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## Family Fun in Asia

written by [Deserae del Campo](#) | Posted on August 26th, 2014

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SITA World Tours' family-friendly China tours offer the opportunity to see pandas up-close.

Been there, done that? Asia is calling.

According to Ryan Droegemueller, product manager for Asia, East & South Africa, Globus family of brands, Asia "is absolutely perfect for families looking for something different, adventurous and ultimately rewarding. In Asia, the cultures and traditions are so different that it is a great chance to learn something totally new."

Mark Yacker, director, North America, Travel Indochina, says, "Asia is not most American's first family vacation, but rather for families who are well traveled, or maybe even those who have done

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exotic.”

From China's ancient history to India's rich culture, or the temples of Thailand, the four tour operators we highlight in this feature have journeys that will leave your multi-generational family clients—grandma, grandpa, mom and dad and those very picky kids—in wide-eyed wonder of Asia and its many exotic splendors.

#### get active in china

SITA World Tours has set new 2015 dates for its jam-packed, 14-day *Family Friendly Journey: China* tour (June 20/July 11), beginning in Shanghai and includes visits to Mt. Qingcheng, just outside Chengdu, “where families visit with pandas, take walks in the gorgeous Sichuan countryside and go rafting,” says Mary Barnett, concierge sales, SITA. “At The Linden Centre near Dali, we stay in a 14-room restored courtyard mansion. We bike through villages, visit local markets and learn handicrafts. Both are pristine areas less visited by tourists, allowing time for families to bond.”

Barnett adds that SITA's family tours are designed specifically for multi-generational travel. “The difference lies in the inclusions. Must-see sightseeing is included in each place, however, we've also added activities that appeal to a broad range of ages, and there are alternatives for those who are less active,” she says. Also added to the 2015 dates is a stay at Six Senses Qing Cheng, slated to open in February and set in the Qing Cheng Mountains. The resort features 113 suites (including 78 *Six Senses Suites*), a *Six Senses Spa*, two pools, a gym, and kids' club. Call for 2015 rates.

#### techie japan

“Japan has been our top-selling country in Asia for the past two years, and as a result we decided to expand our Japan program for 2015 to include a new itinerary created especially for families,” says Janice Farnum, operations and product development, Trafalgar.

That itinerary is the 8-day *Samurai Discovery* tour where families can visit the ruins of Edo Castle; learn about the history of Tokugawa shoguns; take a sushi-making class and a Taiko drumming lesson with a master musician; visit the Edo-Tokyo Museum to see artifacts and architecture of Tokyo's history and culture during the Edo period; and have lunch at a Machiya townhouse (traditional wooden townhouses) where kids can take calligraphy lessons.

Farnum says another reason Trafalgar is offering a family trip to Japan in 2015 is because of the country's video game appeal and technology. To give families a taste of this industry, the tour also offers them the opportunity to visit Sega Joypolis, an indoor amusement park in the center of Tokyo with rides, 3D movies and simulators; the Sony Building where kids can play the latest games to their heart's content; and the Pokemon Centre and Toei Kyoto Studio Park, where kids can dress up as a samurai. Rates start at \$3,575 pp.

#### explore exotic southeast asia

A tour operator that specializes in small groups tours, Travel Indochina offers journeys to 11 countries within the Asia continent.

“Although families with kids ages 12 or older can join our regular *Small Group Journey* departures, we find most families are looking for private arrangements, so they can control the pace of the itinerary and how much or how little they want to pack in,” says Yacker. “Thailand and Vietnam have been our biggest destinations for families over the past two years,” he says. “They each offer a great combination of interesting local cultures, beautiful beaches and waterways, fun activities and an abundance of family friendly hotels and resorts.”

Yacker adds that most families visiting Vietnam with Travel Indochina combine it with a 3- to 5-day visit to Cambodia to explore the Temples of Angkor. Travel Indochina recommends a 12-day family journey through Thailand that hits all the major must-see sights. Families take a boat ride along the Chao Phraya River, visit the Temple of Dawn in Bangkok, trek through the Khoa Yai National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, get

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an up-close look at Thai elephants in Phuket and go on canoe and jungle treks. Rates fluctuate according to customization.

#### full immersion in colorful india

Although Susan Geringer, owner, Geringer Global Travel, says she rarely books a family group to India that includes everyone from grandma/grandpa to the grandkids, she has seen parents with teenagers and young children; mothers with their daughters; and grandparents with grandchildren.

Nevertheless, Geringer says, "India is not for every family. It is an intense place that can initially be overwhelming. Families need to be open to a culture totally different from the U.S."

Geringer specializes in customized itineraries that meet the needs of her multi-generational clients. "The itineraries include not just the sites but immersion experiences that are interesting to both parents and children," she adds. For example, families normally arrive in Delhi before heading to Agra to see the Taj Mahal and visit parts of Rajasthan to experience safaris and stay at a tented camp near a village. Geringer says festivals are also popular for families as well as tours to Kerala. "We also have a wonderful heritage bicycle tour in Udaipur and an unforgettable experience with the elephants in Jaipur where family members spend a half day with an elephant that includes bathing, teaching commands, feeding, and bareback riding," she says.

Other memorable experiences on Geringer's India tours include special heritage walks in cities to meet locals, hiking to villages, cooking classes, and meeting local artists. Call for rates for Geringer's customized tours.

#### contact information

Geringer Global Travel: (877) 255-7438; [geringerglobaltravel.com](http://geringerglobaltravel.com)

Globus family of brands: (866) 755-8581; [globusjourneys.com](http://globusjourneys.com) or [agents.globusfamily.com](http://agents.globusfamily.com)

SITA World Tours: (800) 421-5643; [sitatours.com](http://sitatours.com) or [sitatours.com/AgentServices/index.php](http://sitatours.com/AgentServices/index.php)

Trafalgar: (800) 854-0103; [trafalgar.com/usa](http://trafalgar.com/usa) or [trafalgaragent.com](http://trafalgaragent.com)

Travel Indochina: (800) 342-1957; [travelindochina.com](http://travelindochina.com) or [travelindochina.com/agents](http://travelindochina.com/agents)

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