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TOUR OPERATORS AND WHOLESALERS

China operator Wendy Wu Tours starts U.S. business

By: Michelle Baran
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Wendy Wu Tours, a China specialist in the U.K. and Australia, began operations in North America on Thursday.

The tour operator is headed by CEO Wendy Wu, who was born in Tibet and raised in China.

The company has released a 68-page brochure dedicated to the North American market and launched a website, www.wendywuschina.com (<http://www.wendywuschina.com/>). Wendy Wu pays travel agents commission on every aspect of the sale, including fuel surcharges and tax.

Departures begin in January 2011. Wendy Wu is offering 14 all-inclusive group tours ranging from 10 to 29 days, starting at \$140 per day. Each group will have a maximum of 28 people.

There are eight all-inclusive private tours that offer more flexibility for small groups. All are customizable. Also, Wendy Wu offers short stays and extensions.

Tours range from the 10-day China Experience (includes Beijing, Shanghai and Xian) to the 30-day Epic Adventure, which includes 20 days at an altitude above 11,500 feet. Participants travel in four-wheel-drive vehicles through remote western China.

Examples of hard-to-reach places in Wendy Wu itineraries are the Mount Everest Base Camp on the Tibet side (guests pass through an army reserve station and stay in army barracks) and Zhangjiajie, made famous for inspiring the landscapes in the movie "Avatar." The Mount Everest Base Camp is part of the Epic Adventure tour.

Package prices include all international flights from New York and Los Angeles, fuel surcharges, taxes, accommodations in three- and four-star hotels, three meals a day, intra-China transportation, daily tours and entrance fees, evening entertainment, English-speaking guides, a China escort, and the \$190 visa fee and processing service. The only additional charge is gratuity.

Wendy Wu's North American office is in New York.

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