

Detailed Itinerary for Garden Tour to China. 2016. ‘In the footsteps of Robert Fortune’.

Day 01, 06 Sep. 2016: Australia – Shanghai

Depart Sydney or Melbourne to Shanghai on China Eastern airlines in the morning and arrive in the afternoon. Or join tour in Shanghai. Upon arrival, you are met and transferred to your hotel in Shanghai.

Day 02, 07 Sep: Shanghai – Ningbo (B.L.D)

Pick up at hotel. Travel to Ningbo early in the morning via Jiaxing. En-route we will have a stop to visit Yuanyulou Garden on Huxing Island in Nanlu Lake through which Robert Fortune sailed in 1851. Ancient trees include *Celtis tetrandra* and *Aphananthe aspera*. ‘Ling’, *Trapa bicornis*, is still harvested here and sold by street vendors. The 34 kilometre sea-bridge across Hangzhou Bay is a spectacular experience.



Bagged ‘Ling’ offered by street traders.



The 34 kilometre long Hangzhou Bay Bridge

Day 03, 08 Sep: Ningbo (B.L.D)

Visit both Tiantong Temple and Ashoka temples today. These two spots were major locations for Fortune’s collecting activities during his first three expeditions. *Pseudolarix amabilis*, ‘Mow-chok Bamboo’ (*Phyllostachys edulis*), *Pinus massoniana*, *Farfugium giganteum*, etc. Stay overnight in Ningbo.

Day 04, 09 Sep: Ningbo – Putuoshan (B.L.D)

Travel to Putuoshan Island via Kintang and Zhoushan and visit Putuoshan scenic spots. This small island in the Zhoushan Archipelago appears to have been one of Fortune’s favouring places. The highlight of the itinerary is undoubtedly the historical Puji Buddhist Temple with its intact precinct and garden with many ancient tree specimens which would have been growing there when the plant collector visited. We will also get to visit the Huiji Temple set in natural forest (by cable car) at 290 metres on the summit of the island. *Neolitsea sericea*, *Carpinus putuoensis*, *Ilex integra*, *Nageia nagi*, *Liriodendron chinensis*, etc. We may also get to see the famous Haiyan Pond still with the last of the 2016 season’s Lotus flowers. Stay overnight on Putuoshan.



Tiantong Temple



This bridge and lotus pond as described by Fortune

Day 05, 10 Sep: Putuoshan – Shanghai (B.L.D)

Travel back to Shanghai. Visit the Pudong area including the Oriental Pearl Tower and the original Shanghai Botanical Garden which was probably developed out of a nursery gardens that Robert Fortune knew in the 1840s. After that, we are taken to hotel in Shanghai.

Day 06, 11 Sep: Shanghai (B.L.D)

Today our guide will show us around Shanghai. Stroll the Bund (Wai Tan) waterfront area, a sweeping area along the Huangpu River, where used to be foreign concessions and now is the symbol of modern Shanghai. The riverbank garden at the northern end of the Bund is where Fortune’s plant were acclimatised in the garden of his friend Thomas Beale. Here is the best place to capture the Western influence of the old days. The main event for the day will be a visit to the historical Yuyuan Garden dating from circa 1580, with its timber-built tearoom described by Fortune himself. This garden has some superb tree specimens including *Torreya grandis*, *Pinus bungeana* and *Buxus sinica*. Visit the Old City Temple. Enjoy an exciting Acrobatic Show in the evening if you wish to go out into ‘the town’.

Day 07, 12 Sep: Shanghai – Suzhou (B.L.D)

After breakfast, travel to Suzhou. Suzhou has been praised as the “Paradise on the Earth” since ancient times and is an extraordinarily refined and elegant city. Known as “Venice of the East”, Suzhou is built around the Grand Canal. The city’s many excellent classical gardens have entitled Suzhou as the “Garden City” of China. Our sightseeing includes the Tiger Hill Pagoda and its gardens, The Garden of the Master of the Nets, boat cruise on the Grand Canal. Robert Fortune first visited Suzhou in the summer of 1844 whilst trying to track down the source for the fabulous ‘Moutans’ or Tree Peonies. Suzhou, with its 6 gardens on the World Heritage list, is *the* place to see most of the traditional garden plants of China, plus some superb specimens of penjing (bonsai). *Pinus parviflora*, *Sophora japonica* etc.



The historic Huxinting teahouse in central Shanghai.



Humble Administrator’s Garden. Suzhou

Day 08, 13 Sep: Suzhou (B.L.D)

In morning go to visit the other main representative Garden called Zhuo Zheng (Humble Administrator's) Garden and the Pan Men Scenery area in Suzhou. Lunch at the Silk making factory with its original 19th century spinning machines. It's worth seeing the cultivated form of *Morus alba* used to feed the silk worms. In the afternoon, also go to visit Qionglong Forest Park near Lake Tai Hu.

Day 09, 14 Sep: Suzhou – Wuzhen – Hangzhou (B.L.D)

Morning take the bus to Hangzhou. On the way we will stop over at Wuzhen Watertown, which is located in Tongxiang City, Zhejiang Province with a history of over 1,000 years. Of the ancient residential houses, workshops, and stores still standing on the banks of the rivers, 169,600 square meters, accounting for 81.54 percent of the town's total floor area, have remained unchanged, leading an atmosphere of antiquity. One of the highlights at Wuzhen is the Dye Shop using the root of *Isatis indigotica*. Then continue drive to Hangzhou which is a romantic city with charm and tranquillity. Hangzhou is a city with a rich history and culture. Marco Polo described this place as "the most beautiful and magnificent city in the world".



A Wuzhen Cottage Garden



Dragon Well Tea Gardens in Hangzhou

Day 10, 15 Sep: Hangzhou (B.L.D)

After breakfast, take a cruise on the tranquil waters of the West Lake, which mirrors the surrounding landscape. Visit the ancient timber-built Liu Ho Pagoda & the Yellow Dragon Cave and the Dragon Well Green Tea Village. Enjoy a cup of 'Dragon Well' green tea at the famous Tea Plantation. There is an interesting demonstration of the way the camellia leaves were hand-rolled and dried in a copper basin in the manner as would have been used by the eighteenth century artisans that Fortune took to the plantations of the East India Co. in India.

Day 11, 16 Sep: Hangzhou – Tianmushan (B.L.D)

Travel on to Tianmu Mountain or Tianmushan, which is made up of two peaks: West Tianmu (1,506 meters or 4,941 feet) and East Tianmu (1,480 meters or 4,860 feet). Upon arrival we will visit Tianmu Mountain National Nature Reserve, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve as part of UNESCO's 'Man and the Biosphere Program'. Tianmu is known for giant Japanese cedars, waterfalls, Tianmu tea, peaks surrounded by clouds, bamboo shoots, temples and nunneries, and odd-shaped rocks. More than 2,000 species of plants grow on the mountain, including (on West Tianmu) the last surviving truly wild population of Ginkgo trees. Prominent among the Japanese cedars is the "Giant Tree King", named by the Qianlong Emperor of the Qing. The mountain is also home to hundreds of species of birds and animals, including 39 endangered or protected species. These include the Clouded Leopard and the Black Muntjac. The plant species that we saw here in the natural forest in 2015 included *Pseudolarix amabilis*, *Torreya grandis*, *Deutzia ningboensis*, *Acer henryi*, *Emmenopterys henryi*, *Litsea auriculata*, *Daphniphyllum macropodum*, *Quercus acustissima* and *Ligularia japonica* etc. Stay at Tianmushan.



A giant *Cryptomeria japonica* in the Tianmushan



Rhododendron ovatum on the Huangshan

Day 12, 17 Sep: Tianmushan – Tunxi (Yellow Mountain) (B.L.D)

In the morning, we continue to Tunxi by coach. We could spend more time at the Tianmushan area or make a halfway stop en-route to visit some scenery areas. This will be a bit of botanical exploration for us as I am not sure yet where we will pick to make a stop but we will certainly see *Trachycarpus fortunei*, *Castanopsis sclerophylla* and *Cunninghamia lanceolata*. Upon arrival, we start our visit to Tunxi Ancient Town. In the afternoon, you have the chance to stroll the Tunxi Ancient Town and rest for a while. Stay overnight at the bottom of the mountain. Robert Fortune travelled though Tunxi in 1849 on his way to Sunglo Tea Mountain near the base of the Huangshan.

Day 13, 18 Sep: The Huangshan/Yellow Mountain (B.L.D)

Yellow Mountain Scenic Area is listed as a "World Cultural and Natural Heritage Site" by the United Nations for its picturesque natural attractions and rich culture. A full day tour will begin with a cable car ride to the near top of the mountain at around 1600 metres. Admire the fantastically shaped rocks, the clouds swirling around the peaks, strangely shaped pines on the cliffs, crystal clean springs and many more amazing sights. Stay overnight in a mountain-top four-star hotel set in the forest. For most of us this will perhaps be the botanical treat of a lifetime as the flora is wonderfully rich, *Pinus huangshanensis* is dominant with *Arisaema*, *Sorbus*, *Enkianthus*, *Rhododendron* species including *R. anwheicense*, and of course *R. fortunei*, *Quercus stewardii*, *Cornus* and *Hydrangea* etc. etc. At this altitude we could well benefit from the autumn season and its colours.



On the Huangshan



The Jianglelangshan

Day 14, 19 Sep: Tunxi – Wuyishan (B.L.D)

Morning continue to visit Huangshan scenery. Descend from the mountain by cable car. Afterwards, travel south some 250 kilometres to Wuyishan by coach. This will be the longest drive of the trip with probably 4-5 hours in the bus but the landscape will be dramatic and worth a stop including the fingered peaks of the Jianglangshan.– but that will depend on how soon we can tear ourselves away from the Huangshan! Upon arrival, we are transferred to hotel.

Day 15, 20 Sep: Wuyishan (B.L.D)

Morning visit the Tianyou Peak & Tea Plantation with the Dahongpao 1st generation 300 year old tea trees on the cliffs. In the afternoon take the bamboo raft along the Nine Windings River which is illustrated in Fortune’s original book, ‘Wanderings in the Tea Countries’. Enjoy the sunshine and fresh air and the natural beauty along the river. *Prunus zippeliana* will be the star tree species in the riverbank zone but there are also rhododendrons here as well as *Buddleja lindleyana* and *Machilus grijsii*.



Nine Windings Creek with its rafts.



Gardenia jasminoides species.

Day 16, 21 Sep: Wuyishan – Shanghai (B.L.D) (by air)

Fortune spent some time exploring in the Wuyishan which he very well described in his second book, “*A Journey to the Tea Countries*”. It is absolutely worth tracking this down in one form or another as a reference. After breakfast, visit the Waterfall Temple, where the plant collector probably stayed in 1850, and other places of interest. In the evening after an early dinner, we are transferred to airport for your flight to Shanghai. Upon arrival, our tour guide will meet us in the airport and take us to our hotel.

Day 17, 22 Sep: Shanghai – Australia (B)

Free in the morning. What can be done as an extra will depend on participant’s departure schedule.

Tour guide will transfer you to airport and take flight to Australia.

Day 18, 23 Sep: Australia

Arrive in Australia in the morning. Our unforgettable China tour ends.

TOUR PRICE

Tour price: \$4,150 AUD per person based on minimum 11 participants.

Single supplement: \$920. Land only price ex-Shanghai: \$3,150 AUD per person, twin share.

Tour price includes:

1. Return economy class airfare to China as indicated at the quote;
2. Airport tax and fuel surcharge (currently \$450, subject to change) ;
3. China internal flights and taxes;
4. Twin-share hotels with buffet breakfasts as mentioned above or similar;
5. Sightseeing tours with entrance fees for all the attractions as stated in the itinerary;
6. Meals as mentioned in the itinerary; essentially all meals (B)reakfast, (L)unch and (D)inner.
7. Transfers and transportation all through;
8. Professional English speaking Chinese guide as well as Horticulture Guide (Alistair Watt).

Tour price excludes:

1. Travel insurance; It is mandatory that you have this arranged before departure.
2. China visa (currently \$110.00 for Australians);
3. Required Tip to guide & driver (\$6/per person/per day);
4. Any meals or services not mentioned in the itinerary;
5. Personal expenses.

READING LIST

Robert Fortune wrote 4 books describing his travels in the years 1843 to 1861. Luckily these are recognised as having a high historical value and have been extensively reissued either as reprints (see www.abebooks.com), or; are available for free to read in an electronic form at:

<https://archive.org/details/threeyearswander00fortuoft>

or

<https://archive.org/details/ajourneytoteaco00unkngoog>

Two other books are also extremely useful:

Valder, P. (1999). *The Garden Plants of China*. Florilegium, Glebe, Sydney.

Valder, P. (2002). *Gardens in China*. Timber Press, Oregon, USA.

You should also have my own biography on Robert Fortune available before our September travel date next year.

For more info on specific places, these are good:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/911>

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/547>

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/813>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tianmu_Mountain