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## **London to Sofia by Rail**

22 days, London to Sofia

Trip code EEIS

### **What's included**

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Discover Moment: Paris

- Your Discover Moment: Budapest
- Eurostar ride through the Chunnel
- Paris orientation walk
- TGV train
- Lausanne orientation walk
- Zermatt stay
- The Glacier Express train with lunch onboard
- Dachau tour (Munich)
- Salzburg orientation walk
- Vienna orientation walk
- Budapest orientation walk
- Romanian villages and countryside tour (half-day, from Sighisoara)
- 'Dracula's Castle' (Bran)
- Bucharest orientation tour
- Arbanasi village visit
- Sofia orientation walk
- Istanbul city tour with local guide
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**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 May 27th, 2016 - December 31st, 2016

# Itinerary

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**NOTE:** Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

Day 1

## London

Arrive at any time.

There are no planned activities until an evening welcome meeting.



## Today's Activities

### ACTIVITY

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

Day 2

## London/Paris

Board the famous Eurostar train for the journey through the Chunnel to Paris. Enjoy an orientation walk and free time to visit the city.

It's hard to run out of things to do in a city like Paris. Visit the Eiffel Tower, dozens of museums, Luxembourg Garden, wander the banks of the Seine or sip wine and eat cheese at a sidewalk café like a local.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Train

London - Paris

3h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Orientation With CEO

30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Free Time

Paris

Don't waste a minute in the City of Light. Indulge in some delicious French cuisine, take advantage of some of the best shopping on the globe, or tour some of the amazing landmarks. If you haven't seen the Eiffel Tower up close, here's your chance.



### Optional Activities - Day 2

Luxembourg Garden Visit

Paris

Free

1h-2h

Stroll through the Luxembourg Garden, or Jardin du Luxembourg, built in the early 1600s outside the Luxembourg Palace. The garden is known for expansive lawns, flowers and tree-lined promenade, topped off with a Medici Fountain.

Walk Along the Seine River

Paris

Free

1h-2h

Stroll like a Parisian along the Seine. There are almost 40 bridges that cross over the river within Paris alone, if something on the right bank catches your eye, just cross over to explore. Stop to relax on the banks or bring a picnic.

Eiffel Tower Visit

Paris

16EUR

2h-4h

Visit the most famous landmark in France, the Eiffel Tower. Opt to climb the stairs or take an elevator to the top for a stunning view over the city. Hang out at dusk and watch the tower light up.

Day 3

## Paris

Spend the day with free time to visit dozens of museums, patisserie shops, sidewalk cafés or grand boulevards.

The Louvre, Musée d'Orsay and Rodin Museum are all worth a visit. Stop by Notre Dame or Sacre Coeur to add some spirituality to your day. Shop on the Champs-Élysées or explore the Left Bank.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Optional Activities - Day 3

Eiffel Tower Visit

Paris

16EUR

2h-4h

Visit the most famous landmark in France, the Eiffel Tower. Opt to climb the stairs or take an elevator to the top for a stunning view over the city. Hang out at dusk and watch the tower light up.

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Free

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Walk Along the Seine River

Paris

Free

1h-2h

Stroll like a Parisian along the Seine. There are almost 40 bridges that cross over the river within Paris alone, if something on the right bank catches your eye, just cross over to explore. Stop to relax on the banks or bring a picnic.

Musée Rodin Visit

Paris

12EUR

1h-2h

Spend some time at The August Rodin Museum, one of Paris' most enjoyable museums. With famous sculptures on display like the Burghers of Calais, The Gates of Hell, The Hand of God, The Kiss and The Thinker, you can wander through this former mansion, marvelling at the architecture as well as Rodin's best work.

Champs-Élysées Visit

Paris

Free

Wander past high end retail shops, cafés and theatres before reaching the famous Arc de Triomphe.

### Musée d'Orsay Visit

Paris

11EUR

1h-2h

Tour through The Musée d'Orsay, a must-see museum in Paris. Housed in a former train station, the beautiful building is the perfect setting to display some of the world's most revered Impressionist art. Wander from room to room in awe at the works on display by Monet, Renoir, Cézanne and Gauguin. Marvel at Degas' ballerinas and Van Gogh's swirling colours.

### Sacre Coeur Visit

Paris

Free

1h-2h

Visit the Basilique du Sacré-Coeur, located in the Montmartre neighbourhood. This Roman Catholic church was completed in 1914 and stands on the highest point of the city. Climb up 200 stairs to reach the dome of the basilica to get an amazing view of the Paris skyline.

### The Louvre Visit

Paris

12-16EUR

1h-5h

Examine the massive collection at the Louvre, home to the Mona Lisa and the Winged Venus. While it might take a lifetime to view everything in the museum, one of the largest in the world, make the most of the time you have and try to spend at least a few hours wandering around.

Day 4

## Paris/Lausanne

Take a morning TGV train to Lausanne, Switzerland. Spend the afternoon in this charming town.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Train

Paris - Lausanne

4h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Orientation With CEO

30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Free Time

Lausanne

Check out this sleepy but picturesque town.

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### Optional Activities - Day 4

Cathedral of Notre Dame of Lausanne Visit

Lausanne

Free

30m-1h

Stop at the Cathedral of Notre Dame of Lausanne to marvel at the impressive architecture and the detailed rose window dating back to the 13th century. Construction on the church started in the late 1100s, finally consecrated in 1275. The medieval architecture is stunning and stands out from the charming setting of Lausanne.

Day 5

## Lausanne/Zermatt

Board another train for the journey to Zermatt, a tiny village in the heart of the Swiss Alps. Enjoy the afternoon in the car-free centre or hiking in the nearby mountains.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Train

Lausanne - Zermatt

3h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Free Time

Zermatt

Get out and explore on foot by meandering through the town or setting out on an exhilarating hike. If you'd prefer to travel a little more leisurely, seek out of the local horse-drawn carriages used as cabs.

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### Optional Activities - Day 5

Hiking

Zermatt

Free

2h30m-3h

10-11km

Hit some mountain trails to stretch your legs and soak in the incredible Alpine views.

Day 6

## Zermatt/Chur

Board the Glacier Express for a slow and stunning ride through the Alps. Pass meadows, rushing streams, bridges, villages and massive mountains as the train heads towards Chur. Arrive in the evening after a full day of soaking in the scenery.

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### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch

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### Today's Activities

Train

Zermatt - Chur

5h-6h

Board the Glacier Express and enjoy the stunning view out of the domed glass roof.

Free Time

Chur

Take some time to wander this scenic village. Stop for a delicious meal at a local restaurant or find a great spot for taking photos of the towering mountains.

Day 7

## Chur/Munich

Take a full day to reach Munich, in the heart of Bavaria. Arrive in time for an optional evening out at a local brewery with a few steins of beer and some typical German fare.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Train

Chur - Munich

5h-8h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

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### Optional Activities - Day 7

Hofbräuhaus Visit

Munich

Free-30EUR

30m-3h

Grab a stein and some local Bavarian food at the Hofbräuhaus, where local beer was brewed for the Duke of Bavaria in 1589. While the building has changed over the years it's still a favourite in Munich, for a good reason. With a capacity for 1300 guests, the space isn't exactly intimate, but with its rich history and local Bavarian-style music, there's no shortage of good fun.

Day 8

## Munich

Explore the city or head further afield to visit Füssen and the famous Neuschwanstein Castle.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Free Time

Munich

Time's a wastin! Get out and explore the city or use Munich as a hub to branch out and see nearby landmarks or villages.

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### Optional Activities - Day 8

Neuschwanstein Castle Visit

Füssen

51EUR

Visit the famous Neuschwanstein Castle. The castle is one of the many built by the eccentric King Ludwig of Bavaria, whose love of building extravagant homes for himself bankrupted Bavaria. This castle is the most well-known of the group, the beautiful colours and fairy-tale towers inspired the castle in Disney's Cinderella. Walk up the hill or take a bus to reach the castle, or feel like royalty yourself by taking a horse drawn carriage.

Füssen Visit

Füssen

Take a stroll through the small village of Füssen. Pop into the ubiquitous pastry shops for unrivalled Bavarian baked goods and watch as old men in lederhosen and feathered caps walk through town.

Day 9

## Munich/Salzburg

Visit Dachau before a short train ride to Salzburg, Austria. This charming city is brimming with history and character.

Visit the concentration camp of Dachau, right outside the city centre. Learn of the atrocities of war and the triumph of the human spirit.

Return to the city for a short train ride to Salzburg, Austria. This charming city is brimming with history and character. Known for the nearby salt mines, Mozart and the setting for The Sound of Music, Salzburg has plenty to pack into a day and a half.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Dachau Concentration Camp Visit

Munich

Take a sad but significant tour through this historical site that was used as a model for the other concentration camps of Germany and Poland. At the end of the subway line, located in a residential area, Dachau is a testament both to the evil of mankind and the overwhelming will to survive. Learn of the atrocities of war and come away with a great understanding of the not so distant past.

Train

Munich - Salzburg

1h30m

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Free Time

Salzburg

Start exploring this lovely town.



### Optional Activities - Day 9

Salzburg Old Town Visit

Salzburg

Free

1h30m-2h

Explore the Old Town of Salzburg, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most charming areas in Europe. Set on a river with picturesque bridges and diverse architecture, the pedestrian-only area is perfect for wandering and window shopping. Opt to walk the mountain paths to a fortress for panoramic views of the region.

Day 10

## Salzburg

Make the most of a free day in Salzburg. Opt to visit the salt mines or take the famous Sound of Music tour.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Free Time

Salzburg

Get out and explore.



### Optional Activities - Day 10

Sound of Music Tour

Salzburg

40EUR

Join the Sound of Music tour to visit venues from the movie as well as an opportunity to see the landscapes of the surrounding areas. Listen to the soundtrack as you visit historical and architectural landmarks of the city and Lake District.

The route of the tour includes stops at Morabell Gardens, Leopoldskron Palace, Hellbrunn Palace (the gazebo), Nonnberg Abbey, Salzburg Lake District Area (from the picnic scene with wonderful views of St Gilgen and Lake Wolfgang), and Mondsee (the wedding chapel).

Salzburg Salt Mines Visit

Salzburg

16EUR

1h30m-2h

Visit the mines that give Salzburg its name. Suit up in overalls and learn more about the salt production of the area. Take the big slide and journey on Mirror Lake.

Day 11

## Salzburg/Vienna

Continue by train to Vienna. Opt to visit the famous opera house, join a city tour or visit world-class museums. Stay overnight at a G Adventures for Good supported hotel that supports migrant workers.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Train

Salzburg - Vienna

3h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Free Time

Vienna

Vienna's a great city to take a tour of famous landmarks or try some local specialities and enjoy a piece of strudel in a café.

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### Optional Activities - Day 11

Belvedere Gallery Visit

Vienna

19EUR

1h-2h

Learn some of the history of this beautiful palace and grounds and explore the impressive art collection. Of particular note, the museum's collection of 24 pieces by Gustav Klimt, including his famous 'Kiss'.

Vienna State Opera House Visit

Vienna

8EUR

Visit the famous Vienna Opera House and soak in its exceptional architecture. Opt for a guided tour to see the opera house's main features and learn about the history of the building.

Day 12

## Vienna/Budapest

Take a morning train to Budapest, Hungary. Take an orientation walk upon arrival, then opt to enjoy a night out in this charming city.

Journey by train to Budapest, the 'Pearl of the Danube'. The city, split into Buda and Pest by the river, retains its eastern charm with Buda Castle and Turkish-style thermal baths.

Depending on arrival time, opt to visit some city sights or soak in one of the famous baths.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Train

Vienna - Budapest

4h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Free Time

Budapest

Start exploring this charming city.



## Optional Activities - Day 12

Buda Castle Visit

Budapest

1500HUF

3h-4h

Set on Castle Hill overlooking the Danube River and Pest, Buda Castle was once home to the Hungarian kings of Budapest. Admire the gorgeous architecture and visit its two museums; the National Gallery and the Budapest History Museum. Permanent collections depict the past 500 yrs of Hungary's art history, including Medieval and Renaissance stonework, Gothic wood sculptures, and Gothic altars.

Thermal Baths Visit

Budapest

5700HUF

1h-3h

Bring two towels, your bathing suit and an aching body and prepare to be healed in the largest medicinal bath in Europe. Built in 1913, you can test the waters of 18 different pools (15 of which are spring fed) amidst stunning neo-Baroque architecture. Play chess on floating chessboards, relax in the whirlpools and explore the wonderful mosaic domes of these historic thermal steam rooms.

Enjoy a full day for exploration in Budapest. Opt to visit Buda Castle, the famous thermal baths or take a bike tour of the city.

Today, new travellers may join you for the rest of your adventure. You are welcome to join them at a group meeting this evening, followed by an optional dinner.



## Today's Activities

Optional Welcome Meeting for Travellers on Combos

You may be a seasoned pro at group travel by now, but there will likely be some new travellers joining the group. Sit in on the welcome meeting to meet the newest members of your group and learn about the next leg of your tour.



## Optional Activities - Day 13

Buda Castle Visit

Budapest

1500HUF

3h-4h

Set on Castle Hill overlooking the Danube River and Pest, Buda Castle was once home to the Hungarian kings of Budapest. Admire the gorgeous architecture and visit its two museums; the National Gallery and the Budapest History Museum. Permanent collections depict the past 500 yrs of Hungary's art history, including Medieval and Renaissance stonework, Gothic wood sculptures, and Gothic altars.

Budapest Bike Tour

Budapest

28EUR

3h-4h

Join a group for a guided city tour by bike. Buzz around the city on two wheels to cover more ground and get your blood pumping.

Chain Bridge

Budapest

Free

Straddling the river Danube, the Chain Bridge suspension bridge is the first built to connect Buda and Pest, and is now one of Budapest's most iconic landmarks.

Great Market Hall Visit

Budapest

Free

Take a stroll through the oldest indoor market in Hungary.

Hungarian National Museum

Budapest

3500HUF

1h-2h

Discover a vast collection of relics at the Hungarian National Museum, the oldest in the country. Wander through galleries that feature incredible objects from prehistoric to modern times, including those from the Stone Age, Ottoman period and contemporary Hungary.

Danube River Cruise

Budapest

Float down the Danube for a better look at the picturesque sites along the river bend.

Thermal Baths Visit

Budapest

5700HUF

1h-3h

Bring two towels, your bathing suit and an aching body and prepare to be healed in the largest medicinal bath in Europe. Built in 1913, you can test the waters of 18 different pools (15 of which are spring fed) amidst stunning neo-Baroque architecture. Play chess on floating chessboards, relax in the whirlpools and explore the wonderful mosaic domes of these historic thermal steam rooms.

Hungarian State Opera House

Budapest

10500HUF

30m-1h

Constructed in 1873, the Opera House is one of Budapest's most stunning examples of Neo-Renaissance architecture. Take a guided tour around this stunning building to get a closer look at the ornate marble statues, frescos, and ornate tin work - to name a few highlights.

Parliament Building Visit

Budapest

7000HUF

Take a guided tour of one of Hungary's crown jewels - the Hungarian Parliament building. Existing as the third largest Parliament building in the world, its Neo Gothic architecture also makes it a contender for one of the most beautiful. Tour the Hungarian Coronation Jewels in the Dome Hall, the Old Upper House Hall of the bicameral Hungarian Parliament, as well as the Lounge. Guided tours are mandatory for entrance and we recommend booking your tour in advance.

Day 14

## Budapest/Sibiu

Take another free day to explore Budapest before boarding an overnight train to Sibiu.

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### Today's Activities

Overnight Train (beds)

Budapest - Sighișoara

12h

Stretch out and get some well-earned rest en route to the next stop.

Free Time

Budapest

So much to do in this city - get out and explore!

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### Optional Activities - Day 14

Budapest Morning Walking Tour

Budapest

Wander through Budapest on an early morning walk that ends at Great Market Hall, the city's largest (and oldest) indoor public market. Visit Gellert Hill to learn about the history of Buda and Pest, divided by the Danube River. On a clear day, capture amazing panoramic shots of the river as it snakes through this ancient city. Continue onto Liberty Square, then take a quick peek at the Gellért Thermal Baths to learn about its place in Hungarian culture. Upon arriving at Great Market Hall, sample local specialties that have been enjoyed in this busy market for over 120 years. Remember to bring your camera (and some cash) for market shopping.

Day 15

## Sibiu/Sighișoara

Travel by train from Sibiu to the enchanting town of Sighișoara. Use your free time here to explore the cobblestone streets and medieval architecture.

Explore Sighișoara's medieval walled citadel with its cultural attractions and great restaurants and bars.

Sample some Romanian cuisine—the Casa Dracula (original home of Vlad, the model for Count Dracula) is now a restaurant specializing in hearty meat and game dishes of the region.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Local Train

Sibiu - Sighișoara

2h30m

90km

Climb aboard, take your seat, and get around like the locals do.

Free Time

Sighișoara

Take some time to explore medieval Sighișoara.



### Optional Activities - Day 15

Clock Tower Visit

Sighișoara

Free

Enjoy a visit to the Clock Tower, also known as the Council Tower -- it's Sighisoara's main point of attraction. It was built in the second half of the 14th century and expanded in the 16th century. After a fire in 1676 when the town's gunpowder deposits located in the Tailors' Tower exploded, Austrian artists rebuilt the roof of the tower in its present baroque style and, in 1894, colourful tiles were added.

Casa Dracula (Vlad Dracul Restaurant)

Sighișoara

10-50RON

15m-4h

You will not be digging your canine teeth into any humans at the Casa Dracula. Once the original home for Vlad the Impaler, who was the model for Count Dracula, it is now a restaurant specialising in the hearty meat and game dishes of the region.

The History Museum (Muzeul de Istorie)

Sighișoara

5RON

Explore the Renaissance furniture, medical instruments, fine arts, and more in this museum located inside the Clock Tower -- it's been around since 1899!

The Church of the Dominican Monastery Visit

Sighișoara

Free

Enjoy a visit to the Church of the Dominican Monastery. Built in the late Gothic style, it was last repaired in 1929, quite some time after it was first attested in a document back in 1298.

Day 16

## Sighișoara/Brașov

With a local guide, venture into the Romanian countryside to visit traditional villages. Get a true sense of life in this less-visited region. Visit charming Brasov.

Enjoy a half-day guided tour of Sighisoara and nearby countryside. Take in the beautiful rolling scenery and visit medieval villages and fortified churches.

In the early evening, transfer to the city of Brasov, the best preserved medieval city in Romania.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Sighișoara Region Guided Tour

Sighișoara

5h-6h

Coast over rolling hills and into rural villages, learning about the life and folklore of olden times from our expert local guide.

Train

Sighișoara - Brașov

3h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Day 17

## Braşov

Visit the picturesque Bran Castle and learn the history (and rumours) of this fascinating place.

Impressively situated on a rock outcrop and dominating the valley, this 14th century castle is steeped in history and folklore. Soak in the gorgeous countryside as you learn about the creepier side of Romania.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Bran Castle Visit

Bran

2h-3h

Visit the picturesque Bran Castle, impressively situated on a rock outcrop and dominating the valley. This 14th century castle is steeped in history and folklore and is an unmissable highlight. Sometimes called "Dracula's Castle", it served as a defense point to protect the border between Transylvania and Wallachia. Rumours abound regarding Dracula's interaction with the castle. You'll have to visit to find out the truth.



### Optional Activities - Day 17

Brasov History Museum

Braşov

7RON

1h-1h30m

Explore the rare exhibits that showcase Brasov's history, including stone tools from the Paleolithic age and painted ceramics from the Neolithic age, at this impressive museum.

Catherine's Gate (Poarta Ecaterinei) Visit

Braşov

Get ready to go back in history with a visit to Catherine's Gate, built in 1559 and the only original gate to have survived from medieval times.

Art Museum (Muzeul de Arta)

Braşov

5-8RON

Take in the impressive and varied art at this museum, including anonymous 18th century painters from Transylvania to the most famous Romanian artists of the 20th century. It also boasts beautiful European crystal and porcelain and a significant collection of Oriental vases and statuettes.

### Schei District Visit

Braşov

30m-45m

During the Saxon rule of Brasov, from the 13th to the 17th century, Romanians were forbidden from owning property inside the citadel walls and so they settled in the southwestern Schei district.

Walk up Strada Prundului to Piata Unirii and the beautiful St. Nicholas Church; then, wander around the small curving streets that gradually slope upwards against the hill. Continue to the southern end of Schei and you'll end up on the gravel road to the impressive Solomon's Rocks (Pietrele lui Solomon), a popular picnic area for locals during the weekend but relatively quiet all other times.

### Black Church (Biserica Neagră) Visit

Braşov

8RON

The Black Church is the biggest church between Vienna and Istanbul. It's a famous landmark of the town of Brasov, is Romania's leading Gothic church, and has the largest church bell in the country, weighing a hefty 7 tons (6,350 kg)! Explore its beautiful interior, including stained glass windows and its collection of 119 Turkish carpets, the largest in Europe.

### Tampa Mountain Visit

Braşov

Free-16RON

3h-6h

Tampa Mountain towers over the city of Brasov at 914.4m (3,000ft). Choose to hike to the top of the mountain, or take a cable car if you prefer, but the views from the top of the old town are not to be missed.

Day 18

## Braşov/Bucharest

Travel to Bucharest and enjoy an orientation walk. Take time to explore the Soviet-esque architecture, the beautiful cathedral, or indulge in Bucharest's international cuisine.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Train

Braşov - Bucharest

4h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Orientation With CEO

30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

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### Optional Activities - Day 18

Arch of Triumph Visit

Bucharest

Free

Enjoy a visit to the Arch of Triumph to marvel at the exterior of this historic monument. The arch was initially built to celebrate Romania's independence so troops could march under it on their return to the city in 1878. The current arch was built in 1936, it replaced the wooden and quickly built structures that stood before.

National Village Museum Visit

Bucharest

Check out examples of Romanian rural architecture at this outdoor museum that's literally a park 10 hectares large. It boasts rural homes built in the styles throughout Romania as well as churches, outhouses, and mills -- you'll really feel like you're walking through a Romanian village. To give an even more authentic feel to things, many structures are filled with furniture and pieces from the eras they replicate.

## National History Museum Visit

Bucharest

Boasting more than 650,000 items, the museum, inaugurated in 1972, gives visitors a true understanding of Romanian culture. Housed in the former historic monument once known as the Palace of the Post, it is situated in the old historical centre of Bucharest.

## Palace of the Parliament Visit

Bucharest

Enjoy a visit to the Palace of the Parliament, which contains both chambers of the Romanian parliament as well as the National Museum of Contemporary Art (MNAC). It's the world's largest civilian building with an administrative function, according to the World Records Academy; it's also the most expensive administrative building.

Day 19

## Bucharest/Veliko Tarnovo

Enjoy some free time to explore more of Bucharest in the morning before travelling to Bulgaria and one of the oldest cities in the world, Veliko Tarnovo. Wander the medieval town, visit the museums, or sample your first taste of Bulgarian cuisine.

Enjoy this charming town and opt to visit the Tsarevets Fortress just outside the city.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Free Time

Veliko Tarnovo

Start exploring.

Free Time

Bucharest

Get out and explore.

Private Vehicle

Bucharest - Veliko Tarnovo

3h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

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### Optional Activities - Day 19

Tsarevets Fortress Visit

Veliko Tarnovo

6BGN

1h-3h

The Tsarevets fortress, just 1km (.62 mi) outside central Veliko Tarnovo, is a must-see. This huge complex has been an important stronghold for thousands of years, and you can wander at will around the remains of homes, churches, and watch towers dating from the 5th to the 12th century.

Day 20

## Veliko Tarnovo

Enjoy the morning in the medieval town of Veliko Tarnovo. In the afternoon, visit the hilltop village of Arbanasi. Soak in the views over Veliko Tarnovo.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Arbanasi Village Visit

Arbanasi

Enjoy a visit to Arbanasi. This hilltop village was the residence of choice for the wealthy Roman elite and is still a country haven for the high-flyers of modern Bulgaria. The views all around and down to Veliko Tarnovo are amazing.

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### Optional Activities - Day 20

Mountain Biking

Veliko Tarnovo

7EUR

4h-8h

Hit the trails and enjoy the scenic countryside of Bulgaria on two wheels.

Nativity Church Visit

Arbanasi

6BGN

Visit the 16th-century Church of the Nativity to see the amazing murals.

Day 21

## Veliko Tarnovo/Sofia

Travel to Sofia and take an orientation walk of the capital city. Later, wander down the pedestrian street or visit the eclectic Ladies' Market.

A mix of western grandeur and Soviet bulk, Sofia boasts a gold-domed church and delicious international dining.

Sample modern takes on Bulgarian and international food, with some great trendy dining opportunities.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Orientation With CEO

30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Local Bus

Veliko Tarnovo - Sofia

3h-4h

Climb aboard, grab a seat, and enjoy the ride.



### Optional Activities - Day 21

Ladies' Market Visit

Sofia

Free

Enjoy a visit to the eclectic Ladies' Market - Sofia's biggest market for fresh produce, meats, fish, cheeses and spices.

St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral Visit

Sofia

Free-6BGN

30m-45m

Don't miss the stunning gold-domed Alexander Nevsky church, honouring the Russian liberators whose contribution saw the end of Ottoman rule in Bulgaria.

Vitosha Boulevard Visit

Sofia

Free

1h-2h

Enjoy a stroll down Sofia's chic pedestrian area, Vitosha Boulevard.

Day 22

## Sofia

Depart at any time.



### Meals included

Breakfast

## What's included

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Discover Moment: Paris
- Your Discover Moment: Budapest
- Eurostar ride through the Chunnel
- Paris orientation walk
- TGV train
- Lausanne orientation walk
- Zermatt stay
- The Glacier Express train with lunch onboard
- Dachau tour (Munich)
- Salzburg orientation walk
- Vienna orientation walk
- Budapest orientation walk
- Romanian villages and countryside tour (half-day, from Sighisoara)
- 'Dracula's Castle' (Bran)
- Bucharest orientation tour
- Arbanasi village visit
- Sofia orientation walk
- Istanbul city tour with local guide
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

## What are the main highlights of this trip?

Travel across Europe by train, explore tiny villages and big capital cities, soak in gorgeous Alpine scenery from the window of the Glacier Express, sample cuisine across different countries, get spooked at 'Dracula's Castle'!

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## What important notes should I be aware of before the trip?

### 1. LOCAL GUIDES

It is important to note that in Europe, all guiding is based around local guides all of whom are licensed to work only in a particular city. As such, our leaders are able to provide orientation walks which will show you the layout of each town and city as well as the location of local services such as post offices and laundromats, but are unable to legally share historical facts and figures in public places.

### 2. LUGGAGE

In Europe it is very rare to find elevators in train stations, hotels or other public places. We use public transport on this trip, which means you will need to carry your luggage from platform to platform, in and out of trains and buses etc. and also possibly up several flights of stairs. You will also need to be able to stow your luggage safely on trains and buses. It is therefore essential that you pack light and bring luggage which is compact and lightweight, and which you can easily transport. The carrying of your luggage remains your responsibility at all times.

### 3. ITINERARY CHANGES

Please note, on some departures the trip will visit Avignon and include the Palais des Papes and the Pont St Benezet as scheduled, but will actually stay overnight in the nearby historic cities of Nimes or Arles.

### 4. CUISINE

Vegetarians should be aware that the cuisine on the eastern portion of this trip on is predominantly meat-based.

Although you will be able to find and enjoy vegetarian food, please be aware that there will not be the variety or range of choices that you would find at home.

### 5. COMBO

Please note that this tour combines with other G Adventures tours. As such, the staff and some travel companions on your tour may have previously been traveling together with G Adventures, prior to Day 1 of your tour. Likewise, some staff and travel companions may be continuing together on another G Adventures tour, after your trip concludes.

## What is the group leader like?

This G Adventures group trip is accompanied by one of our group leaders. 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.

## How large will the group be?

Max 16, avg 12.

## What meals are included in this trip?

19 breakfasts, 1 lunch

## What are the meals like on this trip?

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. The above information applies to G Adventures group trips. For Independent trips please check the itinerary for details of meals included. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

## What are the modes of transportation on my trip?

Train, public bus, metro, walking.

## What transportation will we take on this trip?

Intercity transport on this trip will be by train unless otherwise noted. The train systems in Europe are generally good, with seat reservations and toilet/snack facilities on longer journeys. You will notice trains run according to the schedule more stringently in some regions and not-so-stringently in others. Pack a book, some music and your sense of adventure.

Please note that you MUST be comfortable carrying your own luggage as there will be a lot of up and down stairs on this trip due to the nature of station layouts in Europe (very few are equipped with escalators or elevators). Between public transport and hotels you may be required to carry your luggage short distances (up to 15 mins walk), in larger cities you may travel by metro or city bus, and occasionally the group will take taxis to and from hotels.

## **Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?**

We believe solo 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 solo travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

## **Where will we stay during the trip?**

Hotels/pensions (21 nts), overnight train (1 nt).

## **Will I get my own room?**

Please note that if you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single room for all night stops.

Please be aware that single room accommodations in European hotels are often smaller, and may not be to the same service level as double-occupancy rooms.

## **Do any exceptions apply to Rooming or “My Own Room” on my tour?**

Day 14 (overnight train).

## **What kind of accommodation can I expect on this trip?**

It is important to note that accommodation in Europe tend to be quite different to other areas of the world you may have travelled in. Buildings and rooms are generally old and may not have been renovated or maintained to the highest standard. Downtown hotels in Europe were not built to be hotels but houses of the rich, which have been changed into hotels. Therefore unusual room sizes are common as large rooms have been partitioned in the past, resulting in rather "thin" walls. Reception areas, rooms and bathrooms tend to be very small as they were often added into an existing room, and may have a hand nozzle rather than a conventional shower head.

On this trip you can expect to stay in small family-run hotels or pensions (with the exception of the start and finish hotels, which are often larger city hotels), which will vary a little in standard and facilities: some may not have elevators, air-conditioning or English-speaking staff, but most importantly all are locally-run, with some traditional character, and in excellent central locations to give you maximum time for exploring the sights. You can expect to find clean, safe, simple accommodation in convenient locations.

Staff can occasionally demonstrate less than perfect customer service. As accommodation is in short supply, especially during the summer months, hotels can charge a premium and there is sometimes little motivation to improve facilities.

In one or two locations on the Budapest to Istanbul portion we use accommodation with shared bathrooms.

## What is the joining hotel?

For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

## What are the joining instructions?

Please note that day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned on this day. Upon arrival to the city on day 1 (or earlier if you have booked pre-accommodation with us), please make your way to the joining hotel (note that check-in time will be in the afternoon). Once you arrive at the hotel, look for a note or bulletin board in the reception with a note from your CEO. This note will give the details of your Welcome Meeting on day 1 (usually between 5pm and 7pm), where you will get a chance to meet your CEO and other travellers, as well as learn more about how the tour will run. If you don't see a note, please ask reception for details!

If you are arriving later and will miss the Welcome Meeting, your CEO will leave a note at reception for you with any information you may need, and with morning instructions for the next day.

If you have pre-arranged an arrival transfer, look for the driver holding a G Adventures sign in the arrivals hall. Please approach them, and ask them who they are supposed to be picking up (do not tell them your name, they should have this information already). Once they give you the correct name, have your passport ready to show them and you will be on your way!

To arrange an arrival or departure transfer, we recommend you book through our preferred transfer provider - [Welcome Pickups](#)

Choose from a range of transport options including both private and shared transfers at a discounted rate.

We advise that you book both your arrival and departure transfers in advance. Please make sure you have the following details before booking:

- Flight number
- Flight Arrival Time and Date
- Flight Departure Time and Date
- Passenger's Name
- Number of Passengers
- Email
- Valid Mobile Telephone Number
- Drop off and/or Pick Up Address

## Who should I contact in case of an emergency?

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call 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.

### EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures UK office: +447817262559

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 Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found [here](#).

Toll-free, from calls within North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from within UK: 0344 272 0000

Calls from within Germany: 0800 365 1000

Calls from within Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from within New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

For absolute emergencies after office hours please contact +44 7817 262559

If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

## Are there any additional packing suggestions I should consider?

We recommend using a backpack for your convenience, or a medium-sized suitcase if you prefer. A daypack is also essential for carrying everyday items. Space is limited on transportation, so there is a limit of one main piece of luggage per person. You will be responsible for carrying your own luggage. You must be prepared to carry your luggage up and down stairs, on and off transportation, and to hotels (max 15-20 mins.)

# What should be on my packing list?

## Conservative Dress:

- Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)
- Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

## Documents:

- Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

## Essentials:

- Toiletries (required) (Shampoo, bodywash, soap, etc.)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- Cash, credit and debit cards
- Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- Ear plugs
- First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- Fleece top/sweater
- Footwear
- Hat
- Headphones (Noise-cancelling recommended)
- Locks for bags
- Long pants/jeans
- Moneybelt
- Outlet adapter
- Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Shirts/t-shirts
- Sleepwear
- Small travel towel
- Sunglasses
- Swimwear
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

### **Warm Weather:**

- Sandals/flip-flops
- Sturdy water shoes/sandals
- Shorts/skirts (Longer shorts/skirts are recommended)
- Sun hat/bandana
- Swimwear

## **When can I do my laundry on this trip?**

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge or ask your CEO where the closest laundromat is. 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.

## **How much spending money do I need for my trip?**

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.

## **What should I know about currency, credit cards, and exchanging money while on this tour?**

Credit cards and debit cards are very useful for cash advances but you must remember to bring your PIN number (be aware that many ATM machines only accept 4-digit PINs). Both Cirrus and Plus system cards are the most widely accepted debit cards. Visa cards are the most widely accepted credit cards. While ATMs are commonly available, there are no guarantees that your credit or debit cards will actually work - check with your bank. You should be aware when purchasing products or services on a credit card, that a fee usually applies.

Do not rely on credit or debit cards as your only source of money. A combination of Euros and cards is best.

Always take more rather than less, as you don't want to spoil the trip by constantly feeling short of funds.

For this trip you will be in regions using the British Pound (GBP), Euro (EUR), Swiss Francs (CHF), Hungarian Forint (HUF), Romanian New Leu (RON), Bulgarian Lev (BGN) and the Turkish Lira (TRY).

## Should I be tipping on my trip?

It is customary in Europe to leave a small tip for service providers, such as waiters, if you are pleased with the service (€1-2).

Tipping is an expected - though not compulsory - component of your tour program, and an expression of satisfaction with the persons who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping local guides would range from €6-8 per day, depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture.

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 €30-40 per person, per week can be used.

## What activities are optional on this trip?

- Please see the itinerary for information on optional activities, descriptions and estimated pricing.

## Are there any health considerations I should know before travelling?

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## What do I need to know to about safety and security on my trip?

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 group leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it deemed necessary, due to safety concerns. Your Chief Experience Officer (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 and 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 judgement 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.

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. [Read more about travel safety](#) for ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling.

## What are the trip specific safety considerations?

Always keep an eye on your belongings especially in major cities, bus and train terminals.

## Is travel insurance required for my trip?

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 leader, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy we require that at a minimum you are covered for medical expenses including emergency evacuation and repatriation. A minimum coverage of USD200,000 is required. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. Some tours include adventure activities that require extra coverage (e.g. crampon use); please review your itinerary and make sure that you are covered for all included activities. 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.

## What is Planeterra?

Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects into G Adventures' itineraries globally.

G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs, so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with [Planeterra Foundation](#).

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating \$1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

## Does G Adventures have an email newsletter I can subscribe to?

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/](http://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.

## How old must I be to join this trip?

You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

## Are international flights included in this trip?

No, international flights are generally not included in the price of your tour.

However, on some combo tours travelling between two different countries, international flights are included as part of the itinerary and price of the tour. Please speak to your GCO or booking agent for further details.

In addition, check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.

# What should LGBTQ+ travellers know about safety and travel considerations on this trip?

The safety and well-being of all of our travelers is a priority at G Adventures and that includes our travelers who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. We recognize that there are specific concerns and questions you may have about your adventure in terms of safety and security. We encourage you to visit our [LGBTQ+ page](#) for useful resources to ensure you feel safe and comfortable throughout the duration of your trip. The Equaldex tool linked on this page can be of particular help when deciding where you may want to visit next.

## Dossier Disclaimer

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**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.

## 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.