ART FOR CURE

TRIP NOTES

BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

KERALA CYCLE INDIA

Thu 10 Nov - Fri 18 Nov 2022

In aid of ART FOR CURE

10 Nov - 18 Nov 2022

9 DAYS | INDIA | CHALLENGING

Prepare to be mesmerised by Kerala. Meaning 'land of coconuts', it's hardly surprising Kerala is almost entirely shaded by a palm canopy. Home to elephants, tea plantations, a world-class cuisine and many adventure travel opportunities, India's tropical south is the perfect setting for a life-changing adventure.

Soak up the laid back atmosphere as you explore this idyllic coastal state during six days of challenging cycling. Beginning and ending in historic Cochin, set amid a cluster of islands and narrow peninsulas, the route passes through cardamom plantations, paddy fields and dramatic mountain scenery. So when all the hard work is done, why not take a tour of this picturesque corner of the world?

- Cycle more than 350kms through spectacular scenery and the backwaters of southern India
- Pedal the backroads through tea and spice plantations
- Experience the diverse birdlife of the Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary
- Catch a glimpse of Kerala's incredible wildlife

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 *Thu 10 Nov*

-

International departure from London

Full of excitement and nerves you meet your fellow teammates at the airport. Wave goodbye to family and friends as you set off on your long-awaited adventure to Kerala, India.

DAY 2 *Fri 11 Nov*

-

Arrive in Cochin

A local Charity Challenge representative will meet you on arrival at Cochin airport and escort you to your nearby hotel. There will be a bike fitting after you check in at the hotel. Depending on your flight arrival time, and if time allows, you may then choose to unwind with an ancient and relaxing aryuvedic massage. In the evening there will be a group dinner and full challenge briefing.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 3 *Sat 12 Nov*

-

Cycle Cochin to Thattekkad (60km)

Saddle up for the first day of cycling! Leave the city behind as you head towards Thattekkad. You will start cycling early each day, making the most of the cool early mornings. Today you will pass through scenic countryside, passing temples, spice gardens, rubber plantations and paddy fields. After a leisurely lunch en-route you will reach our accommodation for the night.

Accommodation: Tented cottage camp

DAY 4 *Sun 13 Nov*

-

Cycle to Munnar (70 Kms)

Today you pass through the Western Ghats of south-western India, known locally as the Sahyadri Hills. The route meanders through rich ecosystems, so look out for the endangered Indian elephants, bison, monkeys and birds of prey. Lunch will be taken in Adimali after 55km of cycling and you will have the option wether to cycle the remaining, very steep, 15km to Munnar.

Munnar is the gateway to the mountains and home to some of the world's highest tea-growing estates and spice plantations, which combined make this former hill station an ideal retreat.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 5 *Mon 14 Nov*

-

Cycle Munnar to Vandanmedu (85 Kms)

Your third day of pedalling takes you to Vandanmedu. Your route follows tea estate tracks through eucalyptus forest and tea bushes, inviting you to interact with many tea pickers along the way, you will pass through the Lockhart gap and overlook the spectacular Bison Valley.

Accommodation: Lodge

DAY 6 *Tue 15 Nov*

-

Cycle Vandanmedu to Periyar Wildlife Park (33 Kms)

Today you will cycle to Periyar, one of best wildlife reserves in India. The reserve, which extends over 777 square kilometres, is home to elephant, Indian bison and tigers. Forest guides can provide an amazing insight into the unique flora and fauna. You will reach Periyar by lunchtime where you can either relax or take part in optional activities which will be offered to you by the local team.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 7 *Wed 16 Nov*

-

Cycle Periyar to Kulamavu (80 Kms)

A challenging day on the bike, with undulation throughout, and definitely one to remember! The sites are worth the effort today though with spice plantations either side of you and views of the famous arch dam of Idukki. The last section of the day is a tough climb but a worthwhile challenge.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 8 *Thu 17 Nov*

-

Cycle Kulamavu to Marari (64 km)

Today, you will be taking a downhill ride through the mountain passes to the plains and from there through the rubber country of Palai to the backwaters of Kerala. Here, you will transfer for a short distance (30km) after lunch and cycle to a beautiful beach resort at Marari. In the evening you will celebrate completing your cycle challenge!

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 9 *Fri 18 Nov*

-

Depart Cochin to London

Transfer back to Cochin Airport for the return flight to London. Be sure to swap details with new-found cycling pals on the flight home.

HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

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

SELF FUNDER

-

Pay a registration fee of £475.00 when you book
Then a balance of £2088.00 (10 weeks before your challenge)
Raise as much as you can for your charity.

MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

-

Registration fee of £475.00 when you book
Raise a minimum of £3095.00 for your charity.

FLEXI

-

Registration fee of £475.00 when you book
Then £540.00 towards challenge costs (10 weeks before your challenge)
Raise a minimum of £2550.00 for your charity.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

-

- 12.5% off Cotswold Outdoor, Snow + Rock, and Runners Need
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules

On your challenge

-

- International flights to and from the UK (including all known UK air taxes, and fuel surcharges, at the time of costing)
- All internal transfers
- Bike
- An English speaking first aid trained challenge leader and full local support team (assistant, drivers, mechanic, medic
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- Activity equipment such as bikes, tents and rafts as per the challenge activity
- All ground staff including English speaking guide, drivers, cooks, and porters
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- Drinking water on challenge days
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Before you go

-

- Any covid tests required for entry to any countries or places of interest on your challenge itinerary
- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Visa

On your challenge

-

- Helmet

- 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)

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 12 weeks before departure (by 18/08/2022), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 16/12/2022). 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.
Raising the sponsorship	Art For Cure are welcoming recruits to this amazing charity bike ride through Cuba! Don't miss out on another incredible Art for Cure experience which many have said from previous challenges was ***'the best thing they have ever done in their lives!'***
Typical group size	The typical group size is 20 - 55 participants
Optional extras	Extensions at end of trip* Single room supplements* Business class upgrades* (*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 http://www.campbellirvinedirect.com/charitychallenge.

COCHIN AND THE KERALAN BACKWATERS – £425.0

After spending an extra day relaxing on the beach at Marari you will head off to explore Kerala a little further by spending a night on a traditional converted rice barge and discover the sleepy backwaters of this coastal state.

It's then time to head to Cochin where you will be shown the sites of Fort Cochin by a local historian and have the chance to shop until you drop!

- Registration fee £50.0
- Balance £375.0

- Single Room £150.0

Why support Art for Cure?

Art For Cure are a nationally registered charity raising money for breast cancer research. Your Kerala 2022 fundraising will go directly and in full to supporting specific leading breast cancer research, here in the UK. Art For Cure pledge support and guidance in your training and fundraising for this amazing challenge.

Typical Day

You will wake early (around sunrise) in time for a hearty breakfast. Cycling days will last between 4-8 hours, including breaks and snacks. After a leisurely break for lunch around noon – packed or cooked lunch will be provided - you will head on at around 1-2 pm. Arriving at your accommodation before sunset, dinner will be prepared and you can relax as the stars come out.

Level of Difficulty

This challenge has been graded '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 Kerala Cycle, you will be:

- Cycling between 7-9 hours per day.
- Cover an overall distance of 350 kilometres.
- Cycling in extremely hot conditions.

Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of its participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up one of the most advanced and thorough safety management systems in the industry. In a nutshell, Our Challenge Safe brand 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 activity itself. Your welfare is paramount!
In terms of your Kerala Cycle challenge, there are a number of important points that you should be aware of:

- Riding in the heat of India is a major challenge in itself so make sure you are well hydrated throughout.
- This trip involves dirt tracks with lots of loose stones and rocks so concentration while riding through these areas is essential.
- Smoke alarms are not compulsory in India, and as such very few accommodations will include them. Your tour leader will explain the emergency procedures.
- You will be riding on the right-hand side of the road, through occasionally busy areas. Make sure that you are paying attention at all times.
- The brakes on the bikes may be on the opposite side to what you are used to in the UK. Take the first morning slow and steady until you get used to this.

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. 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.

Flights

You will be flying from London Heathrow to and back from Cochin, India. Your flight tickets will be emailed to you a few weeks before departure. If you choose to book your own flights you must confirm with the Charity Challenge office before paying otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance).

Extension

After spending an extra day relaxing on the beach at Marari you will head off to explore Kerala a little further by spending a night on a traditional converted rice barge and discover the sleepy backwaters of this coastal state.

It's then time to head to Cochin where you will be shown the sites of Fort Cochin by a local historian and have the chance to shop until you drop!

Included:

Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary
Guided sightseeing in Fort Cochin
3 nights accommodation (twin share)
All breakfasts, 1 lunch and 1 dinner

Excluded:

Personal expenses (ie: gifts, extra soft drinks or alcohol, laundry etc)
Tips for local team (we recommend you allow around £5 per person for tipping your guide)

Please note that this extension is subject to a minimum of 4 people and flight availability. Occasionally, a flight 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 try to accommodate you in a room with someone of the same gender. If this is not possible, you will be charged a single supplement of around £150

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

The cost of the extension (registration fee and balance) are subject to Charity Challenge's standard terms and conditions.

Visa

You must hold a full ten-year passport with at least six months to run from the end of your challenge, and at least one blank page for your visa and entry/exit stamps.
All foreign nationals require a visa to enter India. British Citizens are now eligible to get an online visa before arrival to India.
Important note: British passport holders of Pakistani origin will still have to apply for a paper visa (not online) and they may have difficulty in obtaining a visa for India and should check the requirements with the Indian High Commission before signing up to this challenge.

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

Vaccinations & medication

Vaccinations
For up to date vaccination information please check the Travel Health Pro website:
https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/105/india
Charity Challenge team 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 so it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you.

Medication

- Carry medicines (including those bought over the counter) in their correctly labelled container, as issued by the pharmacist, in hand luggage
- Consider packing a spare supply of medication in the hold luggage in case of loss of hand luggage
- A letter from the prescriber detailing the medicines with the generic names for the medications can be helpful for border control checks, and in case medicines have to be replaced or medical help is required
- Carry a note from the prescribing physician on letterhead stationery for controlled substances and injection medications
- Take out an appropriate level of travel health insurance including repatriation and specific cover for any pre-existing illnesses

N.B. Some medications are banned abroad so please check you can find further information at https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad

To avoid mosquito bites, we recommend wearing long-sleeved shirts, long trousers and socks at dawn and dusk. You should also wear plenty of insect repellent.

Climate & Terrain

Climate

India is so vast that the climatic conditions in the far North have little relation to those of the extreme South. Kerala enjoys a moderate and pleasant climate. The mean temperature in the warmest month (April) is 27.1°C and in the coldest month (January) is 20.4°C The temperature during the day rarely exceeds 35°C in summer (April and May) and seldom falls below 8°C on winter nights (December, January and February). The atmosphere is neither very humid nor very dry. Early morning fog occurs between October to February but mainly in December and January. An important feature influencing the climate of Kerala is the low cloud which covers almost the entire sky during greater part of the day from June to September. The morning hours in these months, with overcast skies, little or no rain and a fresh breeze with temperature of the order of 21°C to 25°C are the most pleasant in the year.

Terrain

Most of the bike trip is on tarmac roads with some cycling on dirt roads also. They are 'Indian' tarmac roads so do have potholes and can be bumpy. The terrain is very mountainous so be prepared for some tough days but the stunning views, ambience and welcoming nature of the Keralan people will be ample reward for all your hard work.

Bikes

The bikes are, 21-24 gear Trek, Merida or Cannondale bikes. They are some of the best bikes available in India; however, they probably do not compare to your bike at home. We add bells and water bottle holders. Please bring your own toe-clips and pedals if you prefer and we can add them. We take plenty of spares and our mechanics are on hand at all times for repairs or adjustments. The maximum frame size available in India is 21-inch and the minimum is 13.5-inch.

Training

A good level of fitness is definitely required. Anyone who leads an active and healthy lifestyle and cycles on a regular basis, with training, should find this a manageable challenge. As always, however, the more you exercise before the challenge, the more you will get out of it. To train, cycle for a full day at a time or even a whole weekend in order to build up your stamina. Don't forget that the climate is different to the UK, and that you will be exercising constantly for a number of days in the heat and sunshine. You will only be expected to carry water and any essentials that you would carry on a day ride – our support team will take care of the rest of your luggage. Also see the Fitness Training Advice notes.

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

Luggage allowance and valuables

As no formal clothes are needed, luggage should be kept to the absolute minimum – details on what to pack are provided in your Kit List. Your rucksack/duffle bag (suitcases are not appropriate) must not exceed 20kgs in weight. Your luggage will be transported in our support vehicle from hotel to hotel.

Leadership

We employ a number of first aid qualified challenge leaders, all of whom speak fluent English. They will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

Group Size

The group is intended to be a minimum of 20 people in order to run and a maximum of approximately 60 people due to the wilderness environment in which the challenge takes place.

Clothing and Equipment

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For your cycle challenge, padded cycling shorts and comfortable footwear are essential, and helmets are compulsory throughout. Training with your cycling shorts is definitely advised! You can bring equipment like clip-in pedals or a gel seat, if desired, in order to adapt your bike in country, and we would also recommend technical/wicking t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. A full kit list for this challenge can be found here, once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners The Outdoor Shop, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

Accommodation & Toilets

Accommodation
During the challenge sector you will be staying mainly in hotels and heritage accommodation. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with please let Charity Challenge know in advance.

Toilets
You will be staying in hotels or guesthouses, with good toilet facilities.

Money

Currency: The currency is the Rupee, abbreviated as Rs. For up to date currency exchange, go to: http://www.xe.com/. Foreign currency regulations are strict. No Rupee currency may be imported or exported. You may be able to purchase rupees from some UK exchanges prior to travel; however, please note importing currency must be done at your own risk. We recommend you to bring sterling or dollars to exchange at the airport in Delhi.
Credit Cards: A growing number of hotels, restaurants and shops in the major cities are beginning to accept credit cards, the well-known and more accepted ones being American Express, Access/MasterCard, Diners Club and Visas. However, credit cards are not the most convenient form of payment or cash withdrawal.
ATMs: Please note that ATMs are not always available and that when they are they do not always work. It is generally easier to visit a bank, but your local guide will advise.
How much to bring: You will not need large amounts of money during this challenge, and other than at the start and end of the trip, you will be in the mountains away from any foreign exchanges or banks. You will only need money for tips, additional food & drink, gifts & souvenirs, and for any other additional activities that you may wish to do. On average, we recommend around £200 in cash, plus a credit card for emergencies. Keep in mind that you will not be able to buy Rupees before entering India, and so you are advised to take a sufficient amount of cash that you can change at the airport or in Cochin.
NB: By changing at the airport while some of the group collect the luggage you will save time – the Indian Exchanges are generally the fastest.
Tipping: Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. You should only tip if you feel that you have received good service. We recommend approx. £10 per person per challenge day and this should be given to the challenge leader at the end of the trip who will advise how to distribute it among the support team at your final celebration. NB: You may be approached by local porters at the airport. Their tips are not included; if you agree for them to take your bags to the transfer vehicle, please be prepared to tip them a small, nominal amount. However, our team will be there to help you.

Food & Drink

You will be served a variety of European and Indian food. All meals are healthy, nourishing, and plentiful. Please let Charity Challenge knows prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

Phone and WiFi

During the Kerala cycle, phone and WiFi connection will be available almost throughout the whole challenge.

Emergencies

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's cycling ability, which 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. If we find that somebody is unable to cycle at all, then we can transport them from one location to the next by our support vehicle, but only as a final option (due to often poor weather conditions this can be difficult). Contact will be maintained between guides and the support team allowing for emergency evacuation if necessary.

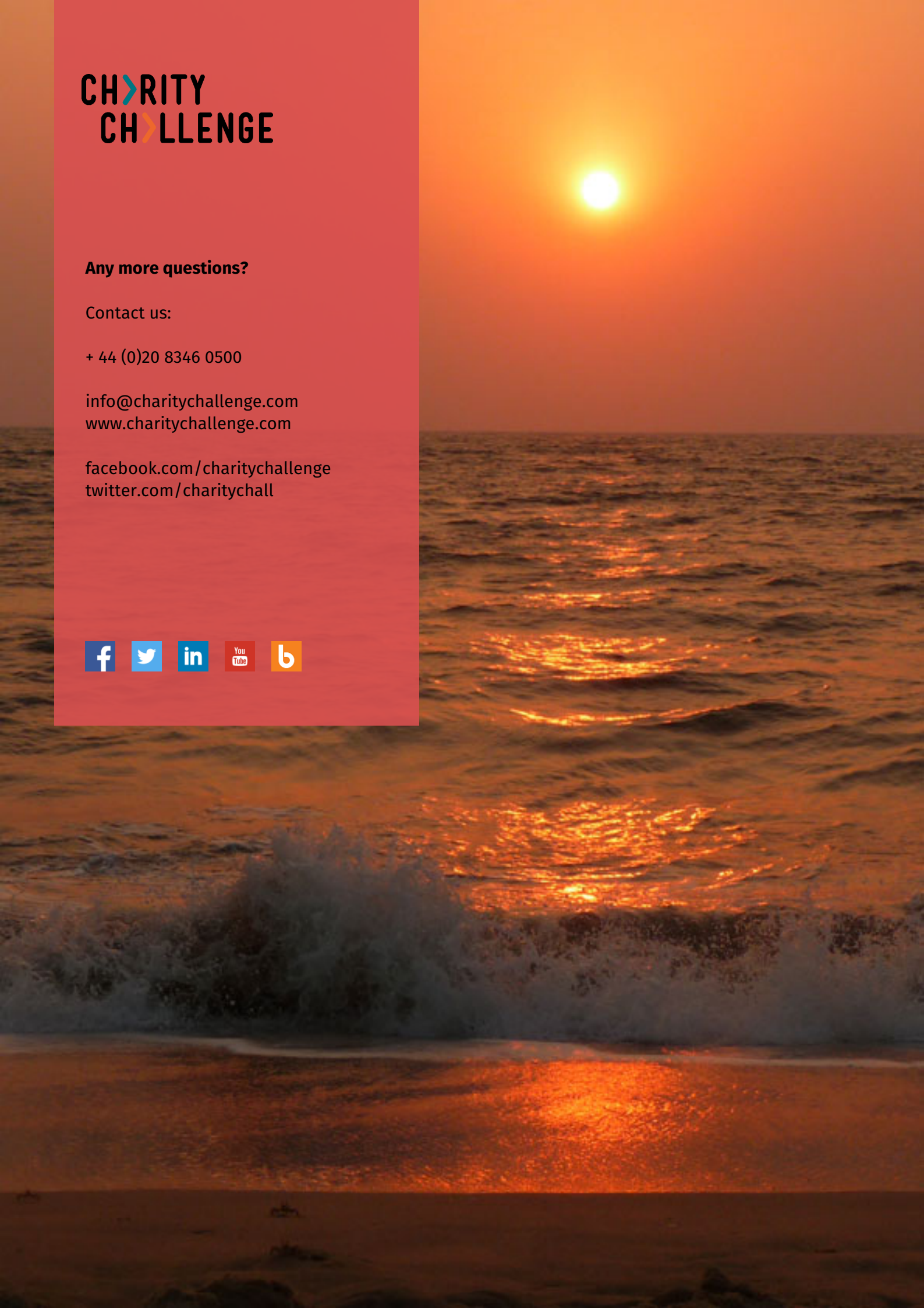
Pre-Existing Medical Conditions

We do not professionally vet your medical details. Please assess for yourself whether you are fit and able to take on the challenge. Please review the detailed Trip Notes and itinerary to get a better idea of what is involved. Please speak to your doctor or specialist if you have any concerns about taking part. If you think that there are things we can do to make the challenge more accessible/comfortable for you, it is your responsibility to let us know, and we will then let you know if we can accommodate your request.

Medical Support

First Aid qualified staff will be provided with the medical details that you give on your booking form but please note that they are on the challenge to support with medical matters related to the challenge environment and terrain itself, i.e. heat/cold, high altitude and so on. They will deal with any incidents and accidents (cuts, sprains, breaks and so on). They are not intended to continue any ongoing specialist medical care that you receive in the UK for pre-exiting medical conditions, and should not be assumed to have any professional experience of your specific medical condition.

If you have any specific needs around pre-existing medical conditions, you should discuss with your family doctor or specialist in advance and can discuss any advice given by them with the challenge leader or doctor.



CHARITY CHALLENGE

Any more questions?

Contact us:

+ 44 (0)20 8346 0500

info@charitychallenge.com
www.charitychallenge.com

facebook.com/charitychallenge
twitter.com/charitychall