

China winter specials expected to lure Aussies

While sales results for China's World Expo were mixed, most wholesalers agree that the awareness it created will translate into an increase in sales to the destination.

By Gary Walsh

WITH the great focus of China tourism in 2010 – Shanghai's World Expo – closing its doors at the end of October, attention is now turning to winter specials from Australia. Reports on the success of World Expo from an Australian business perspective are mixed, but most agree that the event has created interest that now can be translated into sales.

Helen Wong's Tours' marketing manager Jason Sacriz said the outlook for the next 12 months was positive and gave most of the credit to the success of World Expo. "After all the gloom and doom created by the global financial crisis of 2008/09, we have experienced an encouraging 10 months this year, our positive sales figures almost mirroring those we recorded in what was a bright 2007," he said.

"Our conversion rate from quotations to bookings are well up, which highlights how strong China is as a tour destination." Official figures show that on average more than 50,000 Australian tourists now travel to China each month.

"Of particular interest to our clients were our 14-day 'China Odyssey' and 18-day 'Ancient Panorama' programs," Sacriz said. "Forward bookings for our two winter specials are also very strong with some departures already full; a very pleasing result."

Sacriz says prospects for 2011 were bright, and he predicted that Sichuan and Henan provinces would be new areas of interest for visitors to China.

Andrew Yell, general manager, sales, product and marketing for Creative Holidays, said following World Expo there had never been a better time for agents to capitalise on interest in the region.

"China is appealing to Australia travellers for many reasons; it combines mystery, culture, history,



Old Shanghai rooftops (image courtesy of Viking River Cruises)

delicious cuisine and is a fantastic mix of east meets west," he said. "Adding to the attraction of the region is a strong Aussie dollar and the affordable quality hotel options available."

Yell said three and six-night Yangtze cruise itineraries on the five-star ships of Victoria Cruises continued to increase in popularity.

"Growth in sales of accommodation, sightseeing packages and mini-stays in Beijing, Shanghai and Xian demonstrate that China's iconic sites like the Great Wall, Terracotta Warriors, The Forbidden City, The Bund and others have strong appeal and agents should be upselling all-inclusive packages to these destinations wherever possible."

Jimmy Liu from China Bestours said prospects were strong for 2011, despite World Expo not being a success from a business perspective, with hotel costs consistently higher than originally quoted, forcing him to absorb the hike rather than raise prices to clients.

"The economic crisis is gone, the Australian economy is doing well at the moment and with the high value of the Australian dollar, more people will travel next year," he said.

Cruise travel would continue to grow in popularity, so China Bestours would add more cruise itineraries to its program to meet the rising demand. Travel on the Silk Road was also popular, Liu said, with Tibet business also growing.

China Travel Service's operations manager Alan Wan said outbound traffic to China had been particularly strong in September and October.

"For many people, the appeal of Shanghai World Expo was irresistible and the desire to go to China has been helped by the very strong Australian dollar," he said. "Other things being equal, ie. the Australian economy remains healthy and the Australian dollar continues to be strong, the current trend is going to continue with

good growth of traffic to China."

For Travman's Robert Wang, demand for China travel will still be strong in 2011, but so will be competition in a fiercely fought-over market, with clients heavily focused on sourcing value for money product.

Hotel construction and rebranding continues rapidly, with Accor in November to mark the opening of its 100th property in China. Michael Issenberg, chairman and chief operating officer – Accor Asia Pacific, said the Pullman Oceanview Sanya Bay Resort and Spa will be the eighth Pullman hotel in China, with 11 others scheduled for development by 2013.

Accor's presence in China has almost doubled in the past three years, and the group now has hotels in 42 cities, with commitments for another 40 in the next three years. Accor now has a diversified portfolio of 23 luxury hotels, 15 upscale hotels, 18 mid-scale and 43 economy hotels.



The Great Wall...the Forbidden City...from the Ming Dynasty through the Communist era, China's treasures have been largely hidden from outsiders. But now visitors can see the highlights of Beijing, Shanghai, Xian and cruise the Yangtze River through China's spectacular Three Gorges region with Viking River Cruises. New for 2011, *Viking Emerald*, the Yangtze River's most elegant and newest ship will have the largest suites in river cruising, plus every stateroom features a full balcony. While onboard guests will experience the comfort and amenities you would expect from a 5-star hotel—for example, her grand lobby, Observation Lounge and Emerald Bar, gym and spa facilities and onboard beauty salon.

Viking's Best-Ever Early Booking Discount

Save \$2,000 per person on all China itineraries

Book & pay in full by 23 December 2010

Imperial Jewels of China

– Experience China's Key Highlights

From AUD \$2,799* per person

SAVE \$2,000 per person!

Beijing to Shanghai, April to October, 6 day Yangtze Cruise plus, accommodation: 3 nights Beijing, 1 night Xian & 2 nights Shanghai, 12 Guided Tours, 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 10 dinners, 3 Intra-China flights, Cultural Highlights, Culture Curriculum, shipboard gratuities, port charges.



Roof of the World

– Discover China & Spiritual Tibet

From AUD \$4,899* per person

SAVE \$2,000 per person!

Beijing to Tibet to Shanghai, April to October, 6 day Yangtze Cruise plus, accommodation: 3 nights Beijing, 2 nights Xian, 3 nights Lhasa & 2 nights Shanghai, 18 Guided Tours, 15 breakfasts, 14 lunches, 14 dinners, 4 Intra-China flights, Cultural Highlights, Culture Curriculum, shipboard gratuities, port charges.



China's Cultural Delights

– Explore China's Cradle of Culture

From \$3,999* per person

SAVE \$2,000 per person!

Shanghai to Beijing, March to November, 11 day Yangtze cruise plus, accommodation: 3 nights Beijing, 1 night Xian, 2 nights Shanghai, 17 guided tours, 16 breakfasts, 15 lunches, 15 dinners, 2 Intra-China flights, Cultural Highlights, Culture Curriculum, shipboard gratuities and port charges.



Contact Viking today on 1800 829 138 or
australia@vikingrivercruises.com for booking and information.

Visit vikingrivercruises.com.au

China Southern unveils premium economy product

CHINA Southern Airlines, a member of SkyTeam and the largest airline in China, has started rolling out premium economy class service on its routes from Guangzhou to Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane using all-new Airbus A330-300 aircraft.

International premium economy on China Southern includes 40 per

cent extra legroom, with seat pitch extended from the economy pitch of 32 to 37 inches.

China Southern's fully re-designed Airbus A330-300 cabin offers 47 premium economy seats (separated by curtains) and portable doors designed to guarantee travellers a discreet private space.

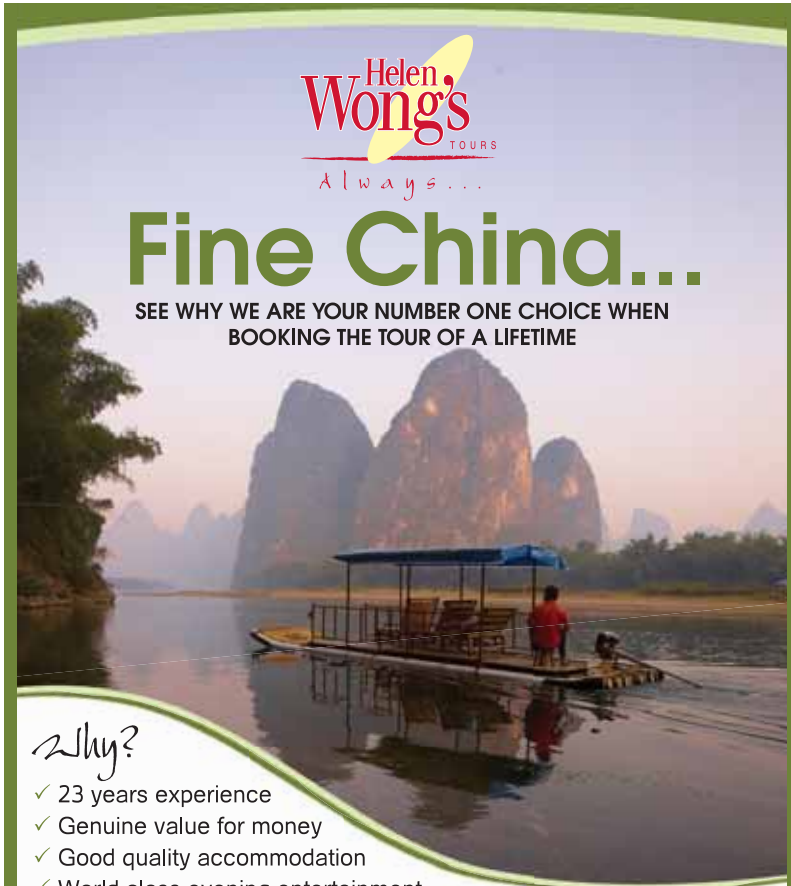
It also promises superior cabin service with newspapers, double-thick wool blanket and pillows, fresh seasonal fruits, noise-reduction headphones, private washing kit and red and white Australian wines.

There is also an exclusive check-in counter and an extra luggage allowance of 15kg.

The new class promises priority baggage delivery on arrival, boarding

at passengers' convenience and priority class upgrade if premium economy is overbooked.

Frequent flyer benefits are also available, with Sky Pearl Club members travelling in premium economy earn 110 per cent of the normal points accrued, and until December 30 members will receive 3000 bonus miles on their account.



Helen Wong's TOURS
Always...

Fine China...

SEE WHY WE ARE YOUR NUMBER ONE CHOICE WHEN BOOKING THE TOUR OF A LIFETIME

Why?

- ✓ 23 years experience
- ✓ Genuine value for money
- ✓ Good quality accommodation
- ✓ World class evening entertainment
- ✓ Respected and trusted travel company
- ✓ Experienced and knowledgeable English-speaking tour guides
- ✓ "Unparalleled Highlights" - Exclusive and unique bonus experiences
- ✓ A professional and friendly team in Australia and across China
- ✓ Wholly Australian owned travel company with an office in Beijing

Call **1 300 788 328** or visit www.helenwongstours.com

sellingChina

China is 'an experience holiday' for clients

JOANNE Miller, manager of Harvey World Travel's Castle Hill branch in the north-west of Sydney, says she sells China as "an experience holiday". She says people travel to China knowing the wonderful sightseeing that awaits them, but are often taken aback by the history and the culture.

Her own experience of Beijing is a case in point. One morning she went to a small local park two blocks from her hotel and watched people doing tai chi, including two elderly ladies.

"They were on their own and did it with swords," Joanne said. "They actually still had bound feet so I would hate to guess their ages. It sounds very movie-like, but with the mist coming off the water it was really surreal."

She said China had been a slower seller for her agency in 2010 than last year, although business had picked up in the past month or so with people looking to travel in 2011 on the back of an improving economy



Yunnan province

and Australian dollar. Shanghai's World Expo had not been a big seller, she said, with those who visited staggered at the sheer number of people who attended each day.

"I don't think that Expo increased people's knowledge of China, however I think the Olympics did a great job. I definitely believe that the more people know about China apart from the Great Wall, Terracotta Army et cetera, the more that they will venture out of the big three cities. When you suggest a Yangtze cruise or train to Tibet most people have never heard of those options."



Best of China & Hong Kong

Beijing - Xian - Guilin - Shanghai - Hong Kong
14 days from \$3,270pp ex Australia

Inclusions: return airfares, all taxes and charges, 4-5 star accommodation, tours, entrance fees, most meals, local E/S guide.

China Experience

Beijing - Xian - Shanghai
9 days only \$988 pp (Land only)

TOLL FREE 1800 338 007 or (03) 9606 0188

Email: citaust@travman.com.au

www.travman.com.au



TRAVMAN TOURS
A Division of CITS Group

Wendy Wu revamps brochure, increases FIT itineraries

WENDY Wu Tours' new China brochure details all product in China, Tibet, Mongolia, Central Asia and Hong Kong in one publication, along with Singapore and Korea. And several of the operator's most popular itineraries have been given added flexibility to make them more attractive to people who want to travel independently as singles or couples.

Marketing manager Amanda Bruno said they were essentially the same itineraries but did not incorporate the all-inclusive features of the traditional Wendy Wu tour. She said the private departures of group tours allowed customers greater flexibility in selecting airlines and departure dates from Australia.

Prices do not include international airfares, visas, gratuities and some other small elements of the

group tour, but do include all transport in China, accommodation with breakfast and lunches while touring, selected theme dinners and all meals on Yangtze River cruises.

Examples of land-only prices are from \$3070 per person (twin share) for the nine-day "China Experience", a 14-day "Majestic Yangtze" trip from \$4155 per person (twin share) and the 17-day "Wonder of China" journey from \$4320 per person (twin share).

Wendy Wu Tours general manager Alan Alcock said feedback from travel agents and customers was behind the company's decision to revamp its brochure range, introduce a new branding tagline and logo as well as increase its FIT itineraries.

Great Wall, Beijing



Uniworld China program a first for Australian market

UNIWORLD Boutique River Cruises has released its 2011 China river cruises and tours program, the first time it has been offered in Australia. The new program includes six itineraries covering Xian, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Suzhou, Guilin, Tongli, Lhasa and Tibet as well as cruises on the Yangtze River.

The cruise program is in partnership with Victoria Cruises while land content focuses on deluxe accommodation with hotels groups including Hilton, Marriott, Sheraton and Shangri-La, with first-class travel in luxury air-conditioned coaches.

All standard staterooms on the *Victoria Anna*, *Victoria Prince* and *Victoria Jenna* have been fitted with private balconies; executive suites include private sitting area, and Shangri-La suites, the highest category of accommodation onboard, feature exclusive sitting and dining areas and the ship's largest private balconies.

"As an added bonus for our guests, those who book themselves into an exclusive suite or higher on selected ships will automatically receive entry to the 'executive suite program', which offers exclusive added extras such as special dining highlights and access to the executive lounge onboard the ship," Uniworld's general manager, John Molinaro, said.

"The all-inclusive nature of our China product represents fantastic value for money for our guests with all meals, accommodation, transport and activities included in the one competitive price."

EXPERIENCE CHINA

Two direct flights daily from Sydney to Guangzhou, your best gateway to China.



TAKING OFF TWICE DAILY FROM 31ST OCTOBER 2010

With two flights departing daily from 31st October 2010, flying direct from Sydney to mainland China's transit hub Guangzhou, has never been easier!

As Asia's largest airline*, China Southern Airlines will offer direct 'world-class' services twice daily to Guangzhou connecting more than 80 cities in mainland China.

Now all you have to do is choose when you would like to arrive faster, easier and feeling fresher.

We look forward to flying with you soon.

*China Southern is Number 1 for traffic volume in Asia, and Number 3 for the world.

Flight CZ326 will depart Sydney daily at 10.50am and CZ302 at 10.15pm

TWO DIRECT FLIGHTS DAILY



中国南方航空
CHINA SOUTHERN



www.flychinasouthern.com



CTS markets all-inclusive tours



Daning River through the magnificent Three Little Gorges

CHINA Travel Service operations manager Alan Wan says CTS' product has stood the test of time in providing quality service and answering the various needs of people visiting China.

The CTS product range includes 13 different all-inclusive tours covering most regions of China; combination tours that add Vietnam, Taiwan, Korea and Japan to China; and local packages focusing on hot spots such as Yangtze River cruises, the Yunnan Shangri-La region, the Panda Research Base, Tibet and Guilin. CTS also offers city stopovers, and takes advantage of airline specials to offer discounted tours on specific days that provide the same content as regular all-inclusive tours but at a bargain price.

Included are three 10-day trips flying Qantas departing on January 5: an "Ice and Snow" special to Beijing, Harbin, Changchun, Shenyang, Dalian and Shanghai, priced from \$2380 per person (twin share); a New Year Special visiting Shanghai, Suzhou, Wuxi, Hangzhou, Shaoxing, Ningbo and Wuzhen priced from \$1950 per person (twin share), and a New Year Promotion covering Beijing, Xian, Hangzhou, Shaoxing, Wuzhen and Shanghai, priced from \$2380 per person (twin share).

There is also a 13-night "China Highlights" tour flying Air China that visits Beijing, Xian, Guilin, Longshen, Yangshuo, Hangzhou, Suzhou and Shanghai, priced from \$2700 per person (twin share) departing on Boxing Day, and a seven-night "Christmas Jianguan" special that costs from \$2870 per person (twin share) flying Qantas. It visits Shanghai, Suzhou, Yangzhou, Nanjing and Beijing, also departing on December 26.



Pullman Lijiang, opening in February

Accor opens 100th China property

HOTEL construction and rebranding continues rapidly, with Accor opening its 100th property in China this month. Michael Issenberg, chairman and chief operating officer – Accor Asia Pacific, said the Pullman Oceanview Sanya Bay Resort and Spa will be the eighth Pullman hotel in China, with 11 others scheduled for development by 2013.

Accor's presence in China has almost doubled in the past three years, and the group now has hotels in 42 cities, with commitments for another 40 in the next three years. Accor now has a diversified portfolio of 23 luxury hotels, 15 upscale hotels, 18 mid-scale and 43 economy hotels.

Wendy Wu Tours Brochure LaUNCH Extravaganza!



2011/12 brochures out now!

Now that you have received your launch box, be sure to check the **GOLD** envelope for details on the amazing prizes you can win. Simply book your customers on a 2011 group tour or FIT valued at over \$2000 pp between 15 October 2010 and 21 January 2011 to be in the running! Good luck!

2011/12 brochures available at Tifs



Wendy Wu Tours
Just say 'Wu'

www.wendywutours.com.au

Conditions: Full terms and conditions of prizes are outlined in the prize letter contained in the official Wendy Wu Tours LaUNCH box. Closing date of promotion: 21 January 2011. Random prize draw will take place on 28 January 2011, 10:00EST at Level 9, 275 George Street Sydney NSW 2000. Prize winners names will be published in Travel Daily on 01 Feb 11 and Travelbulletin on 25 Mar 11. Authorised by permit numbers: NSW-LTPS/10/08813; VIC-10/3319; SA-T10/2252; ACT-TP10/04104.2. Wendy Wu Tours Lic Number: 2TA4792. 7310K

HW's entices travellers to China over winter

HELEN Wong's Tours has unveiled two new bargain-priced tour packages to attract travellers to China over the cooler winter months. One focuses on the sights and sounds of Shanghai, the more tranquil settings of Suzhou, Hangzhou and the historic village of Wuzhen which, combined with Xian and capital Beijing in the 15-day "China Wonders" package.

This exclusive package involves departures in February and March and is priced from \$2799 per person (twin share) flying Air China from Sydney or Melbourne, including departure taxes, security charges and fuel charges (subject to change).

The other, an 11-day "Majestic China" program, begins with a China Southern flight to Guangzhou with visits to Guilin, Xian, home of the army of the Terracotta Warriors, and Beijing, including a walk along a section of the Great Wall of China.

Tours run in November, February and March and are priced from \$2450 per person (twin share) from Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane, including departure taxes, security charges and fuel charges (subject to change).



Beijing's Summer Palace and its Marble Boat

For Brisbane passengers the November flight will mark the start of direct services to Guangzhou.

"Including air fare, the price of the 15-day 'China Wonders' package equates to \$187 a day, which is good value considering the inclusions," Helen Wong's Tours marketing manager Jason Sacriz said.

"Compared with our deluxe tours at other times of the year, the 11-day 'Majestic China' program works out as a real bargain at \$223 a day," he said.

"As with all China programs created

by Helen Wong's Tours, guests stay in four- to five-star hotels with breakfast, with many other meals covered as well as seats to at least two evening cultural shows."

Prices include return economy class air fares to China, domestic flights in China where specified as well as transfers, sightseeing and entrance fees and English-speaking guides.

China visas for Australian passport holders and a travel kit with a 424-page Odyssey book on China and cabin bag are also included.

China Bestours' popular 'Enchanting Minorities' tours

CHINA Bestours' two most popular packages are its "China Splendid" tour and its "Enchanting Minorities" trip. The former is a 15-day journey that covers Beijing, a Yangtze River cruise, Chongqing, Xian, Suzhou and Shanghai. "Enchanting Minorities" is also 15 days, with a focus on the culture of some of China's ethnic minorities.

It visits Guilin, Longsheng, Kunming, Zhongdian (Shangri-La), Lijiang, Guiyang, Anshun and Kaili, with an insight into the lives of the Zhuang, Yao, Sani, Naxi and Bouyei minorities. The tour costs from \$4020 per person (twin share) flying with China Southern.

The "China Splendid" tour is a China highlights trip that includes a three-night Yangtze cruise, two nights in Xian for the terracotta warriors and a side trip to Suzhou from Shanghai. The cost is from \$3625 per person (twin share).



See
the Difference
Experience Macau!

Macau is a trade crossroad for merchants from east and west, where state-of-art meeting and conventions facilities meet world class hotels, combined with an amazing selection of entertainment by day and night.



Macau Government Tourist Office
Lvl 11, 99 Bathurst Street
Sydney NSW 2000
T: 02 92641488
www.macautourism.gov.mo

A World of difference, the difference is Macau

New Viking Emerald to start cruises in 2011



Cruising through the Lesser Gorges

VIKING River Cruises is introducing a new vessel into its China program in 2011, the *Viking Emerald*. Built to meet the demand for suites, it will begin sailing in March 2011. *Viking Emerald* replaces *Viking Century Sun*, and the company claims it is “the most deluxe ship sailing on the Yangtze River and one of the most sophisticated river ships in the world”. The vessel accommodates 264 passengers and has the largest suites in river cruising, including two presidential suites with wrap around balconies and separate sitting and sleeping areas, 14 suites, four junior suites and 132 deluxe staterooms.

Viking says its guides are “by far the highest paid on the Yangtze” ensuring that its clients always receive the best service and quality from their onshore excursions. Onboard amenities include a sun deck with sweeping views, tailor, observation lounge, boutique, beauty salon, gym, sauna and massage services, and internet cafés.

Viking Emerald will be sailing three China itineraries: “Imperial Jewels of China”, “Roof of the World” and “China’s Cultural Delights”. “Imperial Jewels of China” presents China’s key highlights in 12 days, while the 16-day “Roof of the World” voyage includes three nights in Lhasa. Plus, Viking’s 17-day “China’s Cultural Delights” includes an 11-day Yangtze cruise between Chongqing and Nanjing.

Viking’s managing director Australia and New Zealand, Teresia Fors, said: “China is one of the most exciting emerging destinations on the tourism map and all predictions say that inbound tourism to China will continue to grow dramatically over the coming years.”

She said Viking’s included a luxury voyage on board a western owned and managed ship with land stays in Shangri-La, Hyatt and Hilton properties. “It is a China experience without the hassles; you won’t even see your luggage,” she said.

Travman special saves clients \$500 on ‘highlights’ tour

TRAVMAN Tours has released its China winter specials with a saving of up to \$500 on its 13-day “China Highlights” tour. It covers Beijing, Xian, Shanghai, Suzhou, Hangzhou and Wuzhen and features such inclusions as a Peking duck dinner, Shanghai acrobats show, a Tang dynasty dinner show and a visit to a Peking opera performance.

Due to increasing client demand, Travman has added another seven departures for its popular “China Experience” tour that visits Beijing, Xian and Shanghai. This eight-night tour costs from \$988 per person (twin share), land only, and includes four-star hotels, domestic flights, tours, meals, local guide and entrance fees.

Travman has an extensive range of other tours, from a 10-day “Yangtze Delta Explorer” priced from \$2038 per person (twin share) to a 23-day “China Panorama” trip that encompasses such places as Beijing, Shanghai, Xian, Kunming, Dali, Lijian and Chengdu. There are also trips on the Silk Road and a tour that combines a Yangtze cruise with a visit to Tibet.

China Travel Selections

Call: 1300 764 224
or visit www.chinatransel.com.au



China Highlights on Air China

from \$2700*

Beijing-Xi’an-Guilin-Yangshuo-Hangzhou-Suzhou-Shanghai
#10/4/2011, 8/5/2011, 22/05, 12/06...
13 nights and 14 days inclusive

Tour Code: SDCA05

Christmas China on Qantas

from \$2870*

Shanghai-Suzhou-Yangzhou-Nanjing-Beijing
26/12/2010 7 nights and 8 days inclusive

Tour Code: SDQFXMS

Ice and Snow Tour on Qantas

from \$2380*

Beijing-Harbin-Changchun-Shenyang-Dalian-Shanghai
5/1/2011 9 nights and 10 days inclusive

Tour Code: SDQF03

Yangtze Promotion on Air China

from \$1950*

Beijing-Chongqing-Yangtze River Cruise (5-star)-Hangzhou-Shaoxing-Shanghai
13/3/2011, 30/3/2011, #13/4/2011 (Melbourne one day earlier)
10 nights and 11 days inclusive

Tour Code: SECA03

Qantas Yangtze Cruise Delight

from \$2480*

Discover the wonders of the mysterious Yangtze River on 5-star cruise from Shanghai to Chongqing plus land tours...
01/04; #15/04; #13/05; #27/05; 10/06; #08/07; #02/09

* All prices shown per person twin-share #Seasonal surcharge apply

Inclusion: International return and China domestic air tickets; airport taxes & fuel surcharge, 4-star accommodation, 5-star cruises, breakfast & meals as per itinerary, transfers, sightseeing entry fees, English speaking guide.

Lic. No. 2TA001849



Macau sporting events attract international travellers

MACAU’S events calendar remains a major drawcard for visitors, with key sporting events the latest on offer for travellers.

The destination has just hosted the 57th annual Macau Grand Prix from November 18-21, while on Sunday, December 5, the streets of the peninsula and island Taipa will again be a sea of colour with the running of the 29th annual Macau International Marathon.

“It will be a busy time for sports fans,” said Helen Wong, general manager of the Macau Government Tourist Office (Australia and New Zealand). “On one hand we have the motor racing, a long-time event with the names of famous drivers

and riders on the winning list, and two weeks later, around 600 athletes will compete in the marathon, a vast majority from overseas countries, some from Australia and NZ.”

The Macau Marathon will pit the cream of Asian athletes against all comers from around the globe. “Supporters will not only get to see the athletes in action, but experience the best of Macau,” Wong said. “From the fabulous Macanese cuisine to the many sites that are UNESCO World Heritage listed such as the Ruins of St Paul’s and A-Ma Temple, Macau has plenty to offer the sightseeing sports guests.”

Next year the Grand Prix will be staged from November 17-20, 2011.