China’s Unique Heritage
April 22–May 8, 2012

Dear Travelers:

This extraordinary journey will allow you to discover fascinating cultural sites, as well as the exciting natural history of China...from Beijing to the grand pandas...Xi’an to the feathered dinosaurs...the Dazu grottoes to the Yangtze River and Shanghai.

Our expedition will begin in Beijing with highlights both historical and contemporary, as we explore Tianshannan Square, the ancient hutongs (historic neighborhoods), and the Great Wall.

At Beijing’s Museum of Paleontology, we will have an introduction to the spectacular fossils of feathered dinosaurs, the species at the transition from reptile to bird, recently discovered in China and first described by researchers in 2003. This is an extraordinary find and is of great significance to science.

We will take the train north from Beijing to the Changyi River in remote Western Liaoning Province where late Jurassic shales hold fossils that have contributed much to what we know about the evolutionary transition from reptiles to birds. Chinese scientists will join us in the field at the Shihetun Geopark Fossil Site.

A short flight will take us to Xi’an, site of some of the most ancient cities in the world. Its history begins in the Bronze Age 3,000 years ago. From 1,000 BC to 1,000 AD, Xi’an was the imperial capital of China for 11 dynasties. A prosperous city with many fine universities, today Xi’an is renowned for its exciting January 2,300-year-old terra cotta warriors which guarded the tomb of Qin Shi Huang.

In Chengdu, we’ll enjoy other cultural highlights including Wuhuan Temple or Dufu’s Thatched Cottage, the Sichuan Opera, and the grottoes at Dazu which are filled with ancient Buddhist carvings. The giant pandas will hold our attention at Chengdu’s wonderful breeding facility.

Our adventure will continue to the Yangtze River, where we will enjoy a cruise through the Three Gorges on board one of the comfortable Victoria river fleet. We then fly to Shanghai to see this vibrant city. An evening celebration in Shanghai will conclude our adventure!

Leading the expedition will be Dr. Chris Carpenter, an excellent ecologist with a sound understanding and appreciation of the cultural and natural heritage of China. Chris has taken AAAS and Sigma Xi groups throughout China, Tibet, Xinjiang, and Hunza over the last 17 years, and this adventure to explore China’s Unique Heritage is one of his favorite itineraries.

Beyond learning about and visiting sites of global importance, our journey through the Middle Kingdom will confront a variety of fascinating questions about the heritage of China. We’ll take advantage of the opportunity to meet local people, both in scheduled exchanges with villagers and merchants in cities and small towns.

We hope you will join us for an unforgettable visit to a fascinating part of the world. Sincerely,

Margaret M. Betchart
President, Betchart Expeditions Inc.
for AAAS, Sigma Xi & ACS
Day 1  Beijing to Shanghai

By morning, our vessel will have traversed the locks of the Three Gorges Dam, the largest dam in the world. After a tour of the dam site, we will disembark and transfer by bus to Vichang for our connecting flight to Shanghai, near the mouth of the Yangtze River. Shanghai is China’s most important commercially vibrant metropolis. Its high-density architecture includes European colonial, classical Chinese, Socialist, and futuristic designs that are difficult to classify. Shanghai Hotel (2 nights).

Day 15 Vichang to Shanghai

Yes! I/we want to join the China’s Unique Heritage Expedition, May 22–June 8, 2012, as part of the China’s Unique Heritage Expedition. Please reserve our space(s). As a deposit, I/we enclose a check for $5,000 per person payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s) _______________________________ Age ________________

Address ________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State ___________ Zip ________________

Phone: Home ____________________________________________ Work ____________

Email Address ____________________________

Membership (please circle):

AAAS  ___ Sigma Xi  ___ ACS  ___ Planetary Society  ___

Additional Preferences

___ Twin  ___ Single  ___ Share (with a friend)  ___ Nonsmoker  ___ Smoker

Signature ______________________________________ Date ________________

Mail To:  Betchart Expeditions Inc.

17050 Monroebil Road

Cupertino, CA 95014-3345

Phone:  800-841-1903  408-374-0100

Fax:  408-374-0090

Web Site:  www.betchart.com
Day 7 ChaoYang to Beijing & Xi’an
We will depart on a morning train from Jinzhou to Beijing, then fly to Xi’an, a city that served as the imperial capital of China from the 2nd Century BCE. Emperor Qin Shi Huang was the first emperor of China, and his tomb, the Saori Tomb, is the largest tomb in the world. We will visit the famous Terracotta Army, a collection of more than 8,000 life-sized clay warrior figures that were buried with Emperor Qin Shi Huang to protect him in the afterlife. The site is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the 20th century.

Day 8 Xi’an, Imperial Capital of China & Terra Cotta Warriors
This morning we will visit the world-renowned Museum of Terra Cotta Warriors and Horses, the site of an army of more than 6,000 life-sized clay figures that were buried to protect the emperor Qin Shi Huang. The site is one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the 20th century and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We will also visit the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, the largest tomb in the world.

Day 9 Han Tombs
Today we will visit the Han Tombs, a recently excavated 2,000 year-old “mausoleum” of clay animals, miniatures, and religious artifacts that were designed to aid the Han Emperor in his afterlife. The site is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the 20th century.

Day 10 Xi’an to Chengdu
This morning we will fly to the Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport and take a short flight to Xi’an. We will then visit the Shaanxi History Museum, which houses many of China’s most important cultural artifacts. We will also visit the Terracotta Army, a collection of more than 8,000 life-sized clay warrior figures that were buried with Emperor Qin Shi Huang to protect him in the afterlife.

Day 11 Giant Pandas to Dazu
About 2,000 giant pandas survive in the wild, making them an endangered species. This tour will take us to the Dazu Rock Carvings, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most important artistic expressions of the Tang Dynasty.

Day 12 Dazu to Chongqing
After our morning visit to the Buddha Grottoes of Dazu, we will drive to Chongqing, a major city in the southern part of China. We will visit the Chongqing Grand Mosque and the Chongqing Museum, which houses many of China’s most important cultural artifacts.

Day 13 Chongqing to Yangtze River
We will board our Yangtze River cruise ship, which will take us through the Three Gorges, a series of narrow gorges in the Yangtze River. We will visit the Three Gorges Dam, one of the largest engineering projects of the 20th century.

Day 14 Cruise the Yangtze River
We will continue our cruise through the Three Gorges, which are known for their dramatic scenery and cultural significance. We will visit the city of Yichang, which is known for its ancient history and cultural heritage.

Day 15 Yichang to Shanghai
By morning, our vessel will have traversed the locks of the Three Gorges Dam, the largest dam in the world. After a tour of the dam site, we will disembark and transfer by bus to Yichang for our connecting flight to Shanghai, near the mouth of the Yangtze River. Shanghai is China’s main port and commercial hub. Its high-density architecture includes European colonial, classical Chinese, Socialist, and futuristic designs that are difficult to classify.

Days 16 Shanghai
This morning, we will visit the Pudong area, which is the financial and commercial center of Shanghai. We will also visit the famous Bund, a waterfront area that was once the site of many foreign concessions.

Day 17 Shanghai to USA
By morning,我们会出发去上海的浦东。我们将会参观浦西的外滩，这里是曾经的外国租界地。我们也会参观外滩两岸的高楼大厦，欣赏上海的城市风光。
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Sincerely,

Margaret M. Betchart
President, Betchart Expeditions Inc.

The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. In such case the entire payment will be refunded with no further obligation on our part.

Trip Fee: $3,995 per person (plus air fare of approximately $1,915 = tax USA to Beijing, with return from Shanghai plus $395 in tour flights). Single Supplement is $1,095.

Questions? Please call Renee Apostolou, Betchart Expeditions Inc., (800) 252-4910 or (408) 252-4910. Fax: (408) 252-1444. Email: renee@betchartexpeditions.com

Accommodations: We will stay in four star hotels in the cities, and good Chinese hotels in outlying locations. We will travel on board the first class Victoria ships on the Yangtze River. Accommodations are twin-share with private bath.

Reservations, Deposits, and Payments: Please mail a deposit of $1,000 per person with the completed reservation form to: China’s Unique Heritage 2012, Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435. The balance is due February 22, 2012.

Cancellations & Refunds: The initial deposit is refundable up to 60 days before departure less a handling fee of $100 per person. There is no refund after the 60-day period unless your place is resold, then only the $100 per person handling fee is withheld. There are no refunds for unused meals or other expedition features.

Trip Fee: $1,195 + tax USA to Beijing, with return from Shanghai plus $595 airfare & airfare ticketing.

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CHINA’S Unique Heritage

From the Great Wall to Terra Cotta Warriors
Feathered Dinosaurs to Giant Pandas!

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