G Adventures

Last Updated: February 12, 2021

The Silk Road of China

18 days, Beijing to Kashgar

Trip code ACSR

What's included

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt, Heavenly Lake

- Great Wall excursion and entrance (Beijing)
- Tiananmen Square and Forbidden City guided tour
- Terracotta Warriors tour (Xi'an)
- Great Wall visit (Jiayuguan)
- Mogao Grottoes (Dunhuang)
- Turpan guided sightseeing tour
- Yurt stay in the Tian Shan Mountains
- Taklamakan Desert train
- Hotan village and workshop tour by donkey cart
- Kashgar orientation walk
- Sunday bazaar and animal bazaar visit
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

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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, 2015 and onwards

Itinerary

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 Beijing

Arrive at any time.

There are activities planned until an evening welcome meeting and optional group dinner -- the famous Beijing Duck is on the menu.

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 Beijing

Take a guided tour of Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City with free time in the afternoon to explore.

Enjoy a guided tour of Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City. In the afternoon, options include shopping, taking a hutong tour, or visiting some city sights like the Summer Palace, Lama Temple, and Bell and Drum towers.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Tiananmen Square Beijing

Explore one of the world's largest public squares and the symbolic centre of Chinese power. Framed by the Gate of Heavenly Peace with its Mao portrait, Mao's Mausoleum, the Great Hall of the People, the National Museum, and with elaborate flag raising and lowering ceremonies at dawn and dusk, it's a place of pilgrimage for the Chinese tourists who consider it the heart of their nation.

Forbidden City Tour Beijing 2h

Our CEO will steer around crowds and help make the most of a visit to the Forbidden City.

Optional Activities - Day 2

Drum and Bell Tower Visit Beijing 30CNY

Visit the striking Drum Tower for some incredible photo ops. Back in the Han Dynasty the towers were used to echo the time to the city with bells in the morning and drums in the evening. Today the 63-ton bell still stands in one tower and drum performances happen daily in the morning and afternoon.

Shaolin Monk Kung Fu Show Beijing 90-180CNY

Watch this moving performance of choreographed martial arts, complete with a story line to follow.

Hutong Trishaw Cycle Tour Beijing 80-180CNY 3h-4h

Pedal through the hutongs of Beijing, the ancient alleyways created by rows of courtyard-style houses. Exploring the hutongs on a bike will let you cruise through the narrow streets and get up close with locals. This half-day tour includes a driver and rickshaw.

Beijing Acrobatics Performance Beijing

Enjoy an evening of spectacular acrobatics performed by some of China's most talented performers and athletes. This unforgettable spectacle features Chinese-style tricks, like plate-spinning, contortion, foot-juggling, and a host of circus-style acrobatics, too.

Day 3 Beijing/Xi'an

Visit the spectacular Great Wall of China. In the evening, board an overnight train to Xi'an.

Visit the Mutianyu section of the Great Wall of China. At the wall, climb to the top and explore a stretch by foot while taking in spectacular views as it winds along mountain ridges. This section also boasts a cable car and a luge slide.

In the evening, take an overnight sleeper train to Xi'an.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Private Vehicle Beijing

Drive through the city and countryside to reach the Great Wall's Mutianyu section. Take the same transportation back.

Mutianyu Great Wall Visit Beijing 3h

Climb the rolling hills of Huairou County at Mutianyu, one of the best-preserved sections of the Great Wall. Enjoy scenic views as the wall winds along mountain ridges, and take brag-worthy photos of the wall from any of the 22 towers. The Great wall is an incredible piece of engineering stretching 6000 km west from the mountain ridges north of Beijing. It was originally constructed to protect Chinese empires from nomadic northern tribes, and even though it failed in this purpose, it's still one of the country's most remarkable achievements and an iconic destination. The Mutianyu section of the Great Wall is located about 80km away from the Beijing City Center. The walk is approximately 5 kilometres and will take 2 to 3 hours depending on your level of fitness.

Basic Overnight Train (beds) Beijing – Xi'an 12h-15h

Experience overnight travel like a local. Sit back and get some well-earned (and likely much-needed) rest en route to your next stop.

Day 4 Xi'an

Arrive to Xi'an and take an orientation walk. Later, visit the Terracotta Warriors. Opt to visit the Silk Road monument, cycle around the city walls, or explore the Muslim Quarter.

Arrive in Xi'an in the early morning and, after checking into the hotel, grab some breakfast and take an orientation walk.

After, take a guided trip out to the Terracotta Warriors, a short drive away.

Spend free time in the evening wandering the Muslim Quarter and shopping for souvenirs.

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.

Terracotta Warriors Guided Tour Xi'an 3h 2km

Take a guided tour of the Terracotta Warriors where more than 8,000 clay soldiers and hundreds of replica horses and chariots stand in three pits. Learn why the Emperor Qin Shihuang commissioned the statues to serve as his army in the afterlife and how they were discovered. Spend a half-day exploring this archaeological wonder.

Optional Activities - Day 4

Muslim Quarter Visit Xi'an 1h-1h30m

Explore the lively Muslim Quarter and its serene Great Mosque, making time to indulge in the offerings of exotic local street food stalls. At night, head out for some of the best street food in China – the spicy beef and lamb kebabs are always a favorite.

Day 5 Xi'an/Jiayuguan

Enjoy a free day in Xi'an to enjoy the city and sights. Take an overnight train to Jiayuguan.

Enjoy a free day in Xi'an. Opt to visit the Great Mosque in the Muslim Quarter, ride a bike around the city walls, visit the Big Goose Pagoda, or do some shopping. In the evening, board a sleeper train for the overnight journey to Jiayuguan.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Free Time Xi'an

Get out and explore.

Basic Overnight Train (beds) Xi'an – Jiayuguan 18h30m 1450km

Experience overnight travel like a local. Sit back and get some well-earned (and likely much-needed) rest en route to your next stop.

Optional Activities - Day 5

Cycling Xi'an City Walls | Xi'an | 45-45CNY | 1h-2h

Rent a bike and cycle the Xi'an city walls. The walls – built for protection in the Tang Dynasty and expanded in the Ming dynasty –are a great way to absorb local history. Hop off where you like and admire the views as you pedal along the 12m (39 ft) wide wall, which takes about 2 hrs to cycle along.

Big Goose Pagoda Visit | Xi'an | 50CNY

Head to the outskirts of the city to the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, a beautiful, brick Buddhist temple.

The Great Mosque | Xi'an | 25CNY

Discover this hidden oasis behind the markets of the Muslim Quarter. Learn about the Great Mosque's centuries-old history, and explore the temples and gardens to see how Chinese and Islamic architecture came together in this place of worship.

Day 6

Jiayuguan

Arrive in Jiayuguan and visit the westernmost section of the Great Wall.

Located in the Gansu Province, Jiayuguan is famous for its location on the Silk Road and also for its post on the Great Wall.

The westernmost section of the Great Wall, the Jiayuguan Pass, was built during the Ming Dynasty, along with the Overhanging Great Wall section.

Today's Activities

Jiayuguan Great Wall of China Visit | Jiayuguan | 3h-5h

Visit the westernmost section of the Great Wall and learn more about this magnificent structure. This section has been rebuilt and looks quite new despite its authenticity and age.

Free Time Jiayuguan

Spend some free time exploring.

Day 7 Jiayuguan/Dunhuang

Take an express bus to Dunhuang for a guided visit to the famous UNESCO World Heritage Site, Mogao Grottoes.

Travel by express bus to Dunhuang, a major stop on the Silk Road.

Enjoy a guided visit to the famous Mogao Grottoes, filled with Buddha statues, and learn about this important place.

Spend a free afternoon wandering the town centre, shopping in the market, or visiting sights further afield. This is one of the loveliest cities in the region.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

First-class Bus Jiayuguan – Dunhuang 5h-6h 370km

Ride on in style. This sure isn't your grandmother's public bus.

Mogao Grottoes Visit Dunhuang 4h

Enjoy a visit to the Mogao Caves, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, inspiring a school of study called Dunhuangology. According to the Tang Dynasty records, a monk witnessed a vision of 1,000 Buddhas with golden rays. Inspired, he started the construction of the caves, which ended up spanning ten dynasties. There are 750 caves filled with different types of art depicting Buddhas, Apsaras, and daily life.

Free Time Dunhuang

Spend some time exploring.

Day 8

Dunhuang/Turpan

Opt to visit Mingsha Sand Dunes to see a beautiful sunrise, and enjoy a camel ride and some dune sledding. Make good use of free time before boarding an overnight train to Turpan.

Mingsha means "Singing or echoing sands", named for the sound of the wind blowing through the dunes. Arrive before sunrise to climb the massive dunes and watch the sun come up over the "desert". The sands turn from white to golden as the sun rises. Later, opt for a camel ride through the dunes in the early morning sun and choose to sled down one of the dunes.

Head back to town for breakfast and a rest. In the afternoon, opt to spend more time in the city or visit a local village nearby.

In the evening, board a sleeper train to Turpan, the first stop in the Xinjiang province.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Free Time Dunhuang

Explore the city or head further afield.

Private Vehicle Dunhuang – Liuyuan 2h

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

Basic Overnight Train (beds) Liuyuan – Turpan 9h30m

Experience overnight travel like a local. Sit back and get some well-earned (and likely much-needed) rest en route to your next stop.

Optional Activities - Day 8

Mingsha Sand Dunes Visit Dunhuang 120CNY

Visit the Mingsha Sand Dunes, at the edge of town in Dunhuang. Pay your entrance fee at the gate and get transported to an empty desert. Hike in the dark to reach the top of the dunes and watch as the

sun rises, turning the dunes from black and gray to white to golden. After sunrise, opt to ride a camel further into the dunes and hike up for a sandy sled ride down.

Day 9 Turpan

Arrive in Turpan, the lowest point in Asia. Enjoy a city tour with a local guide, including the ancient Karez water system.

Arrive at the train station and drive by private van (about 1 hr) to Turpan, the lowest point in Asia.

Enjoy a city tour with a local guide and learn about this interesting desert city, the ancient Karez water system, and the culture of the Uyghur minority people.

Today's Activities

Private Vehicle Turpan 1h

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

Turpan City Tour Turpan 4h

Meet the locals and find out more about this completely unique culture on a city tour. Get a taste of the Uyghur culture and language and what life is like so far west of Beijing. Wander the streets under trellised grapevines and visit the bazaar and mosque. Learn more about the ancient Karez water system, a feat of engineering allowing this arid desert region to sustain life.

Day 10 Turpan

Enjoy a free day to continue exploring. Opt to visit the Flaming Mountains or Jiaohe ruins.

The day is free to continue exploring. Sights in Turpan include the Emin Minaret, the city mosque, and the Turpan Museum. There is plenty to do outside the city centre; opt to visit the Jiaohe ruins and Flaming Mountains.

Learn what makes this area different from the rest of China, starting with the time. Try your hand at tying a local headscarf in the distinct Uyghur fashion and indulge in some of the grapes grown in this region.

Today's Activities

Free Time Turpan

There's no time to spare– get your adventure on.

Optional Activities - Day 10

Tuyoq Village Visit Turpan 30CNY

Explore this rustic village located near the Flaming Mountains and famed for its seedless grapes. Take in the traditional Uyghur way of life as you wander around the old houses.

Emin Minaret Visit Turpan 40CNY

The Emin Minaret is the tallest minaret in China at 44m (144.4 ft) tall. Built between 1777 and 1778, it showcases both traditional Islamic features and local Uyghur style and architectural traditions.

Flaming Mountains Visit Turpan 50CNY

The Flaming Mountains are a beautiful stop outside the city of Turpan. The red sandstone hills are part of the Tian Shan mountain range near the edge of the Taklamakan Desert. These red coloured mounds have eroded over time, forming deep gullies and trenches, which give the appearance of flames when the sun hits the mountains.

Jiaohe Ruins Visit Turpan 40CNY 1h30m-4h

Located in the Yarnaz Valley, the city of Jiaohe was the capital of the Jushi kingdom from 108BC to 450AD. It was built on an island in the middle of a river, surrounded by steep cliffs, using the landscape as a natural defense system. It's estimated that 7,000 people once lived here. Opt to visit the site with a local guide to learn more about its rich history.

Day 11

Turpan/Heavenly Lake

Drive into the stunning Tian Shan Mountains (Heavenly Mountains) for an overnight in a yurt with the local Kazakh minority people. Spend the day hiking, horseback riding, or just relaxing and soaking in the views.

In the morning take a private van to Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang Province. From here, drive into the Tian Shan Mountains (Heavenly Mountains) for an overnight in a yurt with the local Kazakh minority people. This area looks more similar to the Swiss Alps, with towering snow-capped mountains and turquoise lakes, than somewhere in the middle of China. Spend the day hiking, horseback riding, or just relaxing and soaking in the views. In the evening, tuck into the multi-share circular felt hut (yurt) and sleep like a local.

Keep in mind this area will have basic accommodations, meals, and bathroom facilities. Expect to share your yurt with other members of the group, all sleeping on mats and blankets around a central fireplace. Bathrooms are likely to be outhouses. The experience of staying in this beautiful location with these welcoming people will be well-worth the lack of amenities.

Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

Today's Activities

Private Vehicle Turpan – Heavenly Lake 5h

Drive into the mountains via Urumqi.

Free Time Heavenly Lake

Spend time enjoying this alpine retreat.

ACTIVITY

Enjoy a stay with the minority Kazakh people high in the Tian Shan Mountains, and sleep in the traditional round tents covered with felt at night. These yurts sleep many people (likely mixed gender sleeping arrangements here) and have a stove in the centre to keep things cozy. Bedding and meals

are provided. This is a wonderful glimpse into the unique life of those who live in the remote parts of China.

Optional Activities - Day 11

Hiking Heavenly Lake 160CNY

Head out for a hike through this gorgeous place. Take in the stunning views of snowcapped mountains hovering over the turquoise blue lake.

Horseback Riding Heavenly Lake 150-300CNY

Let the horse do the work as you head higher into the mountains for a gorgeous view over the turquoise blue lake. If you didn't know you were in China, you'd swear it was Switzerland!

Day 12

Heavenly Lake/Urumqi

Spend the morning enjoying nature before heading to Urumqi, the capital of the province.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Free Time Heavenly Lake

Soak in the last of this gorgeous scenery.

Private Vehicle Heavenly Lake – Urumqi 2h 100km

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

Free Time Urumqi

Explore the sights.

Day 13

Urumqi/Hotan

Over the next two days, travel by train to Hotan, a small town in the Taklamakan Desert. Watch the scenery go by, make friends with the locals, and catch up on your reading.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Basic Overnight Train (beds) Urumqi - Hotan 33h

Experience overnight travel like a local. Sit back and get some well-earned (and likely much-needed) rest en route to your next stop.

Day 14

Hotan

Arrive in the evening to Hotan. Start exploring this small town.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Local Train Urumqi - Hotan

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

Day 15

Hotan

Take a village tour by donkey cart to see what life is like in this small town. Enjoy free time in the afternoon to tour the market or check out some abandoned ancient towns and ruins.

With free time in the afternoon, tour the market or check out some abandoned ancient towns, the Yoktan or Melikawat ruins. Hotan is also known for its jade.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Hotan Village Tour Hotan 1h30m

Hop in a donkey cart and enjoy a tour of this this small desert town. Visit some of the industries located here, like a silk factory, a paper making workshop, and a jade carving workshop. Learn more about life in this remote location.

Free Time Hotan

Get exploring.

Optional Activities - Day 15

Yoktan Ruins Visit Hotan Free-150CNY

Travel west and discover Yoktan, the area's ancient capital. Walk among the ruins, now dotted with crops.

Day 16

Hotan/Kashgar

Enjoy one last train ride to Kashgar, arriving in the evening.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Local Train Hotan – Kashgar 12h

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

Day 17

Kashgar

Enjoy the Sunday markets in Kashgar, including the famous Sunday bazaar and fascinating animal market.

Spend the rest of the day exploring the old town centre or the People's Square.

Meet the group for an optional farewell dinner.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Animal Market Kashgar 1h

The animal market is the highlight of a trip to Kashgar. Watch as people come from miles around to bargain and barter for animals. Men in traditional Central Asia Muslim garb negotiate for the best sheep around, boys load goats on and off trucks, and barbers cut hair and trim beards in the middle of it all. Stand back and observe the frenzy.

Sunday Bazaar Market Kashgar 1h

Sunday is the best day to visit the ancient Silk Road bazaar in Kashgar. Once an important trading spot on the route, Kashgar is famous for its bazaar. While the traditional Sunday Bazaar isn't what it

once was, you get a taste of what it must have been like back in the day. Past the donkey parking lot, see traditional fabrics, nuts, spices, and normal household goods being sold in the stalls.

Free Time Kashgar

Make the most of time in this Silk Road city.

Day 18 **Kashgar**

Depart at any time.

From Kashgar, there are flights to different regions of China. You can return to Beijing, continue on to Shanghai, Chengdu, or Hong Kong. Most flights connect in Urumqi.

What’s included

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in a Yurt, Heavenly Lake
- Great Wall excursion and entrance (Beijing)
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What are the main highlights of this trip?

Walk along two sections of the Great Wall, stare down the Terracotta Warriors, learn about the Uyghur culture, stay in a traditional Kazakh yurt, bargain at Kashgar's Sunday bazaar

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Is there a disclaimer I should read before booking this trip?

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Is there a travel disclaimer for my itinerary I should review before booking this trip?

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.

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

1. LUGGAGE
As we use (sometimes crowded) local transport please note backpacks are much more suitable than suitcases for this style of trip. There will be a decent amount of hauling luggage from vans into train stations, up and down stairs, onto trains, lifting to overhead racks, etc. A backpack (rucksack) will make all of this moving about a lot easier.

2. RAMADAN
Depending on the lunar cycle, Ramadan will fall between June 18th to July 17th, 2015. Please note that Ramadan is a month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world, during which time the followers of Islam should not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. There may be some limitations to services and disruptions to schedules during Ramadan in Muslim areas, but generally our tours still operate effectively during this period and food is available to non-muslims throughout the day. It is very important to display increased cultural sensitivity during Ramadan. Please wear loose fitting clothes, that cover knees and shoulders, and try to avoid eating, drinking or smoking in public out of respect for those who can't at that time.

What is the role of the group leader during this trip?

Your G Adventures group trip is accompanied by a G Adventures Chief Experience Officer (CEO) in China. The aim of your CEO 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. G Adventures CEOs are experts in their region with a broad, general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local expert 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.

What is the maximum and typical number of participants on this tour?

Max 16, avg 12

What meals are included in this trip?

12 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 1 dinner

What are the meals like on this trip?

Eating is a big part of traveling. With G Adventures you experience the vast array of wonderful food that is available out in the world.
Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each others company. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. Vegetarians will be able to find a range of different foods, although in some areas the choice maybe limited.
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, private van, subway, taxi, public bus, donkey cart.

Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?

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.

Where will we stay during the trip?

Hotels/guesthouses (11 nts), yurt (1 nt, multi-share), sleeper train (5 nts).

If I choose to purchase My Own Room, are there any exceptions during the trip?

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

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

Nights 3, 5 and 13, Sleeper trains.

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?

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 the Chongwenmen Hotel by subway, it is very easy to transfer to Line 2 of the Subway and take it 5 stops to the Chongwenmen stop. Exit C. Turn right. The hotel is on your right hand side. 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.

What should I do if I can’t find my airport transfer or experience arrival issues?

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 not made contact with our transfer representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, please contact the Beijing transfer complications 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.

Who do I contact for arrival issues or in the event of an emergency?

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Operator (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.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

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 Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found here.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100
Calls from UK: 0344 272 0000
Calls from Germany: 0800 365 1000
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 are the packing guidelines and luggage restrictions?

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.

What should I pack for this trip?

Health & Safety:

- Face masks (Clients will be only be required to wear a face mask where it is mandated by local regulations.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Pen (Please bring your own pen for filling out documents.)

Where can I do my laundry on this trip?

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.

What are the visas and entry requirements for my trip?

All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your own responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. Visa requirements for your trip will vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as far as possible, but rules do change and sometimes without warning. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check the information yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

Visa information specific to your destination and nationality can be found in our Important Pre-Departure Information page here

Please note that visas for China 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. For the most up to date information please check your governments foreign ministry website or with you travel agent as rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself. For most travellers there will probably have an embassy and consulate in the country that you live in.

As of April 3rd, 2018, all Chinese visa application forms must be typed. Handwritten forms will no longer be accepted.

Following the successful implementation of their 144 hour visa free program for the Shanghai district, The Ministry of Public Security of China have announced the extension of the 144 hour visa free program for provinces of Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei. As of the 29th of December 2017, over 50 foreign nationals can now enter or exit via one of the following ports:

- Beijing Capital International Airport
- Railway West Railway Station
- Tianjin Binhai International Airport
- Tianjin International Cruise Homeport, or
- Shijiazhuang Zhengding International Airport in Hebei Province and Qinhuangdao Harbor.

Where can I read detailed notes about this trip?

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.

What should I consider when planning my personal expenses and discretionary spending for this itinerary?

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?

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 Aug 2014 the exchange rate for China was 1 USD = 6.14 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/or Mastercard and debit cards but these should not be relied on as a sole source of funds. We recommend the use of cash as a back up. Major credit cards are accepted in a few shops (except for AMEX and Diner's) but they may charge a 2-4% transaction fee.

What emergency funds do I need access to on this trip?

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!

Do I need to pay a departure tax?

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

What are the tipping guidelines for this trip?

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.

What activities are optional on this trip?

Beijing

- Drum and Bell Tower Visit (30CNY per person)
- Shaolin Monk Kung Fu Show (90-180CNY per person)
- Hutong Trishaw Cycle Tour (80-180CNY per person)
- Beijing Acrobatics Performance

Xi'an

- Muslim Quarter Visit
- Cycling Xi'an City Walls (45-45CNY per person)
- Big Goose Pagoda Visit (50CNY per person)
- The Great Mosque (25CNY per person)

Dunhuang

- Mingsha Sand Dunes Visit (120CNY per person)

Turpan

- Tuyoq Village Visit (30CNY per person)
- Emin Minaret Visit (40CNY per person)
- Flaming Mountains Visit (50CNY per person)
- Jiaohe Ruins Visit (40CNY per person)

Heavenly Lake

- Hiking (160CNY per person)
- Horseback Riding (150-300CNY per person)

Hotan

- Yoktan Ruins Visit (Free-150CNY per person)

Are there any health considerations I should know before travelling?

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 CEOs 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.

What general safety tips and free-time guidelines should I follow?

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:

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

Are there any specific safety considerations for this itinerary?

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.

What are the mandatory group rules regarding laws and behaviour?

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.

What are the mandatory travel insurance requirements for this trip?

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.

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.

How should I dress to respect local customs during the tour?

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, Hindu and Muslim 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.

How can I share feedback about my trip experience?

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that you'll receive a special discount code for free online prints and 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. Please visit http://www.gadventures.com/evaluations

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/

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.

What are the age restrictions for 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 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.