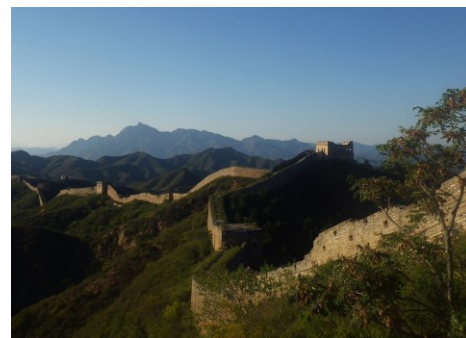


## Great Wall Of China Trek



Duration: 9 days

One of the Seven Wonders of the World, The Great Wall of China has to be the ultimate building project the world has ever known; constructed by human hands over 2000 years ago, it stretches across this hilly region with long spurs and watch-towers often disappearing into the mists.

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

## DETAILED ITINERARY

## Day 1: Fly London to Beijing

## Day 2: Arrive Beijing; transfer Huangyaguan / Forbidden City Tour

Depending on our flight arrival time, we will either avoid Beijing's considerable traffic and transfer to the start of our trek at the small town of Huangyaguan, where we can freshen up and relax! Alternatively, when our arrival time makes it practical, we will transfer into Beijing. Here we enjoy a tour of Tianenman Square and the Forbidden City, the must-see sight of Beijing, before a night in the city. There will be a full trip briefing in the evening. Night city hotel / mountain hotel.

**Drive approx 2 hours**

*NB: If transferring straight to Huangyaguan, there will be opportunity to visit the Forbidden City at the end of the*

*trip.*

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### Day 3: Huangyaguan

Huangyaguan is a small town situated in a beautiful valley in the heart of the Yanshan Mountains. After a fairly leisurely start (or driving from Beijing), we have our first experience walking on the Great Wall. After some steep step sections, which give us a good inkling of what lies ahead, we walk predominantly downhill until we again reach Huangyaguan for the evening. Here the wall crosses the road that leads back to our accommodation. Night mountain hotel.

**Trek approx 3-4 hours**

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### 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 homestays.

**Trek approx. 7 hours**

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### Day 5: Mountain Village – Jinshanlin

Waving goodbye to our hospitable hosts, we head up steeply through the farming terraces immediately behind the village. The terraces soon give way to rocky scrub-covered hillsides. Eventually we re-join the Wall, which is unrestored and crumbling so we follow a path 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 back into the valley, through fields of maize, and walnut and fruit trees, to the village 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 hours**

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### 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 un-restored 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 hours**

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### Day 7: Jinshanlin – Watchtower Panorama – Beijing

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, dotted with many watchtowers; classic 'scales on a dragon's back' scenery. After time to soak up this breathtaking panorama, as we enjoy looking back over the mountains at our huge achievements, we leave the Wall behind and head down on small paths through forest and farmland. We then meet our waiting transport which takes us back to Beijing, the nation's capital and home to over 20 million people! This evening we have a great celebration to mark our achievements. Night hotel.

**Trek approx. 6 – 7 hours; drive approx. 3 hours**

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### Day 8: Beijing

We enjoy time visiting Tianenman Square and the amazing Forbidden City before free time to explore or shop. If you saw this on your arrival day, you are free to spend your time as you wish. Night hotel.

*(Lunch and Dinner not included)*

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### Day 9: Fly Beijing to London

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London to Beijing
- 7 nights accommodation on twinshare - hotels and guesthouses
- All transfers as part of itinerary
- All meals except where specified
- Discover Adventure crew (number dependant on group size)
- English speaking local guide/s
- Local support and back-up
- Tour of Forbidden City and entry to all other sites included in itinerary

## WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Any meals specified 'not included' in the itinerary
- Travel insurance
- China entry visa (approximately £150 - £200 as of March 2024)
- Personal spending money, souvenirs and drinks, optional activities and site visits
- Tips for the local guides and support crew
- Any applicable surcharges as per Terms and Conditions
- Contribution towards airline taxes capped at £250

## GRADE | YELLOW

Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **YELLOW** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors; trip duration, accommodation and living conditions (see icon) are also taken into account.

[Trip grading explained](#)

# CHALLENGE INFORMATION

## DETAILED INFORMATION

### Leaders & Trip Support

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. They are also trained in expedition first aid. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader. Usually leaders are based in the UK or other English-speaking countries and lead for us regularly throughout the year in many different countries. In some instances, trips are led by in-country guides with a wealth of knowledge about the region; they have been trained by us to provide the level of support expected on a Discover Adventure trip.

### Trip Doctor

An expedition doctor or medic accompanies the group (dependent on group size.) Their role is to look after the well-being of the whole group and deal with any medical incidents. They help the crew to ensure the trip runs smoothly, and encourage you when things get tough. The total number of crew looking after you will depend on the final size of your group.

### Local Support Crew

Our local support crew is made up of local guides, assisted by drivers, porters, cooks and other support staff, depending on the type of trip. Local guides know the area well, and are a great source of knowledge about local customs and lifestyles. Not all support crew will speak English well, but are very friendly and approachable. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

Your leader will arrange a collection of tips for the local support crew at the end of your trek, and you will be provided

with a guideline amount in advance. Tipping is not obligatory, but once you see how hard they work on your behalf you will be happy to donate something! All our local crew are paid wages, but bear in mind that the average wage in many countries may be less than you would spend on an average night out.

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## 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 communication devices (eg phones, radios and/or emergency satellite phones), medical kit and other safety apparatus appropriate to the destination. Our leaders always have access to our 24-hour emergency UK back-up. They 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 medical questionnaires and travel insurance as appropriate - is all done with your safety in mind.

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## Foreign Travel Advice

For the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, check [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).

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## Flight Information

Group flights usually leave from London Heathrow or Gatwick on scheduled airlines 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).

Your journey may involve a transit en route; details of route and flight times will be confirmed several months before departure. We do not always use the same airline for each destination; if you wish to know the probable carrier and flight times, please call for details. 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. If you prefer to book your own flights please ask us for a land-only cost.

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## Accommodation

Accommodation on this trek ranges from good quality international-style hotels in Beijing to more basic mountain hotels or lodges. Expect plenty of variety. There is one night in guesthouses (dorm-style) in converted farmers' homestays.

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## Roomshare Arrangements

Our trips are sold on a shared accommodation basis. Some nights are usually twin-share. On some nights we are likely to sleep in more communal rooms such as dormitories, huts, local homestays, etc., depending on the trip, and you may be sharing with a larger number of participants or the whole group; this type of accommodation cannot always be single-sex.

You can tell us if you are travelling with someone else on the trip when you book or within your passenger portal, and we will do all we can to accommodate this request. It is important that each person completes the room share request on their bookings. For customers booking and travelling together, including same-sex couples, a double bed can be

requested if available.

If you're not familiar with anyone in the group, rest assured, we always pair you with someone of the same gender (as per the information you provided when booking, or passport markers), and a similar age where possible. We're actively working to improve our system's gender restrictions to be more inclusive, and we've recently made significant strides in this area. If you identify differently from the gender marker on your passport and would like to discuss this before booking, please feel free to reach out to us.

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## Food & Dietary Requirements

The food provided is plentiful, often local in style and freshly-cooked, and will give you plenty of energy. Sometimes we enjoy a buffet-style lunch-stop, other times we might have packed lunches. On some trips we stop at small local restaurants. Dinners are generally eaten at our accommodation each evening. In some regions there may be less variety than you are used to, and in others fresh meat or produce can be harder to come by. Any meals not included are listed in the itinerary and are generally on travel / free days, giving you the opportunity to explore and try other culinary experiences! There is always something to suit different budgets.

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 may be in very rural or remote areas, or 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 we strongly recommend you bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

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## Luggage

Your luggage, food, water and equipment is transported for you from one night-stop to the next. If there is easy road access this is done by vehicle; if not porters, mules or even camels might carry your bags, depending on the terrain.

Space is limited and hard-sided luggage is not suitable, so it is essential that your kit is packed in a soft 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.

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## Sustainable Travel

We are committed to an ethos of responsible travel here at Discover Adventure; this means sustainable tourism, ethical travel, community engagement, cultural respect, wildlife protection, fair trade practices, carbon footprint reduction and more. We have been on a 30-year journey with this as one of our core principles, and it continues to evolve; you can keep up to date with what we are up to and what all of this translates into on a DA trip [here](#).

From 2024, we will offset our entire carbon footprint, including the flights, via a carbon credit scheme ([see more here](#)).

We must do all we can to be on the right side of history. Our offsetting brings peace of mind to many of our customers, but we think it is essential that our customers are aware of their impact; with this in mind, we encourage our participants to donate to World Land Trust's Buy an Acre project when they book an adventure.

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## Group Dynamic

Our brilliant group dynamic is fundamental to us. We have become synonymous with it over our 30 years of adventure: the supportive nature and group camaraderie are always listed as one of the trip highlights in our feedback. You'll meet people of widely varying backgrounds, motivations and experiences. Under these unique circumstances, you are more likely to open up about your story and form lifelong friendships. You'll likely find something that resonates with everyone in the group. This is a unique way of travelling, after all, and that's what brings you all together.

We have travellers from 18 – 80 across all of our challenges, with the average age of our participants being in the mid-40s.

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## Inclusive Travel

Over the years, people of all abilities have achieved personal goals on our adventures that they may have previously assumed were out of their reach.

We must be aware of any circumstances that may affect your ability to take on the trip, whether you have concerns about fitness, health conditions or disability. This way, we can ensure we are providing the best advice and support. You will be asked to sign a medical declaration upon booking. Whilst we will always try our best for you, by the nature of adventure, not all of our challenges are accessible, and we are not an operator specifically offering adapted adventures. If you would like to have a confidential chat with the team about anything before booking, please give us a call or an email; we will be more than happy to help.

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## PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

### Fitness Levels

This is designed to be a challenge, and it is vital that you train sufficiently for it. We will supply you with a thorough training guide once you have registered. We expect all participants to train hard in advance, but we respect everyone's limits and do not expect everyone to maintain the same pace. Inadequate training is likely to have an impact not just on your chances of completing the challenge, but enjoying it too - and we want you to have the time of your life!

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience, fitness and ability as well as all ages and backgrounds. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race. If you have concerns about your fitness or if you have reduced mobility please do contact us for a confidential chat about whether this challenge is appropriate for you.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners may 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.

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### Passport & Visa / Vaccinations

Entry requirements vary depending on your destination and nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure your passport is valid, and any visas are obtained in good time. Check the [FCO's advice](#) on entry requirements for your destination to be sure. Please ensure you allow plenty of time to apply for your visa; we will provide you with all necessary information 6

weeks prior to departure to assist with your application.

Your routine UK schedule of vaccinations should be up-to-date (especially tetanus). We recommend you check [Fit For Travel](#) for further details. You should always check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

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## 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 may find trekking poles useful. You will trek approximately 45km in total – though do not base your training on distances! It will feel far longer. It's much more useful when training to think about the hours you need to walk for!

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## Clothing & Kit

We plan our trips around the optimal weather conditions, but could still be exposed to bad weather at any time. It is vital you are prepared for all conditions. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, with plenty of information, and we are always available if you need advice.

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## Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance is compulsory on all of our challenges outside of the UK; we strongly suggest that you arrange insurance cover as soon as your booking with us is confirmed, or as soon as you're able to purchase some, and at least 8 months prior to travel. Should you need to cancel prior to departure, you will need insurance to cover the costs involved (registration fee and any trip costs depending on cancellation date).

We all hope never to need it, and thankfully most of the time we don't, but on those rare occasions when you do, you want it to cover you as best it can. Whilst it's a fairly boring admin task relating to your trip of a lifetime, it is really important you ensure that you have adequate cover for the type of challenge you are taking part in as well as medical emergencies, evacuation and repatriation, so make sure you're happy with the level of cover. There are lots of suppliers out there, with a wide range in levels of cover; generally speaking, you get what you pay for! Get and pay for the right level of cover and then you can go on your adventure not having to worry about the what-if's. For more details click [here](#).

Once your travel insurance is arranged, just remember to let us know the policy number and 24-hr medical emergency phone number provided by your insurers.

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## 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 participants 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!

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## Cancelling your booking

In the unfortunate circumstance that you need to cancel your booking, we would ask that you notify us in writing either by email or post. Your cancellation will be considered effective from the date the notice is received. Registration, administration and amendment fees are non refundable and, depending on your payment option and how close it is to your challenge departure date, you may be liable for a cancellation charge.

Full details of all cancellation charges may be found in the Terms and Conditions of booking.

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## Group Size

Your booking is part of a group challenge, and the tour costs and fundraising targets listed on our website are based on a minimum number of participants which is shown on the challenge. Our typical groups run with approximately 15-25 participants; however you may find your group is smaller or larger than this.

We will confirm at least 12 weeks prior to departure that your challenge is guaranteed to run. Occasionally it may be possible to still run the challenge with less than the minimum numbers, subject to a small group supplement. If we think a small group supplement may be necessary, we will discuss this with you as soon as possible, usually 5 months before your departure date.

**Minimum numbers and groups sizes may vary on Bespoke Charity challenges. If you are booked onto a bespoke challenge please contact your charity for full details.**

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## Passenger Portal

We have a Passenger Portal which will give you more details of the challenge itself. It also enables you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - [Passenger Portal Log in](#).

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# CHALLENGE EXTENSIONS



## TERRACOTTA WARRIORS

Lying over 1000km from Beijing, Xi'an is the capital city of Shannxi Province in central China, and one of the most famous and ancient cities in China. It was the imperial city for 13 Chinese dynasties, lasting over 1000 years, and the starting point of the famed Silk Road. Its old city walls are some of the best-preserved in the country. During the Tang Dynasty (618-907AD), Xi'an was one of the greatest cities in the world with a population of over one million, and was a centre of international trade.

The focus of this trip is the incredible Terracotta Warriors, at the tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Hung, 25km east of the city. Despite their world renown, the Terracotta Warriors were only discovered in 1974 when local farmers were digging a well. Buried for over 2000 years, the ranks of soldiers that can be seen today are one of the most amazing sights in China, yet were never intended to be seen by the public. Thousands of life-size terracotta figures of warriors, horses and chariots stand in battle formation, designed to follow their emperor into immortality. The figures have different facial expressions and marks of rank, and are incredibly lifelike. Originally they carried real weapons such as bows, swords and crossbows, many of which remain – and were still sharp when first uncovered.

This is a great opportunity to extend your stay after your Great Wall trek and experience what is considered by many to be the eighth wonder of the world.

**When registering on this extension, a photocopy or scan of your current passport details page is required in order to book the overnight train. Please send this with your booking ref to [info@discoveradventure.com](mailto:info@discoveradventure.com) immediately after you sign up.**

**Min 3 pax - £150 supplement (pp) for 2 pax**

**Single supplement: £220**



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

Please note: This document was downloaded on 27 Jul 2024, and the challenge is subject to change.