

IFB China Quest
Beijing and Shanghai
Sunday 13th April – Friday 18th April 2008

Programme Summary

China is not only home to an ancient culture and 1.3 billion people – it is one of the dominant forces shaping our future world. An enigma to many, China is a complex and intriguing nation and one that is not easy to grasp on a mere business trip or as a tourist. Much of the country's fabric and the interplay between politics, business and society remain hidden from the public eye. Our Quest programme seeks to go beneath the surface of this important country through a series of discussions, visits and workshops with a cross section of Chinese society.

Feedback from IFB India Quest 2007...

"Thank you for a lifetime's experience!" Anne Ridgeon, Ridgeons Ltd

"I enjoyed spending time with my fellow delegates and also learning a lot of new aspects to the social and business life in India", Prashant Jhawar, Usha Communications Technology

"Excellent and fascinating trip. Well planned and hugely varied. We experienced big contrasts between huge companies and wealthy families versus the destitute and homeless unable to afford the most basic shelter. We met successful and dynamic families and businesses, both amongst our hosts and within the group which we are eager to follow up.", Barry Mosheim, Pentland Group Plc

Our Quest Week

Our IFB China Quest will be based around two main centres: the country's majestic and imposing capital, Beijing, and the vibrant financial and commercial capital, Shanghai, one of the world's fastest growing cities. The programme will provide a unique and unparalleled insight into China from the inside out with an abundance of opportunity to learn from and share with Chinese leaders on the ground. Throughout the course of the week, we will have a series of roundtable discussions, workshops, meetings and visits to leading businesses, factories, retail outlets and vast high-tech parks; schools and universities, government offices and artists' studios, as well as visits to urban development projects.

We will learn about:

- The growing role and impact of China in the world; Chinese perspectives on the West
- The impact of the rapid opening up of much of the country on attitudes, practices and future opportunities
- The experience of international companies and overseas investors in China
- The growth of Chinese entrepreneurship and the new generation of leaders, including family owned and run businesses
- The interaction of politics, business and civil society
- China's burgeoning wealth gap and the challenging contrast between the prosperous east coast and the vast rural hinterland, home to some 850 million people
- The huge environmental challenges that China faces and some of the regional and global implications
- The development of NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and the workings of community in China
- Chinese art and culture as an expression of society

The programme will allow participants to choose between different options each day, so we can each focus on the areas of most interest to us.

Over the course of our week together, we will have the opportunity to:

- Gain a sense of the size, attractiveness, 'rules of engagement' and risks of the **Chinese market**, and take a 'reality check' on the hype (both positive and negative) of what is happening in China today and its real potential
- Better understand the likely economic and political impact on the wider world of China's tremendous growth as an **economic and regional power**, as well as the **environmental impact** of the country's rapid industrialisation
- Learn from **Chinese leaders from different sectors** – manufacturing, services, hi-tech, bio-tech etc. – how they see the country's future development and growth; the challenges they face as leaders and their expectations of the future
- Learn from the hands-on experience of international leaders **how to do business in China**, and how Chinese business people view doing business with other parts of the world
- Develop insights into the **changing role of government** and the public sector in a country undergoing a rapid transformation, through discussions with local political officials
- Engage with **young leaders** and **entrepreneurs** who will be the main drivers of economic innovation and growth in the China of the future, and who are already playing a significant role - many of these young leaders are openly questioning what it means to lead and what kind of China they are building
- Visit one of China's most prestigious universities to understand the aspirations and visions of some of its students, likely to become **future leaders** in the country
- Learn about China's **social fabric** – its strengths and tensions – through meeting with some of the pioneers working in civil society (NGOs) and leaders committed to filling the vacuum left by a retreating State

- Gain an insight into **art and culture in China today**: how does contemporary art reflect changes in society and how the Chinese see themselves?

Programme Description: In Beijing and Shanghai

We will start our Quest week on Sunday 13th April 08 in Beijing, the political centre of the world's most populous country. Our time in Beijing will give us an insight into how this immense country works, as seen from the centre, and with the benefit of the great historical context of the country's capital. We will explore some of the country's most important monuments, and meet with leaders from business, government, academia and civil society, and also have the opportunity to get out of the city into the surrounding countryside.

We will then fly to Shanghai, the commercial centre of China. The development of Shanghai over the last twenty years has been astonishing. The city represents the enormous capacity of China to mobilise and industrialise with great discipline and focus; a mix of seemingly chaotic entrepreneurship, a hunger for success and an extraordinary will and drive from government to progress economically. China's economic ambition is most evident and impressive in Shanghai. We will use our time here to learn about the key themes most evident in Shanghai – business, finance, media and growth on the one hand, as well as issues of poverty, inequality, health and education facing its millions of inhabitants on the other.

We will close our Quest on Friday 18th April 07, when we will spend time as a group reflecting on the different examples of leadership we have seen in operation, what we have learned from our week's immersion in a different culture, and what we have learned about ourselves. After a festive dinner to celebrate a great week together, participants can either catch a late flight out of Shanghai Friday night (via Honk Kong to catch BA), or have a more leisurely departure over the weekend.

The Quest Experience

Leaders' Quest is a global non-profit organisation committed to connecting and developing leaders around the world. Its purpose is to be a catalyst for positive change by inspiring leaders from all sectors of society – business, government and civil society – who want to make a difference in their organisations, communities and the wider world. Programmes are currently led in Brazil, China, India and Southern Africa, with the addition of Russia from 2008. For more see www.leadersquest.org.

Leaders' Quest programmes are about learning through meeting people who are doing courageous and inspirational work: people with whom we would not normally have a chance to meet and often in circumstances we would not normally encounter. Our objective is to stand in the shoes of the Indian people we meet and see the world, and ourselves, from their vantage point. Our style is informal, rather provocative and very participative. Participants learn through engagement and debate, through seeing, listening and experiencing for themselves. We avoid lectures and formal presentations wherever possible, and all participants share responsibility for outcomes.

We expect the Quest group size to be around 20 people. For some of our activities, we will work as a complete team, for others, we will form smaller groups. Participants will be asked to choose between options, and we will split up into smaller groups for these. In this way, everyone can plot their own course throughout the week, focusing on the visits that are of most interest to them.

The programme will be full and intense; it is designed to stretch the senses and some of our preconceptions of the world. Through the course of the week we will see very different aspects of China, and will meet people living in very different worlds. It is sometimes hard to absorb everything we are seeing and hearing. An important part of the learning from the week, therefore, comes through our daily Learning Hours. At the end of each day we gather for an hour or so over a drink, when we share key

insights, questions and impressions from our different encounters during the day. This time together allows us to learn from each other, to build connections and insights from experiences and to refine our own questions as we try to make sense of the very diverse experiences. We come away enriched by the experience, by what we have learned and by the people we have met.