

Chengdu Travel Guide



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Welcome to Chengdu!

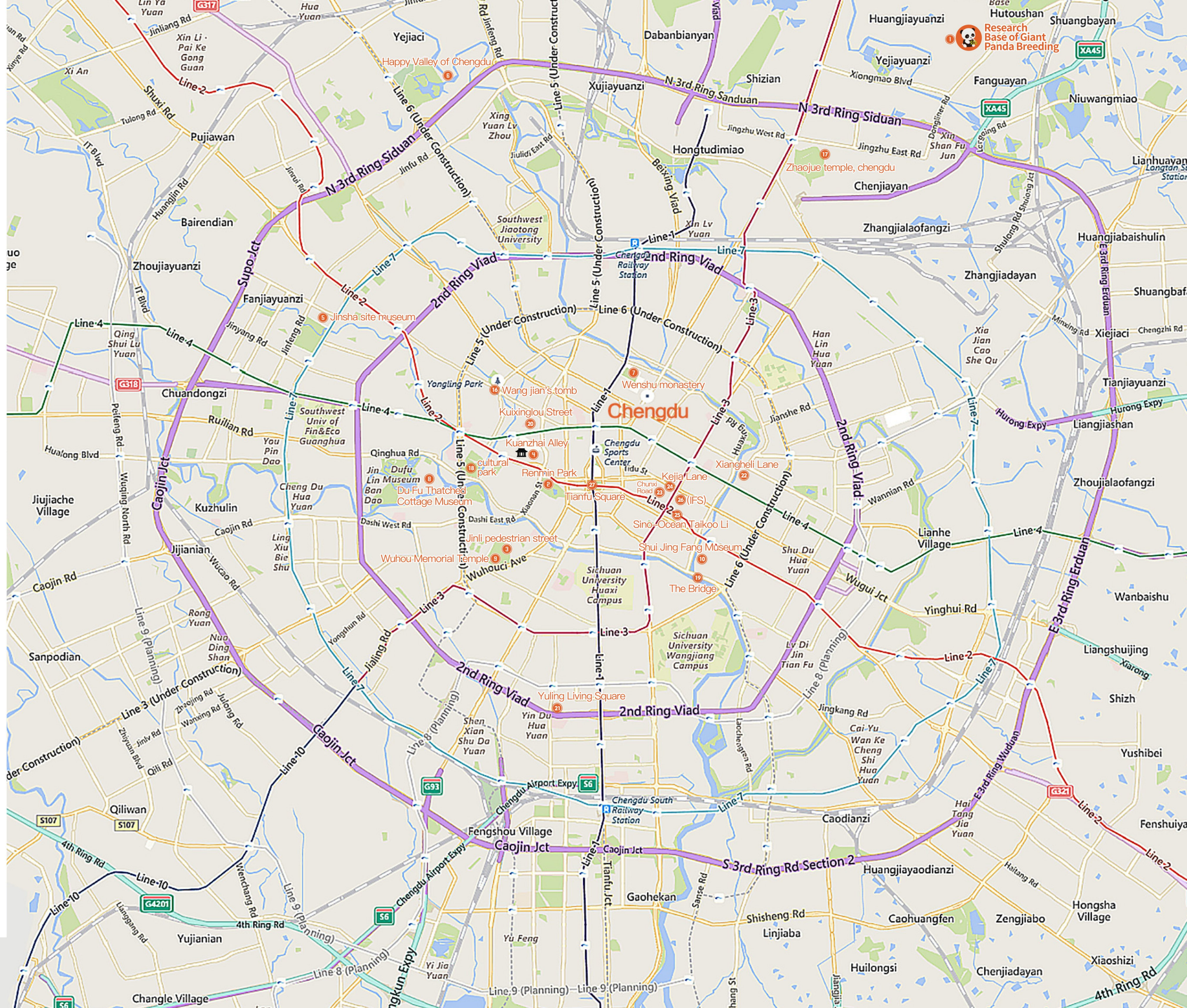
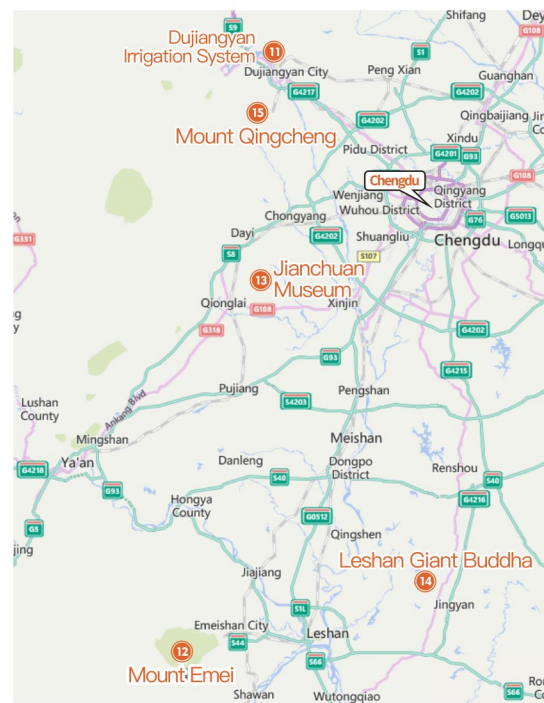
Internationally famous for being the capitol of the Giant Panda, Chengdu is the capitol of the Sichuan Province and is more than 1,300 years old. This is the best place in China, and thus the best place in the world, to see (and even possibly touch) the adorable, cuddly, famously shy, and exceedingly rare Giant Panda. But for the Chinese, Chengdu is a hot, spicy, fragrant, and modern city, with a rich, vibrant cultural history nationally famous for its local specialty “Hot Pot” – the Giant Panda then is just one of the city’s many draws.



Chengdu City

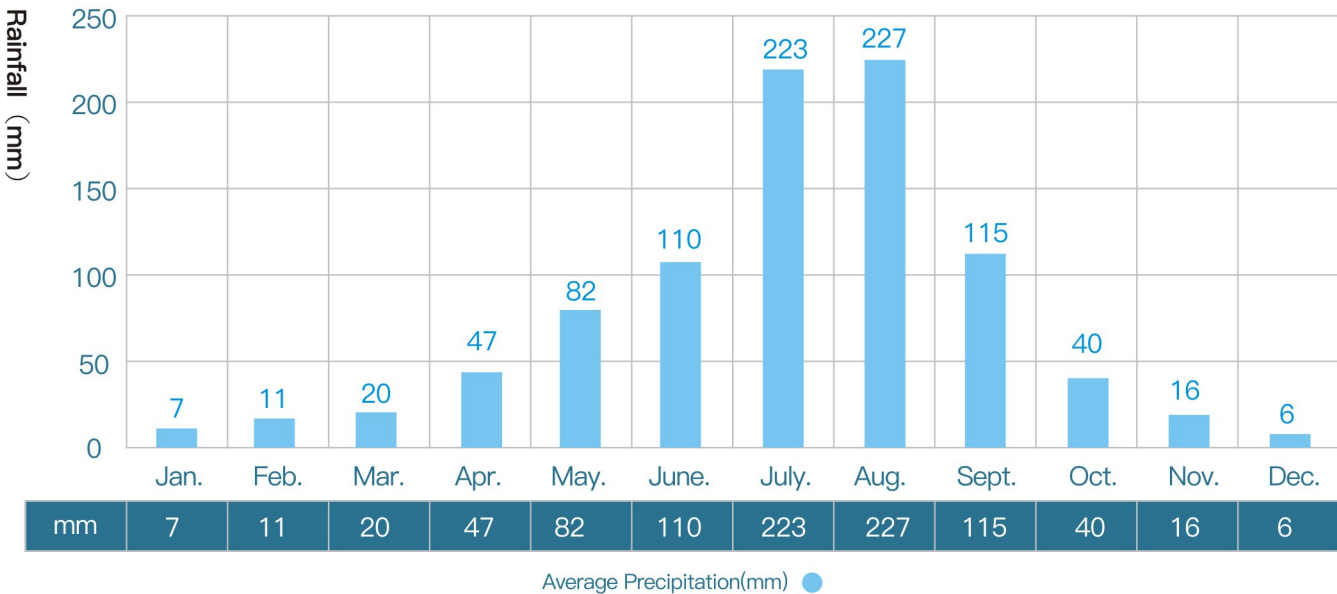
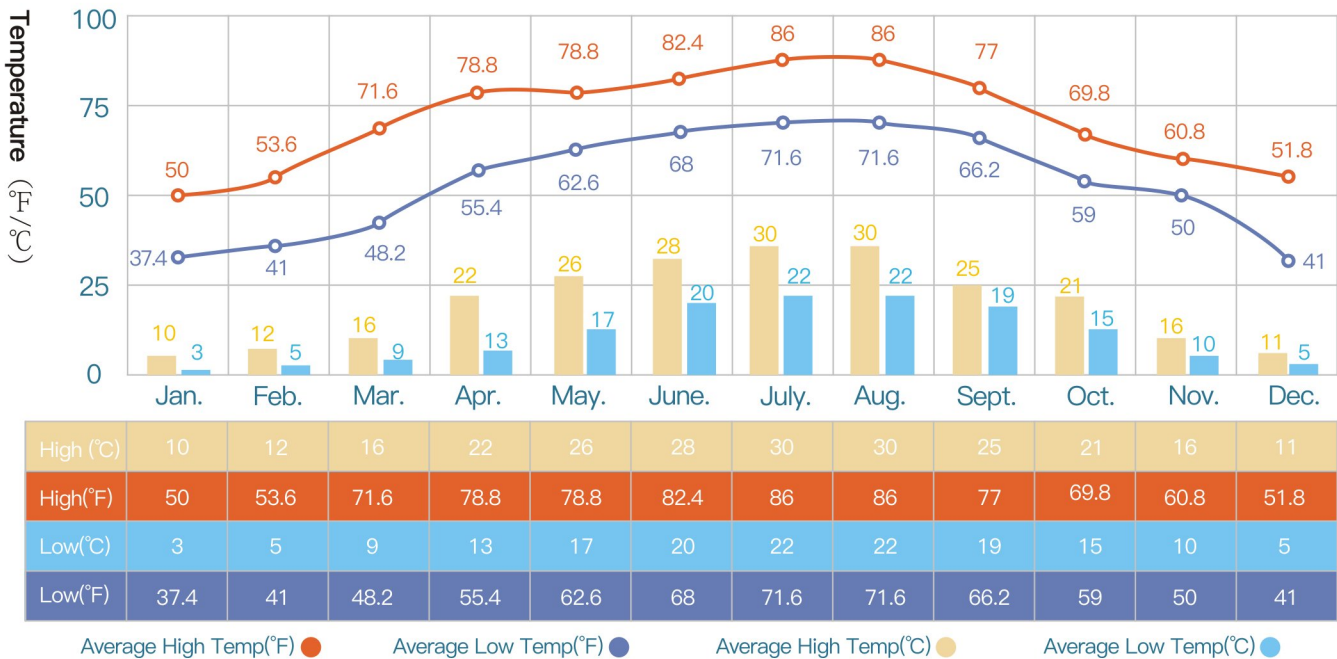
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Best Time to Visit

Spring (March to June) and autumn (September to November) are the best times to travel to Chengdu because the temperatures and humidity are much more comfortable and it doesn't rain as often as during summer. Summer runs from late June to September when the weather can be quite hot. For those who visit in the summer, and need a cool escape, Chengdu is located at the base of the Himalayan foothills so it's a fairly quick trip to reach the mountains where temperatures are much cooler and drier. Recommended nearby locations include the breath-taking national park of Jiuzhaigou, the lush green and ancient mountain of Qingcheng and the heaven-like, usually-shrouded-in-a-sea-of-clouds Emei Mountain. Winter runs from December to February and the weather can get bitter cold with occasional snow, making skiing and winter sports a great option.



Clothing



SPRING

People with allergies or sensitivity to dust may want to bring dust/face masks as it can occasionally be somewhat dry and therefore dusty. Allergy medicine may also be necessary. Nights can be chilly so light to medium sweaters or jackets are recommended, otherwise, daytime dress would be for typical spring weather. A light-weight windbreaker can also be useful.

Summer — It's recommended to bring mostly breathable, high-performance material, short sleeves, shorts (or skirts), and lightweight summer dresses that will keep you cool. Plan on it being quite hot and humid for most days. Also, breathable rain gear, waterproof shoes, a wide brimmed, breathable hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen will be necessary.



Summer. Autumn . Winter

Summer — It's recommended to bring mostly breathable, high-performance material, short sleeves, shorts (or skirts), and lightweight summer dresses that will keep you cool. Plan on it being quite hot and humid for most days. Also, breathable rain gear, waterproof shoes, a wide brimmed, breathable hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen will be necessary.

Autumn — Summer clothes will be fine for the days, but bring some long sleeves, long pants, light to medium sweaters or jackets and a light-weight windbreaker for chilly days and cool nights.

Winter — The best advice is to truly pack for the winter — heavy coats, sweaters, ski hats, gloves, scarfs, warm shoes, warm socks, and even thermal underwear/leggings may be useful. Know that budget hotels and many restaurants may not have adequate heating and the evenings can be especially cold, so at night, warm, comfortable sleepwear like sweatpants and sweatshirts may be necessary. A pair of warm, hard sole slippers can be useful for cold evenings and mornings on the cold tile of hotel floors.

Top 6 things to do

Chengdu is such a gorgeous, fun-filled destination with so many unique experiences found in and around the city that many people find they don't want to leave. It's truly one of the top 10 destinations in the country (some people claim it belongs on the top 5 list with Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Xian) and has a wonderful mix of the modern and ancient world.

1 Getting (very) up-close and personal with a Panda

If there's anything as iconic for China as the Great Wall or the Forbidden Palace, it's the Giant Panda, and of course the best place to see these gentle giants is Chengdu. There are two Panda centers actually — one located within the city called the Giant Panda Breeding Research Base and the other located 2 hours away from the city called Bifengxia Panda Base. At the time of this writing, both allowed visitors to touch and hold baby and adult pandas for a steep extra fee, but the money does go toward Panda protection and breeding research (an essential issue in successful Panda conservation.) At Bifengxia, you can stay on the base in very nice, inexpensive, wooden cabin-like rooms (recommended) which allows you to wake up and get to the pandas before anyone else — giving overnights around 20–30 minutes of quiet, unobstructed observation time. There is also a pleasant and easy stream trail through the base, with impressive waterfalls that makes for a very enjoyable afternoon hike.



2 Sipping Tea in a Local Tea House

Trying hot Chinese tea in any region of China can be a wonderfully memorable experience (as long as you choose your tea house wisely). Chengdu has many of them and the lush, greenness of the city gives an afternoon of tea drinking a different feel from many other popular destinations like Beijing, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Xian. Take your time and enjoy as much tea as you'd like — do some reading or trip research, catch up online with friends back home — a tea house is a relaxing, cultural way to spend your time. It is recommended that you check (or double check) prices before ordering, especially if you have been invited to a tea house by someone you have recently met, or do some research before heading out to make sure you are going to a legitimate establishment.



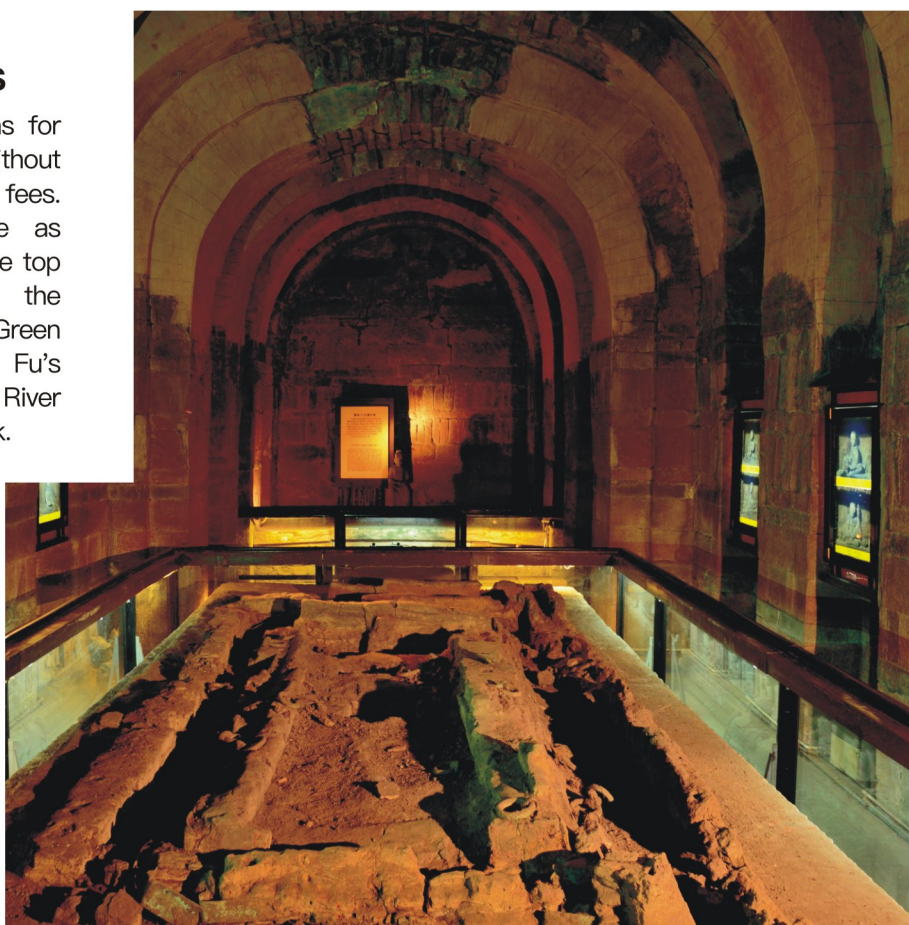
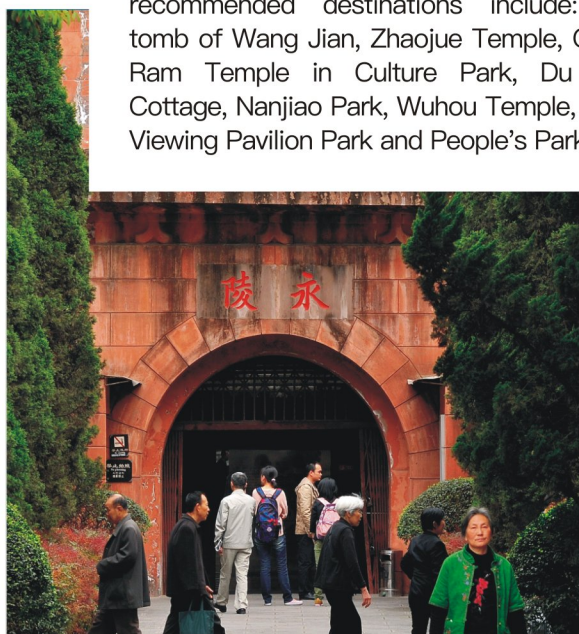
3 Exploring ancient alleyways and historic neighborhoods

Like many places in China, small, narrow alleyways located in historic neighborhoods represent the embodiment of local life. Chengdu also has many of these, the most famous being Kuanzhai Alley. It combines the architectural features of northern China's Courtyard House with those of traditional dwellings in western Sichuan. Walking through these neighborhoods will give visitors a sense of what life was like hundreds of years ago and will still feel, and look, very much as if you're walking through history.



4 Tombs, Temples and Parks

Chengdu has lots of low-cost options for people looking to explore a city without having to spend a ton on entrance fees. The tombs and temples here are as magnificent as any in the country. The top recommended destinations include: the tomb of Wang Jian, Zhaojue Temple, Green Ram Temple in Culture Park, Du Fu's Cottage, Nanjiao Park, Wuhou Temple, River Viewing Pavilion Park and People's Park.



5

Try the mega-famous, local specialty of “Hot Pot” and other Chengdu delicacies

While the dish named “Hot Pot” is called “hot” mostly due to it being served steamy and warm, in the province of Sichuan, the “hot” definitely refers to its spiciness. Nowhere in China is Hot Pot served as mouth-numbingly spicy as here. Grab a few tissues for your soon-to-be runny nose, unzip that jacket, and get ready for one of the most unique culinary experiences of China. For those not accustomed to spicy food, there is honestly not much you can do to reduce the spiciness of Hot Pot as the spice is added to the broth prior to serving. Some restaurants may offer a less spicy version, so ask around or do some online research if this is an important factor. Hot Pot is also an important part of societal food culture in Sichuan, so missing this experience means missing more than just a unique meal — you’d be missing out on an essential part of the region’s culture.

In addition to Hot Pot, Chengdu offers several other unique dishes — and not all of them are spicy. Seven other recommended dishes to try are:

1. Cold Chicken in Chili Oil (凉拌鸡 — Liang Ban Ji)
2. Rabbit fried with Peppers (双椒兔 — Shuang Jiao Tu)
3. Smoked Sausage (腊香肠 — La Xiang Chang)
4. Spiced Steamed Beef (粉蒸牛肉 — Fen Zheng Niu Rou)
5. Sichuan Dumplings in Chili Oil (红油抄手 — Hong You Chao Shou)
6. Wood Fire Chicken (柴火鸡 — Chai Huo Ji)
7. Fish Mint (折耳根 — Zhe Er Gen)



6

Visit Local Museums

One of the quickest ways to get to know a city’s history and local culture is to visit its museums. Many (not all) museums have signs in English (if you’re into reading) as well as objects, displays, and presentations that can only be seen at that specific museum. Museum visits also leave longer-lasting impressions than just watching a video or listening to someone briefly speak about a historical topic. Check out this impressive list of 16 museums: Jinsha Site Museum, Du Fu Cottage, Wuhou Memorial Temple, Sichuan Museum, Chengdu Museum (Old Hall), Chengdu Museum New Building, Sanhe Classic Car Museum, Sichuan Opera Museum, Chengdu Botanical Garden, Sichuan Science and Technology Museum, Teddy Bear Museum, Chengdu Industrial Civilization Museum, The Royal Tomb of Wang Jian, Chengdu Beer Culture Exhibition, Museum of Old Medicine, and the Sichuan Art Museum.



Top Recommended Tour

On this tight 3-day Chengdu city tour, you will immerse yourself in the unique Shu culture and have plenty of opportunities to take lots of photos of (and maybe “with”) pandas.



Arrive in Chengdu

Upon arrival in Chengdu, meet your private tour guide at the arrival hall after claiming your luggage. You will be transfer to the hotel, and checking in.

As night falls, after a good rest, you will begin your first exploration of the city under the guidance of your tour guide — a Food Tour that will satisfy your curiosity and appetite.

Enjoy over 10 popular local dishes plus a glass of rice wine or beer at a boutique bar while zooming through the streets of Chengdu by private tuktuk. Sichuan food is more than just spice, and your local guide will introduce you to a variety of flavors that have a long history in Chengdu giving you insight into each dish and restaurant we visit.



Wuhou Memorial Temple, Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum, Kuanzhai Alley, Local Tea House

A full day tour. Stroll through the Wuhou Memorial Temple, which was built in 223 AD and memorializes famous local heroes like Zhuge Liang, Liu Bei (general of kingdom Shu) and others. This breath-taking complex will make visitors feel as if they are in the famous Chinese book “The Romance of Three Kingdoms” (one of the most famous pieces of Chinese literature, often compared to being of Shakespearian importance in East Asia.) Take a short ride to Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum to learn about the great ancient poet Du Fu from the Tang Dynasty. Have a traditional lunch at a local restaurant and then take a walk through Kuanzhai Alley and around the historic neighborhood trying the most authentic and interesting snacks of Sichuan. Before you get too tired, find yourself a good seat in a local Tea House, sip some tea, and take a well-deserved break.



Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding, Jinsha Site Museum

After breakfast, head northwest to the outskirts of Chengdu to the Panda Breeding Center which takes about a half hour. The center has over 100 pandas who usually have their breakfast first thing in the morning (usually right after the center opens). This is an especially good time to see them as they are far more active during breakfast then they are throughout the rest of the day. If you are lucky, the highlight of your tour (and maybe even the entire trip) might be catching a glimpse of some new-born baby pandas in the delivery rooms called “the Sun” and “the Moon”. For an extra fee, the center (at the time of this writing) allows people to hold “toddler aged” pandas or sit right next to a big adult and pictures are allowed. After you’ve filled your memory card with photos, head back to the city center for lunch. Afterwards, proceed to Jinsha Site Museum to learn more about the local Shu culture from their impressive collection of artifacts and relics from the Shang and Zhou Dynasties.

Chengdu Attractions

Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding

★★★★★ | Panda Research

QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 成都大熊猫繁育研究基地 Chéng Dū Dà Xióng Māo Fán Yù Yán Jiū Jī Dì
- Built in April, 1978
- Duration: 2–4 hours
- Entrance fee: 58 RMB per person (extra fees charged for extra services)
- Opening hours: 07:30–18:00, year around
- Opening hours of ticket office: 07:30–17:00
- Address: 1375 North Panda Avenue, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China
- Best time to visit: All year
- How to get there: Take a bus from the downtown area that goes to “Dong Wu Yuan”, get off there and then take bus 87 or 198 to Xiong Mao Ji Di. Or, take a taxi and show the driver the Chinese name of the base (given above).



Located in a northern suburb of Chengdu, the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding is 15 km away from downtown , covers 67 hectares (about 165 acres) and serves as an important site for the ex-situ conservation of giant pandas. The base is a complete reconstruction of the pandas' natural habitat with lakes, rivers, creeks, bamboo groves, grassy areas, and so on. It also creates a harmonious atmosphere with verdant bamboos, singing birds, and fragrant flowers integrated into natural scenery and artificial landscapes. This eco-paradise is perfect for helping the naturally shy pandas improve their breeding rates, thereby increasing their critically low numbers. The research base contains other rare species as well.



Kuanzhai Alley

★★★★★ | Shopping / Food

QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 宽窄巷子
Kuān Zhǎi Xiàng Zi
- Built in 1718
- Duration: 2–4 hours
- Entrance fee: Free
- Opening hours: All day, all night
- Address: 8 Kuan Alley, Qingyang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province
- Best time to visit: All year
- How to get there:
 - a. Take subway Line 2, get off at Renmin Park Station and walk 400m; or take subway Line 4 and get off at Kuanzhai Alley
 - b. Take bus 62, 70, 93, 126 (Loop line), 127, 163 or 340, and get off at Kuanzhai Alley

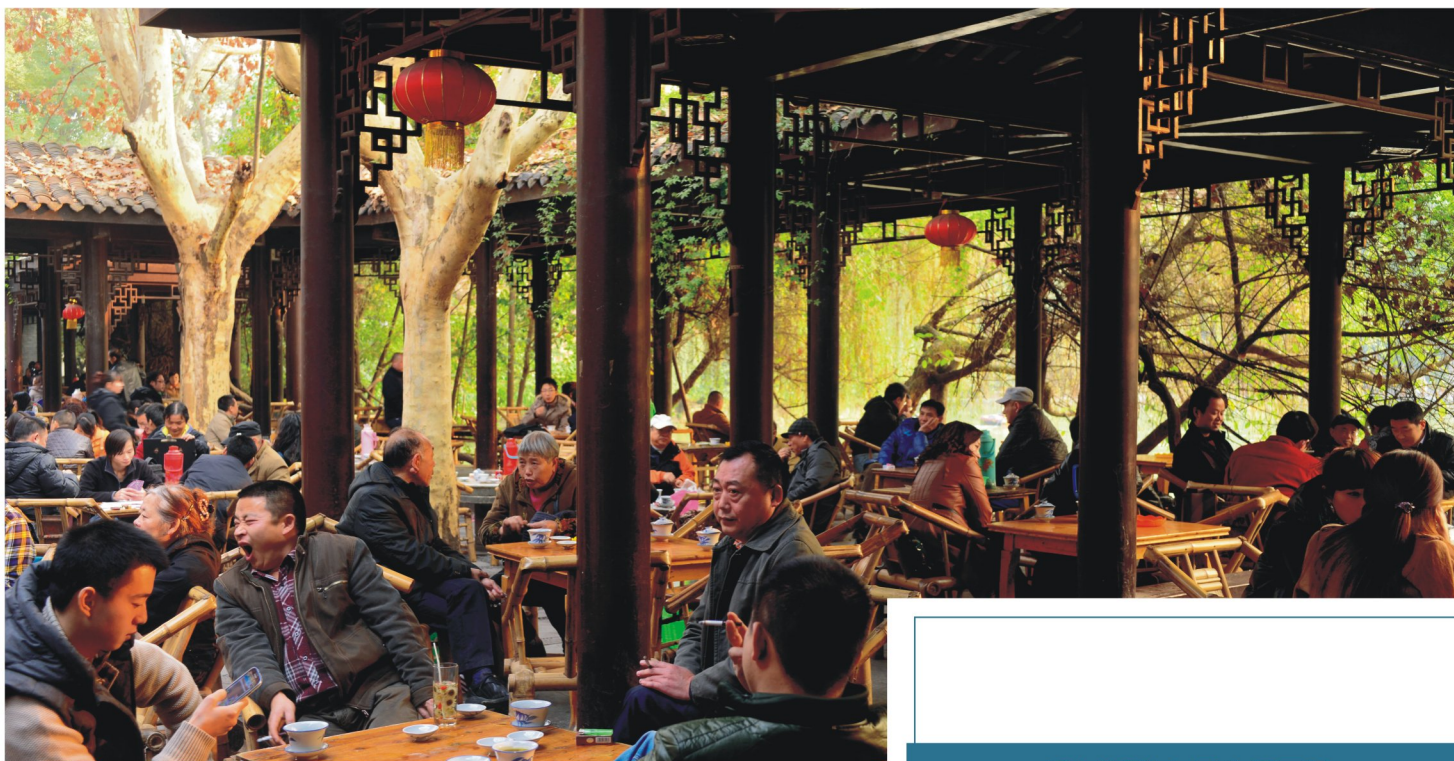


Kuanzhai alley is an ancient pedestrian street constructed during the Qing Dynasty. The name breaks down to mean Kuan (wide), Zhai (narrow), and Jing (井-shaped). It is not only a wonderful example of ancient architecture, but is also the only representation of northern China's Hutong architectural style in southern China. Kuanzhai Alley, combines the architectural features of northern China's ancient "Courtyard House" (Si He Yuan) with the traditional dwellings of western Sichuan.



Chengdu Renmin Park

★★★★★ | Park / Local life



Chengdu Renmin Park is a garden that combines cultural heritage with daily recreation and leisure. The locals in Chengdu often come here to drink tea and relax. It's hard to find a better place to see real local people going about their daily lives in the "Capital of Leisure" than at Renmin Park. There are always crowds of people

sitting in the shade during summer, trying to escape the hot sun. The best way to enjoy this park is to find a teahouse, order a cup of tea, and then spend the rest of the afternoon reading, doing some trip research, catching up with people back home, chatting with your travel companions, sitting and thinking about nothing, or enjoying watching all the people wandering through the park.

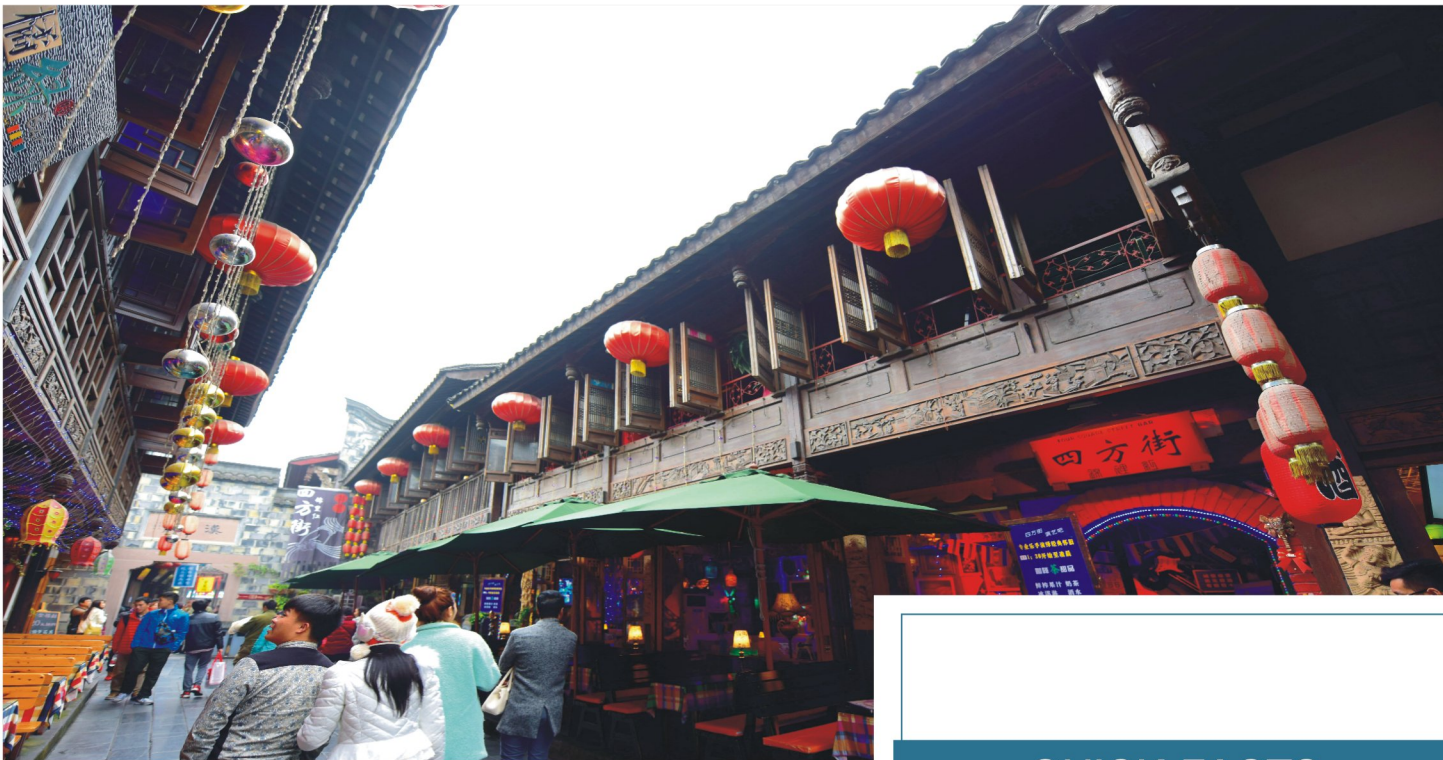


QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 成都人民公园 Chéng Dū Rén Mín Gōng Yuán
- Built in 1911
- Duration: 1–4 hours
- Entrance fee: Free. 12 RMB per person for the flower shows and 8 RMB per person for major festivals
- Opening hours: 06:30~22:00 in summer; 06:30~20:00 in winter
- Address: 12 Shaocheng Road, Qingyang District, Chengdu City
- Best time to visit: All year
- How to get there: Take bus 4, 5, 7, 13, 43, 47, 58, 64, 81, 85

Jinli Pedestrian Street

★★★★★ | Food / Architecture



Jinli Pedestrian Street was once one of the busiest streets of ancient West Shu. It was nationally renowned during the Qin through Han dynasties and the Three Kingdoms Period. Located near Wuhou Memorial Temple, Jinli Pedestrian Street today is enriched with cultural aspects from the Qin through Han

dynasties and Three Kingdoms Period, townscape design from the Ming and Qing dynasties, and folk customs of Western Sichuan (Chuanxi). This street represents the epitome of the slow, local life in Chengdu, with teahouses, inns, restaurants, bars, opera stages, local snacks, artwork, and local specialties fully conveying the unique charm of Sichuan folk customs.



QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 锦里古街 Jǐn lǐ Gǔ Jiē
- Built in 2004
- Duration: 2–3 hours
- Entrance fee: Free
- Opening hours: 5:00–23:00 (Lights turn off at 20:00)
- Address: 231–1 Wuhou Ci Street, Wuhou District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province
- Best time to visit: All year
- How to get there: Take bus 1, 57, 82, 334 or 335 and get off at Wuhou Ci; or take bus 8 or 21 and get off at Wuhou Ci East Street.



Jinsha Site Museum



The Jinsha Site Museum is located in the northwest corner of Chengdu. The current building is built on the original site of a tremendous archaeological find of the ancient Shu civilization called the “Jinsha Site”. It is listed on China’s National Grand Heritage Protection List (a national UNESCO–type list). The museum is open to the public for the purpose of protecting, displaying, and studying the Jinsha site and the ancient Shu civilization. It contains some of the most ancient remains ever found in China.

QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 金沙遗址博物馆 JĪN SHĀ YÍ Zhǐ Bó Wù Gǔ ān

- Constructed in: 2004
- Duration: 3–4 hours
- Entrance fee: 80 RMB per person; 20 RMB per person for 4D cinema; Tickets for the musical “Jinsha”, class B, 180 RMB; class A, 280 RMB; special seating, 380 RMB and VIP, 580 RMB. (On May 18th, “International Museum Day”, the Museum is open to visitors for free)

- Opening hours: Closed on Mondays. In peak season (May 1–October 31), 8:00 to 20:00; the ticket booth closes at 19:00. In low season (November 1 – April 30), 8:00–18:30; the ticket booth closes at 17:30.

- Address: No. 2, Jinsha Site Road, Qingyang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China

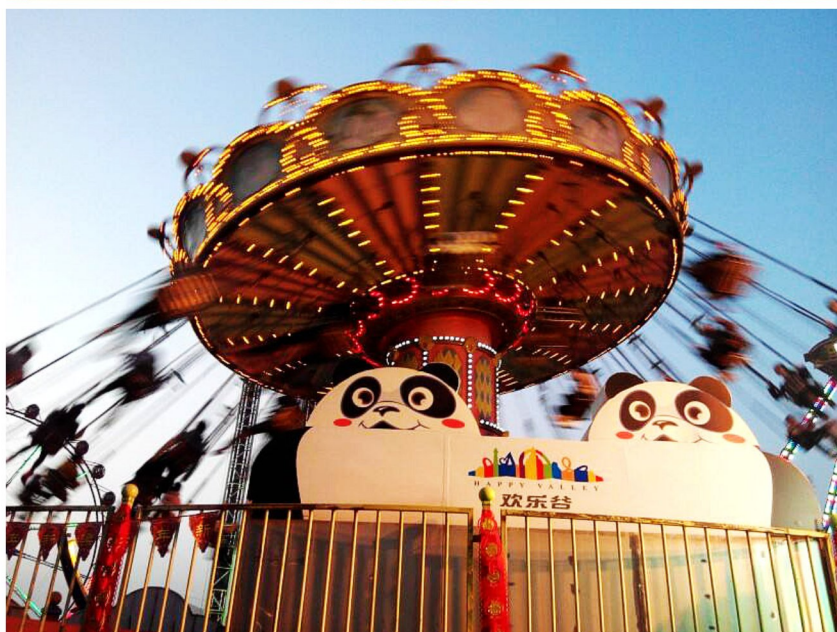
- Best time to visit: All year
- How to get there: Take bus 5, 79, 83, 111, 123, 147 or 163 and get off at the North Qingyang Avenue Station or take bus 7 and get off at the Jinsha Site Road Intersection



Happy Valley of Chengdu

★★★★ | Amusement Park / Leisure

Happy Valley of Chengdu, the third location of Happy Valley parks after Happy Valley of Shenzhen and Happy Valley of Beijing, is the largest modern theme park in Western China. Every year, it attracts numerous domestic and foreign visitors with the promise of “fashionable, dynamic, amusing and dreamlike” experiences. There are several themed-zones in the park, including Sunshine Port, Happy Time, Cyclone in Caribbean, Bashu Folklore, Flyland, Magic Castle, Flying across the Mediterranean, and Joy Light Year. The park has several rides including roller coasters and a log-flume, plenty of kiddie rides, and impressive shows.



QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 成都欢乐谷
Chéng Dū Huān Lè Gǔ
- Built in 2009
- Duration: 1 day
- Entrance fee: 200 RMB for adults, 120 RMB for children , RMB 80 at night (after 18:00)
- Opening hours: 09:00–21:00
- Address: 16 Xihua Avenue, Jinniu District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province
- Best time to visit: from March to November
- How to get there: Take Bus 36 from the North Railway Station or Bus 48 from the New South Gate and get off at Hua Qiao Cheng; or take Bus 56 from Yan Shi Kou or Bus 3, 22, 75, 93, 101, 109 from other stops, get off at Jiu Li Di, then take Bus 88, 95, 362 or 365, and get off at Hua Qiao Cheng. From Jiu Liu Di, you can either walk about ten minutes to get to the park, or take the park's free “Happy Bus” from Jiu Liu Di .



Wenshu Yuan Monastery

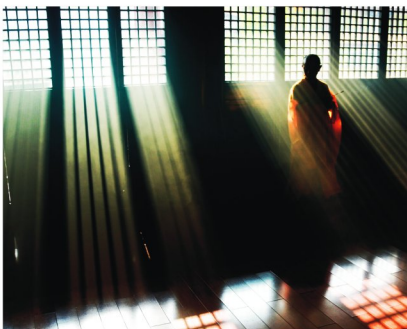


Religious structure / Culture



Originally built during the Sui Dynasty and renovated during the Qing Dynasty under the reign of Emperor Kangxi, the Wenshu Yuan Monastery is considered by the Chinese National Religious and Culture Council as one of the most important Buddhist temples in the country and the single most

important among the four major Buddhist temples located along the upper and lower Yangtze River. The sprawling complex contains six main halls, a plethora of Buddhist relics, and many more ancient buildings making it a top destination for Buddhist pilgrims, tourists, and students studying Buddhism. All buildings in the Wenshu Yuan Monastery are made completely of wood and retain their ancient Chuanxi Plain style.

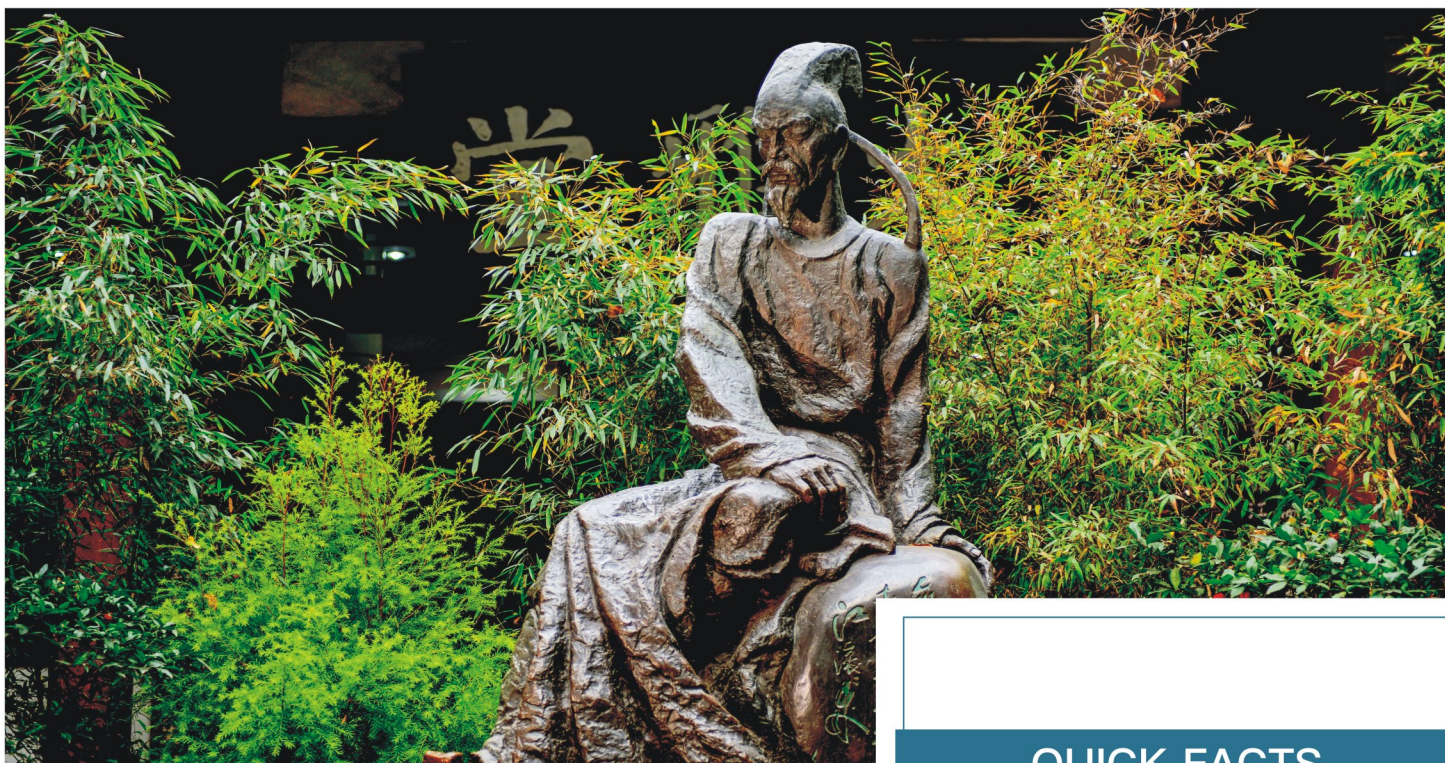


QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 文殊院 Wén Shū Yuàn
- Built in 605 AD
- Duration: 2–4 hours
- Entrance fee: Free
- Opening hours: 08:00–18:00
 - Address: 66 Wenshu Yuan Street, Qingyang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province
 - Best time to visit: All year
 - How to get there: Take Subway Line 1 and get off at Wenshu Yuan Station; or take Bus 42, 75, 126 or 127 and get off at West Stop of Da'an West Road; or take Bus 16, 55, 98 or 298 (nights), get off at Wenshu Yuan, and walk about 320 m.

Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum

★★★ | Historical site & Culture



Located on the picturesque bank of the Huanhua Brook outside of Chengdu and built by a man named Mr. Du Fu with the help of his friends. The Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum was where Mr. Du Fu and his family lived for nearly four years in an attempt to avoid the chaos and tragedies caused by an ongoing war at the time. Mr. Du Fu wrote over 240

poems while living here. The cottage is large, extremely elegant, and wonderfully positioned in a lush, serene setting. Covered cloisters adorn the inside while flower gardens grace the outside paths. Behind the cottage are several pavilions and ponds. You will also find interesting, fragrant, and beautiful fauna inside the cottage complex such as Machilus zuihoensis Hayata, wintersweet, orchids, and thick bamboo and pine groves.



QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 杜甫草堂 Dù Fǔ Cǎo Táng
- Built in 759 AD
- Duration: 1 – 2 hours
- Entrance fee: 60 RMB per person
- Opening hours: 08:00~18:30 in summer; 08:00~18:00 in winter
- Address: 37 Qinghua Road, Qingyang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province
- Best time to visit: All year
- How to get there: Take Bus 19, 35, 58, 59, 82, 165, 170, 208, 309, or 319 and get off at the Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum Stop



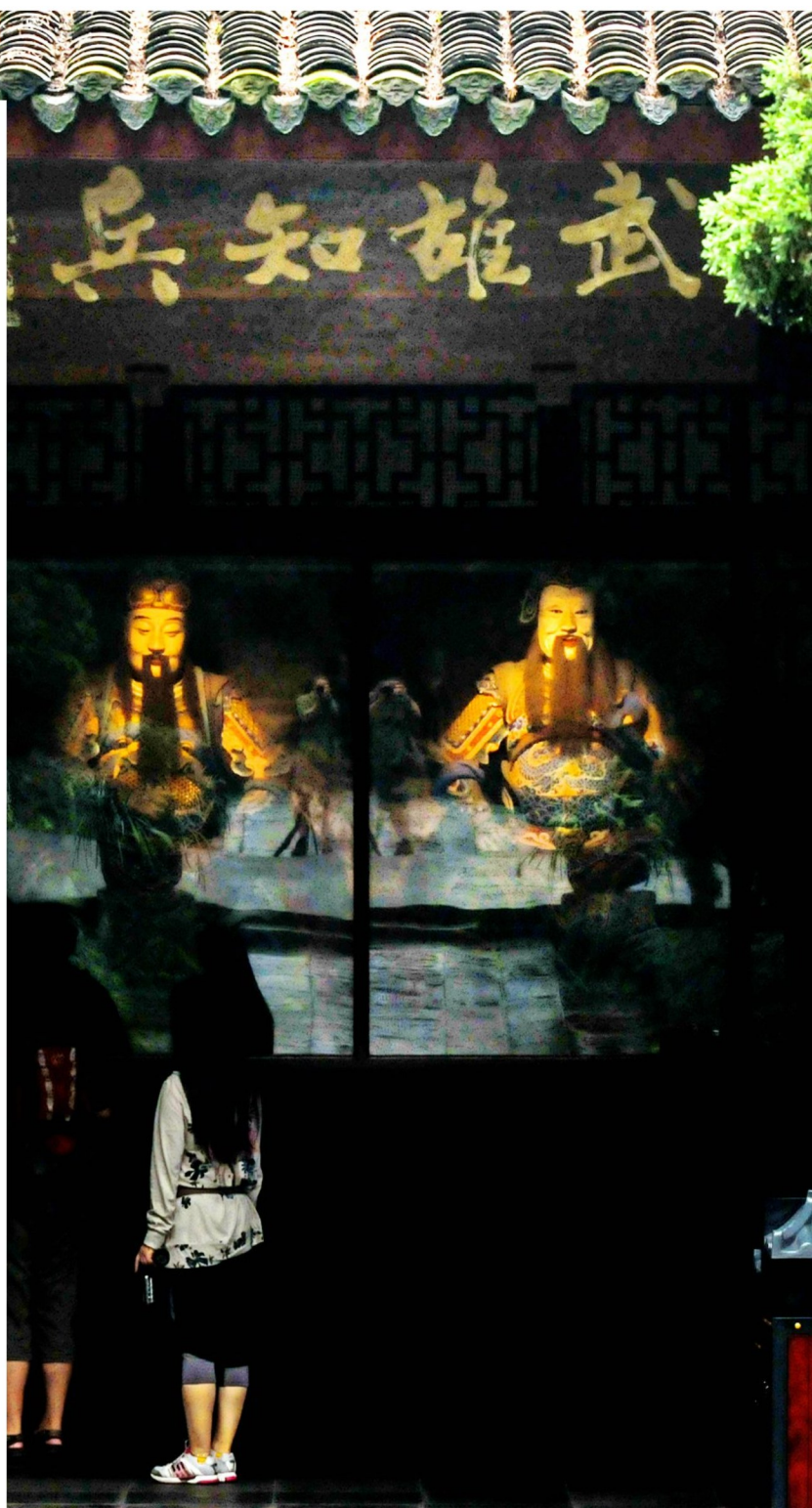
Wuhou Memorial Temple

★★★ | Historical site / Culture

The Wuhou Memorial Temple of Chengdu on Wuhou Ci was first built in 223 AD when the Hui Mausoleum of Liu Bei was under construction. This is considered the most influential heritage museum in the world dedicated to the Three Kingdoms and was built in memory of Zhuge Liang, Liu Bei, and other heroes of the Shu-Han Kingdom. For people interested in the history of the Three Kingdoms, this is a must-see stop. Visiting early in the morning is preferred as the crowds are usually sparse.

QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 武侯祠 Wǔ Hóu Cí
- Built in 223 AD
- Duration: 2–3 hours
- Entrance fee: 60 RMB adults, 30 RMB students, 120 RMB family
- Opening hours: 8:00–21:30 in high season (July 1st – October 7th); 8:00–18:30 in low season (October 8th – June 30th)
- Address: 231 Wuhou Ci Street, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province
- Best time to visit: All year
- How to get there: Take Bus 1, 57, 82, 334, or 335 and get off at Wuhou Ci; or take Bus 8 or 21 and get off at Wuhou Ci East Street



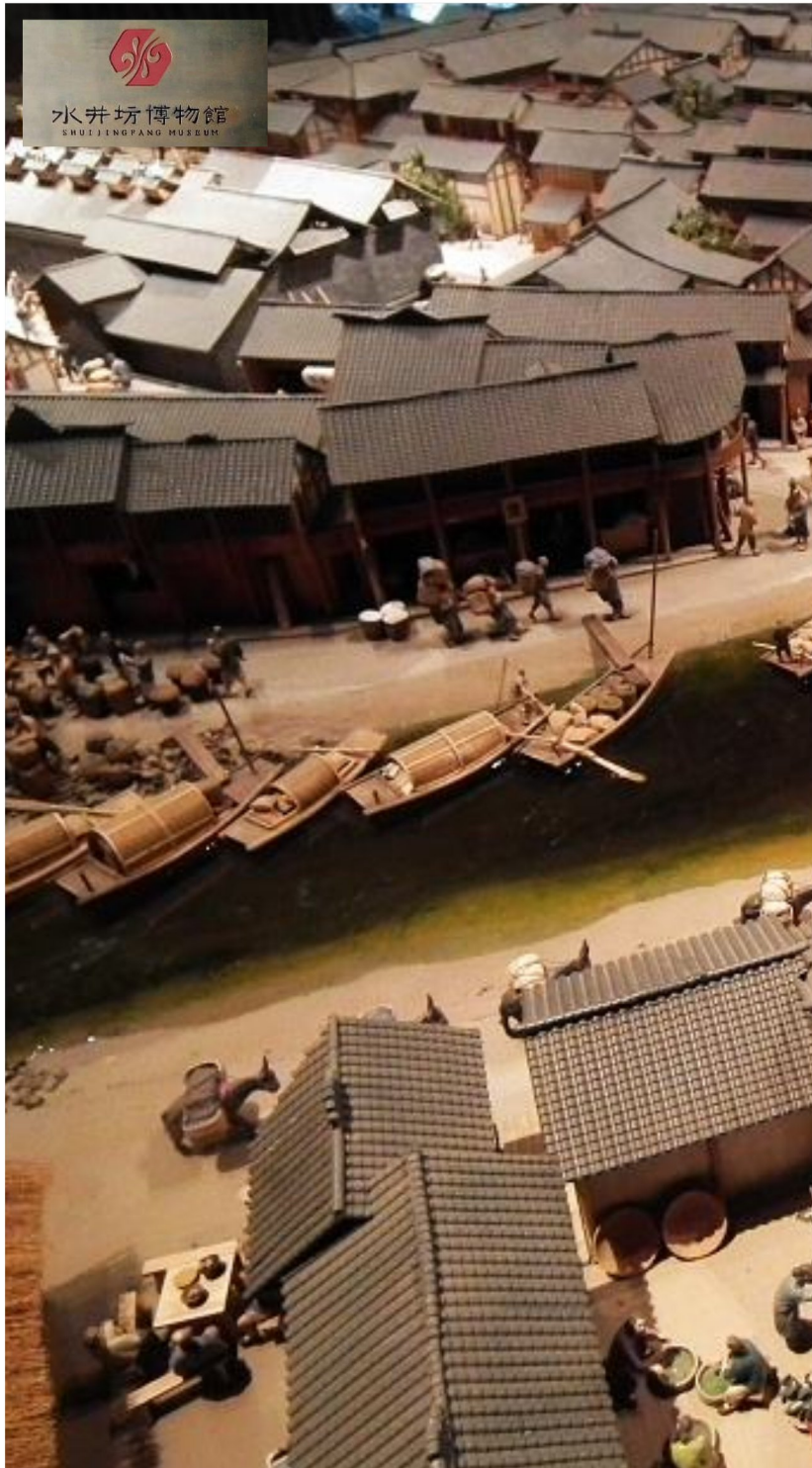
Shui Jing Fang Museum



Museum

Chengdu Shui Jing Fang museum is a good place to learn about the history of winemaking in Sichuan. It was discovered and renovated in 1998 and not only displays ancient Chinese winemaking equipment and wine wares, but also many other historical items.

The 600 year old Shui Jing Fang distillery site is on China's National Cultural Heritage list and is the oldest distillery still in operation. It's located in downtown Chengdu and the museum shows how China's most famous spirit, Baijiu (distilled from sorghum), is made.



QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 水井坊博物馆
Shuí Jǐng Fáng Bó Wù Guǎn
- Built 600 years ago
- Duration: 1–3 hours for each museum
- Entrance fee: 50 RMB
- Opening hours: 9:00am–17:00pm
- Address: 19 Shui Jing St., JinJiang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province
- Best time to visit: All year
- How to get there:
 - a. Take Subway Line 2, get off at DongMen Bridge Station and take exit B out of the station. Then walk 400m down Xiang Alley.
 - b. Take Bus 10, 18,43,47,104,152,335 and get off at ZhiQuan St. Then walk 400m to the museum.



AROUND CHENGDU

Dujiangyan Irrigation System ★★★★★

Ancient dam
Historical site

The Dujiangyan Irrigation System is the world's oldest non-dam irrigation system still in use and is historically as significant in Chinese history as the Great Wall. The compound is composed of the Yuzui Water Diversion Dam, the Feishayan Spillway, and the Baopingkou Water Inlet which together eliminate floods and turn the Chuanxi Plain into a beautiful and abundantly fertile region.

QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 都江堰 Dū Jiāng Yàn
- Built in 256 BC
- Duration: 3–4 hours
- Entrance fee: 90 RMB per person
- Opening hours: 08:00–17:30 (low season: December 1st – March 1st); 08:00–18:00 (high season: March 2nd – November 30th)
- Address: Dujiangyan City, Chengdu, China
- Best time to visit: All year
- How to get there: From Dujiangyan City, take Bus 1, 4 or the scenic shuttle bus





Mount Emei ★★★★★ | Mount

Mt. Emei is breath-taking peak often perched high above a sea of clouds giving visitors stunning airplane-like views. There are many Buddhist structures and temples on the way to the top, and the summit rewards visitors with an enormous golden-colored, intricately carved statue. Located near the city of Emeishan, on the southwestern edge of the Sichuan it is one of the area's four sacred Buddhist mountains (the other three being Jiuhua Shan, Putuo Shan, and Wutai Shan) and is on UNESCO's World Heritage list.

QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 峨眉山 Eméi Shān
- Duration: All day (4–5 hours travel time from Chengdu to the base. Around 4–6 hours to explore the mountain.
- Entrance fee: Peak season 185 RMB per person, low season 110 RMB per person.
- Opening hours: in summer and fall: 06:00–18:30 and in spring and winter: 07:00–17:50
- Address: No. 2, Jinsha Site Road, Qingyang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China
- Best time to visit: Spring and fall offers the best scenery and the opportunity to watch the sunrise or sunset upon a sea of clouds. Summer is also nice as the summit will be much cooler than the Chengdu. Winter can be beautiful too although snow and ice on the mountain's roads, trails, and steps may be a concern.
- Address: Emeishan City / Leshan City, Sichuan Province
- How to get to the base:
 - High-speed rail: take the high-speed train from Chengdu East or Chengdu South station (heading south) and get off at Emei Shan Station. Walk 10 minutes to the main bus station, take Bus 5 and get off at Bao Guo Si Station. Mount Emei base is within walking distance. The journey takes about 2 hours in total.
 - Intercity coach:
 - Option 1 — Take the intercity coach from Xin Nan Men Intercity Bus Station in Chengdu and arrive at Jiuzhu Transportation Center. Tickets are 45 RMB per person.
 - Option 2 — Take a coach with a tour to the Emei Scenic Area from Kuanzhai Xiangzi (Alley). The Coach departs around 7:00 in the morning and the journey takes about 2.5 hours. Tickets range from 65 RMB to 129 RMB.
- How to get to the summit: There are buses that will take you halfway up the mountain (40 RMB) or to near the top (50 RMB). From the top bus station, you can also take a cable car (60 RMB up, 55 RMB down) the rest of the way to the summit. If you want to go down by bus (after hiking up), the ticket from Leidong Terrace to Baoguo temple costs 50 RMB.

Jianchuan Museum ★★★★★ | Museum

Jianchuan Museum is a folklore museum which covers many societal issues such as war and peace, the future, and Chinese folk customs. New exhibitions are planned to open soon and will cover varied topics like Japanese aggression, revolution, earthquake relief, and more.

QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 建川博物馆
Jiàn Chuān Bó Wù Guǎn

- Built in 2005

- Duration: 1–4 hours

- Entrance fee: 60 RMB per person for full ticket (Three-day validity); 20 RMB per person for individual hall ticket (One-day validity)

- Opening hours: 09:00–17:30

- Address: An'ren Ancient Town, Dayi County, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province

- Best time to visit: All year

- How to get there:

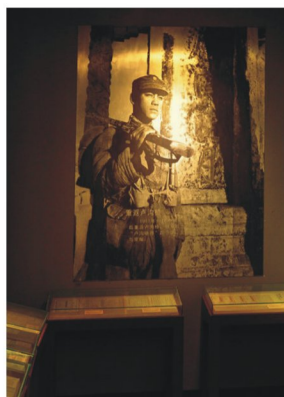
A: Chengdu Cha Dian Zi Bus Station to An'ren Town: every 30 minutes, 70-minute journey. More buses are made available during holidays

B: Chengdu Shi Yang Chang Bus Station to An'ren Town: every 20 minutes, 60-minute journey.

C: Shuangliu Bus Station to An'ren Town: every 60 minutes, 45-minute journey.

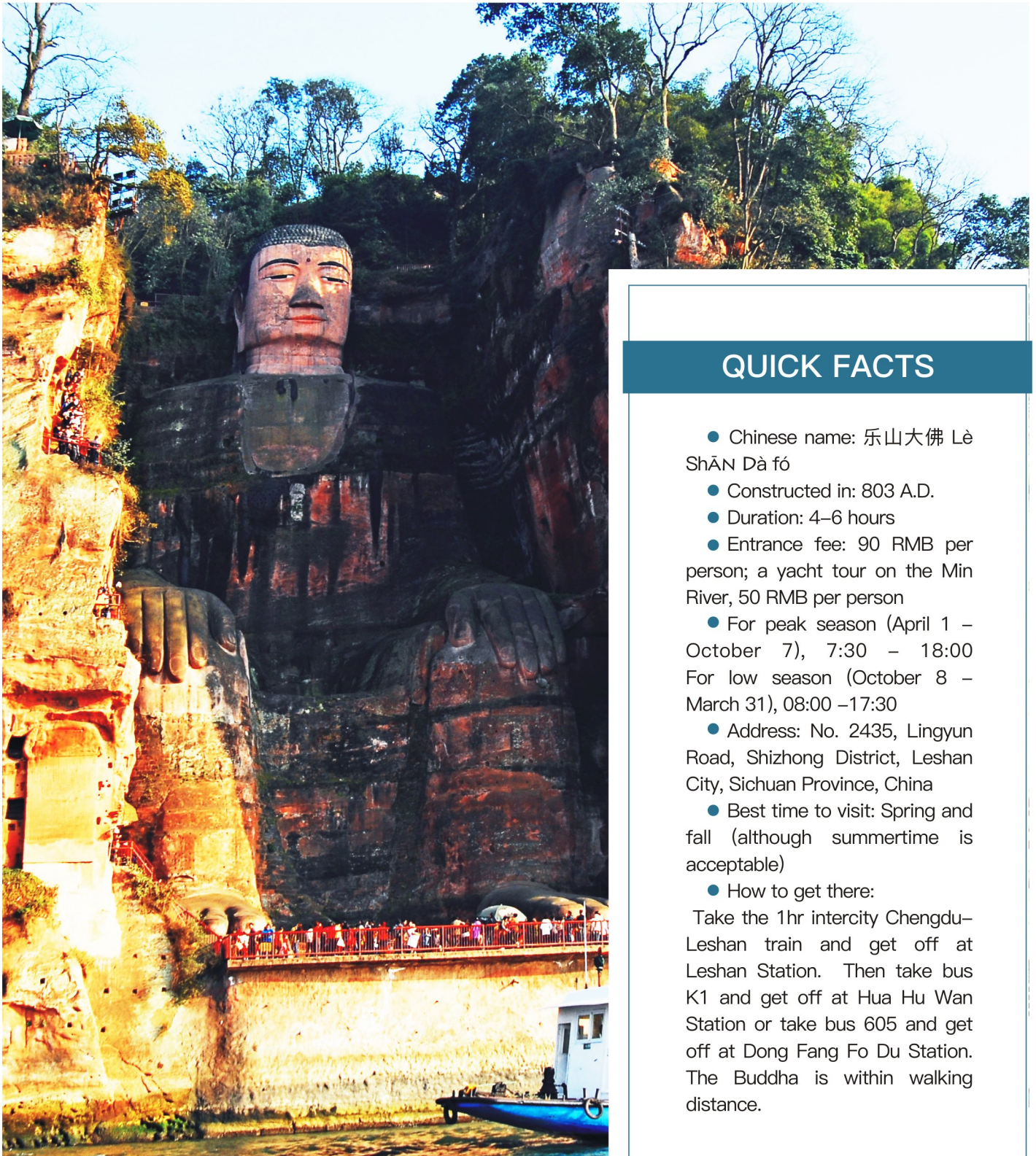
D: Chongzhou Bus Station to An'ren Town: 20-minute journey.

E: Dayi County– An'ren Town: Take Bus 11 and get off at Jianchuan Museum



Leshan Giant Buddha ★★★★★ | Nature / Buddhist Culture

Like something straight out of a Buddhist Indiana Jones movie, the Leshan Giant Buddha statue sits ominously on the bank of the jungly Min river. Carved directly into the high rock-walled river bank, it stands at a jaw-dropping 71 meters (233ft) and visitors can walk right up to the base or observe it standing only a few feet away from the head. It's also possible to observe from across the river for the most spectacular photos. Leshan has been included on UNESCO's World Heritage list and is over 1300 years old.



QUICK FACTS

- Chinese name: 乐山大佛 Lè Shān Dà fó
- Constructed in: 803 A.D.
- Duration: 4–6 hours
- Entrance fee: 90 RMB per person; a yacht tour on the Min River, 50 RMB per person
 - For peak season (April 1 – October 7), 7:30 – 18:00
 - For low season (October 8 – March 31), 08:00 – 17:30
- Address: No. 2435, Lingyun Road, Shizhong District, Leshan City, Sichuan Province, China
- Best time to visit: Spring and fall (although summertime is acceptable)
- How to get there:

Take the 1hr intercity Chengdu–Leshan train and get off at Leshan Station. Then take bus K1 and get off at Hua Hu Wan Station or take bus 605 and get off at Dong Fang Fo Du Station. The Buddha is within walking distance.

Eating in Chengdu

Top Recommended Dishes

Chuan Cuisine, or Sichuan Cuisine, is one of the eight major cuisines in China and has gotten a reputation (fairly or not) for being somewhat spicier than other Chinese cuisines. This heat, or 'La', is derived from different ingredients and methods of preparation: Ma La (peppercorns), Hu La (baked chili over a charcoal fire), Xiang La (savory fragrance from sesame oil), Xian La (fresh chilis), Cao La (chopped and fermented salty chili) and Suan La (pickled chili). For each dish, a special and unique spice blend is used.



1. Chengdu Hot Pot (Ma La Spicy)

Hot pot is basically a rich broth, served at the table along with side dishes of fresh vegetables and a variety of raw meat. Diners then make their own bowl with whichever ingredients they wish and the thinly sliced meat is cooked directly in the boiling broth. In Chengdu, the broth is usually cooked with red, hot chili peppers making it a bit spicier than other hot pot variations although some restaurants in Chengdu will offer less spicy broth options — you just need to ask and/or do a little research. The experience is memorable as it's both a social event (assuming you are eating hot pot with several friends) and a culinary highlight as the delicious, savory spice creates an ongoing tingly sensation as you eat. Vegetables are usually leafy green herbs that are mainly there for adding flavor,

although heartier vegetables like carrots, potatoes, corn are possible to be added at some restaurants. The meats are usually wonderfully thin-sliced lamb, beef, pork or chicken, along with the uniquely Chinese fish or beef balls (minced and rolled) and seafood and they are all cooked directly in the broth on the table.

- Characteristics:

- Rich, savory, and spicy (remember Ma, La, Xian and Xiang mentioned above).

- Recommendation:

- Shu Jiuxiang Hot Pot Restaurant

- Address: No. 53, Nanfu Street, Section 2, Renmin South Road, Jinjiang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China

2. Kung Pao Chicken (Hu La Spicy)

Although originally from the neighboring Guizhou Province, it is not mostly considered part of Chuan Cuisine. It is made from chicken, dried chili, peanuts, peppercorns, and dried, lightly sautéed chilis.

- Characteristics: Sweet and spicy.
- Recommendation:
People's Dining Hall
- Address: 10, No. 16, Yulin East Street, Section 4, Renmin South Road, Wuhou District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province.



3. Mapo Tofu

The origin of Mapo Tofu can be traced back to the end of the 19th century and a female cook running a small restaurant near the Wanfu Bridge in Chengdu. For vegetarians, be forewarned — this dish is not necessarily vegetarian despite its name. Traditional Mapo Tofu, which is the most common form found in all of China, contains tofu and minced meat (used in the sauce). For those wanting a purely vegetarian dining experience, it's important to ask the restaurant first if they offer a vegetarian version — or, to save a little hassle, research your restaurant before going out. Also, be forewarned, this dish is usually served spicy. In Chinese, the flavor is

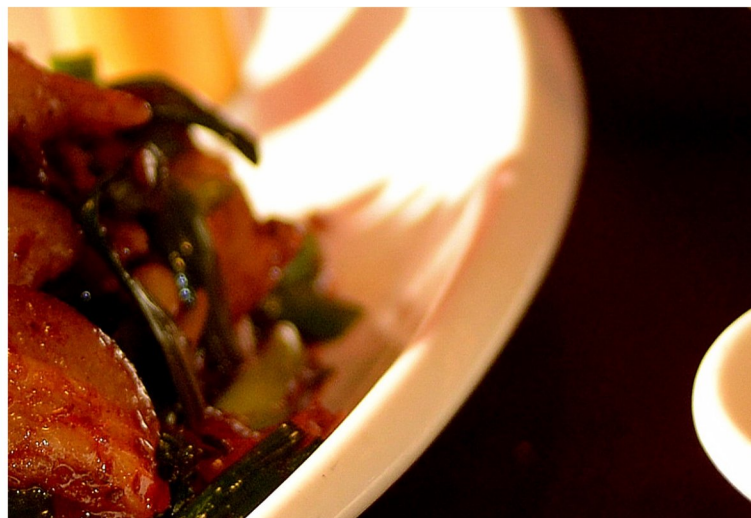
described as Ma (numbing), La (spicy hot), Su (flaky), Xiang (aromatic) and Nen (tender). A light oily surface on the dish shows proper cooking and high quality as the flavors are richer and more savory when cooked properly which also produces that light layer of natural, flavorful oil. It's highly recommended to eat Mapo Tofu while warm.

- Characteristics: Savory, rich, and spicy
- Recommendation:
Chen's Mapo Tofu
- Address: 10–12, No. 10, Qinghua Road, Qingyang District, Chengdu City, China.

4. Twice Cooked Pork (Huiguo Rou)

This is one of the most popular dishes in Sichuan cuisine and is usually not as spicy as many other dishes. Pork is boiled until medium, then it's added to a mixture of doubanjiang (Sichuan chili bean sauce), stir-fried garlic, and sweet soybean paste. The whole mix is then sautéed to slowly bring out all the flavors.

- Characteristics: Tender, moist, and not greasy
- Recommendation:
Taolin Restaurant
- Address: 1, No. 69, Dongsheng Street, Jinjiang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China



5. Shredded Pork in Garlic Sauce (Yuxiang Rousi)



Tender and juicy shredded pork with a slight fish fragrance (Yuxiang) made by mixing fermented, salty, hot chili peppers with sugar and vinegar. It makes for an interesting taste sensation as the sweet and sour come first and the spicy heat comes last.

- Characteristics: Salty, sweet, sour, and spicy
- Recommendation:
Chen Mapo Restaurant
- Address: 10-12, No. 10, Qinghua Road, Qingyang District, Chengdu City, China.



6. Boiled Pork



Boiled pork is a staple dish in Sichuan. Pork simply boiled in water and chili oil and it comes out spicy and tender.

- Characteristics: spicy and hearty
- Recommendation:
Yutian Restaurant
- Address: 9, No. 20, Section 2, Hongxing Road, Jinjiang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China





7. Sliced Beef Tripe and Organ Meat in Chili Sauce (Fuqi Feipian)



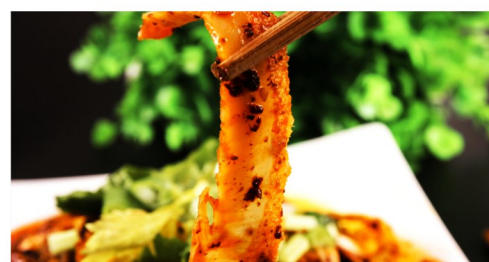
This one is not for the faint of heart, but has a deliciously deep meat flavor. A mixture of different organ meats such as cattle scalp, heart, tongue, tripe are combined with regular beef, marinated in red oil (made from chilis, Sichuan peppercorn powder, and sesame) and then boiled.

- Features: Spicy, deep meatiness, and aromatic.

- Recommendation:

Ziyan Baiwei Chicken (chicken of layered flavors)

- Address: G1 & G2, 1F of Hongxing FAgriculture Trading Market, No. 98, Dongsheng Street, Jinjiang District, Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China



Top Restaurants

In addition to numerous hot-pot restaurants and the dishes mentioned above, Chengdu has many excellent restaurants which feature a variety of cuisines — including other varieties of Chinese food, east and southeast Asian dishes, and even western food for those wanting a small reminder of home. Here, we'll continue to focus on establishments that serve mostly Sichuan cuisine, but for visitors looking for alternatives, rest assured that Chengdu is a modern city with a wide variety of dining options.

①

The Bridge Upscale Innovative Sichuan Cuisine

The Bridge is the first restaurant project in China from renowned Chinese chef André Chiang. This is an upscale, fine dining establishment located near Anshun Bridge, one of Chengdu's most important historical landmarks, and strives to create an international interpretation of Sichuan cuisine.

Average price per person: 500 RMB

Opening hours: 11:30–14:00, 17:30–22:00

Address: 66 East Binjiang Road, Jinjiang District, Chengdu, Sichuan China

②

Shujiuxiang Hot Pot Restaurant Hot Pot

The Shujiuxiang Hot Pot Restaurant is so good, it's nationally known. Here, they use an innovative pot method to facilitate cooking, use fresh ingredients, and their broth is considered one of the very best in the city.

Average price per person: 100 RMB

Opening hours: 11:00–15:00

Address: 66 East Binjiang Road, Jinjiang District, Chengdu, Sichuan China

③

Wenshu Temple Vegetarian Vegetarian

Wenshu Temple Vegetarian is located in the Wenshu Monastery (Manjushri Monastery) in north Chengdu and is the first vegetarian restaurant of the city. The meat substitute for “Spicy Chicken Nuggets” is tofu which is soaked in local red chili oil with many different seasonings. The fish substitute for “Braised Fish” has a similar texture to fish and a crispy outer shell. The restaurant is popular with locals and dining inside a monastery is a memorable experience itself.

Average price per person: Buffet, 35 RMB (with a 5 RMB refund for those who don't waste food), Vegetarian Hot-pot, 50 RMB

Opening hours: Buffet: 11:15–14:30; Vegetarian Hot Pot: 11:00–21:00

Address: No. 15, Wenshu Yuan Street, Qingyang District, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

④

Chen's Mapo Tofu

Local delicacies

Chen's Mapo Tofu's dates all the way back to 1862 — a true Chengdu legend. The decorations, lanterns in the hall, traditional wooden tables, and armless vintage chairs tell the tale of a restaurant from the Qing

Dynasty. The dish “Mapo Tofu” is delicious, salty and spicy. Also, they serve a wonderful Boiled Fish, Kung Pao Chicken, Twice Cooked Pork (Huiguo Rou), and Blood Curd (Mao Xuewang) — all fairly spicy dishes.

Average price per person:

50 RMB

Opening hours: 11:30 – 14:30 and 5:30 – 21:00

Address: 10–12, No. 10, Qinghua Road, Qingyang District, Chengdu, Sichuan China

⑤

Sichuan Folk Traditional Sichuan Cuisine Sichuan Opera Show

Blue brick walls, old wood carvings, and stone lions perched at the doors are all part of this stylish Chengdu establishment. Authentic Sichuan cuisine is cooked with quality ingredients. Diners are also treated to amazing, entertaining, and mind-blowing traditional performances from Sichuan opera's “face-changing” and “shadow-puppet” show.

Average price per person:

77 RMB

Opening hours: 10:00–21:00

Address: Building #3, Phase II of The Atrium, No. 169, Xiadongdajie Section, Dongdajie Street, Jinjiang District, Chengdu, Sichuan, China



| | |
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| ① | ② |
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| ④ | ⑤ |



Best Streets for Great Eats

There are several famous streets in Chengdu well known for having a variety of restaurants, as well as being quaint, quiet places great for observing local life.

Kuixinglou Street

Old German-style buildings which had laid idle for years have now been transformed into ultra-modern constructions with a Chinese flare. This small street includes more than a dozen shops scattered from one end to the other. Upscale Western-styled restaurants, vegetarian restaurants, and authentic local restaurants provide visitors with a variety of food options.

Recommendation: Shaocheng Weidao, Super-in Chwan Chwan (Hot Skewers in Hot Pots), “No Cat French Desserts”, and “Lobster Island” are all good choices.

Address: Kuixinglou Street, Qingyang District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China.

How to get there: Take bus 341, 54, 48 or 30 and get off at Yushu Street East Station. It is within walking distance from here.

Nearby attractions: Kuanzhai Alley and Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum



Yuling Living Square

Visitors can experience ordinary Chinese life here in the alleys around the Yulin Community. People still lead a “slow life” here and thus makes a trip to this street a great cultural experience too. Hot pots, meat skewers, crawfish, other grilled dishes, barbequed rabbit, and even rabbit kidneys can be found here — yes, Chengdu people love meat, even organ meat. This street is a gourmet paradise in the eyes of locals.

Recommendation: Wangma Shredded Rabbits and Yulin Chuanchuanxiang (Sichuan skewers)

Address: Yulin Street, Wuhou District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China.

Transportation: Take bus 153 or 1006 and get off at Yulin East Road Station. The Living Square is within walking distance.

Nearby attractions: Wuhou Shrine and Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum





Xiangheli Lane

This street is an ancient residential community with a strong Chengdu look and feel which has now become a special dining street. Most shops open after 10 o'clock in the morning and it is still fairly quiet here during the day. In the evening, it comes alive with people ready for dinner. There are hot pot barbecues and other styles of small restaurants all along the street.

Recommendation: Ziwei Grilled Fish, Weng's Bobo (jar) Chicken and Kang's Grilled Bullfrog

Address: Intersection of Tianxiang Street, Chenghua District, Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China

How to get there: Take Bus 8, 106 or 237 and get off at Mengzhuiwan Jiekou Station. Or take Metro Line 4 and get off at Yushuang Road Subway Station.

Nearby attractions: Wuhou Shrine



Jinli Pedestrian Street

Jinli Pedestrian Street, the oldest commercial street in Chengdu, is a great place to see local folk art and is a must-see for tourists who love art, home decoration, or just browsing and shopping. Almost all Chengdu snacks can be found here: sweet water noodles, buckwheat noodles, San Dapao (sticky rice balls, which make a lot noise as they are cooked), Sugar and Oil Guozi (fried sticky rice balls with black sugar and sesame seeds) and Dan Hong Gao (a stuffed pancake/crepe). The old streets here are a great place to watch people strolling and enjoying an afternoon or evening snack. The area also offers local opera performances, Guzheng performances, and a nice selection of tea-houses.

Recommendation: Damiao Hot Pot, Golden Beef Pancake

Address: 1, No. 231, Wuhouci Avenue, Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China

How to get there: Take bus 1, 57, 82, 334, and get off at Wuhouci Bus Station. The restaurants are within walking distance.

Street Food

Brick-and-mortar restaurants are not the only places to get great food in Chengdu. Food stalls often serve up some of the most memorable tastes for visitors and will be found scattered throughout the city.

Visitors should know that the health standards employed by food stalls are often not very different from those observed at established restaurants. And, one major benefit of eating at food stalls is the fact that you can clearly see the food being prepared, the ingredients that are used, the storage practices of those ingredients, and the hygienic standards of the chef. All of these issues are well-hidden at most restaurants (with one exception being “Lanzhou” style restaurants in China — the ones that make hand-pulled noodles — which usually have large windows between the kitchen and the dining area).



Shopping

Top Items to take back Home

After enjoying the professionals of Chengdu preparing your meals, you may want to try and recreate some of the dishes, or beverages, back home.

Chengdu Hot Pot Seasoning

Generally, local hot pot restaurants sell their own hot pot seasoning blends. Unlike the ones bought in supermarkets, this hot pot seasoning is the most authentic.

Sichuan style Broad-Bean Sauce (Doubanjiang)

This is a wonderfully rich and unique soy-based sauce and is essential for properly preparing authentic Sichuan dishes. It uses fermented soybeans and chilis which gives it a spicy kick.

Tea

Chengdu has the largest number of tea houses in China. Some people even say that Chengdu is “a city in a tea bowl”. The most representative and endemic of Sichuan tea is “Zhuyeqing” and “Bi Tan Piao Xue” — both are a style of green, jasmine tea. One great thing about bringing back tea is it barely weighs anything!

Sichuan Silk Brocade

Here’s one item worth taking home that is not for consumption. This is one of Chengdu’s most famous

handicrafts — a unique and beautiful style of stitching. Highly skilled and experienced weavers spend hours hand-stitching decorative and highly detailed patterns into a variety of clothes and textiles — shirts, blouses, pillow cases, sheets, tapestries, etc. For those who like hand-woven items, plan to spend the better part of an afternoon browsing or shopping for these — and leave extra room in your suitcase. These make fantastic gifts too.

Top Places for Shopping

①

Chunxi Road

Chunxi Road has a mind-boggling number of big, name-brand stores and little private shops selling so many items, we simply can't even begin to list them here. It's one of the best places in Chengdu to find fantastic deals because this is a real shopping district mainly for locals, not a touristy area. So slip on your most comfortable shoes (there are very few places to sit and you will be on your feet for hours without realizing it) and bargain hard.

Address: Chunxi Road, Jinjiang District, Chengdu, Sichuan Province

②

Kejia Lane

Kejia Lane is a hip, trendy street near Chunxi Road popular with young people for its wide array of stores selling the latest in fashion. There are many food and beverage shops on the street, so it's a great place to take a break and enjoy some local tea (or coffee if that's your thing).

Address: Jinjiang District, Chengdu,

Sichuan Province (near Chunxi Road)

③

Sino-Ocean Taikoo Li Chengdu

Located in the Chunxi Road area, Sino-Ocean Taikoo Li Chengdu is a brand spanking new area full of international luxury brands and Michelin-starred restaurants. If you get tired of the old and ancient and have a hankering for modern and cosmopolitan, this is some of the best Chengdu has to offer. It's also perhaps the best place in the city to buy genuine Gucci, Coach, LV, or Kate Spade items (buying elsewhere, especially at non-authorized stores, probably means what you're buying is not authentic even if the price tag is high); however, be aware that prices for genuine luxury items in China are usually much more expensive than in western countries. For those not interested in forking over \$1,000 USD/EU for a handbag, Taikoo Li is an uber-modern, glitzy, charming street full of life and a great place to see how the upper-class of China live. It's also one of

the best places in the city for a fine dining experience.

Address: No. 8, Shamao Street, Jinjiang District, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

④

Chengdu International Financial Square (IFS)

What attracts the most visitors to IFS is the large Panda Bear statue climbing on the building. This lovely panda has a fascinating attraction to youth which make IFS no longer an Conventional shopping mall. There are luxury brands and famous chain restaurants here, which make IFS the highest-end shopping mall and a landmark of Chengdu. You can have a photo taken with the "Panda" on the terrace of the roof.

Opening hours: 10:00–22:00

Address: No.1, Section 3, Hongxing Road, Jinjiang District, Chengdu (near Daci Temple Road, Chunxi Road Pedestrian Street)



Transportation

Taxi

Taxis are plentiful, efficient, affordable, and safe in Chengdu (as well as in most of the China) The base rate is 8–9 RMB, depending on the type of car, and then 1.9 RMB for every kilometer. A night subsidy is charged from 23:00 to 6:00. All taxis have easily displayed meters and usually the drivers are very good about using them. If you do get in a taxi and the meter (with bright red LED numbers) is not turned on within the first few seconds of the trip (again, very rare), just point to it and the driver will turn it on.

Tip: If you're traveling in summer and the driver has the windows down and the AC off (which is more common than you may think), if you'd really like for it to be on, you can usually communicate this wish by pointing in the area of the AC control and then waving your hand back and forth in front of your face indicating that you're hot. However, since most distances are fairly short and the ride will be over in 5–15min, it may not be enough time for the car to cool down. So, before you get in a taxi on a hot day, just make sure the windows are UP and check to make sure the car is cool as soon as you open the door — or be prepared to sweat. During the day, don't be afraid to pass on a taxi, even if you stopped it, as the driver will easily find another passenger.

A great way to hail taxi's now is through a taxi-hailing app. The most popular, and arguably best one, is the Apple backed app “Didi Chuxing”, simply called “Didi”.

Bus:

Pros:

- 1) Buses are as cheap as the subway (usually only 1–2 RMB)
- 2) China is famous for having very comprehensive bus systems covering nearly every corner of every city meaning you won't have to walk very far once getting off.
- 3) Buses come frequently with popular lines arriving possibly every

minute during rush hour, but rarely longer than every 10 minutes.

- 4) Buses are modern and usually based on Japanese or German designs.
- 5) Some buses even use hybrid engines making them better for the environment.
- 6) During summer, they always have the AC on.



Subway:

The subway is the fastest, nicest, coolest, and the most convenient way to move around Chengdu. Modern, climate-controlled trains whisk you around the city quickly efficiently, and best of all, very affordably. While taxis are affordable by western standards, you'd need to take several subway trips before equaling the cost of just one taxi ride. True, you'll need to walk a little to get to your final destination, but Chengdu's subway system has stops at most major (and even minor) popular destinations — and traffic is never an issue.

Notes and Tips:

Taking the subway, even at night, is extremely safe. All stations are well lit and have security guards. Westerners who are used to doggy, dingy, or poorly lit subways with no security are in for a treat. China's subways are the complete opposite. Subway maps, found inside the trains and all over the stations, use both Chinese characters and their Pinyin counterparts (Pinyin is Chinese written using the Roman alphabet). For those not familiar with riding subways, the following is important: before boarding a train, find your destination on a map and then look at the FINAL DESTINATION going in that direction. The name of the final destination is important in order to find which train you need.

While built somewhat out of numerical order, these are the current open lines:
Line 1, Line 2, Line 3, Line 4, Line 7 and Line 10.

All train stations conveniently connect to the subway system.

Chengdu (Train North Station): Line 1 North Railway Station

Chengdu East: Line 2 Chengdu East Railway Station

Chengdu South: Line 1 South Railway Station

Here are some of the more popular attractions and their corresponding subway lines :

Line 1: Wenshu Yuan Monastery, Tianfu Square, and Global Center.

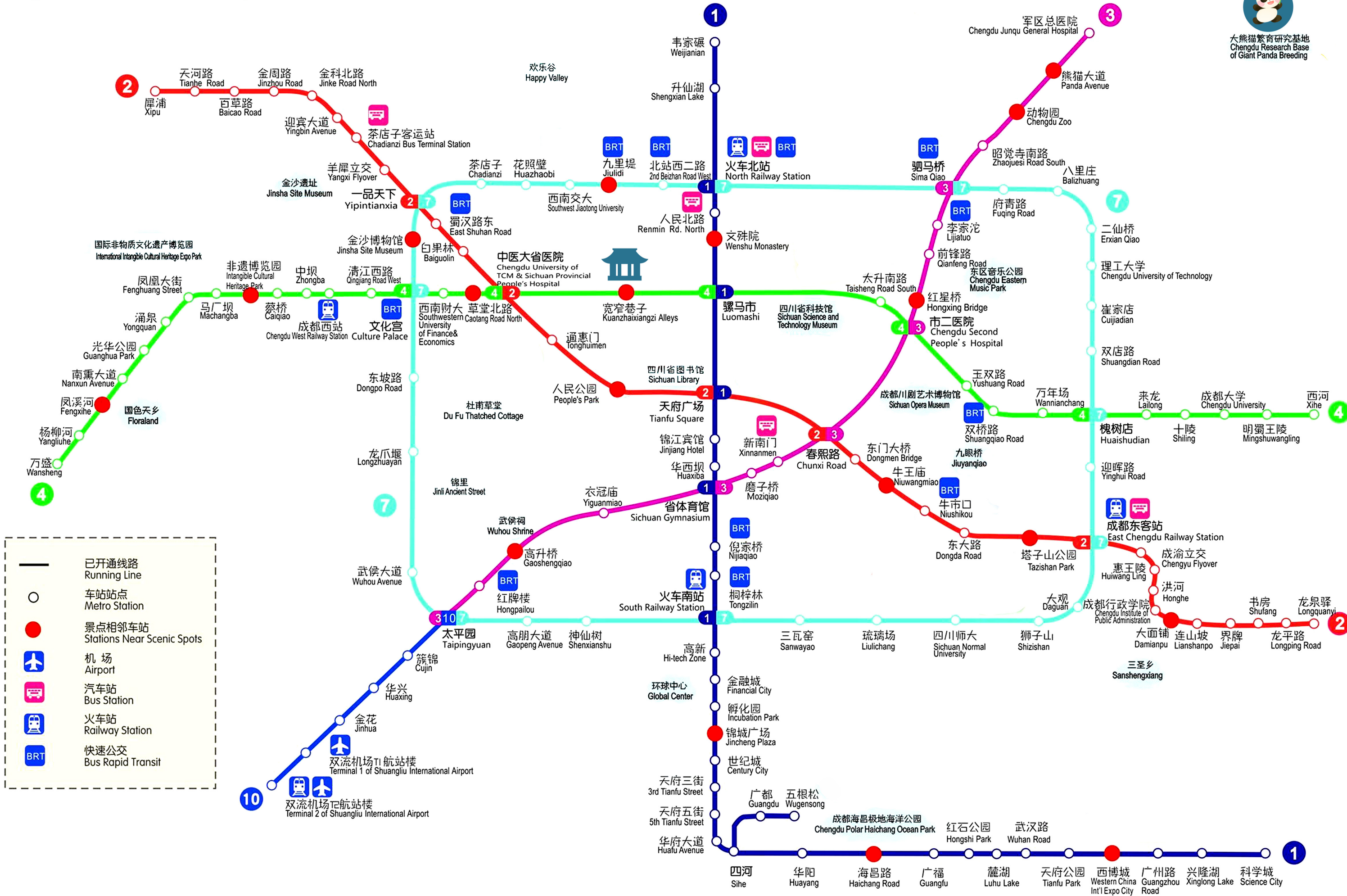
Line 2: Chunxi Road,

Line 3: Wuhou Memorial Temple, Jinli Pedestrian Street, and the Panda Base.

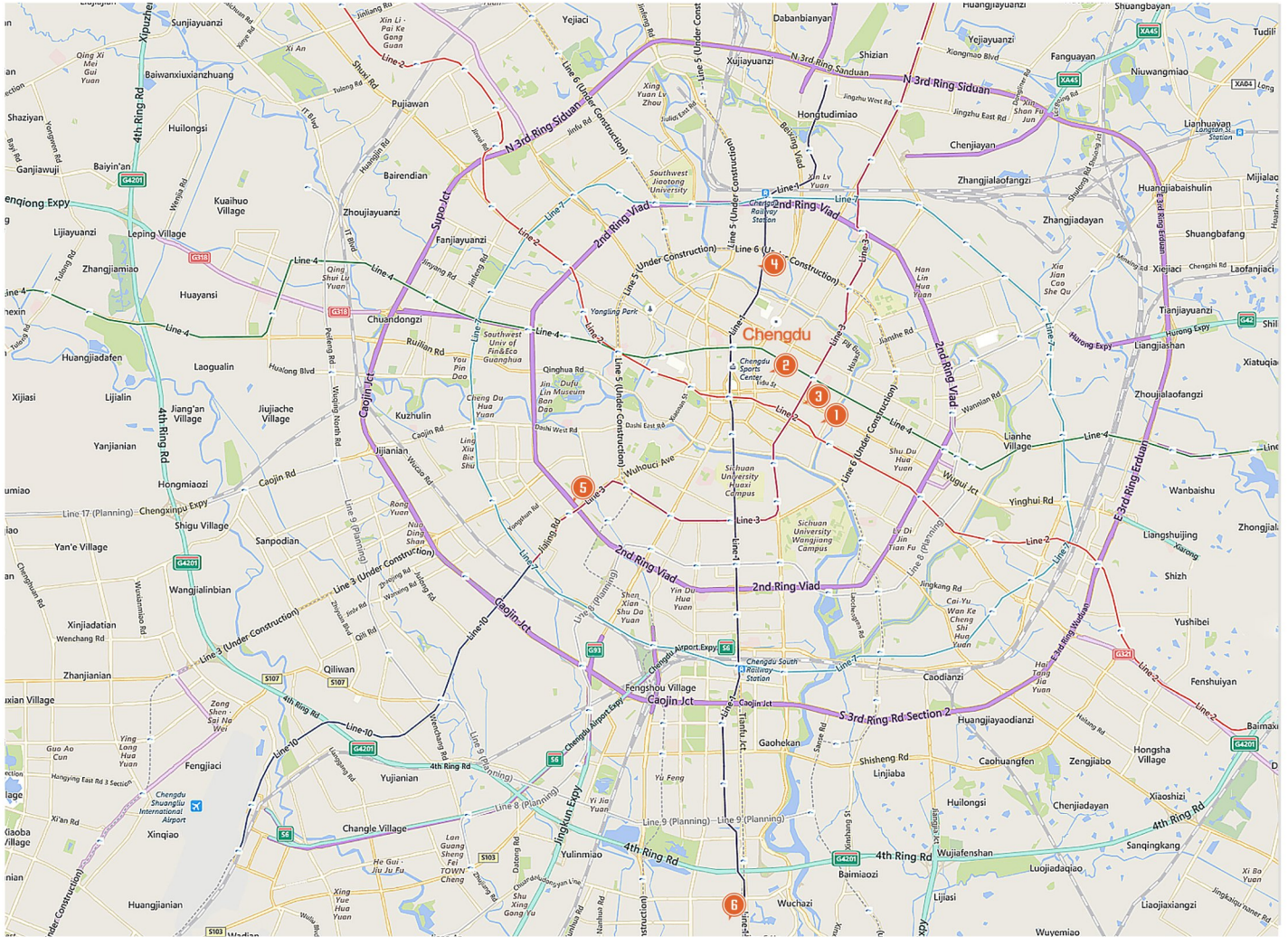
Line 4: Kuanzhai Alley and Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum



Chengdu Metro Tourist Map



Top Hotels



1

The Temple House Deluxe, 5-star

This deluxe hotel has a gorgeous stone façade and an enchanting, quiet courtyard lining a row of rooms adorned with beautiful reddish, all wood doors, windows, and support beams. It combines an ancient Chinese styled exterior and courtyard with modern room interiors. The whole place is dripping with quaintness. For those

who enjoy the feeling of living in a Chinese village in the 1800's, yet with all modern amenities, this is one of the best choices in the city.

Address: No. 81 Bitieshi Street, Jinjiang District, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

2

The St. Regis Chengdu Deluxe, 5-star

When you want to spend the night in the future, say 5 years ahead of

now, the St. Regis is the spot. There's not a hint of the old-world here; this is the postcard of the relaxingly contemporary, futuristic tomorrow. Steps from Tianfu Square and Chunxi Road, Chengdu's newest icon unites impeccable service with the ambience of a private residence. An alluring haven for tired feet and aching backs in the heart of Chengdu's business district, the St. Regis Chengdu artfully combines historic Art Deco accents with cutting edge in-room

technology. Recently built in 2014, the rooms have outstanding views of the city as you'll be staying in a gorgeous, mirrored-glass, 30-story building. Indoor pool? Check. Suites? Check. Did we mention the impeccable service? For the price, you'll actually get a lot and staying here may not be as expensive as you might imagine (it's surprisingly one of the more affordable options for this supreme level of comfort).

Address: 88 Taisheng Road South, Qingyang District, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

3

Niccolo Chengdu

Deluxe, 4-star

Modernly aristocratic, the lobby alone of this brand-new hotel impresses with its exceptionally high roof and marble columns. In fact, there's marble everywhere in this hotel. Everything looks like an executive suite in the Niccolo. Located in Chengdu's famous International Finance Square (IFS) within the Chun Xi Road business district and only 25 minutes away from the Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport, it's also conveniently located.

Address: Tower 3, Chengdu IFS, No.1, Section 3, Hongxing Road, Jinjiang District, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

4

Tibet Hotel Chengdu

Comfortable, 4-star

You may not believe how affordable this gorgeous 5-star hotel is. Much more affordable than the above



choices mostly because it's simply not brand spanking new. Designed as a large, perfectly square building roughly 20 stories tall and in the spirit of an authentic Tibetan structure, the hotel is affiliated with the Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region. Bursting out from a grove of trees and painted gleaming white with brick red borders on top and bottom, it's hard to miss. It has all the amenities you'd expect from a 5-star hotel, with the charm of the Tibetan culture. It's located on the Jinjiang River in downtown Chengdu, adjacent to the business district, shopping malls, Wenshu Yuan Monastery, and Cultural District and inside offers Sichuan, Cantonese, Tibetan, and French Western dishes. They also have Tibetan dance performances and snowy aristocratic feasts in the Red Palace Ballroom. Check online for prices and you may be pleasantly surprised — it's one of the best deals in the city.

Address: No. 10, Section 1, Renmin North Road, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

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Holiday Inn Express Chengdu Wuhou

Comfortable

As Holiday Inn Express hotels go, this one is a bit nicer than what you may find in western countries. Officially listed as a "3 ½ star" hotel, it is pretty much what you'd expect from this international hotel chain. Located in southwest Chengdu, in the Wuhou District, it's adjacent to the Wuhou Memorial Temple and overlooks popular spots



such as the Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum and Wangjiang Tower.

Address: No. 5, West Section, Second Ring Road, Wuhou District, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

6

Citadines South Chengdu (Apartment Hotel)

Comfortable

A sleek, modern, and brand new 4-star hotel option that regularly offers excellent online deals. Its best feature is that all the rooms are mini-apartments: with kitchen including a sink, small stove, microwave, extra-large refrigerator, and even a washing machine! Rooms also have a small living room and dining area. Bathrooms come with huge showers and some with extra-large bathtubs — and nice views of the city. Once again, the price may be much more affordable than most people would imagine, especially if you can get one of their special rates making it one of the most surprisingly affordable options on this list. Without a doubt, it is the best value. The hotel has an indoor pool and as a nice bonus, a modern coffee shop on premise (called Maan Coffee). It's located in the central business district of Tianfu New Area, just a 2-minute walk from Tianfu Software Park and Tianfu 3rd Street Subway Station.

Address: No. 88, Tian Fu Third Street, Icon CGenesis Plaza Tower 5, Hi-Tech Industrial Development Zone, Chengdu, China, Wuhou, Chengdu, Sichuan China



Chengdu Facts

Chinese name: 成都 Chéngdū
Location: Southwest China
Population (city): About 15 million
Language: Mandarin
Dialect: Sichuan dialect
Zip code: 610000
Tel code: +86 (028)
Time zone: China standard (UTC+8)

Before you Go

Bank

There are ATMs all over Chengdu that easily accept foreign debit and credit cards. Keypads and screens all have English options and almost all ATMs are located in well-lit, very safe areas often with their own security guard. Almost all hotels (except for some very basic hostels) accept western debit and credit cards.

Internet

All hotels, most youth hostels, coffee shops, shopping malls, train stations, the airport provide free wifi.

Hospital

Major hospitals in Chengdu include “Sichuan People’s Hospital”, “West China Hospital of Sichuan University”, “General Hospital of Chengdu Military Region of the People’s Liberation Army” and “Chengdu Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine Hospital”. These hospitals will have more advanced medical equipment, modern lab services, and modern infrastructure than other hospitals. Some medical staff will speak basic English, although don’t expect all doctors to speak English or be prepared for their English to be very basic. Communication may be an issue if you have a serious medical issue, but each of the above hospitals can usually arrange for interpretation if necessary — just don’t expect a translator for a non-life-threatening visit.

“West China Stomatological Hospital of Sichuan University” has the most advanced dental services in Chengdu.

Safety

Both violent and non-violent crime is rare in China. Streets are mostly safe to walk down at all hours of the night. Taxis are mostly safe too. China has extra strict, forcefully applied, laws protecting foreigners which discourages most crime against them.

Nevertheless, travelers should always observe good common sense. While even dark alleyways may be perfectly safe in China, if you’re carrying anything valuable, you may not want to risk it. Don’t leave luggage or any possessions un-attended. Be careful with pick pocketers in large crowds. Women traveling alone should also take normal precautions, but there’s no need to be fearful. Overall, China and particularly Chengdu, are exceptionally safe places to travel.

Eating Safe

Use the following tips to help ensure your meal has been properly prepared:

1) Where there’s people, the food is probably great — the age-old common-sense tactic of eating where others eat still holds true today. If the place is busy (with locals), it probably means the food is safe and delicious.

2) Stand back and watch for a few minutes before ordering — a little observation can save the day (and the night). If you find a stall that you like, before ordering, just step back and observe how the cook prepares the food. Pay attention to hygienic practices like the use of gloves and hair nets or hats, fresh meat kept in a refrigerated environment (like a cooler with ice), vegetables looking fresh and stored in an enclosed container with lid not an open container near the ground, and of course most of all, the stall is kept clean. Other issues to notice: those who touch food should not also be touching money — it doesn’t matter if the cook is wearing gloves because even a gloved hand should not touch your food right after they have grabbed the previous customer’s money; the cook or any worker at the stall should not cough or sneeze anywhere near food and should also wash (or at least wipe) their hands right after doing so; and

while this last one may seem like it would never happen, it does so be on the look-out — anything dropped on the ground (food, utensils, unwrapped plastic forks or straws, cups) should be discarded, but unfortunately this is not always the case.

3) The nose knows — this tactic can be a little difficult for travelers new to Chinese cuisine, but in general, if it smells wonderful (not “good” or “nice”, but “OMG! I gotta try it!”), then it’s probably a good place.

4) The eyes know something too — does the food look dry, old, mushy, or like it’s been sitting out for most of the day? If so, you’ll want to pass. Hot food should look like it has been freshly and recently prepared with a nice shine to the outside. Cold food, especially fruits and vegetables, should look fresh and crisp and not brown.

5) In general, fruits and vegetables that are peeled are generally safer to eat than those that aren’t. So, oranges, bananas, coconuts, (usually) carrots, peas etc. are great choices. Some exceptions are melons (cantaloupe, watermelon, honeydews) which are often grown in very low-lying areas that may be exposed to unsanitary water and water run-off. Produce that is not peeled (and served fresh, not cooked) could be perfectly fine to eat, but they do carry extra risk — all berries, apples, all types of lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, etc. Readers may take some comfort in knowing that the writer of this guide has in fact eaten at many street stalls all over China and using these tips, has not only never had a problem but has also had some of the tastiest, most memorable meals at them — for a much more affordable price.

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