, Heavenly Lake enjoys crystal water

