CHINA AND TIBET RAIL DISCOVERY

APRIL 11 – APRIL 22, 2019
In the shadow of the Himalayas and known as the 'Roof of the World' due to its breathtaking average height of 13,200ft (4,060m) above sea level, Tibet is home to more Himalayan peaks than anywhere else. Mount Everest lies on its border with Nepal. As befits such a remarkable land, Lhasa is home to an amazing UNESCO collection of spectacular palaces and temples. Yet Tibet has been virtually inaccessible by land. That changed with the building of the Golmud to Lhasa railway. More than 600 miles (965kms) is at an altitude of over 13,000ft (4,000m) and much of this magnificent line runs over permafrost. With the summit, the Tangula Pass, at 16,640ft (5,072m) it is also the world's highest railway. To travel on this line is a true pioneering adventure, an experience as unique as the destination itself.
EXPERIENCED TOUR MANAGERS
Our experienced Tour Managers are selected for their travel knowledge, and their linguistic and organisational abilities allowing you to relax and enjoy your rail cruise. We receive exceptional passenger comments about our Tour Managers and their aim is to ensure you enjoy every minute of your holiday.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE AIRPORT TRANSFERS
Arrival and departure transfers are included.

HOTEL & ON BOARD ACCOMMODATION
Although you will spend much of your time sightseeing or relaxing in the train’s public areas, you will find your cabin a welcome retreat at the end of a rewarding day. All hotels are of five-star standard, or the best available.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER DAILY
All meals are included, starting with dinner on the first day and ending with breakfast on the last day. All departures feature one or two uniquely designed Restaurant Cars where you can enjoy the excellent waiter-served food and wine. Several times during the tour we will also sample authentic local cuisine with wine and a selection of drinks off the train, which is also included in the tour price.

DRINKS WITH MEALS
A generous drinks allowance, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, is included with lunch and dinner on and off the train.

ON BOARD SERVICE
You can expect service which is attentive, friendly and unintrusive. Your car attendants provide 24-hour housekeeping and bedding turndown services, with one attendant always on duty to assist you and to ensure you are comfortable in your cabin. Complimentary tea, coffee and bottled drinking water are available in your cabin 24 hours a day.

GUIDED OFF-TRAIN EXCURSIONS
The history and culture of the places we visit on our rail cruises will come alive through our expert local guides. All our tours include a wide-ranging sightseeing schedule to make the most of the time you have off the train and bring you closer to the culture, people and history of your destinations. We believe it is the special little touches that help create magical memories.

PERSONAL HEADSETS
On all the off–train excursions, to enhance your enjoyment and insights into the places you visit, you will be provided with a lightweight personal headset on which to listen to your tour guide as you take in the sights. The range of the headset means that you do not need to worry about missing any of the guide’s commentary on your excursion, even if you prefer to wander away from the group.

ON BOARD DOCTOR AND MEDICAL FACILITIES
To give you peace of mind our tours are accompanied by a doctor who travels with us for the entire journey; so you can rest assured that medical assistance is always available. On call 24 hours a day, the doctor is on hand to give primary care as required. In almost every case, the doctor will be English-speaking and registered with the General Medical Council in the UK.

LUGGAGE HANDLING
Your luggage and belongings will stay with you on the train throughout the journey but, wherever necessary, porterage is included between the hotels and stations.

ALL GRATUITIES
You will not have to worry about tipping on or off the train on your rail journey with Golden Eagle Luxury Trains as all gratuities are included in the tour price.
Modern comfort in an ancient country… the Urumqi Private Train, with the option of private en-suite facilities, guarantees you good living even in the remotest of places.

For further details on the train, please visit www.getrains.com/trains

The programmes we offer are carefully designed to balance generous amounts of relaxation, whilst voyaging across the vast landscapes with sightseeing that opens a window into the soul and spirit of the places and communities we visit.

The Shangri-La Express private train, with the option of private en-suite facilities, guarantees you good living even in the remotest of places.

Meals are served in the train’s spacious restaurant car, where our chefs serve a western breakfast followed by a wide range of authentic Chinese specialities at lunch and dinner, using only local ingredients. As well as soft drinks, tea and coffee, meals are accompanied by a selection of wines from around the world.

After dinner, enjoy the ambience of the piano bar car, where our resident pianist will entertain you. Staying open until the last person leaves, the bar is the perfect place to get to know your fellow passengers, or simply while away some time reading or taking in the scenery whilst enjoying your favourite drink.

For further details on the train, please visit www.getrains.com/trains

To Book Call +44 (0)161 928 9410 or Call Your Travel Agent
At 75 sq ft (7 sq metres) Diamond Class cabins are the most spacious compartments available on the Shangri-La Express, featuring a large double bed, individual desk with freestanding chair, a large picture window and a double wardrobe.

Diamond Class cabins have a private en-suite wet room with washbasin, toilet and shower.

**DIAMOND CABINS**

- Sleeps two in large double bed (length 2.03m)
- En-suite facilities
- Towels, robes and slippers provided
- Towels and linens changed regularly
- Complimentary tea, coffee and mineral water in cabin
- Cabin Area: 75sqft (7sqm)
Heritage Class cabins are more compact, at 36 sq ft (3.45 sq metres), featuring two lower berth single beds, a large picture window and luggage storage above the door. Towels, robes and slippers are provided with our compliments, in addition to tea, coffee and mineral water, available from your cabin attendant throughout the day.

Toilet and showering facilities are available at each end of the sleeping carriage. The shower room features a separate shower cubicle, hairdryer and separate changing area.

**HERITAGE CABINS**
- Sleeps 2 in twin beds (length 2.03m)
- Toilet/wash facilities are available at each end of each sleeping carriage
- Separate shower cubicle (shared)
- Towels, robes and slippers provided
- Towels and linens changed regularly
- Complimentary tea, coffee and mineral water in cabin
- Cabin Area: 36sqft (3.45sqm)
Enjoy a rail tour with a difference that offers a magical exploration of Tibet, known affectionately as the Roof of the World and home to more Himalayan peaks than anywhere else, before traversing across the grand wilderness of China through stunning scenery and ancient cities.

**TOUR SCHEDULE**

April 11 – April 22, 2019

**HOTEL & ON BOARD ACCOMMODATION**

1 night in Urumqi | 6 nights on board the Shangri-La Express | 1 night in Kashgar | 3 nights in Lhasa

**DAILY TOUR ITINERARY**

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**URUMQI - KASHGAR - TURPAN - DUNHUANG**

**JIAYUGUAN - XINING - QINGHAI-TIBET RAILWAY - LHASA**

www.goldeneagleluxurytrains.com
TOUR ITINERARY

URUMQI
CHINA

Day 1

Guests are met upon arrival in Urumqi and are transferred to the Sheraton Urumqi hotel. This evening we will enjoy a Welcome Dinner.

URUMQI
CHINA

Day 2

Today we visit the renowned Provincial Museum in Urumqi, famous for having the artefacts and mummies of Caucasians who lived in the region between 1,500 and 4,000 years ago:

There is also a fine collection of silk articles and other artefacts from various eras of history, as well as written materials in different languages.

What most people come to see are the mummies and their artefacts and they are unusually well preserved. Until two decades ago, this culture was hardly known to historians and archaeologists, and their history and origins remain much of a mystery. The Xinjiang Autonomous Regional Museum houses the mummies and their artefacts that are some of the most significant archaeological discoveries in a hundred years and it is an excellent place to learn the history of this region.
Today we will visit the Old City of Kashgar, with a history of more than 2,000 years. Uygur people have lived here for generations carving out a splendid society in the process. Kashgar old city was the renowned centre at the crossroads of the Southern and Middle Silk Roads in the past. Today, Kashgar Old City is still a cradle of culture, a burning torch to the memories of the past and is without doubt a step-back into the past in which you are a living part. Tonight, we stay for one night at the five-star Radisson Blu Hotel Kashgar.

Today’s special tour arrangements begin with Kashgar Sunday Bazaar. Its very remoteness is what makes the market so extraordinary; partly due to the exoticism of the produce for sale, partly because it is the only real place to shop in an area the size of western Europe. The population of Kashgar is reputedly swelled by 100,000 every Sunday for this market, but due to the difficulties of getting there, only a small fraction of these visitors are foreigners and therefore offers very much a unique experience on our journey.

Turpan is the location where the Flaming Mountains create a magnificent backdrop. First, we visit Jiaohe Ancient City which is one of the best preserved ancient cities in China, the ruins of the buildings are divided into temples, civilian dwellings and government offices, workshops and residential houses in the streets are still visible and time there is time spent in a world long disappeared.

In the afternoon, we take a fascinating tour to the world famous ancient underground irrigation system at Karez that has successfully fed the rich orchards and vineyards for centuries; The system is considered as one of the three great projects in China with the other two being the Great Wall and the Grand Canal. Then we will have a Uygur Family Visit where we will enjoy the traditional Uygur ethnic dancing and local snacks, experiencing real life and culture.
This morning we will explore the vast natural beauty of the Sand Dunes by camel, where we will discover Crescent Lake, hidden amongst the towering sand dunes and has sustained life in this region for millennia.

In the small oasis city of Dunhuang we will visit the fascination Magao Thousand Buddha Cave Complex. This impressive site contains almost 500 grottoes, carved between 700 and 1,700 years ago. Inside we will see an amazing collection of beautiful sculptures and murals depicting the evolution of Buddhist religious art over 1,000 years.
Today in Jiayuguan we visit the first pass at the west end of the Great Wall of China, the Jiayuguan Pass. Along with Shanhaiguan, it is one of the largest and most intact passes of the Great Wall. It was an important military fortress and also a vital traffic fort along the Silk Road, the world’s oldest trading route, connecting China, Central Asia and Europe. Standing in the endless desert with rolling mountains as its backdrop, this isolated pass will take you back to the desolation and loneliness of frontier life in ancient times.

After lunch we head for the Overhanging Great Wall, which was constructed in the year of 1539 during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). The wall was built in order to support the already existing Jiayuguan Fort which held a key role in the defence mechanism of the area around Jiayuguan. Parts of the wall are steep so for those who do make it to the top will enjoy a bird’s eye view of endless Gobi Desert, a couple of oases and snow-capped mountains seen from a great distance.

Today in Xining we explore this historic and multi-ethnic region which is home to an incredible 37 different nationalities. Located on the eastern edge of Qinghai Province, Xining’s history can be traced back 2,100 years to antiquity. Here we will experience some of the distinctive traditions and customs of this region.

We set out from our train this morning stopping first at the Buddhist Kumbum (Ta’er) Monastery. Kumbum was founded in 1583 in a narrow valley close to the village of Lusar in the Tibetan cultural region of Amdo. In the afternoon we will visit the Shuijingxiang Market. At the entrance of two intersecting alleys, each more than 1,100 metres long are more than 3,000 fixed stalls. The market has everything from food and drink to articles for daily use. You can not only find lotus roots and wild rice stems, which are products of Southern China but also seafood from the coast.
An early morning start at Golmud today as we board the high-altitude train (where we have reserved seats) that will take us on an extraordinary and unforgettable 14-hour daylight journey along the 1,142km ‘Roof of the World’ line to Lhasa, cresting the 16,640ft (5,072m) Tangula Pass. This is the world’s highest railway pass, reaching an unbelievable 3 miles (5km) above sea level. Due to the high altitude, supplementary oxygen is pumped in through the ventilation system. Personal oxygen masks are available if required.

Guests are met upon arrival in Lhasa and are transferred to the centrally located luxurious five-star The St Regis Lhasa Resort for a three-night stay. Located in the eastern part of Lhasa, The St. Regis Lhasa Resort is this unique city’s most coveted address conveniently located in the famed Barkhor area. The sweeping landscapes surrounding this exclusive resort provide a timeless, inviting setting for contemplation as well as exploration.

The St. Regis Lhasa Resort faces the World Heritage Site, the Potala Palace, once the chief residence of the Dalai Lama. A mere six minutes by car from the resort, the palace has been converted into a museum. Jokhang Temple, another iconic structure and Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama’s former Summer Palace, are also close by.
Lhasa is located in a small basin surrounded by mountains, and it literally means "place of the gods". At an altitude of around 11,975ft (3,650m) it is one of the highest cities in the world; it is also the traditional seat of the Dalai Lama and the holiest centre of Tibet with over a thousand years of cultural and spiritual history. Today we visit Norbulingka, the Dalai Lama's Summer Palace, it was built in the 1740’s as a retreat from which to escape the heat of the summer. Meaning either 'jewel garden' or 'precious garden' it is still a tranquil haven from the noise of the city and a wonderful place to explore. There will also be free time to wander through Lhasa and soak up the atmosphere of this picturesque city.

This afternoon we visit the 17th century Potala Palace, former seat of the Tibetan Government and the Dalai Lama’s winter residence before he fled to India in 1959. It contains thousands of rooms, dominates the city skyline. Perched upon Marpo Ri hill, 130 meters above the Lhasa valley, the Potala Palace rises a further 170 meters, is the greatest monumental structure in Tibet and one of the architectural wonders of the world.

On our second full day here, we visit the 13th century Jokhang Temple, Tibet’s holiest shrine and the spiritual home for almost all Tibetans. Next we explore the adjacent Barkhor market, the oldest market in the capital and a well-trodden route for the many pilgrims who make their way to the temple. A local lunch is accompanied by traditional folk music.

Breakfast in the hotel before onward departures.