

The Silk Road

Photography Tour
2013

An 18 day cultural journey into the far west of China, following tradition and trade along the Silk Road. Camels, markets, dunes and deserts sign post our travels along the Silk Route. Join photographer Ewen Bell as he shares his photographic inspiration and technical tuition.

A photographic adventure designed by photographers, for photographers. Maximum group size of 8.

PHOTOGRAPHY
by Ewen Bell



GRASSHOPPER
ADVENTURES



The Itinerary

Days 1-3 | Xi'an

Start of the Silk Route and home of the famous Terracotta Warriors, there is also a whole lot more to Xi'an. We visit the bustling Muslim markets and have the chance to capture the unique blend of old and new presented by this vibrant city.

Days 4-5 | Xiahe

We travel overland to the city of Lanzhou and head higher into the mountains to a place where Tibetan culture is still strong. Xiahe Labrang monastery is a sacred place, a temple with devoted monks and enduring Tibetan traditions.

Days 6-7 | Jiayuguan

Jiayuguan was traditionally seen as the western boundary of Han China, and it is here that the last grand fortress along the Great Wall is to be found, surrounded by desert which stretches away to colossal mountains on the horizon.

Days 8-9 | Dunhuang

The Silk Road was more than just a trade route, it was also a conduit for ideas and religions. This is in evidence along the length of the Silk Route, but nowhere more spectacularly than at the oasis town of Dunhuang, famous as the site of China's finest Buddhist cave art. We tour the frescos and carving within the grottos (cameras are not permitted inside) and venture into the sea of huge dunes which surround the town.

Days 10-11 | Turpan

Turpan sits in a vast depression and is surrounded by a maze of grape-trellis-lined dusty lanes which lead to the desert and its fiery Flaming Mountains, ancient cities, hidden ravines and even vineyards.

Days 12-13 | Kuqa

This rural outpost is a trading center for the Ugyr people and we make the journey by plane via Urumqi to join the market frenzy and experience a little of life in the remote west of China.

Days 14-18 | Kashgar

Kashgar was a crucial trading post along the Silk Road and its bustling Sunday Bazaar still attracts traders from around the region. The proximity to Central Asia gives Kashgar a unique blend of cultures and the old city is alive with Uyghurs, Tajiks, Kazaks and Kyrgyz, each distinguishable by their traditional headgear. To really take the Silk Route to the limits of China we travel along the Karakoram Highway to stunning and remote Lake Karakul, nestled among 7000m plus peaks where we spend a night in a yurt.





Learn and Explore

Anyone who loves photography can join this tour.

Skills and experience is not a prerequisite. Enthusiam is essential. There is ample one on one time so that your questions can be answered, your photos can be reviewed and your expression can be encouraged. With such a small group size we can ensure everybody gets the encouragement and guidance they desire.

If you're a confident photographer or already work at a professional level, then this journey will simply assist with getting great shots. We encourage everyone on tour to share ideas, to discuss their experiences and learn from each other as well.

Partners are also welcome on these photo tours, but they may need to exercise a little patience with the desires of photographers to make the most of special moments. My photography tours put the photographers first :)





Your Escort

For the duration of the tour your photographic instructor and escort will be Ewen Bell. His work is published all over the world in travel brochures, the travel media and photography magazines. Ewen's depth of experience with photography tours is impressive, with over 25 journeys completed in recent years across Asia, Australia and Antarctica.

"This is a whole other side of China, a journey into the wild west. We get a taste of Tibet and wander with the Uyghurs, touch the very edge of the Great Wall and dance in the desert. It's not the China you know."

The key to a great photography tour is the photographer behind the design. Ewen leaves no stone unturned for the sake of his travellers and only works with the most dedicated tour operators. This is no ordinary tour experience, this a journey filled with inspiration.

www.ewenbell.com



Photographic Tuition

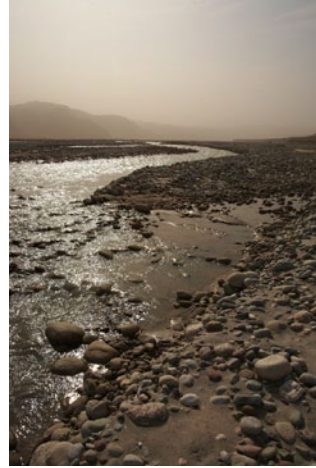
Not only are these tours designed to deliver exceptional photographic opportunities, but you get the professional photographer included too. Ewen Bell has been running these tours since 2005, working hard to make them even better with each year of experience.

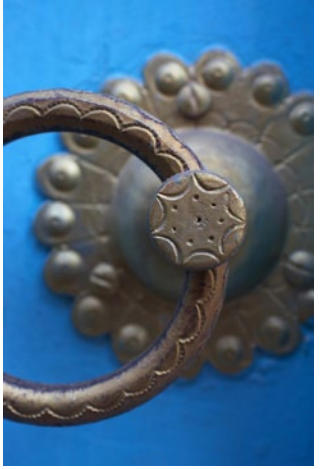
Because the tours are limited to very small groups of just 8 people, Ewen has time to help you with one-on-one advice. For two weeks you have a personal expert to offer ideas and answer questions. Even better, you're travelling in a group of like-minded people, resulting in a total photographic immersion.

Every detail of the craft is open to discussion. Ewen's style is to emphasise the creative potential of photography without getting mired in the technical. He will push you to be in control of the camera, to make the images your own, but for the sake of creativity and expression.

These tours are designed to help you learn to take better photos, and go home with some incredible experiences. Ewen will be there every step of the way to offer support as you need it.







Camera Gear

We recommend the use of Digital SLR cameras for this journey, but you are not restricted from using any type of camera you may have, including conventional film SLRs and compact cameras. We will have access to power for recharging batteries on every evening of the trip, but it's never a bad idea to have a couple of spare batteries for your camera body.

We also recommend that you carry a wide angle lens for general use and landscape opportunities, as we emphasize techniques for portraits and culture. A tripod is not required for this trip.

A good quality day pack will be an essential part of the packing list. The traditional type of 'over-the-shoulder' camera bag is not very suitable for travel photography, a day-pack style bag is better. The Lowe Pro Flipside 300 or 400 are highly recommended.

Finally, we do encourage you bring a laptop. We'll have lots of opportunity to share and review images during the journey, plus your laptop can serve as a valuable backup or storage device to make room for more photographs each day. Affordable and light Netbooks or the Mac Air are powerful enough to edit RAW files, review your work and record important details from the journey.





Art and Creativity

The camera is like a paintbrush, and in the hands of different people it will produce very different images.

Ewen Bell specialises in teaching people about the creative potential of photography, to go beyond the technical issues of a camera and start taking creative control. Expression is at the heart of great photography, sharing your perspective, your view, your experience. Travelling with a photo tour like this one will offer lots of inspiration, but travelling with an instructor like Ewen will give you new ways to express your experience.

A few basic principles underpin the art of travel photography. Go Slow. Get Closer. Look for the Light. Join Ewen for two weeks of photographic adventure and find out for yourself how much inspiration can flow from three very simple ideas.





8 is Great!

Ewen Bell restricts all of his photographic tours to just 8 people. With good reason.

"I never want to run a photography tour with more than 8 people, let alone 12 or 16. Smaller groups mean less drama, more fun and are infinitely more rewarding. My first responsibility is to ensure every person on my tour gets plenty of my time and advice, plus to ensure we don't ruin a lovely location by dragging a horde of photographers about. Small isn't just good, it's great!"







Who Travels With Us

Our photographic journeys appeal to both the young and old, the experienced and novice. Most tours are made up of people aged 25 to 65, and occasionally older or younger still. It doesn't matter what your skills and interest in photography are, you will enjoy sharing a creative and immersive experience with like minded people.

You can read feedback from Ewen's past travellers on photography tours by visiting www.ewenbell.com





The Fine Print

Dates

2013: April 15 to May 2

Price

US\$5800

Group Size

Maximum of 8 people

The itinerary information may vary slightly for your specific departure, as we continuously research and develop each trip. Inclement weather or other factors outside our control may also necessitate minor alterations.

Accommodation

A mix of 3-4 star hotels, guesthouses and one night on the overnight train from Xi'An. Lots of variety. All accommodation is on a twin-share basis unless you elect to pay the single supplement.

Difficulty Rating

Walking is the key to engagement, usually covering short distances but travelling slowly. The Great Wall visit is easy to manage on foot, but expect to slow down in the thin air when we visit Lake Kurakul to the west of Kashgar. Our private vans for longer journeys during the trip will have plenty of extra room for camera gear, but you will need to drag your luggage through railway stations and when boarding the train.

Inclusions

The instructing photographer and a local guide are included for this tour. Most meals during the tour, all entry fees to temples & monuments, and tipping of local guides.

Not included

- Flight to and from China
- Visa for entry into China
- Gratuities and items of personal nature
- Beverages, Laundry, Phone and Internet Charges
- Your Camera!





Make A Booking



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How to Book

Simply visit the website for Grasshopper Adventures and complete the online booking form to reserve a place. Once payment of the deposit has been received your place on the trip is confirmed.

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