

China Sister School Exchange Program Itinerary (Sample)

(Minds Abroad will find a high school in China that is excited to host your students for 11 days of cross-cultural activities)



**\$985/student for the core 11 day
exchange program in Beijing**

**\$1985/student for the optional two
week service extension in Yunnan**

*(Prices include all in-country costs but exclude int'l airfare,
min 15 students)*



Minds Abroad

Named a "Top Ten Program" by the Center for
Citizen Diplomacy and U.S State Department



The Core 11 Day Exchange Program in Beijing

In our increasingly globalized, interdependent world, students from the U.S. need to become more aware of other countries and cultures. The US-China relationship is the most important bilateral relationship of the 21st century and, with that in mind, the Minds Abroad Sister School Exchange Program facilitates the exchange of students between a US high school and a similar high school in China.

Students from the US, as part of this program, will come to Beijing and participate in a variety of activities with their Chinese peers in order to have an all-encompassing cultural experience. During the course of this program, the US students will study Chinese, visit sites of historic and cultural significance and interact extensively with their local Chinese students --- eating together, engaging in teambuilding activities and shadowing their peers in class.

Through this process they will get to know Chinese culture more closely and make international friends. After the US students return to their own country, their US institution will host a visit from Chinese students in the same manner. This will give the Chinese students a similar opportunity to visit the United States, make friends, and explore American culture, and it will extend and deepen the understanding and friendship between the two sets of students.

In China, the base of the 11 day core program is Beijing. In fact, Beijing is not only China's capital city, but is also home to its greatest collection of historical sites. This city is an ideal location for anyone looking to get a glimpse of the country's history and culture. Beijing's uniqueness has its origin in the juxtaposition of the old city against its modern bustling counterpart.



The Two Week Optional Yunnan Service Learning Extension

In addition to the core Sister School Exchange Program in Beijing, school groups can opt to continue onto a two week service learning extension in Yunnan. This extension includes an extended weekend trip into the Himalayas in Yunnan.

School Groups who have the time and would like to gain insight into a more traditional and ethnically diverse side of China can opt to continue onto Yunnan. This experience will also engender students with a better understanding of social issues in China. If student groups are aiming for the riveting displays of China's ethnic minority cultures and its alluring scenic beauty, then Yunnan is definitely the most rewarding destination. As Lonely Planet contends, "If you have time for but one province in China, Yunnan should be it."

As a part of the Optional Yunnan Service Learning Extension Program, students will volunteer at a local non-profit organization in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan, where they will come face to face with some of the problems that the development sector of this province is currently encountering.

About Minds Abroad

Minds Abroad is a US-based organization that conducts study abroad programs in Asia for both individual students and customized groups from high schools, colleges and universities. Our programs are typically a blend of morning classes, afternoon interning, volunteering or language exchange sessions, evening cultural activities and weekend excursions to sites of educational value. Homestays are an additional component for which school groups may opt. Minds Abroad was recently named a "Top Ten Best Practices Program" by the Center for Citizen Diplomacy in conjunction with the State Department.



Program Components

Mandarin language classes (both in the Beijing core and the Yunnan optional extension)

These classes will be primarily conducted by local teachers from the faculty of the Beijing Sister School during some weekday mornings. Learning Mandarin will not only enrich our students' cultural experience, but will also help them easily and more confidently navigate their journey in China. There will be classes for beginners, intermediate and advanced students and students will enroll in programs according to their Mandarin levels.

Weekend cultural activities with Chinese peers (Beijing core only)

On the two weekends of the core program the Chinese and American students will engage in a variety of activities; these activities will be decided in conjunction with both the US and Chinese institutions, but can include team building activities, visiting museums, local parks and local historic sites. The goal of these activities is to help the students develop a new perspective about their own cultural heritage and that of their counterparts.

Shadowing local peers in their classes (Beijing core only)

As an integral part of their cultural experience, US students will shadow their Chinese peers through a typical day in their sister school in Beijing. This will familiarize them with a typical schedule at a local high school in Beijing with Chinese students as well as educational system and teaching methods that are vastly different than what is practiced in a typical US high school. Students will also get to learn about the academic curriculum, sports, and other extra-curricular programs their Chinese sister school offers, as well as the dreams and expectations of their peers and teachers.

Excursions to sites of historic and cultural significance in Beijing (core) and Yunnan (optional extension)

While in Beijing, in most afternoons, students will explore major cultural sites. They will see many faces of Beijing; they will hike up the legendary Great Wall, wander through the Forbidden City, China's former imperial palace, explore Tiananmen Square, the largest square in the world and visit the Temple of Heaven with its ceremonial alter.

School groups opting to participate in the Yunnan extension will visit Yunnan's north. They will go to a string of Himalayan towns and villages famous for their history, their strong ethnic minority culture and scenic beauty. This will include the cosmopolitan capital of Yunnan, Kunming, the historic walled city of Dali, the well preserved ancient town of Baisha, UNESCO World Heritage Site Lijiang, and the surreal Tibetan town of Shangri-La.

Volunteer service learning in Yunnan (optional extension)

As an integral part of the Optional Yunnan Service Program, during weekdays, in the afternoons, the US students will teach English to students in non-profit organizations that are devoted to helping children from a variety of disadvantaged backgrounds including homeless children, the children of the migrant workers, and children from economically-challenged ethnic minority groups in Kunming. Through this activity, participants will not only have an excellent opportunity to immerse themselves in Chinese culture but will also learn about community and developmental issues in a typical Chinese city.



Calendar of the Sister School Exchange Program

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
			Day 1	Day 2 (Chinese and US students)	Day 3 (Chinese and US students)	Day 4 (Chinese and US students)
				Beijing	Beijing	Beijing
			Depart US.	AM: In-Transit PM: Arrive in hotel and get settled. Evening: Have welcome dinner together with Chinese peers.	Activities with Chinese peers*	Activities with Chinese peers*
Day 5 (Chinese and US students eat together)	Day 6 (Chinese and US students)	Day 7 (Chinese and US students eat together)	Day 8 (Chinese and US students)	Day 9 (Chinese and US students)	Day 10 (Chinese and US students)	Day 11 (Chinese and US students)
Beijing	Beijing	Beijing	Beijing	Beijing	Beijing	Beijing
AM: Morning Chinese class PM: Have lunch together with Chinese peers. Visit the Tiananmen Square, a site of several important events in Chinese history followed by the Forbidden City, a UNESCO World Heritage Site Evening: Return from this trip.	AM: Shadow local peers in their classes PM: Have lunch together with Chinese peers. Explore the Mutianyu section of the Great Wall, located in Huairou County. Evening: Return from this trip.	AM: Morning Chinese class PM: Have lunch together with Chinese peers. Visit the historic Temple of Heaven, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Evening: Return from this trip.	AM: Shadow local peers in their classes PM: Have lunch together with Chinese peers. Students will take a trip to the Summer Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Evening: Return from this trip.	AM: Morning Chinese class PM: Lunch with Chinese peers. Explore Houhai Park and then view local Hutongs old neighborhoods around the lake (Hutongs are the traditional courtyard houses of Beijing). Evening: Return from this trip.	Activities with Chinese peers*	Activities with Chinese peers* Evening: Farewell dinner at 798 Art District together with Chinese peers.
Day 12	* The specific itinerary for these four weekend days are to be decided in discussion with Minds Abroad and the US & Chinese schools; if there are any activity costs they are not included.					
Beijing/Home or Kunming (only US Students)						

Calendar of Optional Yunnan Service Project (Some groups to do this, some to return to USA directly)

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18
Beijing/Home or Kunming (only US Students)	Kunming (only US Students)	Kunming (only US Students)	Kunming (only US Students)	Dali (only US students)	Dali/Lijiang (only US students)	Baisha/Shangri-La (only US Students)
Students, who are going for the Optional Yunnan Service Project trip, will head over to Kunming from Beijing.	AM: Morning Chinese Class PM: Service Project Evening: Students will rest after travel.	AM: Morning Chinese Class PM: Service Project Evening: Students will undertake the Kunming Walking Tour (north).	AM: Morning Chinese Class PM: Service Project Evening: Students will pack for weekend excursion.	AM: Students will leave for Dali. PM: Students will enjoy a bike ride along the beautiful Lake Erhai. Afterwards, they will explore Dali Old Town, also famously known as the Yu town.	AM: They will hike up the Cang Mountains for a bird's eye view of Dali and hike around its peaks. PM: Students will travel to Lijiang. Evening: Students will rest upon reaching Lijiang.	AM: Students will visit the old town of Lijiang early in the morning, if time permits. Afterwards, visit Baisha old town. PM: Students will travel to Shangri-La. Evening: Students will visit Shangri-La Old Town.
Day 19	Day 20	Day 21	Day 22	Day 23	Day 24	Day 25
Shangri-La	Shangri-La/Lijiang/Kunming (only US Students)	Kunming (only US Students)	Kunming (only US Students)	Kunming (only US Students)	Kunming (only US Students)	East China (only US Students)
AM & PM: Students will rent a bike and explore the beautiful grasslands west of the Old Town near Napa Lake. Evening: Students will go to Shangri-La's public square to participate in circle dancing.	AM: Students will visit the Ganden Sunstseling Gompa Tibetan Buddhist Monastery. PM & Evening: Return to Lijiang. On way back, view the first bend of the Yangtze River. Upon reaching Lijiang, overnight train to Kunming.	AM: Students will rest upon arrival in Kunming. PM: Service Project Evening: Students will have an early night after the overnight journey the night before.	AM: Morning Chinese Class PM: Service Project Evening: Students will undertake the Kunming Walking Tour (south).	AM: Morning Chinese Class PM & Evening: Service Project. Afterwards, students will be given their farewell at a local KTV center where they will sing popular songs.	AM: Morning Chinese Class PM: Service Project Evening: Students will pack for their flight back home.	AM: If flight time permits, students will take a trip to the Western Hills. PM & Evening: Students will fly to gateway airport in East China and stay at a hotel near gateway city airport.
Day 26	Website: www.mindsabroad.com Email: info@mindsabroad.com					
In-Transit(only US Students)						
Students will fly back home from the gateway city airport in East China.	US Phone: +1 877 UABROAD China Phone: +86 871 65325089					