

Beijing Great Wall Int'l Travel Agency

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Xiamen, Hakka Tulou



Located on the southeast coast of China, Xiamen enjoys a pleasant climate and beautiful natural environment. And the city claims to be a city in the sea and is renowned for its various scenic spots and cultural relics. Tulou (Earthen houses) represent a vernacular architecture specific to Jiangxi, Fujian and Guangdong provinces following the flow of the Hakka people from central China to the South. As most Hakka resided in

mountains, communal houses made of compacted earth were built to provide protection against bandits and wild animals. The older examples of this style of construction consist of interior buildings enclosed by huge peripheral ones holding hundreds of rooms and dwellers. With all the halls, storehouses, wells and bedrooms inside, the huge towerlike building functions almost as a small fortified city. Earthen houses are made of earth, stone, bamboo and wood, all readily available materials. After constructing the walls with rammed earth, branches, strips of wood and bamboo chips were laid in the wall as "bones" to reinforce it. The end result is a well lit, well-ventilated, windproof, quakeproof building that is warm in winter and cool in summer.

(MDX-002) Xiamen-Nanjing-Yongding-Zhangzhou-Xiamen (5 Days)

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Day 1/Arrive in Xiamen

Arrive in Xiamen in the morning, a beautiful coastal sub-provincial city in southeastern Fujian province. Pick up, then, take a local ferry to travel **Gulangyu Island**, renowned for its delicate natural beauty, its ancient relics, and its varied architecture. The name of Gu (drum) Lang (wave) is from the huge reef surrounding it. When the tide comes in, the waves pound the reef and it sounds like the beating of a drum. Then, visit the **South Putuo Temple** which is deemed to be one of the must-go tourist places in Xiamen, situated at the foot of Wulaofeng (Mountain of Five Old Men) and facing the sea. The temple covers 30,000 square meters with four main buildings on the north-south axis, and the many rooms flanking the main buildings include dormitories, libraries and study rooms for monks. Stay overnight in Xiamen. (L,D)

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Day 2/Xiamen-Nanjing-Yongding

After breakfast, you will drive to Nanjing (3.5 hours driving). Visit Nanjing **Tianluokeng Hakka House** and **Yuchang House**, the most classical designs of Tulou. One Hakka House or Tulou is constructed by compacted earth for inhabiting of dozens of families, the descents of one ancestor. Most houses were built in round shape for defense against bandits and wild animals scattered in mountains area. Enjoy lunch in the village, and around 4pm, head for Yongding (1 hour driving). There are many architectural designs of Tulou in this area with a well-concentrated distribution of clusters. The most common designs are rectangular, round, triangular, pentagonal and octagonal. Stay overnight in Overseas Guesthouse (the local best available). (B,L,D)

Day 3/Yongding

Today's highlight is sightseeing of **Yongding Chuxi Hakka House**, like **Jiqing House**, **Yuqing House**, **Gengqing House**. The Chuxi Tulou cluster includes five large circular buildings and ten rectangular buildings. All building names share the common word "Qing", meaning "celebration", which reflects the hospitable nature of the Hakka people. Have lunch in the village. In the afternoon, pay a visit to **Yongding Nanxi Hakka House**, like **Yanxiang House**, **Huanji House**. Yanxiang House is referred to as Fengzhi Dafu after an ancestor was bestowed with the honorary title of "honest man". Huanjilou was built in 1693. In 1918 it withstood an earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale and was used as the base by the Red Army of China. Then, visit **Chengqi House**, the biggest tulou in Yongding County following a very classical design with a large central hall. Stay overnight in Overseas guesthouse (the local best available). (B,L,D)

Day 4/Yongding-Xiamen

After breakfast, drive back to Xiamen, and pay a visit Zhangzhou on the way. Zhangzhou is a time-honoured city as well as a well-known "land of plenty". As early as 5,000 years ago, the ancient Minyue people began to settle here. Visit **Zhangzhou old town**. Stay overnight in Xiamen. (B,L,D)

Day 5/Depart from Xiamen

Depart from Xiamen leaving for next station. TOUR ENDS! (B)