Last Updated: May 29, 2014

Volunteer China – Pandas - ACZJ

14 days: Beijing to Shanghai

What's Included

Tiananmen Square and Forbidden City guided tour (Beijing). Great Wall visit. Volunteering at a school for people with developmental disabilities. Xi'an orientation walk. Terracotta Warriors excursion. Volunteer stay at Bifengxia Panda Reserve. Shanghai orientation walk.

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VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2014 - September 14th, 2015

Itinerary

Day 1 Arrive Beijing

Feel free to arrive in Beijing at any time today as there are no planned activities. The group will meet at 6pm. Please check for a notice from your CEO. Following the meeting, there's an option to eat some delicious Beijing fare at a local restaurant with your new group.

Day 2 Beijing

Day 2 we set out early to explore the Forbidden City and its corridors and buildings. We will also stand in the heart of Tiananmen square, and hear the significance of these places to modern day Chinese. Late afternoon there is some free time to explore sites such as the traditional hutongs of Beijing or the Temple of Heaven, a refuge for Chinese retirees, where they practice water calligraphy, tai chi, or walk pet crickets!

Day 3 - 5 Rural Beijing (2B, 2L, 2D)

Day 3 we travel to the Great Wall. An incredible piece of engineering stretching 6000km westwards along the mountain ridges north of Beijing, originally constructed to protect the Chinese empires from the Mongolian 'barbarians' of the north. We visit the section known as Mutianyu one of the finest preserved Ming Dynasty sections and a little further from Beijing than where most crowds go.

Early afternoon we continue from the Great Wall to Zhiguang School. The school was established in 1998 to provide vocational education for people with developmental disabilities. Through education, the mission is to advocate and empower intellectually challenged individuals to be part of their community and support themselves through work and continual learning.

Over the next couple days you will have the opportunity to assist in the classroom, prepare food and work on the farm. We stay at the school in a simple basic hostel.

In afternoon on Day 5, we return to Beijing for our overnight transportation on to the ancient capital of China, Xi'an.

Day 6-7 Xi'an

The ancient Tang Dynasty capital holds so many things to explore. Once we arrive, we will we will travel 45 minutes out to the site of the sprawling pits of the Terracotta Warriors. We'll spend a long morning here with our local guide. In the evening, the best way to fuel your stomach is to take a stroll through the Muslim Quarter, munching on nan bread and lamb skewers, dried fruits and roasted walnuts. Delicious!

Day 7 there will be time for a trip atop the ancient city walls which enclose the heart of the modern city. You can also tour two of Xi'an's famous landmarks the Drum and Bell Towers today before continuing our voyage on to Chengdu.

Day 8 Chengdu

This morning we arrive in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province and a chilli-lover’s paradise! This is a vibrant, modern city of almost 12 million people which manages to retain some of its older characteristics and traditions. One of these traditions you can experience for yourself in the form of the 200-year-old Sichuan Opera. The singing, comedy, puppets and incredible 'changing faces' act performed in old halls or courtyard buildings, are a feast for the eyes.

For a relaxing afternoon, visit one of Chengdu's parks or temples, scattered with teahouses. You can while away an afternoon sipping tea and watching the locals play chess, cards or mah-jongg. You may even be invited to give it a try yourself. No visit is complete without a meal in a local Sichuan restaurant. The cuisine is spicy, and peppercorns and chillies abound, but often in a surprisingly subtle way. Whether it's hotpot, meat or a vegetable dish, your mouth will water and your taste buds tingle with delight.

Day 9-11 Bifengxia Panda Centre

The majority of the world’s remaining pandas live in the mountains of Sichuan and on the morning of day 9 we travel some 160 kms (approx. 3 hours) south-west of Chengdu to the Bifengxia Panda Reserve. China has for good reason adopted these playful black and white darlings as their national animal, and has set up Bifengxia to help them survive. Staying in simple accommodation, our volunteer work allows us to see giant pandas up close, but in a relatively natural environment.

There are thought to be less than 1000 of these remarkable animals left in the wild, with around 80% in Sichuan and the remainder in Shaanxi and Gansu provinces. The centre is designed to provide the ideal breeding environment for the pandas, with 70 pandas having been moved here since the earthquake in 2008.

Volunteer duties include gathering bamboo and supplementary foods for these giants and providing a healthy breakfast for them to tuck into as they stretch after a long night’s slumber. Cleaning their areas and enclosures ensures a safe and sanitary environment for the pandas to flourish, and there is occasionally also the chance to help the professional workers gather behavioural data. Most active in the morning there should be plenty of opportunity to see the infants romp in their playground environment, designed to encourage movement and socialization of this fairly solitary creature.

Accommodation here is very basic but worth it for this amazing experience.

Day 12-13 Shanghai

Arriving in the evening in Shanghai, head out to explore the city's lights and modern allure. Your CEO will take the group on walking tour in downtown Shanghai on day 13.

A stroll down the Bund can give a insight into the colonial past of Shanghai as the old European architecture, faces across the river to the modern skyscrapers of the future. A simple fishing village until the arrive of the British, French and other European nations in the mid 1800s, Shanghai's history is surprisingly recent, reflected in both the layout of the city, divided between the old French and International concessions, and also in the architecture where Art Deco sits next to modernity. The presence of so many foreigners made this city a hotbed of culture and politics and it is no surprise that the birthplace of the Communist Party of China can be found deep in the heart of the old French Concession.

Day 14 Depart Shanghai

You are free to depart anytime today.

What's Included

Tiananmen Square and Forbidden City guided tour (Beijing). Great Wall visit. Volunteering at a school for people with developmental disabilities. Xi'an orientation walk. Terracotta Warriors excursion. Volunteer stay at Bifengxia Panda Reserve. Shanghai orientation walk.

Highlights

Volunteer at a school for people with developmental disabilities offering vocational training, come face-to-face with pandas in Chengdu, explore the bustling streets of China's biggest cities, hike along the Great Wall, meet the Terracotta Warriors.

Dossier Disclaimer

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Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

Important Notes

As we use (sometimes crowded) local transport please note backpacks are much more suitable than suitcases for this style of trip.

As we use a D Class speed train on this trip we require a copy of your passport photo page at the time of booking..

Group Leader Description

All our G Adventures group trip is accompanied by a G Adventures Chief Experience Officer (CEO) in China. The aim of the group leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting- we think it's the best of both worlds.

Group Size Notes

Max 16, avg 10

Meals Included

2 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners.

Meals

Eating is a big part of traveling. Travelling with G Adventures you experience the vast array of wonderful food that is available out in the world. Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility, though generally food is cheap. Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. Included breakfasts will usually be asian style consisting of noodles or congee (rice porridge) or bread and eggs. Vegetarians will be able to find a range of different foods, although in some areas the choice maybe limited. While trekking in remote regions food is included, plentiful and made of fresh local ingredients. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

Meal Budget

Allow USD225-275 for meals not included.

Transport

Train, private bus, public bus, bicycle, walking.

About our Transportation

All local transportation is included in the cost of your tour unless otherwise noted. Visiting a range of destinations from rural Sichuan to modern Shanghai we utilize transportation from traditional sleeper trains to new modern bullet trains with local buses and public transportation within cities.

Project accommodation is on site in rural Beijing and onsite or directly adjacent to the Panda Breeding Base in Sichuan.

As we use some fast trains it is important that we have your passport photo page copy at the time of booking in order to process these tickets. Internal rail tickets are issued locally and will be given to you during the trip.

Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Accommodation

Hotels/guesthouses (11 nts), sleeper trains (2 nts).

My Own Room Exceptions

Day 5, 7 and 12, when we are on overnight sleeper trains.

About Accommodation

Accommodation ranges from central located moderate level hotels in Beijing, Chengdu, Xian and Shanghai to more rustic accommodation at the two projects. Please note that the accommodation at the Panda Base in particular is quite basic while the focus of the Special Commune in on helping local people with developmental challenges thus accommodation provided is fairly simple.

Joining Hotel

Chong Wen Men Hotel ■■■■■
No. 2 West Chong Wen Men Street ■■■■■■2■
DongCheng District ■■■
Beijing
China
Tel : +86 10 65122211

We recommend printing out this address with Chinese characters to simplify the arrival process; as English is not widely spoken or understood in China.

Joining Instructions

When arriving to Beijing International Airport, you have a few choices on how to get to your starting point hotel.

A. Taxi: Follow the signs to the taxi ranks once you have come out of the baggage hall. The ranks are clearly defined, and traffic guards will systematically put you into a taxi. Print out the name of your hotel in Chinese. A taxi ride will take between 34-45 minutes depending on traffic, and should cost between 95-120 Yuan (plus an extra 10 for the tollway).

DO NOT GO WITH ANYONE WHO APPROACHES YOU OFFERING A METERED TAXI WHICH IS PARKED IN THE LOT. THEY WILL RIP YOU OFF.

B. Airport Express Train: Once you have come out of the luggage hall, follow the signs to the underground Airport Express Line. This line takes you to the center of Beijing, to DONGZHIMEN, where you can transfer to Subway line 2, or take a taxi from here to your hotel. The Airport Express ticket costs 25 yuan. It takes about 16 minutes from Terminal 3 of the Airport to Dongzhimen. Train hours

are from 6:30am to 10:30pm.

To continue to Chongwen Men Hotel by subway, it is very easy to transfer to Line 2 of the Subway and take it 5 stops to the Chongwenmen stop (Chongwen men station). Take Exit D out Walk will take you about 3 minutes to hotel. Subway fare is 2 yuan.

C. If you have paid for an arrival transfer when you booked your trip, our driver will be waiting for you with a G Adventures sign with your name on it. He will be waiting for you outside the luggage hall. There most likely will be many signs, so please check carefully for your name.

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details. If you have pre-booked an airport transfer and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, please contact the transfer operator (number below).
As a last resort, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

AIRPORT TRANSFER
If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, we will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer however we cannot guarantee this. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel

If your call is specifically concerning Beijing Airport Transfer complications please call our local G Adventures Transfer provider directly at: +86 1391 0388 356 –Ms Xiaofeng Chen (Beijing)

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS
G Adventures Local Office (China): Annie Liu
During Office hours (Weekdays, 9am-5pm Local Time): +86 028 8556 9729; +86 138 8079 9290 (China)

G Adventures Asia Manager: Julie Fitzgerald

G Adventures Office Bangkok, Thailand
During Office hours (Weekdays, 9am-5pm Local Time)
From outside Thailand: +66 2 381 5574
From within Thailand: 02 381 5574

After hours emergency number
From outside Thailand: +66 87 049 6074
From within Thailand: 087 049 6074

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100
Calls from UK: 0844 272 0000
Calls from Germany: 01805 70 90 30 00
Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307
Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

What to Take

What you need to bring depends on the trip you have chosen and the countries or regions you are planning to visit. We suggest that you pack as lightly as possible as your are expected to carry your own luggage. As a rule we try not to have to walk more than 15-20 mintues with your bags which is why we recommend keeping the weight of your bags between 10-15kg/22-30lb. Suitcases are not recommended for G Adventures trips! Most travellers carry a backpack or rolling bag of small to medium size (no XXL ones please!) as they need to fit under the beds when travelling on sleeper trains. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water, cameras and other electronics like ipods and mobile phones.

Checklist

Suggested Items:
- Windproof / waterproof jacket / umbrella / poncho
- Small towel / swimsuit
- Day pack for daily personal items
- Sun hat / sun block / sunglasses
- Wet wipes / Moist towelettes / Hand sanitizing lotion
- Alarm Clock
- Hiking pants /track pants / long trousers
- Hiking boots/sturdy walking shoes
- Ear plugs for light sleepers
- Moisturizer, Lip balm
- Toiletries (biodegradable)
- Water bottle / Plastic mug / Cutleries
- Pocketknife
- Flashlight (with extra batteries and bulbs)
- Money belt
- Insect Repellent
- Tampons
- Protein bars, chocolate, dried fruits, candies and snack foods.
- First-aid kit (should contain lip salve, Aspirin, band aids, anti-histamine, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, re hydration powder, insect repellent, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)

Optional Items:
Camera and film, reading/writing material, binoculars, cover for backpacks.

Documents:
- Passport (with photocopies)
- Travel insurance (with photocopies)
- Airline tickets (with photocopies)
- USD cash
- Credit or debit card (see personal spending money)
- G Adventures vouchers, pre-departure information and dossier
- Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required

NOTE: Please bring clothes that you are comfortable possibly getting dirty during the volunteer times.

Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

Visas

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself with the embassy of each country. Your travel agent can assist. Please, keep in mind that all

countries require passports valid for at least 6 months from the moment of departure from the country.

CHINA: all nationalities require a visa to visit China

Most nationalities also need an official Letter Of Invitation (LOI) before they can apply for their Chinese visa.

You can obtain the LOI through our visa support agent in China. The visa support link you need to complete will be sent to you or your travel agent by email when you confirm your booking. You must read the instructions carefully and fill out all the details.

When filling out your Chinese Visa Application form, Please ensure that you list the same details as appear on your LOI when filling out your Chinese Visa Application form.

Passengers traveling to Tibet:
As Tibet continues to be a sensitive area for travel to the Chinese government you must refrain from listing Tibet as one of the places you are going to visit as your application form or your Visa will be denied. We will provide you with the necessary documents to obtain your Chinese Visa, please use the details provided when filling out your Chinese Visa application form.

HOW TO FILL IN CHINA LOI FORM ONLINE:

As Chinese visas are dated specifically for entry and exit, please ensure you enter the correct dates. We also recommend you add on an extra day to both the start/end of your trip so your visa length will cover any unexpected delays. Please, remember to put exactly the same dates when you fill out the application at the Chinese embassy.

Please do not submit the below application until 3 months prior to your entry into China. The details will be forwarded to our local agent in China and you will be emailed your Chinese Invitation Letter (With day by day Itinerary) only once we are within 60 days of the trip start date.

Once you have received your LOI you can apply for your visa by going to the nearest Chinese embassy.Please, remember that it is your responsibility to check whether passport details, name spelling and dates on the LOI are correct.

Volunteer visas are difficult and time consuming to obtain from any Government. In our experience, the processing times and granting of tourist visas are typically faster and allow some volunteer work to be done while in the country. When applying for a Chinese visa, please do not mention volunteering as you will then be forced to apply for a Business Visa which is difficult to obtain. The volunteering portion on this tour only covers a few days and therefore you should apply for a regular tourist visa.

Detailed Trip Notes

China has emerged as a great tourist destination in the last ten years and is an intriguing and rewarding destination to visit. Developing at a fast rate, travel is becoming easier for foreigners but please be aware that English is still not widely spoken outside the large cities and that accommodation, toilet facilities and some transportation is not yet at the same level as you would expect in developed countries. If you are able to bring with you a lot of patience, a great sense of humour and a willingness to try and interact with the local people, your travel experience wil be greatly enhanced.

Specific to this itinerary we combine more leisure focused touring in Beijing, Xian, Chengdu and Shanghai with the opportunity to contribute to China's ongoing progress through the Panda and Special Commune Projects.

At the Special Commune we have an evening free following the wall followed by a full day of opportunity to assist with on-site projects. Much of this opportunity revolves around site development and/or organic farming but there are often a wider range of other functions with which we can assist the ultimate goal being to contribute your skills to helping the inhabitants of the Commune develop their facility, enhance their job skills and better succeed in their goals.

Our time at the Panda Base is based on 2 full days and 2 partial days of being able to observe and assist with the care of Pandas. Please note that the focus of this base is the Pandas and not tourism and thus the scope and range of our opportunity to interact with the animals may change with different trips (or weather). The work that we can do is however not glamourous and it is suggested you bring clothes you are comfortable getting dirty. The final morning you are free to further involve yourself with the commune or do some leisurely exploration.

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Money Exchange

As currency exchange rates in Asia fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: www.xe.com.

As of May 2011 the exchange rate for China was 1 USD = 6.5 CNY (Chinese Yuan).

Cash (Chinese Yuan) is the best method of money in China. There are some ATM machines at international airports and major cities that accept Visa and debit cards but these should not be relied on as a source of funds. We recommend the use of cash and traveller's cheques in major currencies (USD, CAD, GBP, EUR, AUD, HKD) as a backup. Major credit cards are accepted in a few shops (except for AMEX and Diner's) but they may charge a 2-4% transaction fee.

Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD $200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

Departure Tax

Departure Tax is included in all International and Domestic tickets in China.

Tipping

Traditionally in China tipping is not expected and thus there is no need to tip in restaurants and your general interaction with locals; however, tipping is customary - though not compulsory - in the tourism industry and not only shows an expression of satisfaction it may also be of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO may offer to collect the money and tip as a group.

Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from 1 to 3 USD per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. A suggestion would be for each group member to contribute anonymously by putting their tip into an envelope. This often works the best and the group as a whole should gather to present the gift to the recipient(s), offering their thanks and showing their appreciation. This method brings the action out into the open, allowing for a friendly and appreciative interaction between the group and the recipient(s).

Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline $5 USD per person per day can be used.

Optional Activities

All prices listed are in Chinese Yuan (CNY), per person (unless stated otherwise), and are subject to change as services are provided by third party operators.

Beijing

- Great Wall entrance - CNY 45.00
- Cable car at Great Wall - CNY 60.00
- Toboggan at Great Wall - CNY 60.00
- Forbidden City - CNY 60.00
- Temple of Heaven - CNY 35.00 (Taxi 12 CNY per taxi from your hotel)
- Summer Palace - transfer - CNY2 PP by subway (Taxi or Subway)
- Summer Palace - CNY 50.00 (30main entry; 10 Cixi Museum; 10 Dragon boat)
- Lama Temple - CNY 25.00 (Subway 2 CNY PP)
- Legend of Gongfu Beijing - CNY200-680
- Acrobatic Performance Beijing - CNY180-880
- Beijing Opera Performance - CNY180-680
- Hutong Trishaw Cycle Tour - CNY100-150
- Bike tour Drum Tower & Houhai - CNY 25.00 (Bike Rental)

■ Factory 798 Art & Galleries - Free
■ Tiananmen Square - Free
■ Beijing Duck - CNY100-150
■ Hutong Cycle tour - 100-150

Xi'an
■ Terra Cotta Warriors Museum - 150CNY
■ Bell & Drum Towers - 35CNY - one way; 50 CNY - round trip
■ Great Mosque - 25CNY
■ City Wall Xi'an South Gate - 54CNY (20 CNY/ hr to bike the wall)
■ Big Wild Goose Pagoda - 50CNY PP (15CNY per taxi - one way)
■ Shanxi History Museum - Free (20CNY for non-reserved visitors)
■ Dumpling Banquet Defachang Restaurant - 108CNY

Shanghai
■ Yuyuan Garden Shanghai - 40CNY
■ Jinmao Tower - 120CNY
■ Huangpu River night cruise - 100CNY (10CNY taxi from your hotel to the pier - one way)
■ Shanghai Museum - Free
■ Old Town Shanghai - Free
■ Urban Planning Exhibition Centre - 30CNY
■ Acrobatic Show Shanghai - 260-600CNY
■ Oriental Pearl View deck - 120 CNY for second ball view deck;150for third ball view deck
■ Meglev Train Longyang train station to Pudong Airport - 100CNY (Round Trip)

Chengdu
■Massage CNY 60-150 per hour
■Cooking Class CNY 150
■Wenshu Monastery CNY 5
■Giant Panda Breeding Research Centre entry: 60 CNY

***Please note these are examples of the entrance fees charged, this does not include hiring transport to/from the destination (unless stated otherwise)

Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. In Asia pharmacies tend to stock the same western drugs as you get at home but they are usually produced locally so please bring the full drug name with you when trying to purchase a prescription drug. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with

options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

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www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

Trip Specific Safety

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Medical Form

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

www.gadventures.com/medical-form.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details

of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit www.planeterra.org

Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program
Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be charged in the currency of your booking)

Associated Planeterra Project

Planeterra supports the work of the Bifengxia Panda Reserve. The majority of the world's remaining pandas live in the mountains of Sichuan and 70 pandas are currently being cared for at the Bifengxia Panda Reserve, with many being moved after the Reserve at Wolong was all but destroyed in the 2008 earthquake. There are thought to be less than 1000 of these remarkable animals left in the wild, with around 80% in Sichuan and the remainder in Shaanxi and Gansu provinces. The centre is designed to provide the ideal breeding environment for the pandas, with the aim of releasing pandas back into the wild. More information about the Reserve can be found here: http://english.dreams-travel.com/guide/sichuan/bfxpandareserve.htm

Local Dress

In Asia the dress standard is more conservative than it is back home. When packing try to pick loose, lightweight, long clothing that will keep you cool in the usually hot and humid climate of Asian summers. In predominately Buddhist countries we ask that you dress respectfully and avoid very short shorts/skirts and singlets/tanktops when visiting temples or mosques or other holy sites.

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at customerservice@gadventures.com and we will send it on to you.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletters/

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for Planeterra's monthly news to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

Be sure to stop by The Watering Hole, our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the Departure Lounge section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at wateringhole.gadventures.com.