



## Tour of Hunan Province 21st October to 4th November 2019

The Meridian Society is pleased to announce its plans for a tour to Hunan this year.

### Introduction:

Located in central China, the province takes its name Hunan from the Chinese words 'Hu' for Lake and 'Nan' meaning South. This refers to Lake Dongting, the second largest lake in China. One of the best months to visit is October.

Hunan is famed for its cuisine competing for the spiciest food in China . Hunan/Xiang cuisine contains over 4000 dishes such as General Tso's Chicken, Hunan hotpot and stinky tofu. The economy is mainly agricultural being China's biggest rice producer as will be seen by the number of paddy fields.

90% of the population are Han with the remaining 10% accounted for by the Miao, Tujia, Dong and Yao ethnic minorities whose building skills without nails are renowned.

In the 1920's, Mao Zedong capitalised on peasant discontent and established a short-lived Hunan Soviet republic. Mao and his followers were forced out of Hunan in 1934 on what became known as the Long March. We will visit where he grew up.

### The Tour:

**D1 Changsha**      **Night 1 of 4 in Changsha**      **Monday 21 October**  
Meet at the 4 star Changsha Nuobo Meiyu Hotel for 3 nights

**D2 Changsha**      **Night 2 of 4 in Changsha**

Our tour starts in Changsha, the capital of Hunan. From there we can go up Yuelu Mountain by cable car and when walking down visit the thousand year old Yuelu Academy now part of Hunan University. Afterwards we go to the Aiwan Pavillion much loved by the late Chairman Mao, the Orange Isle (see below) and the international Hunan Provincial Museum.



**D3 Changsha/Yueyang/Changsha Night 3 of 4 in Changsha**

Yueyang 152km/100 miles north of Changsha, a 2.5 hour journey on super highway by coach.

Today we will spend the day in Yueyang and visit the 1700 year Yueyang Tower built without nails, the Cishi Pagoda and Junshan Island in Dongting Hu, the second largest body of fresh water in China.

**D4 Changsha/Shaoshan/Hengyang Night 1 of 2 in Hengshan**

Day trip to Shaoshan 98km/60 miles south of Changsha. Then we travel to Hengshan, 105 miles to south.



Our journey continues to Hengshan taking in Shaoshan on the way. The attractions in Mao's hometown include his Former Residence, the Memorial Museum, Memorial Park, Mao's Bronze Statue Square, the Relics Museum, the Mao Ancestral Hall and the Water Dripping Cave where Mao intended to live after he retired.

**D5: Hengshan Night 2 of 2 in Hengshan**

Zhurong Feng 18 miles 30 min from Hengshan; 'Grand Temple of Mount Heng' 16 km/10 miles from Hengshan.

From here we visit Heng Shan/Mountain range, one of the five sacred mountains in China and its highest mountain, Zhurong Feng/Peak named after Zhu Rong, the God of Fire who solved the problem of how to keep a fire alight. There is a shrine to him at its top.

Nearby at the foot of Nanyue / South Mountain is an enormous complex of Buddhist and Taoist temples covering 24.5 acres most frequently called "The Grand Temple of Mount Heng" or "Nanyue Damiao". Its founding year is unknown but it is known to have existed in AD 725. Its 8 Temples of Taoism/Daoism and Eight Temples of Buddhism show how two faiths can co-exist in harmony.

**D6 Hengyang/Huaihua Night 1 of 2 in Huaihua**

Day trip around Hengyang then we travel about 220 miles 3.5 hours west to Huaihua.

Our next stop is Huaihua. On the way is the beautiful Dongzhou Island in the middle of Xiangjiang River. Its vegetarian restaurant is recommended for the delicious food served and cooked in the monastery. Before leaving Dongzhou Island we will see the Chuanshan Academy noted for the writings of the philosopher Wang Fuzhi.

En route to Huaihua we reach Hengyang, now the second largest city in Hunan and go to The Monument of Martyrs where in 1944 the Battle of Hengyang began against Japan lasting for 47 days. We will then go south to the tranquil Yueping Park and visit The City Museum where there are thousand of antiques on display. Following this we will wander around Xi hu Park formerly Lotus Park at the entrance of which is a bronze bust to Xia Minghan, the martyred Chinese revolutionary. Time permitting we will then visit Xiangjiang River Scenic Belt, a popular walking area before travelling to Huaihua.

**D7 Huaihua/Hongjiang/Huaihua Night 2 of 2 in Huaihua**

A quieter seventh day spent visiting the ancient commercial town of Hongjiang in Yuanshui at the confluence of the Yuan and Wu rivers. Its history dates back to the Spring and Autumn period (771-476BC) flourishing in the Tang, Ming and Qing dynasties. Hongjiang is famed for its well-preserved ancient architecture with guildhalls and cobbled lanes which are well worth exploring.

Afterwards there will be time to wander around Qianyang Ancient City with its ancient walls, ancestral and lineage halls, courtyard residences of officials and temples and the historic wooden Furong (Lotus) Tower overlooking the Yuanshui River.

**D8 Huaihua/Zhijiang/Fenghuang Night 1 of 2 in Fenghuang (Phoenix Town)**

Zhijiang 50km/32miles sw. of Huaihua; Fenghuang 112km/70 miles north of Zhijiang.

After breakfast, visit Zhijiang to see the Longjin Roofed Bridge/Longjin Feng Yu Qiao, the 2nd longest Dong wind and rain bridge in the world and the Wanhe Gulou (Bell Tower as shown below) recently built by the Dong ethnic minority.



Following this we will visit Peace Square, the Sino-American War Memorial also known as “China’s Arc de Triomphe” and visit the Surrender Hall. In the Sino-Japanese War, Zhijiang was the HQ of Chinese Army and had the second largest airport in the Far East because of Claire Lee Chennault so afterwards we visit the Flying Tigers Memorial Hall. Then we travel onto Fenghuang (Phoenix Town) where we spend 2 nights.

**D9 Fenghuang Night 2 of 2 in Fenghuang (Phoenix Town)**

After breakfast we visit this ancient city and see the former residence of Shen Congwen the father of Chinese regional literature and author of “Border Town”, the former residence of Xiong Xiling, the first prime minister of the Republic of China, the Yang Family Ancestral Hall one of the 24 ancestral temples, Zonta Hall, Dongmen/East Gate City Tower, the Ancient City Museum, North Gate Pier, Folk Custom Palace - formerly Longevity Palace, Phoenix Hong Bridge and the Hongqiao art building.

Afterwards we will be able to enjoy a boat trip on the Tuojiang River with a leisurely stroll back through the quiet and elegant scenery of this ancient city with its timber-structured stilt houses.

**D10 Fenghuang/Zhangjiajie Night 1 of 2 in Zhangjiajie City**

Southern Great Wall 16km/10 miles west of Fenghuang. Zhangjiajie 210km/150 miles from Fenghuang.

Before continuing on our way to Zhangjiajie, we make a tour of the Great Wall in the south and then visit Furong Zhen which is now called Hibiscus Town after the film. It is built in the architectural style of the Tujia ethnic minority and older than Fenghuang.

### D11 Zhangjiajie Night 2 of 2 in Zhangjiajie City

“Tianmen Shan/Mountain National Forest Park” is 8km/5 miles south of Zhangjiajie.

While staying at Zhangjiajie City, we will visit the Tianmen Shan National Forest Park (天门山) and travel on the longest cable car in the world to reach Tianmen Shan. After getting off, we will walk on skywalks where sections of the footpath have been replaced with glass and, for those who are brave enough, the Guigu Zhandao which would fall for 5000 feet if this walkway gave way. Amongst these breathtaking landscapes are the Tianmen Temple the large Buddhist Temple on top of Tianmen Shan accessible by chairlift and foot, Tongtian Avenue with its 99 curves cut into the side of the mountain and Tianmen Cave reached by ascending the 999 steps of The Celestial Ladder. This is an auspicious number in Chinese because it means eternal life.

### D12 Zhangjiajie Night 1 of 2 in Wulingyuan, Zhangjiajie

After changing hotels, we next go to Zhangjiajie National Forest Park and visit at its highest point Yellow Stone Village where elixirs granting immortality used to be produced. We follow the Golden Whip Stream regarded as one of the most beautiful parts of the Park which begins near the entrance continuing for 2 miles surrounded by its fabled karst peaks such as The Hawk Protects the Golden Whip and The Lovers Peaks. Time permitting we will follow the footpath along the stream until a shop is reached 200 m/218 yards before Zicao Tan (Purple Grass Pool) from where we will go to the coach park.

### D13 Zhangjiajie Night 2 of 2 in Wulingyuan, Zhangjiajie



**Morning:** Our visit to Tianzi Shan gives us a bird’s eye view of all the mountains and valleys of the Wuling Mountains. We will also see Xi Hai Stone Forest, Viewing Terrace, Imperial Brush Peak, One Dangerous Step etc.

**Afternoon:** We tour the Yuanjiajie Scenic Area by cable car to see Tian Xia Di Yi Qiao, a natural rock bridge safe to cross and the Four Gates with Plenty Water where four streams pass through the mountains forming four natural gates, the Avator Hallelujah Mountain etc. Tuija families have lived for generations on top of these mountains. We will visit Baofeng Lake with its thunderous waterfall which reflects the green hills surrounding it where the local Tuijia girls will sing for you (usually for a fee!).

**Evening:** We are going to see The Tianmen Fox Fairy Show. A spectacular outdoor show with 500 local actors with English subtitles that originated from a traditional Chinese fairy tale of love between a fox fairy and a woodsman thousands of years ago.

**As the evenings can become chilly when sitting down high up in these mountains, we recommend that you wrap up well to keep warm and dry.**



**D14 Changde/Changsha Night 4 of 4 in Changsha**

Changsha is 180 km/112 miles south east of Changde and 321 km/200 miles east of Zhangjiajie.

We return to Changsha for the end of our tour visiting Taohuayuan Scenic Area near Changde. This area was immortalized in Chinese poetry by Tao Yuanming nicknamed "Wuli", a famous writer of the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420), in Peach-Blossom Spring about an utopian idyll found by a fisherman. While we will not be able to see the peach blossoms for which this area is famed on this trip, we will be able to see the Taoyuan Mountain, the Wuliu Lake, Qingu (Qin Village) which is between Qinxi (Qin=stream/river) and Taohua Mountain and the ancient town of Taohuayuan.

**D 15 Changsha- Monday 4 November**

Transfer to airport for the flight to Beijing/Shanghai/Hongkong/Heathrow.

Hainan Airlines operate a flight 3 times a week Monday, Wednesday and Friday to/from Huanghua International Airport, Changsha direct to London Heathrow.

**Hotels:**

Changsha Nuobo Meiyu Hotel 4star

Add: 388 Shawan Road, Yuhua District, Changsha

<https://sg.trip.com/hotels/changsha-hotel-detail-8033036/nuobo-meiyu-hotel/>

Hengshan Wanyi Qingqing Hotel 4star

Add: 101 Fangguang Road, Nanyue District, Hengshan

<https://www.trip.com/hotels/hengyang-hotel-detail-4436611/wanyi-qingqin-hotel/>

Huaihua Wanxiang Hotel 4star

Add: 39 North Renmin Road, Huaihua

<https://www.trip.com/hotels/huaihua-hotel-detail-1254919/wanxiang-hotel/>

Fenghuang Huazhu Poshan Inn

Add: 20 Qingxi Lane, Fenghuang

[https://www.booking.com/hotel/cn/fenghuang-poshan-inn.en-gb.html?aid=356980;label=gog235jc-1DCAsoMUIUZmVuZ2h1YW5nLXBvc2hhbi1pbm5IM1gDaFCIAQG YAQm4AQbIAQzYAQPoAQGIAGGoAgO4AuSrhOQFwAIB;sid=154098919b8c01e578eab0262b9182e4;dist=0&keep\\_landing=1&sb\\_price\\_type=total&type=total&](https://www.booking.com/hotel/cn/fenghuang-poshan-inn.en-gb.html?aid=356980;label=gog235jc-1DCAsoMUIUZmVuZ2h1YW5nLXBvc2hhbi1pbm5IM1gDaFCIAQG YAQm4AQbIAQzYAQPoAQGIAGGoAgO4AuSrhOQFwAIB;sid=154098919b8c01e578eab0262b9182e4;dist=0&keep_landing=1&sb_price_type=total&type=total&)

Zhangjiajie Huatian Hotel 5 star

Address: Huatian City, Yongding District, Zhangjiajie, Hunan, China

[https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel\\_Review-g494933-d7309536-Reviews-](https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel_Review-g494933-d7309536-Reviews-Zhangjiajie_Huatian_hotel-Zhangjiajie_Hunan.html)

[Zhangjiajie Huatian hotel-Zhangjiajie Hunan.html](https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel_Review-g494933-d7309536-Reviews-Zhangjiajie_Huatian_hotel-Zhangjiajie_Hunan.html)

Zhangjiajie Xibujie Inn

Add: 53 Xibu Street, Zhangjiajie

[https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel\\_Review-g494933-d6896523-Reviews-Xibujie\\_Inn-Zhangjiajie\\_Hunan.html](https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel_Review-g494933-d6896523-Reviews-Xibujie_Inn-Zhangjiajie_Hunan.html)

**Cost (with twin/double-shared accommodation) per person:**

The Meridian Society and SACU Members: £1,474

Non-Member: £1,514

Single room supplement is £404 per person for the whole trip.

**The tour cost includes:**

Twin/double room in specified 3-5 star hotels and room types in China with breakfast; including 13 Chinese dinners from Day 2 in local Chinese restaurants.

Service of professional English speaking local guide accompanying for all hotel transfers and sightseeing;

Private vehicle with air-conditioning; Transfers and all sightseeing; The entrance fees to all listed sightseeing;

**Not included in the tour**

International flights; Chinese Visa; Travel Insurance; Meals not specified & drinks; Sightseeing not specified; Personal expenses eg. laundry, communication, use of internet, souvenirs & gratuities. All lunches are on arrangements.

Additional Nights at Changsha Nuobo Meiyu Hotel will cost £58 per room including breakfast

\* Please note these prices are only valid if a minimum of 10 persons submit their completed booking form and pay the deposit of £260 per person by the deadline on Sunday 26th May. The balance of the cost must be paid in full by Sunday 18th August.

Sent with The Meridian Society tour of Hunan Province are payment details with two booking forms, Form A and Form B formatted as Word documents for completion for those interested in joining our exciting tour.

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