

# GREAT WALL OF CHINA TREK

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How fit do I need to be?

This trekking challenge is all about **endurance** fitness rather than speed and it is certainly not a race. Try to train with your day pack on your back and get used to drinking and carrying water during your training. There is inevitably a lot of trekking up and down steps, so any step exercises will help build up your leg muscles. Take the stairs and not the lift at every opportunity! Sticking to our training plan will really pay off, as this is a challenge, not a holiday. You will be up early in the mornings and trekking for approximately 6 hours each day so good fitness is very important. This trek is achievable for most people provided they **train well in advance**.

Keep in mind that this is a challenging trek and many people will find elements of the trip difficult at times, whether it is the physical trekking, changing weather, the difference in culture or something else. It is great if you can work as a team and help each other out during any difficulties. While there are challenges, **the enjoyment and rewards that come from trekking the Great Wall are immense!**



### What will the trekking be like?

There is very little flat terrain and you will be walking on or beside the wall at all times, so walking on uneven terrain and up and downhill in your training will help you. You will trek approximately 70km in total, partly on flagstones of various conditions on the Wall, and partly on paths through woodland and farmland. At times it is rough and rocky underfoot, at other times it can be muddy. **There are many steps**. If you are unsteady on your feet you will find trekking poles useful but do make sure you use these in your training exercise.

### What is the accommodation like?

Whilst on the trek you will be staying in **basic local hotels** and one night in **homestay** accommodation in a mountain village where the area is more rural. The accommodation we use is of quite a basic standard but it is comfortable (don't expect the luxuries you are used to in the UK). You can often appreciate the views of the Great Wall during your down time, as the hotels are chosen in order to maintain a good location in relation to the wall. Most have electrical points and you are lucky enough to get showers on this challenge. The accommodation is on a twin-share basis. If you are travelling alone, you will be paired up with someone of the same sex and similar age. You can always let us know nearer the time if you wish to share with a particular person, if you have not already done so.

### Can I request single accommodation?

There may be a limited number of single rooms available, however these are subject to request and at an additional cost (on a first-come, first-served basis). Please contact us if this is important to you, but remember sharing a room is a really good ice-breaker if you don't know anyone else on the trip, so don't worry too much about it!

### Who accompanies us on the trek from Discover Adventure?

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.



01722 718444

info@discoveradventure.com



## Will there be a doctor trekking with us also?

Depending on group size, an expedition doctor or medic may accompany the group.

## Who else will accompany the group on this challenge?

Our local support crew is made up of local guides, drivers and cooks. Local guides know the area well, and are a **great source of knowledge about local customs and lifestyles**. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

## What are the transport arrangements for the group and our kit?

When you arrive in China you will travel on a coach or minibus depending on the group size. As detailed in your challenge itinerary, it may be necessary on some days to hop on the bus for short transfers before you start trekking. Your **luggage will be transported each day by truck as you trek**, so you therefore cannot access your main packs during the day and will need to make sure that you carry a day-pack with your fleece, waterproof, sun-cream, hat, camera, water etc. Discover Adventure Kitbags are specially designed for the rigours of our challenges and are very affordable, please ask for details.

## What will the weather be like?

Days should be warm and sunny, not too hot or cold, though it can be cooler up in the hills. Rain showers aren't unusual, and it can be windy. The autumn can be cooler than spring. Weather conditions can change quickly, and **you should be prepared for anything**. Average temperatures in Beijing range between 7-27°C. Although the weather is likely to be pleasant, you will need to be prepared for rain and a drop in temperature at night. It is a good idea to take some warmer sleepwear if the temperatures are lower than expected. Bedding is provided throughout the trek, and a silk liner/light sleeping bag is only really required as an extra if you feel the cold at night.

Never underestimate the sun, even if it feels cold while you are trekking or there is cloud cover or the wind is blowing. Please bring Factor 30 Sun Screen as a minimum, if not higher along with lip salve with a high SPF too. You are trekking through some exposed areas with little shelter so a sun hat and quality sunglasses are also a must.



## What will I be eating?

The **Chinese-style food** on this trip is freshly-cooked and plentiful so it is important that you make sure you are eating well for the long days of trekking. For breakfast you will typically have bread, jam, eggs, tea and coffee and for lunch you will be able to make up your own pack lunch of sandwiches, cake, fruit and a snack. In the evening you will be served traditional Chinese meals with rice and a variety of meat and vegetable dishes.

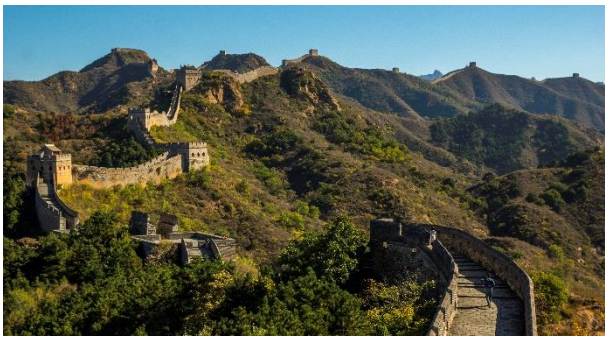
## I have a specific dietary need; will there be enough for me to eat?

Being vegetarian, gluten free, dairy free or having other dietary requirements is usually not a problem provided you **let us know well in advance** (airlines need to know at least 8 weeks prior to the departure). If you feel you aren't getting enough energy because of your dietary requirements please talk to the leaders on the trip – they can't help unless they know there's a problem. 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.



01722 718444  
info@discoveradventure.com





## Do I need to bring snacks?

Bring enough snacks to keep you going each day - around **2-3 tasty treats a day will suffice**. We recommend a combination of slow and fast release snacks such as cereal bars (e.g. Tracker), flapjacks, salted nuts, chocolate bars such as Mars or Snickers, and a packet of sweets. Bringing a combination of treats will keep you interested in snacking as consistent energy levels are important.

## How much do I need to drink?

**Drink, drink, drink!** Due to the nature of the challenge and the climate, you may find that you will need to drink significantly more in China than you would trekking in the UK. You will be provided with plenty of bottled water at breakfast for the day ahead, and in the evenings at dinner, so ensure that you keep topping up your bottles and hydration systems. You will be carrying at least 2ltrs of water during the day so try and get used to trekking with that amount of weight on you when training.

## What is the celebration meal?

At the end of your challenge, there will be a special meal to celebrate your achievements. Please check your trip itinerary to confirm whether you will need to set aside funds to pay for this on the night.

## What about toilets?

There are no toilet facilities except for in your hotels (aside from the odd squat-style toilet in some locations) so there may be occasions when you need to go whilst trekking. You will need to take nappy sacks and paper in order to make sure you **leave no trace**. These can be discarded in the next bin. The toilets in the hotels will have a bin next to them to put used toilet paper in rather than flushing them.

## What can I do to prevent illness during the challenge?

Illness can spread through the group very quickly when you are living closely together so it's important to bring **antiseptic hand sanitiser** for use after the toilet and before eating to minimise the spread of germs. Also, avoid sharing water bottles and sharing each other's food or sweets as this spreads germs very easily, even if you are being careful.

## What if I have any issues during the trip?

Our leaders are very experienced and work very hard to ensure your trip runs as smoothly and enjoyably as possible, and we're sure that you'll have a wonderful time. If you do have any concerns or problems during the trip **please talk to the crew and give them the opportunity to explain or rectify things while they are able**. They are all very approachable!



## What will happen in the case of an emergency on this challenge?

The crew will have radios and emergency satellite phones, extensive medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. If you are feeling unwell on this trek, tell your leaders and listen to their advice as your health and safety is our top priority.

## I suffer from vertigo, will I find this particularly difficult on the trek?

If you suffer from vertigo, you will find some areas on this trek more challenging than others. Remember your safety is always our top concern and you will be with experienced leaders who will ensure that the group is well looked after. If you are concerned about vertigo, please do give us a call to discuss.



## How much money will I need to bring with me?

You will need to set aside money on the trip for the meals which are not included in the itinerary plus drinks and souvenirs, and local crew tips. We usually recommend that you take between **£150 - £200 worth of spending money** but if you are planning on buying lots of souvenirs you may wish to take more. There is a chance to change money in your hotel but we recommend that you take Chinese Yuan with you – it is easy to obtain in the UK. If it is not included as per your itinerary, you will need to set aside approximately £25-30 for the celebration meal, which can be paid in US dollars or Yuan. It is always wise to take a credit card in case of emergency as well.

## What do you recommend for crew tips?

The local crew work incredibly hard for the duration of the trip and it is great if we can show our appreciation in the form of a tip. The guide is **around £60 per participant** (which can also be paid in Yuan) which is split out between the local crew but this is of course at your discretion. Your trek leader will give you further advice. Please do not give out individual tips to any local crew who you feel have helped you personally. They work well as a team and those 'out of sight' will be working just as hard.

## Will there be Wi-Fi, phone reception and charging points?

The Wi-Fi in the hotels may not be as fast as you're used to at home and there won't be any internet access when on the trek itself. The phone reception will be limited and you will only be able to charge your devices in the hotel. You may wish to bring your own solar charging device. Treat this challenge like a 'Digital Detox' and tell your relatives that no news is good news, as the leader will have a satellite phone for emergencies only.

## Do I need travel insurance?

As part of your booking conditions, it is **compulsory that you ensure you have adequate travel insurance cover** to cover you for trekking. You can purchase insurance through our website with Insure2Travel if you wish to via [this link](#); otherwise you are able to source your own preferred cover with a company of your choosing.

## When will we know the flight details and meeting point?

Discover Adventure will usually confirm the main group flight details 5 months prior to the trip departure so you will know which airport you are travelling from and can arrange suitable transport. You will be sent your **Final Joining Instructions** in the month prior to the trip departure date, within which specific details of **where and when to meet your trip leader** and fellow trekking participants will be confirmed.

## Will I need my flight ticket before the trip departure date?

Unless specified otherwise, you do not need to have your flight ticket prior to the trip departure date as this will be given to you by the trip leader, doctor or a Discover Adventure representative at the airport. If there are alternative plans, your Challenge Co-ordinator will inform you.

## Can I make my own flight arrangements or alter my flight from the main group?

Flights are included on this trip and you will automatically be booked on to the main group flights, unless you let us know otherwise in good time (no later than three months prior to the trip departure).

It is possible to make your own flight arrangements and a land only discount will be applied to your transactions when you return the '**Flight Arrangements Form**' (sent at the time of booking).

It is also possible to extend your return journey on the main group flights, but note that you will remain on the same flight path returning from the same airport. There is a flight extension request fee to deviate from the main group flight booking and you will need to return the 'Flight Arrangements Form' with your request. The earlier you return your form to us, the less likely there will be a supplement to pay if the flights are more expensive on your requested day. We will always contact you if this is the case to check whether you are happy to proceed.

If you are keen to upgrade your flight, this may be possible at a supplement and you can contact us for an approximate price but please note that this is often very expensive and we will require full payment upfront.



## What do I need to bring?

Refer to the **Kit List** sent to you to ensure that you have all the essentials for a comfortable trip. Make sure your walking boots are waterproof and well-worn in. Trekking tops of a wicking nature will be more comfortable to walk in than cotton. Don't forget your charity t-shirts too! If you intend to trek with poles, ensure that you train with them too. If you are still to buy some kit don't forget that Cotswold Outdoor offer all Discover Adventure participants **15% off** any purchases you make with them. Please ask us for the code if you do not have this already.

## What is the luggage allowance?

Your main luggage limit on the plane is 20kg with a 5kg allowance for hand luggage. Do travel lightly and take only small bottles of toiletries. If you stick to the kit list you will manage this with no problems and don't forget that suitcases are not suitable, soft rucksacks/kitbags only (with no wheels on).

## Do I need to carry my own luggage?

As your main kit bags will be transported by truck between each overnight stop, you will only need to carry a day-pack with your trekking essentials (i.e. water, spare layers, waterproof, sun-cream, hat, camera, snacks).

## What are the passport and visa requirements?

A valid 10-year passport is essential; with at least six months remaining before expiry.

**You will require a Tourist Visa to enter China** and you will need to make arrangements for this yourself prior to departing. You are not able to apply for a Chinese Tourist Visa before 3 months prior to the trip departure. For UK nationals, please refer to the foreign travel advice [given here](#) for more information and the onward links to follow to the China Visa Application Service Centre. We will send the supportive evidence of travel to you at 3 months prior to your trip departure so that you can complete and application fully. If you are a foreign national, or British but living in another country, please refer to your local Chinese Embassy for details on how to obtain your visa and if you need any information from us, do get in touch as soon as possible. If you would like to use a visa agency, we work with the **Visa Machine** (follow [this link](#) for more information).

## How can I find out more about the requirement for vaccinations?

**You will need to ensure that you have the vaccinations required for this trip prior to travel.** You can find some guidance and information on the [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) website. Always consult your local GP or travel clinic for the latest health advice, as they are aware of any updates in World Health Travel requirements.

## Passenger Portal

We have a **Passenger Portal** which will enable 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](#).

## Download the app!



We use the **VAMOOS travel app** that can be downloaded from the App store to your smartphone. The app can be used offline, and allows you to access all of your challenge documents from your phone. Just download the app and enter your unique code at the prompt (**please ask for your specific code if you do not have it**).



01722 718444  
info@discoveradventure.com

**DISCOVER**  
*Adventure*