

7 days Fenghuang - Zhangjiajie - Avatar Trip

Code: LCT- Hunan-7D-01

Duration: 7 Days

Attractions: Yuanjiajie National Forest Park

Overview: This 7-day tour will take you to dive deeper in Hunan province by visiting the mysterious Fenghuang Ancient Town, picturesque Zhangjiajie and the hometown of Chairman Mao - Changsha.

Highlights:

1. Amaze at the mysterious Fenghuang Ancient Town and experience the unique Tujia culture;
2. Visit the Yuanjiajie National Park and revere at the Avatar Hallelujah Mountain;
3. Discover the miraculous nature work in Huanglong Cave;
4. Challenge yourself on the world's longest Glass Bridge;
5. Explore the birthplace of Mao Zedong and learn about his stories.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Changsha

Your local driver will hold a welcome sign with your name written on and wait for you at the baggage area upon your arrival and then drive you to Fenghuang Ancient Town, which takes about 5.5 hours. In the evening, you may wander in the serene town and enjoy the beautiful night view on your own.

Day 2: Fenghuang Ancient Town, drive to Zhangjiajie

09:00: Your local guide will meet you at your hotel lobby and take you to explore the picturesque Fenghuang Ancient Town.

09:10 - 15:00: *Fenghuang Ancient Town* is located in Hunan Province, under the jurisdiction of Xiangxi Autonomous Prefecture. The name Fenghuang, meaning the Phoenix (a kind of bird

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symbolizing good omen and longevity), comes from the legend that a couple of phoenixes were deeply attracted by the beauty of the small town when they flew by and reluctant to leave. The Fenghuang Ancient Town has lived up its reputation for sure. With the mountains, rivers, and blue skies prevailing all over, the town gives off a sense of mystery. Everything seems just so green and harmonious, like a traditional Chinese painting with all the mountain covered with verdant foliage, rivers flowing quietly along, bridges connecting passengers on both sides, and featured houses standing on the banks telling ancient stories. There are two ways to enjoy such a elegant town. You may just stroll in the wear flagstone alleys and observe the daily life of Miao ethical life. Or, you may ride a boat and flow with the Tuo River and just immerse yourself in the picturesque scenery.

15:30 - 18:00: Your driver will drive you to Zhangjiajie city and drop you off at the hotel in the Wulingyuan area.

Day 3: **Yuanjiajie Scenic Area, Golden Whip Stream, Ten-Mile Gallery**

09:00: Meet your tour guide in your hotel lobby and set out for this day tour.

09:10 - 11:00: Visit the **Yuanjiajie National Forest Park**. As part of the first forest park (Zhangjiajie Forest Park) in China, Yuanjiajie is geographically located within the Wulingyuan Scenic Area. Adjacent to the Golden Whip Stream, it is bordered by the Suoxiyu Nature Reserve to the east, the Yaozizhai Scenic area to the south, the Huangshizhai Village to the west, and the Tianzi Mountain to the north and spans an area of about 1,200 km². With the guidance of your tour guide, you will discover a lot of hidden natural beauties.

11:00 - 12:30: You will see the **Golden Whip Stream**. Narrowed by the towering peaks, the Golden Whip Stream flows quietly. Walking along the stream is like wandering in a picture. On either side large rock formations create a fascinating landscape and towering up into the sky you will see the Golden Whip Stone. Clusters of wild monkeys jump here and there over the formations and have no fear of humans, instead sometimes they may beg for food!

12: 30 - 13:30: Lunch will be arranged for your own expense, your tour guide will give you some recommendations.

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12:40 - 14:00: After lunch, you will leave for the **Ten-mile Gallery**. The name comes from the fact that this scenic area offers so many diversified views that it is just like wandering in a gallery. Like any other natural scenic area, many of the mountains, peaks and stones here are personalized and have their own stories. A small train on site offers the option of sightseeing without walking which can save a lot of time and energy. You are most welcome to try!

14:20 - 17:00: You will continue on to the **Tianzi Mountain**. It's said that a leader named Xiang Dakun in the Song Dynasty led a peasant uprising here and he called himself Tianzi. That's why the mountain is named Tianzi Mountain. You may feel concerned about climbing mountains, but Tianzi Mountain offers many breaks by providing rich natural views spread along the way. You will be amazed by the natural landscape here.

17:20: Your tour today comes to an end and you will be transferred back to your hotel.

Day 4: **Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon, Baofeng Lake**

09:00: This day will reveal the most breathtaking tour sights.

09:20 - 12:30: First, you will head for the **Zhangjiajie Grand Canyon**. Like many other sights in Zhangjiajie, the grand Canyon is full of natural splendour. You will continue to immerse yourself in nature. The next stop is a thrilling sight. Standing on the mountain, you will see a magnificent glass bridge connecting two mountains. You will have a chance to walk on the **Glass Bridge**. Regardless of how many tourists are walking on the bridge taking photos or viewing the distant mountains, you will probably feel terrified if you have acrophobia. The secret is not to look down.

12:30 - 13:30: Time for lunch for your own account after visiting the bridge.

14:20 p.m - 16:30: After lunch, you will enjoy a boat ride on Baofeng Lake. A few years ago, this place was a deep canyon. The local people established a 72-meter-high reservoir to reserve water for irrigation and an unexpectedly beautiful lake was created. You will take the boat to enjoy the lake. Surrounded by the mountains, you will hear the sound of rushing water before you could see the waterfall. Then suddenly, a song will begin. The folk song of a local girl of Tu nationality singing to welcome you. Then, you will hear a male voice echoing her singing. Your tour guide

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will share many stories of the Tu People with you.

17:10: Drop off at Zhangjiajie hotel.

Day 5: Yellow Dragon Cave, Tianmen Mountain

09:00: Your local tour expert will meet you at your hotel lobby and take you to enjoy the Yellow Dragon Cave and Tianmen Mountain today.

09:15 - 12:00: Huanglong Cave, aka **Yellow Dragon Cave** is one of the essential sights in Zhangjiajie Wulingyuan Scenic Area. It was praised as the “All-around Champion Karst Cave in the World”. Divided into four layers, the whole sight is about 7.5km long and houses a variety of rivers, stalagmites, pillars, stalactites, and caves. According to available data, this place used to be an ocean in 380 million years ago, with highly soluble limestone and dolomite deposited below. In 65 million years ago, a crust uplift has created the dry cave and with some help of the stone dissolution and water flow, the current scene has been produced.

The vertical cave structure, cavernous caverns, ten of thousands of stalagmites, magnificent cave waterfall, and multiple ways of visiting route make the Huanglong Cave one of the must-see sights in Zhangjiajie. Entering the world with Led lights coloring everywhere, you will feel like walking in a paradise. The dripping water is everywhere, slowly shaping the rock formations. Yet, the Huanglong Cave is not just about dripping water, you will also find a 40-meter high waterfall rushing down the center the a hall ceiling, rivers formed on the ground interlacing with each other. You may hop into a boat and cruise down the maze-like cave while admire the varied tall stalagmites. In the Dragon’s Palace Hall, you will find two famous stalagmites, the Sea-Suppressing Needle dating back to 10000 years ago and the King’s Throne. Each bear a different legend.

12:00 - 13:00: You will have lunch nearby the Huanglong Cave.

14:00 - 17:00: Your last sight in Zhangjiajie will be the **Tianmen Mountain**. It’s a giant limestone mountain with sheer cliffs and jagged peaked covered in green. Being the highest peak of Zhangjiajie city, Tianmen Mountain is regarded as the soul of the scenic area. Visiting the

Tianmen Mountain, you mustn’t miss the four highlights - Cableway, Tongtian Avenue, Tianmen

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Cave and Mountain Temple.

Tianmen Mountain Cableway is the longest of its kind in the world, with a length of 7455 m. In certain places, the cable way will rise steeply at an angle of 70°, it's like flying straight into the clouds! Exciting and exhilarating as it is, people with acrophobia are not recommended to try it.

The next highlight is the Tongtian Avenue, aka Avenue Leading to the Sky. It is a mountain road of 10.77 km that connects the very gate of the scenic area and the Tianmen Cave. What's more amazingly is that the road happens to have 99 bends, echoing with the ancient Chinese belief of Nine Layers of Skies. The road is not very long, but the elevation rises rapidly from 200 m to 1300m with 180° sharp turns every few minutes. People suffer from carsick are not recommended to try.

Tianmen Cave is the representative cave that resulted from natural soil erosion in the high altitude areas. Hanging on the 1300-high cliff, the Tianmen Cave is 131.5m in height, 57m in width and 60m in depth. People, rich or poor, regard it the sacred place to pray for well being. To get to the Tianmen Cave, you will have to walk the 999 steep and narrow steps, which is called the Stairway to Heaven. The climbing itself is nothing particular, but finishing it you can proudly say that you've knocked on the Heaven's Door.

The last highlight is the Tianmen Mountain Temple. Built in Tang Dynasty, the temple is the center of Buddhism in western Hunan area. It is located in a mountain hollow, allowing you to have a broad overview of the surrounding hills. Looking from the south-east end, the temple is like a lord (the son of the sky) overseeing all its subjects.

18:00 : You will be dropped off at a Zhangjiajie city hotel.

Day 6: Zhangjiajie - Changsha by train (T8324, 08:15 - 12:40)

06: 20: Your Zhangjiajie driver will pick you up at the Zhangjiajie train station and take you to Zhangjiajie train station, from where you will take train to Changsha.

12:40: Your Changsha guide and driver will meet you at the Changsha train station and show you around after taking you for lunch.

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14:00 - 15:30: Your first sight will be the **Yuelu Academy**. Founded in Song Dynasty (960 -1279), Yuelu Academy has served as an institute for higher education for over 1000 years. It focused on the Confucian teaching for such a long time that it's the oldest of its kind still in existence today. The academy reached its prime period when Zhu Xi (a literary giant in Song Dynasty) delivered lectures here and over 1000 students attended. In the following generations, its position has declined gradually until in 1903, it was transferred to Hunan Institute of Higher Learning, which is the current Hunan University. Inside the Academy, you will find a academy-oriented museum, where you will see all kinds of available records of Chinese traditional books.

16:00 - 17:30: You will visit the **Mawangdui Heritage Site**. Located in the suburb of Changsha city, Mawangdui is the burial site for ancient Changsha State Chancellor Li Cang and his families in Western Han Dynasty. There are about 3000 pieces of relics discovered, including silk tapestries, bamboo objects, bamboo painting, Chinese herb medicines, and ancient prescriptions. The whole structure is comprised of three outer coffins, three inner coffins and three skirts, quite complicated. The wooden coffins are surrounded by the charcoal, which is sealed by the white kaolin clay, which led to the nearly perfect preserved body of Lady Dai (Li Cang's wife). It's still a mystery regarding how ancient Chinese people can manage to preserve her body.

17:30- 18:30: You will enjoy dinner at a nice local restaurant.

18:30-19:30: During this time, you might be tired, but if you are not, we will take you to visit the famous **Orange Island Park**. It was allegedly silted up by sand and stones in 305 A.D and there used to be four smaller islands here, which with the time goes by, were connected and become one large island. In 1925, Chairman Mao Zedong came back to Changsha and had a revisit, leaving the famous poem "Changsha Tune - Spring in a Pleasure Garden". Since then, the place became famous and in 1960, a park was built on the site. The night view in the park is spectacular, you may enjoy the Fireworks Square, Fountain Show, the Statue of young Chairman Mao.

20: 00: Changsha hotel drop off.

Day 7: Departure Changsha

Your Changsha driver will pick you up about 4 hour before your flight and transfer you to

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Changsha airport. Our service ends here.

What's Important:

What's included:

Air-conditioned vehicle with experienced driver.

Licensed Chinese- English bilingual speaking tour guide.

Entrance fee for sights mentioned, including cable car up the Tianzi Mountain

Bottled water.

Soft seat train tickets from Zhangjiajie to Changsha.

What's not included:

Meals

Personal expenses or private entertainment items at the sights.

Tips or gratuities for guide and driver if we did a good job (recommended)

Accommodation

What to take: smile and a relaxed enthusiastic attitude.

Good to know

1. Please follow your tour guide very closely. The road names in Zhangjiajie change very frequently and only locals can discern. You can't even trust your e-map.
2. We recommend you book a hotel in Wulingyuan area from Day 2 to Day 4, which would be convenient to get around.
3. Coming to Zhangjiajie, your primary purpose is to appreciate the cloudy mountains. Please check the weather conditions in advance.
4. Book your hotel in advance. It's better to book 4-5 star hotels, where service quality is guaranteed.

When you order meals in Zhangjiajie, do not order dishes with no listed price. Do not order

so-called rare animal meat.

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5. Be cautious about the girls who call themselves from Tu Nationality. They may get too enthusiastic, encourage you to take pictures with them and then press you for payment.
6. When you take cabs on your own, be cautious about the taxis providing the service for only 10 RMB! That's fraud.
7. The trip to Zhangjiajie has involved a lot of walking, a pair of comfortable shoes with good grip is very necessary;
8. In Summer time, please prepare mosquito repellent, sunglasses, sun block and hat for your Zhangjiajie tour. An extra light coat is necessary for cool mornings and evenings.
9. As our customer, your time is very valuable to us. We will never take you to any factories or shops for shopping.
10. For lunch, we will take you to a nice local restaurant, where you can enjoy the local food at a fair price. Please inform us about your food preferences in case you have any allergies.
11. A regular day tour will last 8-9 hours. If you want a tour with a duration exceeding the working period of our tour guide and driver, we need to charge you for your extra hours at the standard rate of 100 RMB per hour.
12. Please be aware that your itinerary can be changed anytime. Whenever you want to adjust it, we will help you with that.
13. What we provide are high-quality private tours, you will only be with your families or friends. No other people will join you.
14. It takes about 2-3 hours to finish walking the Grand Canyon. If you find it too much, you can skip it and walk on the Glass Bridge.

FAQ

1. When is the best time to visit Zhangjiajie?

Re: Different seasons will reward you with different views, but most people would choose to visit from April to October when the weather is better.

2. What kind of car will I have?

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Re: It depends on your group size. For a group size of 1-2 people, you will be offered a sedan car. For a group size of 3-4 people, you will enjoy a 7-seater van. A 14-17-seater van will be in service if there are 5-8 of you. When your tour group size is larger, a 33-seater coach or bigger will be offered.

3. Can I confirm this is a private tour?

Re: Yes, this is a private tour just for your group. No other people will join you.

4. Can the tour guide accompany us to have dinner and help us order?

Re: The working time for the tour guide and driver is 8-9 hours. If you have finished your tour early, our tour guide can certainly help you until you get to dinner. Otherwise, you will need to pay extra for their overtime work.

5. Can I book the entrance tickets for the Grand Canyon Glass Bridge?

Re: The Grand Canyon Glass Bridge Office has limited the visitors number to be 8,000 per day and it requires prior reservation. The reservation made by the travel agencies is more easier to be accept. We don't offer the tickets booking service alone, but we have packages that include such service.

6. Where is the Avatar Hallelujah Mountain?

Re: The Avatar Hallelujah Mountain is inspired by the Heavenly Pillar in Zhangjiajie Scenic Area. It's located on the way the Huangshizhai.

7. How many days do you suggest we spend in Zhangjiajie?

Re: At least 4 days. There are so many natural wonders in Zhangjiajie waiting for your exploration. You will need one day to settle and travel, three days to visit Yuanjiajie National Park, Tianmen Mountain and Glass Bridge.

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8. How can I get to Wulingyuan from Zhangjiajie?

Re: Wulingyuan is a district of Zhangjiajie city. You can take a bus from the Central Bus Station in Zhangjiajie city and it takes about 40mins.