CHARITY CHALLENGE

TRIP NOTES

BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

GREAT WALL DISCOVERY CHINA

Sat 16 Sep - Sun 24 Sep 2017

In aid of your choice of charity

16 Sep - 24 Sep 2017

9 DAYS | CHINA | CHALLENGING

Originally constructed to defend China against the nomadic tribes, the Great Wall is a thrilling challenge of twists, turns, ups and downs. Beginning 4 hours north of Beijing, our challenge takes us on a series of vigorous upwards climbs of over 10,000 relentless steps over the course of a week. As the days progress we follow the winding path along the mountains that spread either side of the Gubeikou Gateway. Exhaustion will quickly vanish as we are rewarded with sweeping views over the vast mountain ranges.

- Conquer the imperial masterpiece of the Ming dynasty
- Test yourself against thousands of challenging steps
- Triumph over the crumbling, twisting pathways of the Yan Mountains
- Savour the timeless landscapes and time- weathered watchtowers
- Enjoy the cultural highlights of China's bustling capital city

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 *Sat 16 Sep*

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International departure from London

The excitement and anticipation begins to build in earnest today, as you head to the airport to begin this incredible adventure. A Charity Challenge representative will be on hand to answer any last minute questions, and quell any last minute nerves, before you join the rest of the group for this trek of a lifetime.

DAY 2 *Sun 17 Sep*

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Arrival Beijing and transfer to the Wall area

Arriving in Beijing, your local Charity Challenge guide will be on hand at the airport to welcome you to China and oversee the road transfer to your first night's accommodation. Today provides your first chance to savour the challenge ahead, as you head into the mountainous regions that surround the Chinese capital. So sit back, relax and enjoy the moment. Gathering later for a trek briefing and an inaugural team dinner, all the elements are finally in place and the stage is set for an unforgettable adventure.

DAY 3 *Mon 18 Sep*

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Jinshanling Loop (approximately 5-6 hours)

And so it begins! This is what all the months of training have been building up to. It is just a short drive to the start of the trek and nothing can quite prepare you for your first sight of this iconic monument in all its magnificent glory. Before you, snaking its way across seemingly endless miles of mountainous valleys, stands the Great Wall itself. Today's route takes in part of the original wall, its steep, crumbling staircases and watchtowers providing a fitting introduction to the enormity of the challenge ahead. The views are stunning though, with China lying to the south and Mongolia to the north, so enjoy the panoramas...they will help take your mind off the endless steps!

DAY 4 *Tue 19 Sep*

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Gubeikou Gateway (approximately 7-8 hours)

Shaking off the aches and pains of yesterday's endeavours, today sees you tackling the longest day of the challenge, as you take on the demanding Gubeikou section of the wall. So, digging deep, and hopefully encouraged by your first day's achievements, you'll begin with a steady climb up past a number of time-worn watchtowers. The expansive views are no less impressive today as you head down through rugged farmland, before climbing up again to hike along the renovated Jinshanling section of the wall, ending the trek where we began yesterday, tired, but ultimately satisfied with the day's efforts.

DAY 5 *Wed 20 Sep*

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Mutianyu section (approximately 5 hours)

Today sees us turning our attentions to the Mutianyu section of the Wall, and the challenging trek down the appropriately named "Heavenly Staircase". Driving out to the village of Xihazi, the day begins with a stiff climb up towards the tower of Zhenbeilou, quite literally the pinnacle of our challenge. Basking in the glory of some truly breathtaking scenery, you'll then begin the hike down towards Mutianyu, tackling the steep staircase that leads onto the more popular renovated section of the wall as you head down a seemingly endless series of steps that will test even the fittest of legs.

DAY 6 *Thu 21 Sep*

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Huanghuacheng (approximately 5 hours)

Today provides us with an opportunity to trek one of the most exciting sections of our journey, as we tackle the Wall at Huanghuacheng. From the small village of Xishuiyu, the trail meanders up through thick forest to the tree-line and the start of our scramble along one of the most challenging parts of the old wall. Against the spectacular backdrop of the Xishuiyu Reservoir and the surrounding mountains, we'll battle our way along a series of overgrown and steep ascents and descents, before the final section of the day tests nerves and legs to the limit as you make your way down a steeply paved gradient to our waiting bus.

DAY 7 *Fri 22 Sep*

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Badaling Great Wall (approximately 4-5 hours)

The final day of trekking begins with a challenging ascent up onto the old part of the wall at Badaling. Recently renovated, the morning ascent involves a steep climb up a combination of steps and paved walkways that will push those tired limbs to their maximum. The views from the top though will be just the reward you need to push on through to the last, very steep section and the end of the challenge. Stopping off for a well deserved lunch en route, the journey back to Beijing may also include time for a visit to either a silk or jade factory before you reach your hotel.

DAY 8 *Sat 23 Sep*

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Day 8: Full day city tour of Beijing

The hard work done, today provides a chance to relax and enjoy some of the cultural highlights of China's historic capital. A rich contrast of the old and the new, today's city tour of Beijing includes a visit to Tiantin Park and the Temple of Heaven, where you can join the locals as they enjoy a morning of Tai Chi, Mah Jong and their own unique version of 'Strictly Come Dancing'! An opportunity for some shopping at the local market is then followed by a tour around Tiananmen Square and the magnificent Forbidden City, before a final group dinner this evening of traditional Peking Duck or a vegetarian alternative.

DAY 9 *Sun 24 Sep*

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Day 9: Beijing to London

After a final breakfast and a fond farewell to Beijing, you'll make your way to the airport this morning for the flight home. Filled with a profound sense of pride and a wish that the adventure could continue, you return home armed

with stories and memories that will last a lifetime...or at least until the next challenge.

NB

This itinerary may change depending on accommodation availability. We occasionally run our Great Wall challenge in reverse, which means that you will complete all of the days of trekking given here but in a different order. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary; however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say. Should you suffer from vertigo, it is worth considering that on most mountain treks there will be occasional exposure to sheer drops. Therefore you should discuss the particular itinerary of your choice with a member of our team.

HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

This page provides you details of the costs of your challenge.
The costs below are per person.

SELF FUNDER

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Pay a registration fee of £375.00 when you book
Then a balance of £1458.00
(8 weeks before your challenge)
Raise as much as you can for your charity.

MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

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Registration fee of £375.00 when you book
Raise a minimum of £2975.00 for your charity.

FLEXI

-

Registration fee of £375.00 when you book
Then £375.00 towards challenge costs
(8 weeks before your challenge)
Raise a minimum of £2210.00 for your charity.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

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- 12.5% off Cotswold Outdoor, Snow + Rock, and Runners Need
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Public liability insurance
- Discount on personal equipment from The Outdoor Shop, Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor and Nomad Travel Stores
- Access to "ask the expert" re your kit requirements
- Access to training weekends (optional and at additional expense)
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule
- Fitness training notes
- Sponsorship forms (online and hard copy)
- Template press release
- A-Z of fundraising ideas
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, fact file, Q&As, health notes, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- Fundraising advice

On your challenge

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- International flights to and from the UK (including all known UK air taxes, and fuel surcharges, at the time of costing)
- Internal road and air transfers as per the itinerary
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Drinking water on challenge days
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- All ground staff including English speaking guide, drivers, cooks, and porters
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Activity equipment such as bikes, tents and rafts as per the challenge activity
- A donation to a community project in one of the countries in which we operate
- A contribution towards funding the reduction of carbon emissions through Climate Care's portfolio of award winning projects
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- All challenge management before, during and post event

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Visa
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)
- Travel Insurance (you can buy at time of booking or in your Account Area, or provide your own policy details)
- Clothing and equipment listed on your Kit List

On your challenge

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- Tips
- Departure Tax (if applicable)
- Personal spending money
- Any other specific items listed as not included in your Trip Notes

THE DETAILS

Fundraising deadlines	You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 10 weeks before departure (by 08/07/2017), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 22/10/2017). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.
Prices include all known air taxes	We include ALL known air taxes (including fuel) at the time of costing. Many companies do not include air taxes at all, and clients are therefore hit with a surcharge of three or four hundreds of pounds just before departure. Our aim is to provide you with transparent pricing and clear instructions as to what is included in our prices and if applicable what isn't.
Typical group size	The typical group size is 20 - 30 participants
Small group supplement	The costs and sponsorship levels on our website are based on a minimum of 20 participants. We can run this trip with 15-19 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £75. This is payable by your charity if you book under the Minimum Sponsorship or Flexi options, and by yourself if you choose the Self Funder option. We will notify you 12 weeks before departure if this is necessary.

Optional extras	Business class upgrades* Travel insurance Single room supplements* Extensions at end of trip* Trek/bike training weekends* (*subject to availability)
Travel insurance	Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenge is our main concern, which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy, which covers you for the adventurous nature of your challenge, the activities you are undertaking, and the altitudes. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found at https://www.campbellirvine.com/charitychallenge.

Level of Difficulty

The Great Wall Discovery challenge is graded as challenging. This is the perfect challenge for participants who are of an adventurous spirit and an open mind, but perhaps haven't taken on a strenuous challenge event before and are hoping to push themselves out of their comfort zone. You can tell your supporters that on your Great Wall Discovery Challenge you will be:

- Trekking for around 4-7 hours per day, covering approximately 50kms over 5 days.
- Continually hiking up and down thousands of stairs.
- Battling the heat on exposed sections of the wall. Temperatures can reach the mid 20s.
- Trekking on un-renovated sections of the wall, with crumbling steps, shrubbery and rocks underfoot, and steep stair climbs.
- Taking on sections at height with drops at either side.
- Staying in basic lodges each night.

Visa

UK Citizens DO require a visa to enter China. You cannot obtain visas upon entry to China.

We will supply you with the relevant form and application advice three months prior to departure, and if you would like to start having a look at the information you can visit the Chinese Visa Application website by clicking here. However, you should not apply before 3 months prior to departure due to the validity of the visa.

You will need to attend the Chinese Visa Application Service Centre yourself to process your application or apply by post, which costs extra.

Prices are subject to change by the Chinese Embassy and will be confirmed upon your application. Your passport must have at least six months to run from the end of your challenge and one blank page for your visa. To see the schedule of fees follow the link. https://www.visaforchina.org/LON_EN/upload/Attach/mrbj/289577.pdf

Note:

The visa form requires a "yes" or "no" answer to the following question:
Are you experiencing any of the following conditions?

1. Serious mental disorder
2. Infectious pulmonary tuberculosis
3. Other infectious disease of public health hazards

If you have any concerns about this question please refer to your GP/Health Clinic and note that you may be asked by the visa office for further information and a fit to travel note to support your travel to China.

Terracotta Warriors extension

DAY 9 FREE DAY IN BEIJING AND BOARD THE OVERNIGHT TRAIN TO XIAN
Today has been left free for you to make the most of Beijing's many attractions. There is a possibility of joining an optional tour to the majestic Summer Palace, described by UNESCO as a masterpiece of Chinese landscape garden

design. Other options include a visit to one of the city's bustling markets, before an early dinner precedes the boarding of the overnight train to Xian. Please note: You will be occupying four-berth, air-conditioned cabins on the train. These will be unisex. Breakfast and dinner are included.

DAY 10 ARRIVE XIAN. VISIT TERRACOTTA WARRIORS & XIAN GRAND MOSQUE
One of the oldest cities in China, Xian once lay at the start of the famous Silk Road. Arriving in the city this morning, you will be transferred on to your hotel in time for breakfast and a chance to freshen up. After paying a visit to Xian's Grand Mosque, you'll then continue on to the Terracotta Warriors Museum, without doubt one of China's most revered archaeological sites. Lunch and a dumpling dinner are included today and this evening you will enjoy a performance of the renowned Tang Dynasty cultural show. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included.

DAY 11 YANGLING TOMB & AFTERNOON IN BEIJING
Following breakfast you will pay a visit this morning to the 2,000 year old Yangljng Tombs, the final resting place of the fourth emperor of the Western Han Dynasty. Later you will then fly back to Beijing, to spend your final night in the Chinese capital. Dinner is not included this evening, affording you an opportunity to make your own plans to enjoy some of the rich culinary diversity the city has to offer. Breakfast included.

DAY 12 MORNING IN BEIJING, AFTERNOON FLIGHT TO UK
Depart on international flight back to the UK, arriving at London Heathrow the same day. (B)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE TERRACOTTA WARRIORS EXTENSION

Included:

Overnight train to Xian. You will be booked in a four-berth cabin, which may require you to share with members of the opposite sex. To secure a single sex cabin a supplement will apply. Please enquire with challenges@charitychallenge.com for the additional information regarding any supplement, subject to availability.
All transfers
Accommodation on twin share basis in Xian at the 4* Le Garden hotel and in Beijing at the 3* Holiday Inn Express Temple of Heaven*
All sightseeing, entrances and meals as mentioned in the above itinerary

Excluded:

Additional optional sightseeing in Beijing on Day 9
Personal expenses (i.e.: gifts, extra soft drinks or alcohol, laundry, etc)
Any tips for local team (guides, drivers, etc.)
Please note that this extension is subject to minimum numbers and flight availability and should be booked no later than 14 weeks prior to departure. In some cases a surcharge may need to be applied, in which case we will inform you prior to confirming your booking. Full payment must be received no later than 8 weeks prior to departure or your place on the extension may be cancelled. All bookings will be confirmed no later than 6 weeks prior to departure.

The advertised costs for this extension are per person on twin sharing basis. If you are a solo passenger, we will accommodate you in a room with someone of the same sex.

*Please note that we reserve the right to change accommodation. Where this is necessary, alternative accommodation will be of an equal or better standard.

Warriors & Pandas extension

DAY 9 FREE DAY IN BEIJING AND BOARD THE OVERNIGHT TRAIN TO XIAN

Today has been left free for you to make the most of Beijing's many attractions. There is a possibility of joining an optional tour to the majestic Summer Palace, described by UNESCO as a masterpiece of Chinese landscape garden design. Other options include a visit to one of the city's bustling markets, before an early dinner precedes the boarding of the overnight train to Xian. Please note: You will be occupying four-berth, air-conditioned cabins on the train. These will be unisex. (B,D)

DAY 10 ARRIVE XIAN. VISIT TERRACOTTA WARRIORS & XIAN GRAND MOSQUE

One of the oldest cities in China, Xian once lay at the start of the famous Silk Road. Arriving in the city this morning, you will be transferred on to your hotel in time for breakfast and a chance to freshen up. After paying a visit to Xian's Grand Mosque, you'll then continue on to the Terracotta Warriors Museum, without doubt one of China's most revered archaeological sites. Lunch and a dumpling dinner are included today and this evening you will enjoy a performance of the renowned Tang Dynasty cultural show. (B,L,D)

DAY 11 VISIT YANGLING TOMB. FLY TO CHENGDU, SICHUAN PROVINCE

Start the day with a visit to the 2,000 year old Yangljng Tombs, the final resting place of the fourth emperor of the Western Han Dynasty. Lunch is not included today, so you are free to make your own choices, before the transfer to the airport for the flight on to Chengdu. Home to the world renowned Giant Panda Breeding and Research Centre, the city lies sandwiched between the towering Longmen and Qionglai Mountains and, on arrival, you will head straight out for dinner to sample some typical spicy Sichuan cuisine. (B,D)

DAY 12 VISIT PANDAS. FLY BACK TO BEIJING

Driving the short distance to the research centre this morning, you will then spend some two to three hours enjoying a rare opportunity to learn more about its work as one of the world's most important panda breeding sanctuaries. Following the visit there will be some free time in Chengdu before boarding the flight back to Beijing, where you will have a free evening to make the most of your final night back in the capital. (B,D)

DAY 13 FLY BACK TO UK

After a final chance to make the most of some free time this morning, you will then transfer to Beijing International Airport for the return flight to London, arriving back in London Heathrow later the same day. (B)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE WARRIORS & PANDAS EXTENSION
Included:

Overnight train to Xian. You will be booked in a four-berth cabin, which may require you to share with members of the opposite sex. To secure a single sex cabin a supplement will apply. Please enquire with challenges@charitychallenge.com for the additional information regarding any supplement, subject to availability.
All Internal flights
All transfers
Accommodation on twin share basis in Xian at the 4* Le Garden hotel, in Chengdu at the Yinhe Dynasty Hotel 4*and in Beijing at the 3* Holiday Inn Express Temple Of Heaven*

All sightseeing, entrances and meals as mentioned in the above itinerary

Excluded:

Additional optional sightseeing in Beijing on Day 9
Personal expenses (i.e.: gifts, extra soft drinks or alcohol, laundry, etc)
Any tips for local team (guides, drivers, etc.)
Please note that this extension is subject to minimum numbers and flight availability and should be booked no later than 14 weeks prior to departure. In some cases, a surcharge may need to be applied in which case we will inform you prior to confirming your booking. Full payment must be received no later than 8 weeks prior to departure or your place on the extension may be cancelled. All bookings will be confirmed no later than 6 weeks prior to departure.

The advertised costs for this extension are per person on twin sharing basis. If you are a solo passenger, we will accommodate you in a room with someone of the same sex.

*Please note that we reserve the right to change accommodation. Where this is necessary, alternative accommodation will be of an equal or better standard.

Money

Currency: The currency in China is the Yuan ¥. For up to date currency exchange, go to www.xe.com. We recommend exchanging currency before you go; however there are ATM's and currency exchanges available at Beijing airport. You can only convert 100 Yuan notes (around £10 GBP) back in the UK, so make sure that you spend any extra change.

Credit Cards: Cards are not accepted at the lodges along the route of the wall, therefore you should have sufficient currency with you before leaving the airport.

ATMs: You will have no access to ATMs the days that you will be trekking but once back in Beijing you are able to withdraw cash if needed.

How much to bring: All accommodation and meals are included within the price of the trip, as well as water during the days of your trek. You will not need to carry a lot of money with you during the challenge, but as there are daily opportunities to buy soft drinks, alcohol and snacks on the Wall we would suggest a maximum amount of about £15 a day (in Yuan). Bring more if you intend to buy souvenirs and take up the opportunity of the additional tours offered by the guides. You may have the opportunity of visiting an acrobat show (around £20) and enjoying a relaxing post-trek massage (about £25) on your return to Beijing at the end of the trek. The guides will also offer you the opportunity to purchase a CD souvenir of group photos (around £20), traditional name chops and other items. There are plenty of great souvenirs in China so do keep that in mind!

Tipping: Tipping is at your sole discretion and all staff are paid a fair wage. However, tourism is a tipping culture, and Chinese guides will generally receive a tip at the end of a job well done. If you choose to tip, we would suggest an amount of £35 per participant for the duration of the challenge (around 350 Yuan). For those on Charity Challenge organised extensions, we would suggest between £5 and £6 per person per day.

Vaccinations

For up to date vaccination information please check the NHS 'Fit for Travel' website: http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/home.aspx. Although the Charity Challenge team are travel professionals, they are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your GP or travel nurse to discuss vaccination requirements. Your GP may ask questions about the specific locations that you are visiting in China, and as such it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you.

Flights

You will be flying from London Heathrow to Beijing. The flying time is approx. 9-10 hours if flying non-stop or 14-16 hours if indirect. Your flight tickets will be issued to you upon departure at the airport. If you choose to book your own flights please confirm with the Charity Challenge office first, otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance). For more general flights questions, please refer to our main FAQs page.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have a suitable travel insurance policy whilst participating on the challenge. We have a special policy which covers among other things, medical (emergency, evacuation and repatriation) arrangements, cancellation and curtailment of the challenge, and more specifically for the adventurous activities undertaken on this challenge. If you have your own travel insurance policy, you must ensure that it provides at least the same level of cover as our recommended policy, including protecting the charity in the event of your cancellation 56 days or less prior to departure. If you choose not to purchase our recommended policy when you book we will send you a disclaimer which you should complete and return.

On Day 7 of your Great Wall Discovery itinerary there is the opportunity to ride on a toboggan run at the end of your day's trek. Please note that, if you choose to ride the toboggan, you do so at your own risk and you will be not covered if you have taken out Global Travel Insurance as recommended by Charity Challenge. We strongly discourage using the toboggan run and cannot vouch for its safety. Your decision to ride the toboggan should take this into account.

For more general travel insurance questions, please refer to our main FAQs page.

Group Size

Each group is intended to be 20 people minimum in order to run and a maximum of approx. 30 people. We will be able to run this challenge for 10 to 19 people by charging a small group supplement of £75 which will be added to your final balance invoice (self funders) or charged to your charity (minimum sponsorship or flexi).

Leadership

There will be an English-speaking challenge leader who will be responsible for the logistics and co-ordination of

your challenge. There will also be numerous local support staff to assist them. The challenge leader will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

Climate & Terrain

Climate

China has the same seasons as the UK, but much more pronounced. April and May are the spring months, and as such the trees are blossoming – there are plenty of flowers around, which may affect hayfever sufferers. In September/October, the trees are losing their leaves and the Wall is surrounded by vibrant oranges and russet colours. Both seasons are incredibly beautiful. April/October will be much colder than May/September, although in all months you may experience wind chill up on the ridges of the Wall, and heat in the valleys. The nightly temperatures will be cold, particularly in April/October, and temperatures may drop to around 5 degrees. Warm layers will be necessary for the evening, but in the day you can expect to reach temperatures of around 20 degrees in early April/late October, and around 28 degrees in late May/early September. Like the UK, the weather is changeable, and these are rough guidelines.

Terrain

The route is mountainous and the wall involves a trek incorporating thousands of steps up and down. There are also steep drops either side of the wall so please take this into account if you suffer from vertigo. Some areas of the Wall are completely unrenovated, and so you may be trekking up some overgrown, crumbly paths in your quest to conquer the Wall!

Luggage allowance & valuables

The luggage allowance will depend on the airline we are using for your challenge, but in general it will be one piece of checked baggage at around 23kg. However, we suggest that for our Great Wall challenge you should only need around 15kg-17kg. If you don't need it, don't bring it, is a good rule. For any valuables, safe deposit boxes are usually provided in Beijing for guests' use in the hotels, but will not be available in the local lodges. Use a padlock on your luggage when in transit to reduce any risks. Carry your passport with you and make sure you have a photocopy of your documents (travel insurance etc.) in case they get lost or damaged.

Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the International Porter Protection Group and Climate Care to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should

consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income. For more information, please visit our Responsible Tourism pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

Typical day

You will wake at around 7am, have breakfast, make your packed lunch and pack your daypack for the next section of the walk. You will be given enough water for the day and your packed lunch to carry. The rest of your luggage will be transported for you to the next destination. At around 8.30/9am we will begin the day's walk, stopping for lunch at a scenic spot on the wall around midday. You will be walking for 4-7 hours each day and arriving in the late afternoon at your next accommodation. Specific hours of activity for each day are given in the itinerary.

Accommodation & Toilets

Accommodation

On the Wall you will be staying in basic, but adequate, lodges or hotels. It may not be up to the standard expected in Western hotels, but you should have clean linen and hot water – everything you need! In the colder months of early April and late October, we recommend taking a sleeping bag for anyone who feels the cold in the night. Blankets are provided in the lodges, but a sleeping bag will increase your comfort. The hotels in Beijing will be of a three star standard and much more comfortable. All rooms are en-suite and have facilities for charging batteries. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with please ensure that you note this where appropriate when booking or email challenges@charitychallenge.com.

Toilets

These range from very basic ('communing with nature' on the trek itself) to normal western standards in the accommodation. There will be en-suite toilet and washing facilities at the hotels and lodges; however, depending on the season hot water may be limited in some of the lodges along the wall.

Food & Drink

Food is basic but filling. In recent years, breakfast has become more westernised, with eggs, tomato and cucumber, as well as cooked meats. Lunch will usually be a sandwich along with nuts, snacks and fruit. Dinner will consist of Chinese dishes and of course rice or noodles. There will, of course, be vegetarian options provided, although the choice is more limited. It is important that you eat as much as possible during the trekking phase in order to replace body salts lost due to increased perspiration. All participants but especially those with personal eating restrictions should bring snacks to supplement their meals. You may also wish to bring additional treats like marmite, peanut butter etc. as you will be eating Chinese food everyday – this can become monotonous for even the most adventurous eater!! The tap-water is not safe to drink. Bottled water will be provided during the trekking sections, and you can buy bottled water or soft drinks in hotels and lodges for meals (around 5 Yuan, or 50p). Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

Clothing & equipment

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For this challenge, waterproof, well-worn in boots will be indispensable, particularly coupled with some really good quality walking socks. The benefits of a comfortable day sack cannot be underestimated, so make sure that you train with this. Other essentials are a high quality gore-tex waterproof jacket and technical/wicking t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. Walking poles are also highly recommended, as the steps on this challenge are very tough on even the fittest knees, and descents can be tricky. A full kit list for this challenge can be found here, and once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners The Outdoor Shop, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

Phone & WiFi

Most of the accommodation you are in will have limited WiFi which you will be able to use, but please do not rely upon this. Facebook and any Google-based applications (including Gmail) are blocked in China, so you will not have access to these sites or be able to post updates for your friends and family. You will have phone signal in almost all places on the challenge.

Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of our participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up Challenge Safe, one of the most advanced and thorough safety management systems in the industry. Challenge Safe formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the challenge activity itself. Your welfare is absolutely paramount!

In terms of your Great Wall Discovery challenge, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- The wall is very exposed, with almost no shade, and on sunny days the temperatures can soar. You should ideally be wearing a sun hat, sun cream, and hydrating constantly!
- Some areas of the wall are very remote, with no car access, and emergency evacuation may take up to 4 hours. However, there are several escape routes off the wall and the nearest medical facilities will be by stretcher and then vehicle.
- Certain sections are un-renovated, with crumbling and uneven terrain, and some sheer drops at either side. Your leader will help you get through these sections if you have a fear of heights!
- Smoke alarms are not a legal requirement in China, and as such many of the lodges we use do not have them in place. Your leader will explain the emergency fire procedures to you.
- On the final day of the trek there is the opportunity to ride on a toboggan run on the wall. Charity Challenge strongly discourages the use of the toboggan run, and if you choose to do so this will be at your own risk. Also be aware that the Charity Challenge travel insurance policy will not cover you for this specific activity.

Emergencies

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's walking abilities. This is allowed for. There will be a staff member at the back of the group at all times to ensure that you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace. In the event of an emergency on the Wall, all guides and leaders are maintaining

contact via radio, and the backup vehicle will not be far away. If somebody is unable to walk at all, then the guides will arrange evacuation off the Wall to the vehicle.

Training

Training and fitness is definitely required. It is important that you work specifically on your stamina, leg and joint strength, and balance in order to get as much out of the challenge as possible. You will be trekking up and down thousands of steps so climb stairs as often and wherever you can! The trek takes place in a mountainous environment, so the best training advice is to get outdoors into some of the mountains of the UK to familiarise yourself with walking on rugged terrain, while carrying weight in your daypack. You need to be able to sustain around 4-7 hours of trekking for 5 continuous days, so if you can then replicating this over a weekend would be fantastic training. You can also look to join one of our training weekends.

Challenge Training

If you would like to get a feel for our challenges ahead of your departure, why not consider booking on a 1 or 2 day UK Challenge?

We have a variety of challenges, covering all levels of difficulty, taking place in stunning National Parks across the UK that are led by highly qualified and experienced expedition and mountain leaders. These challenges will give you the perfect opportunity to monitor fitness levels, test out your kit, meet people in the great outdoors, share fundraising stories and gain valuable advice and support for the challenge ahead. We encourage participants to make use of our highly knowledgeable leaders and ask them any questions you may have about clothing and equipment, expedition health and wellbeing, trekking skills, walking techniques and teamwork!

We are offering all participants **50% off** the registration fee when you book on one of the UK challenges listed via the link below. Just use the code **TRAINING** when booking. T&C's – you must have an active booking on a challenge to avail of this offer. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Find out more here

CHARITY CHALLENGE

Any more questions?

Contact us:

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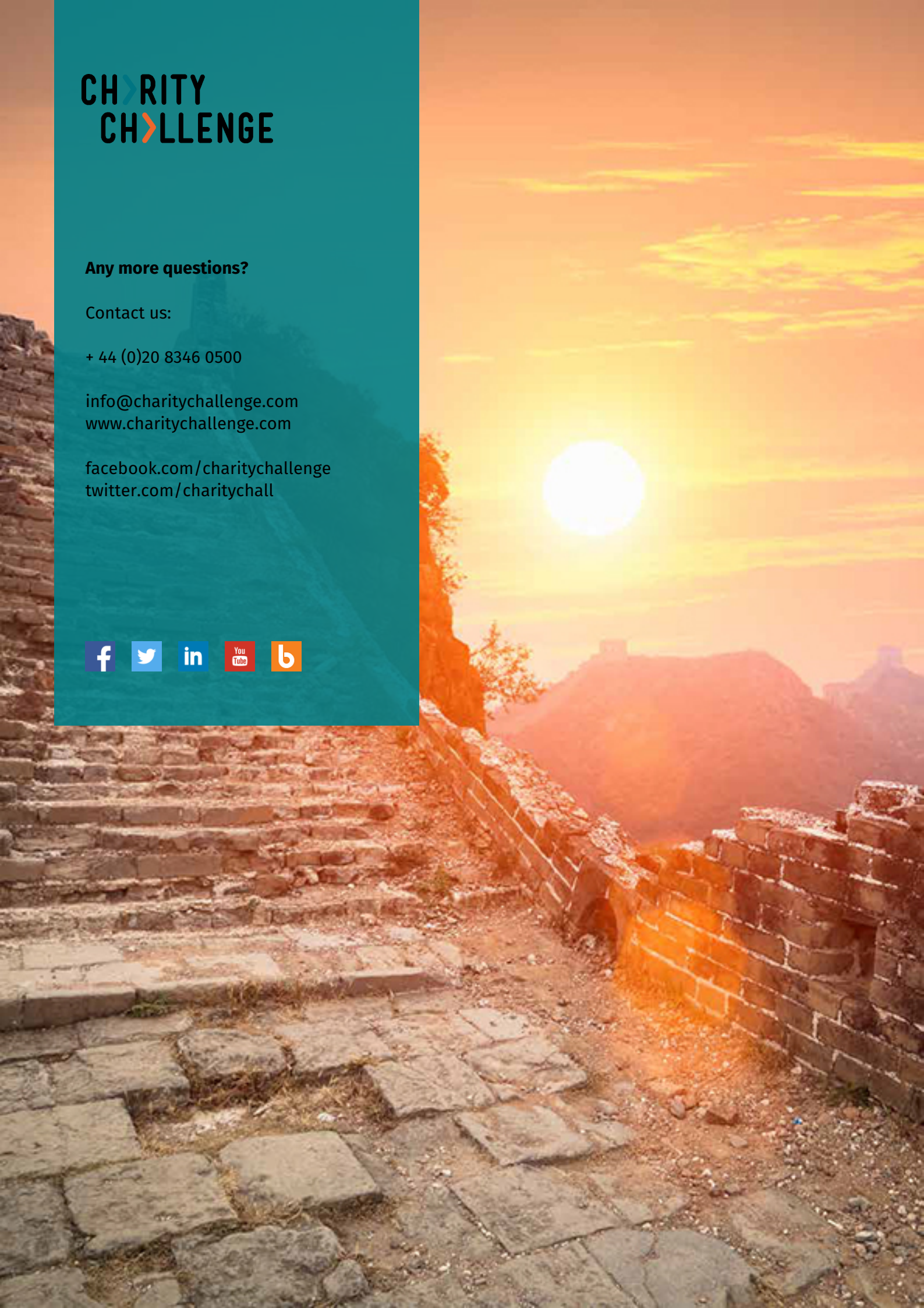
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