Along the Silk Road
TRACING CHINA’S ANCIENT CARAVAN ROUTES
August 31 to September 17, 2015
Traveling the Silk Road is, without question, one of the world’s epic journeys—even to this day. Though named for its famous silk trade, the route also acted as a conduit for gold, ivory, and exotic plant and animal products. Traveling overland today from Beijing to Central Asia through China’s remote northwest is not an undertaking for the inexperienced traveler, though the rewards are great for those who are drawn to the prospect: art-filled Buddhist caves in Dunhuang, the oasis city of Turfan, Kashgar’s famed Sunday livestock bazaar, and an unforgettable mix of exotic cultures and fascinating peoples. Our caravan is led by Thomas Fingar, MA ’69, PhD ’77, a China specialist. This is a journey not to be missed!

BRETT S. THOMPSON, ’83, DIRECTOR, STANFORD TRAVEL/STUDY

Highlights

**EXPLORE** markets and mosques of oasis cities along the route of ancient caravans, including the vibrant Sunday market of Kashgar.

**DISCOVER** the Buddhist grottoes of Dunhuang and Bezeklik, caves filled with art that was commissioned by rich merchants looking to win favor with Buddha.

**MEANDER** atop the Great Wall of China, a millennia-old architectural feat that succeeded in warding off the Mongols some nine centuries ago.
MONDAY & TUESDAY, AUGUST 31 & SEPTEMBER 1
DEPART U.S. / BEIJING, CHINA
Depart the U.S. on flights bound for Beijing, crossing the international date line en route and arriving in Beijing on Tuesday. After checking in to our hotel, enjoy the remainder of the evening at leisure. GRAND HYATT BEIJING

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2 & 3
BEIJING
During our two full days in China’s capital, visit the “Forbidden City,” the Imperial Palace of omnipotent Chinese emperors. Visit the Lama Temple of Tibetan Buddhism and the Confucian Temple nearby. Stroll along the wondrous Great Wall at Mutianyu and explore the Ming tombs. Enjoy a welcome reception with fellow Stanford travelers and a dinner of local specialties. GRAND HYATT BEIJING (9/2: B,L; 9/3: B,L,D)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4
BEIJING / XIAN
Fly to Xian, the ancient starting point for caravans leaving China for the arduous trek west into death-defying deserts and over almost impassable mountain ranges. Visit the Yangling Museum, which features recent archaeological discoveries from Han dynasty tombs. Walk through Xian’s old Muslim Quarter where the Great Mosque and the Chinese garden surrounding it create an island of tranquility. Enjoy a dumpling dinner at the renowned Defachang Restaurant. HILTON XIAN (B,L,D)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5
XIANG
Xian served as China’s capital during the reign of Qin Shi Huang Di, the first emperor of China. The legendary, life-size, 6,000-man terra-cotta army, created to protect his tomb and China’s most breathtaking archaeological find, was discovered in 1974 and is only part of the treasure trove hidden beneath the low hills outside Xian. Visit the Shaanxi History Museum, which houses over 300,000 items dating as far back as 1.7 million years. HILTON XIAN (B,L,D)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6
XIANG / LANZHO / XIAYE (LABRANG)
Fly to Lanzhou and, this afternoon, continue by coach on a fascinating four-hour cross-country drive to Xiahe, passing mosques and Hui Muslim villages en route. MINHANG HOTEL (B,L,D)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7
XIAYE (LABRANG) / LANZHO
Spend the day exploring the Labrang Monastery, which sits at an altitude of 9,500 feet in a remote mountain valley in Gansu province. Home to over 1,000 monks, Labrang is a major pilgrimage site and center of scholarship and is considered the most important Tibetan monastery outside of Tibet. Continue to our hotel in Lanzhou. CROWNE PLAZA (B,L,D)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8
LANZHOU / DUNHUANG
Lanzhou, a former caravan stop on the Silk Road and an historic transit point for the wool, silk and tea trades, is situated on the banks of the Yellow River and is the present-day capital of Gansu province. Visit the Gansu Provincial Museum with its relics from the Silk Road, which provide evidence that ancient traders made contact with a variety of civilizations. Fly to Dunhuang late this afternoon. DUNHUANG HOTEL (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9
DUNHUANG
Dunhuang was a major crossroads on the Silk Road, where Indian, Chinese and Central Asian monks and pilgrims mixed with merchants, traders and camel caravans, carrying with them in both directions their various forms of Buddhism.
Explore Dunhuang’s famous Mogao Thousand Buddha Caves, nearly 500 grottoes that contain 1,000 years’ worth of Buddhist sculpture, art and murals. This afternoon, visit the towering Mingsha (“Singing Sands”) sand dunes and perhaps take a camel ride across the desert.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12
DUNHUANG / URUMQI / TURFAN
Today we drive to Urumqi where we visit the Xinjiang Provincial Museum to view its impressive Caucasian mummies discovered in the Taklamakan Desert. This evening fly to Kashgar.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13
KASHGAR
The Kashgar market is one of the highlights of our journey. Each Sunday thousands of people—Uyghurs, Tajiks, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks and Han Chinese—converge on Kashgar to trade and socialize. Goods and services of every description change hands. We also explore the Id Kha Mosque, built in 1442, and the tomb of Abakh Hoja, where many generations of the same family are buried in an enclosed compound surrounded by shady gardens.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15
KASHGAR / URUMQI / SHANGHAI
Today we fly from Kashgar to Shanghai, stopping in Urumqi en route.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11
TURFAN
Visit Emin Mosque with its 130-foot-tall minaret, one of the best-preserved in China. Explore the Gaochang ruins, the remains of a major Silk Road trading post. Stop for a view of the Flaming Mountains on our way to Bezeklik, an archaeological site encompassing nearly 13,000 square feet and with cave murals dating from the 5th century.

TURFAN / URUMQI / KASHGAR
This morning, fly to Urumqi and continue by coach to the oasis city of Turfan with its mix of Uyghur, Han Chinese and Hui peoples. The extremes of heat and cold in the desert landscape are mitigated by the ingenious underground karez irrigation channels that bring melted snow from the Tian Shan Mountains. This system is considered one of the three great ancient engineering projects in China, along with the Great Wall and the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal.

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MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14
KASHGAR / LAKE KARAKUL / KASHGAR
Enjoy a full-day excursion to Lake Karakul, one of the greatest natural sights in western China and known for its dazzling blue-and-green-hued waters. At an altitude of almost 12,000 feet, it’s the highest lake of the Pamir plateau and surrounded by even higher mountains that remain snow-covered throughout the year. Enjoy a walk along the lake’s shore, perhaps viewing the three highest peaks visible from the lake: Muztagata (24,750 feet high), Kongur Tagh (25,088 feet) and Kongur Tiube (24,698 feet).
Trip Information

**DATES**
August 31 to September 17, 2015 (18 days)

**SIZE**
Limited to 36 participants

**COST**
- $8,795 per person, double occupancy
- $10,195 per person, single occupancy
*Association nonmembers add $200 per person

**INCLUDED**
- 16 nights of deluxe hotel accommodations
- 16 breakfasts, 14 lunches and 14 dinners
- Welcome and farewell receptions
- Internal flights within China
- Gratuities to guides and drivers for all group activities
- All tours as described in the itinerary
- Transfers and baggage handling on program arrival and departure days
- Minimal medical, accident and evacuation insurance
- Educational program with lecture series and pre-departure materials, including recommended reading list, a selected book, map and travel information
- Services of our professional tour manager to assist you throughout the program

**NOT INCLUDED**
- International and U.S. domestic airfare
- Passport and visa fees
- Immunization costs
- Meals and beverages other than those specified as included
- Independent and private transfers
- Trip-cancellation/ interruption and baggage insurance
- Excess-baggage charges
- Personal items such as internet access, telephone and fax calls, laundry and gratuities for nongroup services

**AIR ARRANGEMENTS**
International and U.S. domestic airfare is not included in the program cost. Round-trip, economy-class airfare on Singapore and Cathay Pacific airlines from San Francisco to Beijing and return from Shanghai is approximately $1,800 as of September 2014 and is subject to change without notice. Information on recommended flight itineraries will be sent by our operator.

**WHAT TO EXPECT**
Participants must be physically fit and in good health. Due to China’s infrastructure outside of its major cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, we consider this to be a strenuous program that is at times physically demanding and busy. Daily excursions involve one to three miles of walking, often on uneven terrain and cobbled paths. Stairs may not have handrails, and elevators are limited or unavailable. Some days require early-morning starts. We often have a full schedule of excursions, lectures and special events. Our journey at times requires several hours of travel by motorcoach, the longest drives being up to four hours. Luggage will need to be handled by individual travelers at airport customs points where porters are not permitted.

Though time spent at these locations is brief, if you are susceptible to altitude sickness, please be aware that Xiahe is almost 10,000 feet above sea level and Lake Karakul is nearly 12,000 feet above sea level. China’s tourism industry is developing, thus patience with local service standards will greatly improve one’s enjoyment of the trip. We expect that participants will be a self-selecting group whose interest in the places we visit far outweighs the need for creature comforts. In many ways, the challenges of this program are part of the learning experience. We welcome travelers 15 years of age and older on this program.
Deposit & Final Payment
A $1,000 per-person deposit is required to hold your space on this program. Complete and return the attached reservation form or sign up online. Final payment is due 120 days prior to departure. As a condition of participation, all confirmed participants are required to sign a Release of Liability.

Cancellations & Refunds
Deposits and any payments are refundable, less a $500-per-person cancellation fee, until 120 days prior to departure. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and your place(s) can be resold, in which case a $1,000-per-person cancellation fee will apply.

Insurance
Stanford Travel/Study provides all travelers who are U.S. or Canadian citizens with minimal medical, accident and evacuation coverage under our group-travel insurance policy. Our group policy is intended to provide minimal levels of protection while you are traveling on this program. You may choose to subscribe to optional trip-cancellation and baggage insurance. A brochure offering such insurance will be provided to U.S. residents with their welcome materials. The product offered in this brochure includes special benefits if you purchase your policy within a specified window: 14 to 21 days of the date listed on the welcome letter, depending on your destination and state of residence.

Eligibility
We encourage membership in the Alumni Association as the program cost for nonmembers is $200 more than the members’ price. Parents and their children under 21 may travel on one membership. For more information or to purchase a membership, visit alumni.stanford.edu/goto/membership or call (650) 725-0692.

Responsibility
The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motorcoach, launch or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. The right is reserved to cancel any program prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the program. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk entirely. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not onboard their plane or conveyance. Neither the Alumni Association, Stanford University nor our operators accept liability for any carrier’s cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket connected with the tour. Program price is based on rates in effect in September 2014 and is subject to change without notice to reflect fluctuations in exchange rates, tariffs or fuel charges.

California Seller of Travel Program Registration #2048 523-50

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Reservation Form
Along the Silk Road

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I/We have read the Terms and Conditions for the program and agree to them.

SIGNATURE
If this is a reservation for one person, please indicate:

- [ ] I wish to have single accommodations.
- [ ] I plan to share accommodations with:

- [ ] OR I’d like to know about possible roommates.

Bed Preference:
- [ ] Twins  [ ] Double

Here is my deposit of $________ ($1,000 per person) for ____ space(s).

- [ ] Enclosed is my check (payable to Stanford Alumni Association) OR
- [ ] Charge my deposit to my:
  - [ ] Visa  [ ] MasterCard  [ ] American Express

CARD #

EXPIRATION DATE

Mail completed form to address on mail panel or fax to (650) 725-8675 or place your deposit online at alumni.stanford.edu/trip?silkroad2015. Submit your reservation only once to avoid multiple charges to your account.

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"Tom Fingar was outstanding. I enjoyed his lectures and looked forward to every one of them."

MARC ROSENBERG, CHINA SUITCASE SEMINAR, 2012

THOMAS FINGAR, MA ’69, PHD ’77, is the Oksenberg-Rohlen Distinguished Fellow in the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford. Between 1975 and 1986 he held a number of positions at Stanford, including senior research associate in the Center for International Security and Arms Control. In 1975, he helped establish Stanford’s U.S-China Relations Program and served as director from 1981 to 1983. In 1978, he negotiated the arrangements that brought the first Chinese students to Stanford since 1949, and in 1981–82 he headed the National Academy of Sciences program to facilitate two-way scholarly exchanges between the U.S. and China. On this trip he plans to share his knowledge and experience based on his vast global portfolio and career as a China specialist. He plans to discuss China’s quest for wealth, power, security and stability and China’s vision of the world order.

— Payne Distinguished Lecturer, Stanford University, 2009
— Served as the first deputy director of National Intelligence for Analysis and, concurrently, as chairman of the National Intelligence Council, 2005–2008
— BA, government and history, Cornell University
— MA and PhD, political science, Stanford University

— Marc ROSENBERG, CHINA SUITCASE SEMINAR, 2012

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"Tom Fingar was outstanding. I enjoyed his lectures and looked forward to every one of them."
"The best trip I’ve ever taken—a high-quality learning experience, cultural delights and sheer enjoyment with an excellent group, professor and guides."

JUSTINE KIRK, ALONG THE SILK ROAD, 2013