

CH RITY
CH>ALLENGE



TRIP NOTES

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TREK PATAGONIA
ARGENTINA

Sat 12 Mar - Fri 25 Mar 2022





In aid of your choice of charity

12 Mar - 25 Mar 2022

14 DAYS | ARGENTINA | TOUGH

You will trek past beautiful lakes and glaciers on this magnificent challenge, also experiencing ice-capped cliffs and mountains, forests and grasslands. Camping in spectacular locations, you will be able to appreciate the sheer beauty of Patagonia on this epic adventure.

After enjoying a night in Buenos Aires, you will make your way to Calafate and begin your adventure with the Perito Moreno Glacier trek. Then, you will hike through Estancia los Huemules, and marvel at the beauty of Pollone Glacier and Laguna de los Tres.

- 7-day trek across beautiful glaciers, mountains, forests and grassland
- Camp in the stunning wilderness of the Glacier National Park
- Enjoy exquisite turquoise lakes and ice-capped summits
- Spectacular panoramic views of the Andes and Mount Fitz Roy
- Enjoy a night in Buenos Aires, Argentina's capital city

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 Sat 12 Mar

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International departure from London

The day has finally arrived for your adventure to begin. As you take off for your long-haul flight you may feel about of nerves but hopefully mostly excitement; all the hard work you've already put into training and fundraising will finally be put to the test.

DAY 2 Sun 13 Mar

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Arrive to Buenos Aires

You will arrive in Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina, and be met by your local representative. You will have a few hours in the capital before transferring back to the domestic airport for a flight to Calafate. Here you will stay overnight a local hotel. (B, L, D)

DAY 3 Mon 14 Mar

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Free day in Calafate

Today, you can stretch your legs and explore the town of Calafate, your base for the challenge when not on the trek itself. You will receive a welcome briefing from your local leader, who will talk you through the exciting days ahead. Dinner at the hotel. (B,D). Overnight in hotel in Calafate.

DAY 4 Tue 15 Mar

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Mini-Trekking on Perito Moreno Glacier

This morning you depart El Calafate from the hotel and journey toward the Glacier National Park for your first introduction to glacier trekking. Arriving at the port, Bahia Bajo las Sombras (Bay of Shadows), you board a boat for a short crossing of the Rico arm of Lake Argentino, taking in the views.

After disembarking, you walk through a small, dense forest of native Lenga trees to arrive at the edge of the ice. Here, you will attach crampons and receive a briefing for the day ahead. The walk on the glacier is fascinating, and a very up-close-and-personal experience. You will be hiking across old ice formations, with its cracks, isolated small lagoons and crevasses of magical deep blue. Watching your step as you cross the glacier, the circular walk provides you with excellent views of the lake before returning to the start point. After lunch, you will return across the lake by boat, to the boardwalk on the east wall of the glacier. Here you will go toe-to-toe with this impressive and magnificent river of ice, before heading back to your hotel. (B,L,D)

Overnight hotel in Calafate.

*** Note: trekking on this day will require a strong level of fitness and confident trekking abilities. Due to insurance purposes in Argentina, our ground team can only take people aged 65 and under on the glacier.** If you are over this age or don't want to go on the glacier, we can split the group and you can visit the glacier in the more conventional way which is visiting the trails, catwalks and lookouts that face the spectacular glacier. There will also be a boat excursion with a chance to observe the gigantic mass of ice from the water, which provides a completely different perspective to the impressive glacier.

DAY 5 Wed 16 Mar

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La Leona Petrified Forest (3 hours)

After breakfast, you depart the city of El Calafate and transfer to the fascinating La Leona Petrified Forest. On the journey, take in the various spectacular panoramic views of the Andes and Mount Fitz Roy. Trek for 3 hours spotting the petrified fossil tree trunks and possibly fossils of different species of dinosaurs, in this semi-desert environment. The sediment formations provide an insight into the geological history of the region, which was vastly different to today's times. After trekking, transfer to Chalten (B,L,D).

Overnight hotel in Chalten.

DAY 6 Thu 17 Mar

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Trek Pliegue Tumbado (6/7 hours and 16km approx.)

Early this morning, you leave El Chalten and travel towards Laguna Toro. After an hour of ascent, crossing small streams through native woodland, you emerge to a picture postcard view of Mount Fitz Roy, Torre and Huemul. Continuing across the Pampa de las Carretas, and up through the woodlands accompanied by birdsong, you will come to the beautiful alpine meadows. The weather is changeable, and you may experience the biting Patagonian wind and possibly even snow (even in the summer)! Keep your eyes open as it's quite possible to find the remains of 100-million-year-old marine fossils along the route.

The highlight of the day is finally arriving at the viewpoint - nearly 1500m - offering a breathtaking view of the Torre and Fitz Roy massifs. After enjoying lunch with this incredible backdrop, you will return to El Chalten for dinner at a local restaurant. (B,L,D)

Overnight hotel in Chalten.

DAY 7 Fri 18 Mar

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Trek to Laguna Torre and Madre e Hija (7/8 hours and 20km approx.)

After breakfast, you begin trekking towards Laguna Torre through a spellbinding valley, loved by the geologists and photographers alike for its perfect formation. At the end of the valley, you will find Laguna Torre, its glacier and the famous Mount Torre - considered one of the most difficult mountains in the world to climb. After lunch, you will continue walking past the lagoons (including Madre, Hija and Nieta). After a couple of hours, you will arrive at Poincenot base camp. (B,L,D)

Overnight camping at Poincenot.

* Please note, your main luggage will be left at the hotel in Chalten this morning and you will pick this up again on the evening of day 10 of the itinerary. For 4 days of trekking from days 7, 8, 9 and 10, porters will carry your clothes and personal items for 3 nights (8-10kg maximum). A sleeping bag and sleeping mat will be provided for you and be carried by the support team.

DAY 8 Sat 19 Mar

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Trek to Laguna los Tres, Lago Piedras Blancas and Rio Electrico Valley (7/8 hours and 18km approx.)

You may want to get up early today to enjoy a golden sunrise, the closest you can get to Mt Fitz Roy. After breakfast, you follow the trail that ascends steeply to Laguna de los Tres and your efforts will be rewarded at the top with

captivating views of Mt Fitz Roy's summit. There may be some time to rest your legs and explore, before you descend down to the Rio Blanco valley through lush forest on an easy trail, finally joining the Electrico Valley and your base for the night - the Piedra del Fraile Refuge. (B,L,D)

Overnight camping.

DAY 9 Sun 20 Mar

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Trek to Pollone Glacier, Laguna Azul, Verde and Los Huemules to Lago del Diablo (8/9 hours and 20km approx.)

After waking in the foothills of the mountains, you continue along the valley towards the Pollone Glacier, appreciating raw nature at its best. Along the way, you will admire a different angle of Mount Fitz Roy; its northern face. On the trek you will discover hidden lagoons at the base of the mountain, before heading back to Piedra del Fraile. After lunch, you follow the Rio de las Vueltas valley eventually arriving at the private reserve of Los Huemules. You will cross a hanging bridge to enter the Diablo valley, walking along the valley basin before arriving in Puesto Cagliero which will be your home for the night. From here, you can see expansive views of the Cagliero glacier and its lagoon (right in front of the refuge). (B,L,D)

Overnight camp beds at the refuge.

DAY 10 Mon 21 Mar

-

Trek to Loma del Diable and transfer to El Chalten (8/9 hours and 15km approx.)

Today's trek will climb up to Loma del Diablo with a long and steady hike. Today's terrain includes a mix of open land and pathways and forest trails sculpted by the Patagonian winds. Continuing the trek, you take in Laguna Verde and Azul (where you will stop for lunch). You will then return via the same route towards the road to transfer back to El Chalten for a well-deserved hot shower, and your celebratory meal. (B,L,D)

Overnight hotel in Chalten.

DAY 11 Tue 22 Mar

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Free day in Calafate

After breakfast, you will transfer to Calafate and have the remainder of the day free to explore Calafate and will stay overnight in a local hotel. (B,D).

DAY 12 Wed 23 Mar

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Calafate to Buenos Aires

You will have most of the day to relax and enjoy the city before transferring late afternoon to the airport for your domestic flight back to Buenos Aires. (B) Overnight hotel.

DAY 13 Thu 24 Mar

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Depart Buenos Aires

It's time to say 'adios' to Argentina as you embark on your journey home. This is the perfect opportunity to reflect on

everything you have achieved before getting home and sharing the incredible experience with all your supportive friends and family. (B)

DAY 14 *Fri 25 Mar*

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Arrive in London

You will arrive back into London, before completing the final part of your journey back home.

SELF FUNDER

Pay a registration fee of **£495** when you book.

Then a balance of **£3,465**
(10 weeks before your challenge).

Raise as much as you can for your nominated charity.

The full cost of this challenge is **£3,960**. You will be required to pay the registration fee of **£495** at the time of booking and the final balance of **£3,465** which is due 10 weeks before departure. You will receive fundraising advice and sponsorship forms and be asked to raise as much as you can for your nominated charity. As you have covered the full cost of the challenge, 100% of this fundraising will be retained by your nominated charity.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

BEFORE YOU GO

- 15% off Cotswold Outdoor, Cycle Surgery, Snow and 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 London (including all known UK air taxes, and fuel surcharges, at the time of costing)
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Drinking water on challenge days including one refillable stainless-steel bottle per person for drinking water (to be refilled according to the instructions by the support staff)
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- 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 tents, sleeping bags and sleeping mats as per the challenge activity
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- All internal transfers
- Tips for all meals included in the itinerary and tips for local guides and assistance staff during the trekking days

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED?

BEFORE YOU GO

- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Visa
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)
- Travel Insurance

ON YOUR CHALLENGE

- Hotel tax (usually US\$1 per person per night in Buenos Aires)
- Departure Tax (if applicable)
- Meals not specified in the itinerary

THE DETAILS

REGISTRATION FEE IN INSTALMENTS

The first instalment of £250 is due at the time of booking. The second instalment of £245 will automatically be debited from your credit/debit card 31 days after you book. We can only accept payment for your registration fee by instalments if you book and pay online. Please note that when paying your registration fee in instalments, a £10 admin fee will be added to your first registration fee payment. Please note that your booking will not be processed (and we will not send an authorisation request to your charity) until we receive the payment for your second instalment. Your place on the challenge will only be held until 31 days from your initial booking. If we are unable to take your second instalment, your booking will be cancelled and normal cancellation terms will apply.

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 15 - 24 participants

SMALL GROUP SUPPLEMENT

The costs and sponsorship levels on our website are based on a minimum of 15 participants. We can run this trip with 10-14 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £95.00. 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*
- Single room supplements*
- Extensions at end of trip*
- (*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 by [clicking here](#).

Level of Difficulty

The Patagonia challenge is graded as tough due to the rough terrain, the trekking on the Glaciars, and basic facilities. A good level of fitness and regular training is required for this challenge. The more prepared you are for this challenge, the more you will enjoy it. Anyone who leads a fairly active and moderately healthy lifestyle should be able to complete the trek as long as they train regularly over a period of at least three months leading up to it, so as to build up stamina and endurance. Don't forget that the temperature and the altitudes will be very different from the UK and that you will be exercising constantly for a number of days.

You can tell your supporters that on your Challenge you will be:

- Trekking for 7 days consecutively for very long distances and fighting the winds and bad weather conditions of the Patagonian Mountains
- Trekking at altitudes of up to almost 1,200m
- Suffering temperatures of down to below zero degrees
- Sleeping in locations with very basic facilities

Typical Day

During the trekking days you will rise early and pack up before breakfast, then trek carrying your bags for 6-8 hours. There will be a picnic lunch en route and plenty of time to stop and view the remarkable scenery. The evenings are spent in basic, though beautifully located, camps and refuges where the food and facilities are fairly simple.

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 Patagonia Trek Challenge, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- You will be trekking for 7 days consecutively for very long distances and fighting the winds and bad weather conditions of the Patagonian Mountains.
- You will be trekking at altitudes of up to almost 1,500m
- It will be very windy and cold especially at nights.
- You will be sleeping in locations with very basic facilities
- You will be descending and ascending to the Viedma glacier using crampons. No technical trekking experience is needed, but you will need to be in good physical conditions and no injured. Our trek guide will assess your fitness levels and determine whether you will do this trek or not.

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.

Flights

You will be making a return journey from London indirectly (via Madrid and Buenos Aires) to Calafate, Argentina. Your flight tickets will be e-mailed to you before departure.

Visa

You must hold a full ten-year passport with at least six months to run from the end of your expedition. Airlines may not carry passengers holding passports with less than 6 months validity. You don't need a visa to enter Argentina as a tourist unless you're travelling on an Emergency Travel Document. On presentation of a valid British passport you will normally be granted a 90-day stay in the country.

If you're travelling to Argentina for any purpose other than tourism, contact the [Embassy of the Argentine Republic in London](#).

Insurance

It is a condition of travelling with Charity Challenge that you have a suitable travel insurance policy which covers you for your entire 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 must complete in your account area prior to travel.

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/countries>

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>

Malaria risk is low throughout the year. The risk is limited to the Departments of Oran and San Martin in Salta Province in the north of the country, and to a lesser extent to Corrientes and Misiones Provinces. There is minimal risk in the tourist resort of Iguazu Falls.

Climate & Terrain

The best season for trekking in Patagonia is between October and April. Daytime temperatures can reach 35°C in Buenos Aires and around 22°C in Calafate. Night times, especially when in Calafate and the trekking area can go down from single figures to below zero. You must be prepared for the worst, as mountain weather conditions are extremely unpredictable.

Training & Training Weekends

This challenge is graded 'Extreme', which means that a good level of fitness is definitely required! We recommend that you have significant experience of trekking within the UK before departure. Don't forget that the temperature and the altitudes are different from the UK. While strength is important, endurance training should be your primary focus. Walking up hills and climbing stairs are both ways to condition your lower body. Begin slowly, without the weight of a pack, eventually adding weight as you increase your training pace. Take long hikes (6-8 hours) with a weighted pack, up and down hills or on small mountains (weigh your pack with water containers and pour out the water before your descent to minimise knee stress). Also see our Fitness [Training page](#).

Training weekends

We offer superb training weekends across various locations in the UK, from Saturday morning to Sunday afternoon.

These training weekends not only help you become physically prepared for the challenge, but our experienced instructors and leaders will talk you through your clothing and equipment, camp craft, health and wellbeing, trekking skills (walking on different terrain/at altitude/at night/using walking poles), teamwork on expedition and many more themes designed to make you get the most out of your challenge. The weekends are great ways for you to get out into the mountains of the UK, while also meeting other Charity Challengers and sharing your experiences. To read more about our training weekends, including dates and prices, check out our dedicated page.

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 20kg.

However, you should only need around 15kg. Use a padlock on your luggage when in transit to reduce any risks.

Your main luggage will be left at the hotel in Chalten on the morning of day 7 of the itinerary and you will pick this up again on the evening of day 10 of the itinerary. For 4 days of trekking from days 7, 8, 9 and 10, porters will carry your clothes and personal items for 3 nights (8-10kg maximum).

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.

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. Your local challenge leader will meet you at your arrival to Calafate, although you will be met by a Charity Challenge representative in Buenos Aires until you check in at your hotel and get your next day flight to Calafate.

Group Size

Each group is intended to be 15 people minimum in order to run and a maximum of 24 people. We will be able to run this challenge for 10 to 14 people by charging a small group supplement of £95 which will be added to your final balance invoice.

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. You don't need a clean pair every day, but enough to make sure you have dry socks each morning. The benefits of a comfortable day sack cannot be underestimated, so make sure that you train with this. Other essentials are high quality Gore-Tex waterproof and windproof jackets and trousers, technical/wicking t-shirts rather than cotton shirts, and a down jacket for the evenings in camp and your summit day/night. A full kit list for this challenge is available on the webpage and once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners The

Outdoor Shop, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

Accommodation & Toilets

In Buenos Aires, we will be staying in a local 4* local hotel. During the trek, we will be staying in campsites (twin tents), refuges (dormitories) and lodges. The accommodation in campsites will be sharing with someone of the same sex. The accommodation in refuges and lodges might be with more people in your group since the rooms are from 4 to 8 beds. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please ensure you submit this information at the time of booking or email challenges@charitychallenge.com

Foam sleeping mats and sleeping bags are provided but do take your own if you require extra comfort.

From March 2020, international travellers will be required to pay a tax of approximately US\$1 for each night they spend in the City of Buenos Aires. At this stage, this can't be prepaid and will be required to be paid by each person before check-in. The itinerary has 3 nights in Buenos Aires.

Food & Drink

During the day a typical packed lunch provided might consist of fruit juice, fresh fruit, sandwiches, etc. The evening meal at the campsite, lodges and refuges will be a starter with some cheese, olives, bread, a main with some beef, chicken or salad, rice, potatoes and vegetables and some fruits for dessert. Dinners will vary from day-to-day and so not all will include soft drinks. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

One refillable stainless-steel bottle per person will be provided on the expedition. This is to be refilled according to the instructions by the support staff for drinkable water.

Money

Currency: Argentina uses the Argentine Peso. For up to date currency exchange, go to www.xe.com. GBP can be exchange at Buenos Aires airport and in the city.

Credit Cards: These are accepted in all major hotels, banks and stores in Argentina. Credit card receipts from stores and restaurants will be priced in Argentine Peso, although you will be billed in the currency of your own country with the official exchange rate having been taken into consideration

ATMs: There is an extensive network of ATMs where visitors can use. You should check with your bank before departure that your card can be used overseas and what the charges will be, as UK cash cards are not always accepted by Argentinean cash machines. It is wise to take sufficient funds in cash for periods away from the major cities.

How much to bring: You will not need a large amount of money during this trip and other than at the start and end of the challenge, you will be in the rural areas 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 wish to do specially in Buenos Aires. On average we recommend around £300.

Tippling: Tips for all meals included in the itinerary and tips for guides and assistance staff on trekking days are included in the price of the expedition.

Phone & WiFi

You will have mobile phone and internet signal during your stay in Buenos Aires, and the main cities El Chalten and Calafate. After that, you will have extremely limited mobile phone or internet reception during your trek.

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, all guides and leaders are maintaining contact via radio.

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Any more questions?

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