

CHINA Great Wall of China Trek

This is an Open Challenge itinerary; you can take part on the dates shown and raise money for a charity of your choice. Itineraries for bespoke trips (run for sole charities) may differ slightly, and will have different dates and pricing schedules.

Duration: 11 days / 10 nights

Trip Grade: Moderate

Dates:

19 Apr – 29 Apr 2012 18 Apr – 28 Apr 2013
 20 Sep – 30 Sep 2012 19 Sep – 29 Sep 2013
 11 Oct – 21 Oct 2012 10 Oct – 20 Oct 2013

Payment Options:	2012	2013
Fundraising:		
Registration Fee	£349	£349
	+	+
Fundraising Target	£3100	£3250
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Self Payment:		
Registration Fee	£349	£349
	+	+
Trip Cost	£1240	£1300

Please note Registration Fee is in addition to Trip Cost / Fundraising Target



Our trek is very varied, as we trek through woodland and terraced farmland, and follow the contours of the beautiful hills and mountains in remote areas north of Beijing. We walk on old sections of the Great Wall, as well as restored sections with smooth flagstones and lots of steps!

This challenge is physically demanding and offers fabulous scenery and a fascinating insight into a rich culture and history.



Stretching 6000km in a snaking line across China, the Great Wall was begun in the 5th Century BC. As it snakes across the mountains it conjures up a sense of history which is difficult to grasp until you have had the opportunity to experience it.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Depart London for Beijing

Day 2: Beijing

Arrive Beijing. We transfer to our city hotel, where we can freshen up and relax! There will be a full trip briefing in the evening. Night hotel.

Day 3: Beijing – Huangyaguan

We transfer this morning from the busy streets of Beijing, driving northwest into the hills above Huangyaguan, a small town situated in a beautiful valley in the heart of the Yanshan Mountains. After a scenic drive through a landscape of hills and lakes, we arrive at our village and see the Great Wall for the first time, as it snakes along the ridgeline of the mountains. After a good traditional lunch we start our trek! The Wall is well renovated here and it disappears into the horizon in both directions. After some steep step sections, which give us a good inkling of what lies ahead, we walk predominantly downhill until we reach

Huangyaguan. Here the wall crosses the road that leads to our nearby accommodation. Night mountain hotel.

Drive approx 4 hrs; trek approx 2 – 3 hrs

Day 4: Huangyaguan – Mountain Village

Our day's walk begins where we left the Wall yesterday, and we head up the steep

renovated steps towards what appears to be a sheer cliff face. This is where we encounter 'Heaven's Ladder', a steep climb of over 200 steps leading us up



the cliff face. There are fabulous views from the top, and once we have caught our breath the path continues gradually on steep tracks through forest, up to the top of the ridge. Once again we join the old Wall, and follow it along the contours of the mountain until we clamber down into the valley below. We bed down in the houses of a local village, a real cultural experience. Night farmers' houses.

Trek approx 7 hrs

Day 5: Mountain Village – Jinshanlin

Waving goodbye to our hospitable hosts, we head up through the farming terraces immediately behind the village. The path is steep, and the terraces soon give way to rocky hillsides scattered with scrub. Eventually we re-join the Wall, which is unrestored and crumbling so we follow a path which takes us alongside it, with fabulous views along the ridgeline to the day's highest point. We then drop down the hillside and make

our way on winding tracks through trees back into the valley, where farmers grow maize, and walnut and fruit trees. Back at the village, we walk along the village road, enjoying the scenes of rural life, until we reach



the main road and our waiting transport. Our drive through the mountains to Jinshanlin is very scenic. Night mountain hotel.

Trek approx 4 – 5 hours; drive approx 3-4 hrs

Day 6: Gubeiko – Jinshanlin

A quick 20-minute hop in the bus takes us to our start point just outside the village of Gubeiko. We walk through the village and farmland until our path takes us alongside an unrestored yet well-preserved section of the Wall. This part appears to be of almost brick-like construction and dates back to the Qing Dynasty – the last dynasty to rule over this vast land. We follow a track down into the valley in order to skirt a Chinese military post and follow dirt paths through trees and undergrowth before rejoining the Wall. There are some steep sections and we help each other out if need be. Stunning views of the Great Wall snaking along the hilltops keep us going whenever we find it tough! The final stretch to Jinshanlin is on restored Wall with lots of steps. A short walk through the village and small shops takes us to our simple accommodation. Night mountain hotel.

Trek approx 7 – 8 hrs

Day 7: Jinshanlin – Watchtower Panorama – Mutianyu

Today's stunning walk on this largely restored section of the Wall takes us from Jinshanlin towards Simatei. Starting where we left off yesterday, we head up the carefully restored steps which take us into the mountains one final time. There are a few sections on older bricks and some dirt tracks, but



for most of today we walk on good flagstones. The scenery is superb with rolling purple hills fading into the distance. . We climb uphill a good deal, but from our high point we enjoy the views of the Great Wall as it clings precariously to the rock face opposite, dotted with many watchtowers; classic 'scales on a dragon's back' scenery. After time to soak up this breathtaking panorama, we leave the Wall behind and head down on small paths through forest and farmland. We then meet our waiting transport which takes us to Mutianyu. Night mountain hotel.

Trek approx 6 – 7 hrs; drive approx 2 hrs

Day 8: Mutianyu

Our trek starts with a brief walk through a friendly village before we climb for 1-2 hours up the hillside, where we may see villagers gathering firewood. We can see the Wall high on the ridge ahead of us, and slowly wind our way up to it. Once more our efforts are rewarded by stunning views as the Wall disappears from view in both directions. We continue along the well-restored Wall flagstones, with some good sections of steps, before descending down to our hotel



at Mutianyu. There is an opportunity to do some haggling in the markets before you reach the hotel, so carry some money with you for this! Night mountain hotel.

Trek approx 4 – 5 hrs

Day 9: Mutianyu – Juyongguan – Beijing

After a transfer, our final day's walk takes us on a circuit of the restored Wall at Juyongguan. The Wall undulates across the rolling spine of hills offering spectacular views of this area, where many warriors once fought. After some of the steepest steps we have encountered yet, our trek is over all too soon and we must leave the Wall and return to the twenty-first century. We load up the bus and transfer to Beijing, the nation's capital and home to over 13 million people. Our senses will be unprepared as we enter Beijing and experience its frenetic energy, quite a contrast after the natural scenery and remote tranquillity of the past few days. After checking into our hotel, we have time to freshen up before the evening celebration meal.

Drive approx 2-3 hrs; trek approx 4 hrs

(Dinner not included)

Day 10: Free day Beijing

We take the opportunity to visit the fabulous Forbidden City and Tianenman Square. You are then free to do more sight-

seeing, explore the local shops and markets or simply relax. *(Lunch and dinner not included)*

Day 11: Depart Beijing

Transfer to the airport for our flight to London – arrive same day.

Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

For details of our extension to see the incredible Terracotta Warriors in Xian (adds 4 extra days) please contact us.



GENERAL INFORMATION

TOUR COST

All accommodation is included as well as all flights and transfers; all meals except three as specified in the itinerary; entrance to the Forbidden City and all other sites visited as part of the itinerary.

Experienced Discover Adventure leaders and doctor (depending on final group size) are also included, along with a local support crew of local guides, drivers and cooks (see Trip Support below).

It does not include personal travel insurance, airline fuel supplement if charged by the airline, entry visa, tips for local crew or international



departure tax. It also does not include any entrance fees to any optional sites or attractions you may wish to visit, or optional activities you may wish to undertake.

Costs in China

We recommend you budget for the following costs in-country:

- Tips for Local Crew (see below): US\$40
- Meals not included: US\$30-40
- Entry visa: £30 + service fees (obtain before departure)

Remember to allow extra for drinks, souvenirs & other personal expenses. There is plenty of opportunity to buy souvenirs during the trek.

This recommendation is a guideline only. Please note that costs may fluctuate and we have no control over any changes.

We strongly recommend you carry a credit card in case of personal emergency.



FLIGHT INFORMATION

Group flights leave from London Heathrow or Gatwick and are booked through Discover Adventure Ltd under ATOL licence 5636. By travelling with Discover Adventure you are protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

We are most likely to fly with Emirates or Cathay Pacific airlines. However, we don't always fly with the same airline so this is a guideline only. You will usually receive confirmed flight details several months before departure.

Our itineraries are always based on current flight schedules and are therefore subject to change by the airline.

Connecting Flights

If you book flights to Heathrow or Gatwick, it is your responsibility to allow plenty of time to connect to the group flight and to cope with any flight schedule changes. Please be aware that the best deals allow little flexibility if you need to change them. We regret that we are unable to book connecting flights for you.

Transit Stops

When booking group flights we endeavour to find the best flights that match our itinerary. There are often no direct flights to our destination, so do be prepared for transit stops: bring a good book or chat to your fellow trekkers! Airlines that do offer direct flights rarely offer competitive rates for

groups. Please remember that the main purpose of our trips is to raise money for charity!

Flying Separately

If you prefer to book your own flights please ask us for a land-only cost. You will be responsible for making your own arrangements for meeting the rest of the group, though we can advise you. We need to know if you do not require our group flight as early as possible; please complete the form in the information pack you'll be sent with your booking confirmation.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation on this trek ranges from good quality western-style hotels in Beijing to more basic mountain hotels or lodges. There is one night in farmers' houses, which provides a real insight into rural Chinese life. Please do not expect the same standards as you would in the UK!

FOOD

All food is included when trekking. The food is good, freshly-cooked and will give you plenty of energy for the long days of trekking. Meals are generally Chinese-style not western. In some areas fresh meat can be hard to come by.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

For most people, the main attraction of travelling to a different country is to see new sights and enjoy new experiences. Sometimes those new experiences can make life harder or more inconvenient than you may like, such as toilet hygiene or different food, or simply a different attitude to solving problems. This is all part of the challenge you are signing up for!

We are very privileged to live in a country with a high standard of living, and travelling exposes us to different challenges – all of which help broaden our horizons. We can guarantee that coming face-to-face with experiences outside your normal 'comfort zone' will help you bond with your fellow trekkers and provide you with plenty of things to laugh about! A sense of humour and sense of adventure are two of the most important things to bring with you!

Dietary Requirements

Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. Please do not expect as much variety as you would have

access to at home – we will be in very rural areas and among people of a different culture who may not understand your requirements, however willing they are to help. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.



Other Meals

Any meals not included are listed in the itinerary and are generally when we are in towns or cities and you are free to explore and try other culinary experiences! There is always something to suit every budget.

PASSPORT, VISA & VACCINATIONS

A valid ten-year passport is essential; it should be valid for at least 6 months after entry into China. A visa is essential for all nationalities, costing approx £35 at time of writing. We will provide you with more information about entry visas in the lead-up to your trip.

We insist that you have had a Tetanus injection in the last ten years, and highly recommend protection against Polio, Hepatitis A and Typhoid. A Yellow Fever certificate is essential only if coming from an infected area.

You should always check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

TREKKING INFORMATION

Terrain

Walking is partly on flagstones of various conditions on the Wall, and partly on paths through woodland or farmland. At times it is rough and rocky underfoot, at other times it can be muddy. There are also many steps. If you are unsteady on your feet you will find trekking poles useful.

Trekking Distances:

You will trek approximately 80km on this trip overall. Because of the varied terrain and lack of accurate maps, it's impossible to give accurate daily distances. It's also much more useful when training to think about the hours you need to walk for!

We are always happy to talk through the trip in more detail with you if you are worried about your fitness at any stage.

FITNESS WARNING: DESIGNED TO BE CHALLENGING!

This trek is designed to be challenging for those of good health and fitness, and is achievable for most people provided they train well in advance. We will supply you with a thorough training guide when you have registered. Training for the challenge is all part of the preparation and requires commitment! Without it, you will find the trek less enjoyable – and we want you to have the time of your life!

Clothing & Equipment

We are travelling through remote mountains where we could be exposed to bad weather at any time. The table below gives you an idea of the climate, but be prepared for all weathers and temperatures. Weather conditions can change quickly in these regions. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, as well as details on useful discounts you are entitled to as a Discover Adventure customer. We are always available if you need advice.

Weather

Min/Max temp °C & average monthly rainfall (Beijing)

April	7-21 °C	17	Sept	14-26 °C	58
May	13-27 °C	35	Oct	6-20 °C	16

TRAINING WEEKENDS: £129 SPECIAL OFFER!

Only when you book online at the same time as registering for your main challenge

Discover Adventure Training Weekends in Snowdonia National Park are designed help you prepare for your challenge. Whether you use the weekend to gauge your fitness, get your training back on track, boost your confidence, get advice or meet other trekkers, you're bound to find it incredibly useful!

For dates and further information see our brochure or website.

Fitness Levels

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience and fitness, all ages and backgrounds. We expect all participants to train hard in advance to achieve this challenge, but we respect everyone's limits. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners will find themselves waiting for the slower ones. Please relax, and remember that this is a team effort that enables people to achieve their personal goals and earn sponsorship.

TRIP SUPPORT

Discover Adventure Crew

Your trip will be led by experienced Discover Adventure leaders. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments,



knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader.

All our leaders are from the UK or other English-speaking countries. Most work for us on an ad-hoc basis and have 'real' jobs in-between trips! We never send our leaders to the same destination for months on end – we want them to be as enthusiastic about your trip as you are.



Although our leaders are trained in expedition first-aid, they are accompanied by an expedition doctor or medic (dependent on group size), who is there to look after the well-being of the whole group and deal with any incidents. They help the leaders to ensure the trip runs smoothly and encourage you when things get tough.

The number of crew looking after you will depend on the final size of your group, but an average-sized group in China would be led by two leaders and a doctor. At Discover

Adventure we pride ourselves on our high leader: trekker ratio and believe it leads to greater trip enjoyment as well as excellent trip safety.

Local Support Crew

Our local support crew is made up of local guides and drivers. Your local guide knows the local area well, and is a great source of knowledge about local customs and lifestyles. Our drivers do not always speak much English but are very friendly and approachable. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

Tips for Local Crew

Your leader will arrange a collection of tips for the local support crew at the end of your trek. Tipping is not obligatory, but once you see how hard they work on your behalf you will be happy to donate something! See 'Costs in China' above for a guideline amount, your leader will let you know if there is any change to this guideline. All our local crew are paid wages, but bear in mind that the average wage in this country is far below what you would spend on a normal night out.

Luggage

Your luggage is carried by vehicles from hotel to hotel. Vehicles will drop us off at the start of the trek and pick us up for any transfers. They also carry all food, water etc.

Space is limited and hard-sided luggage is not suitable, so it is essential that your kit is packed in a soft sailing bag, rucksack or expedition kitbag. Ask us about our specially-designed low-cost kitbags if you don't have one already.



You should also bring a small daypack to carry for items needed during the day as you will not have access to your main luggage until the evening.

TRIP SAFETY

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority. Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with radios and emergency satellite phones, extensive medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. They always have

access to our 24-hour emergency back-up in the UK. Our leaders are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary should local conditions dictate.

Pre-trip administration – such as compulsory medical questionnaires and travel insurance – is all done with your safety in mind.

WORLDWIDE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Long before 'Responsible Tourism' became a recognised phrase, we designed and ran our trips to ensure they made minimum impact on the environment and a positive impact on the local communities we pass through. AITO, our Trade Association, has recognised the work we do in this area and has awarded us 5 stars as a Responsible Tour Operator.

Discover Adventure Projects

We are supporting a tree-planting project in Peru and a children's home in Tanzania on a long-term basis. If you would like to 'give something back' please consider donating £5 to our projects when you sign up. Please see our website for more details.

Carbon Offsetting

We encourage all our customers to offset emissions connected with their trip. You can offset at any time in the lead-up to departure by visiting Climate Care via our website and making a donation to a worthwhile project supported by them. Alternatively, if you wish to take more practical action in the UK you can volunteer for a day with BTCV and work on an environmental project local to you. Work may include construction footpaths, dry stone walling, creating wildlife habitats or planting trees in your community. Make your volunteer pledge by going to www.btcv.org/dapledge



Please contact the Discover Adventure office with any queries, using the contact information at the foot of this page.

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