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THE BUTTERFLY SKIN CHARITY

TRIP NOTES

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DEBRA GREAT WALL DISCOVERY 2027 CHINA

Sat 09 Oct - Sun 17 Oct 2027

In aid of DEBRA

09 Oct - 17 Oct 2027

9 DAYS | CHINA | CHALLENGING

Appropriately named one of the ‘New Wonders of the World, the Great Wall of China is a truly iconic location – perfect for a Charity Challenge.

Originally constructed to defend China against the nomadic tribes, the Great Wall Discovery is a thrilling challenge of twists, turns, ups and downs. Beginning four hours north of Beijing, this week-long challenge tackles a series of vigorous climbs totalling over 10,000 uneven steps. The trek will follow the winding path along the Yan Mountains to the Gubeikou Gateway and takes on the famous ‘heavenly staircase’. Exhaustion will quickly be replaced with wonder as you savour the sweeping views of the surrounding mountain ranges.

The challenge ends in the vast metropolis of Beijing, with time to explore the cultural highlights of China’s historic capital.

Our expert English speaking guides will be with you every step of the way, managing your challenge and providing historical context to the Great Wall and its surroundings.

- 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 09 Oct*

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International departure from London

Your fundraising and training is about to pay off as the big day has finally arrived. Wave goodbye to family and friends and board your overnight flight to Beijing, where your challenge begins.

DAY 2 *Sun 10 Oct*

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Arrival Beijing and transfer to the Wall area

Ni Hao, welcome to China!

Your local Charity Challenge guide will be on hand at the airport to welcome you and organise your road transfer to the first night's accommodation. In the evening, you will gather together for a trek briefing and inaugural team dinner to prepare for your incredible adventure.

Accommodation: Lodge

DAY 3 *Mon 11 Oct*

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Badaling (approximately 5 hours)

Today's trek will take you to the best preserved and most complete section of the wall. With classic views of the wall winding its way over the hills and into the distance, there will be plenty of perfect photo opportunities along the way. After conquering the final watchtower of the day, it will be time to leave this impressive fortification behind you to transfer to your accommodation for tonight to celebrate your first trekking day achievements.

Accommodation: Lodge

DAY 4 *Tue 12 Oct*

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Lupiguan (approximately 6-7 hours)

This morning you take a short transfer to the start of the today's wall, Lupiguan. An unrenovated part of the Great Wall with spectacular scenery every step of the way. Today's trek will take you walking on a part of the wall that runs along the mountain ridge, with the River Bai Gorge on one side and a reservoir on the other.

Begin with a steady 1 hour climb up to the wall itself on a countryside trail. As you reach the wall stop for a well earned water and snack break to take in the vast views and spectacular backdrop of the surrounding mountains. You will need to take care today as this unrestored section can often be loose under foot. Once you have soaked up the view, continue your trek along the wall in site of watch towers standing at several high points. To finish the day you will come off the wall to trek back down into the valley to pick up the coach for your transfer to tonight's lodge.

Accommodation: Lodge

DAY 5 *Wed 13 Oct*

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Gubeikou Gateway (approximately 6-7 hours)

This is the longest day of the challenge so get ready to push yourself to the limits! Today you will take on the demanding Gubeikou section of the wall, which begins with a steady climb on uneven ground, past several time-worn watchtowers. Gubeikou was once the site of incessant warfare and was heavily guarded leading to an interesting variety of defence structures. This part of the wall offers fantastic panoramic views over rural China so be sure to have your camera to hand. The end of the day walk to your lodge where a delicious evening meal will await you.

Accommodation: Lodge

DAY 6 *Thu 14 Oct*

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Jinshanling Loop (approximately 5-6 hours)

Today, after a short group warm up, your trek on the wall will begin. After just a few kilometres, you will leave behind the tourists and reach an original section of the wall. Its steep, crumbling staircases will provide a fitting introduction to the enormity of the challenge ahead. Be sure to count the watchtowers as you pass through them and take time to look back and see what you have achieved. Tonight, you will get the chance to rest your weary legs at the lodge before getting a good night's sleep.

Accommodation: Lodge

DAY 7 *Fri 15 Oct*

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Mutianyu section (approximately 5 hours)

Today follows the Mutianyu section of the wall and will see you taking on the "Heavenly Staircase".

You will begin the day with a steep climb up towards the first watchtower on this section before following this along to the Heavenly Staircase. Once at the top, you can bask in the glory of the truly breath-taking scenery around you and take advantage of being on one of the quieter sections of the wall. Given the number of stairs and the scale of the climb, today will test even the fittest of legs. After completing the heavenly staircase you will return back down off the wall in time for a well deserved lunch before heading back to Beijing. Once settled back in the capital, you will enjoy an evening meal with your fellow trekkers and new-found friends.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 8 *Sat 16 Oct*

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Day 8: Full day city tour of Beijing

With the hard work done, it will be time to relax and enjoy some of the cultural highlights of China's historic capital, Beijing.

Today's city tour of Beijing includes a visit to Tiantan 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 followed by a tour around Tiananmen Square and the magnificent Forbidden City, before a final group dinner of traditional Peking Duck or a vegetarian alternative.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 9 *Sun 17 Oct*

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Day 9: Beijing to London

It's time to bid a fond farewell to China and make your way to the airport for your morning flight home. Filled with a profound sense of pride and a wish that the adventure could continue, you will 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.

In Summary

Self funder

Pay a non-refundable registration fee of **£395.00** when you book.

Then a balance of **£1,624.00**
(10 weeks before your challenge).

Raise as much as you can for DEBRA.

Minimum sponsorship

Pay a non-refundable registration fee of **£395.00** when you book.

Raise a minimum of **£3,465.00** for DEBRA.

Flexi

Pay a non-refundable registration fee of **£395.00** when you book.

Then **£395.00** towards challenge costs
(10 weeks before your challenge).

Raise a minimum of **£2,660.00** for DEBRA.

You will be invoiced for the air tax and fuel element contribution for your international flights, capped at £250.00, which is due 10 weeks before departure.

Please note that you can pay your registration fee in instalments.

In Detail

Self funder option

The full cost of this challenge is **£2,019.00** plus the air tax and fuel element contribution (capped at **£250.00**). You will be required to pay the non-refundable registration fee of **£395.00** at the time of booking, and 10 weeks before departure (31/07/2027) you will be required to pay the final balance of your challenge costs (**£1,624.00**), plus the air tax and fuel element contribution. You will receive fundraising advice and sponsorship forms and be asked to raise as much as you can for DEBRA. As you have covered the full cost of the challenge, 100% of this fundraising will be retained by DEBRA.

Minimum sponsorship option

You will be required to pay the non-refundable registration fee of **£395.00** at the time of booking and raise a minimum amount of sponsorship, **£3,465.00** for DEBRA. You should send your sponsorship money to DEBRA as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required (£2,772.00) must be sent to the charity 12 weeks before departure (by 17/07/2027), and the remaining 20% (£693.00) within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 14/11/2027). If you have raised the necessary funds, DEBRA will then pay the balance of your expedition costs (which will not exceed 49% of the minimum sponsorship target). The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise. You will be required to pay the air tax and fuel element contribution 10 weeks before departure (capped at £250.00).

Flexi option

You will be required to pay the non-refundable registration fee of **£395.00** at the time of booking, and 10 weeks before departure (31/07/2027) you will be required to pay a second contribution of **£395.00** towards your challenge costs, plus the air tax and fuel element contribution (capped at £250.00). You will also need to raise a minimum amount of sponsorship, **£2,660.00** for DEBRA. You should send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required (£2,128.00) must be sent to the charity 12 weeks before departure (by 17/07/2027), and the remaining 20% (£532.00) within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 14/11/2027). If you have raised the necessary funds, DEBRA will then pay the balance of your expedition costs (which will not exceed 49% of the minimum sponsorship target). The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.

What's included?

Before you go

- Members only benefits and discounts at a wide range of clothing and equipment suppliers including Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor, Runners Needs, Snow + Rock, Water to Go, The Altitude Centre, Sporttape and Nomad & MASTA.
- Sponsorship forms
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, visa information, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Public liability insurance
- Fundraising advice
- Fitness training notes
- Access to training weekends (optional and at additional expense)
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule

On your challenge

- An English speaking first aid trained challenge leader and full local support team
- Drinking water on challenge days
- Equipment as per the challenge activity
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Internal transfers (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- UK-based 24-hour emergency support line
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary

What's not included?

Before you go

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

On your challenge

- Tips

The details

Registration fee in instalments

The first instalment of £200.00 is due at the time of booking. The second instalment of £195.00 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.

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 17/07/2027), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 14/11/2027). 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.

Air tax and fuel element contribution

The air taxes, and fuel element, that make up part of the flight costs can fluctuate significantly before a challenge takes place. As such, we exclude part of these taxes from the initial cost of the challenge and we will invoice you for it 10 weeks before departure. This applies to all participants on all payment options. For the challenge you are booked on this payment will be capped at £250.00 and we will absorb any amount above that. Please be sure to factor this cost into your budgeting for the challenge.

Typical group size

The typical group size is 36 - 70 participants

Optional extras

- Extensions at end of trip*
- Single room supplements*
- Business class upgrades*
- Travel insurance

(*subject to availability)

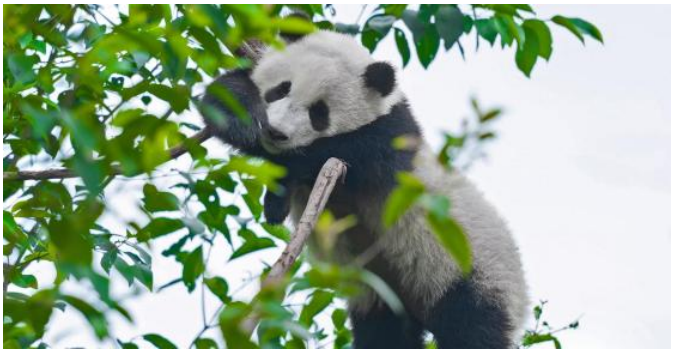
Travel insurance

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. Charity Challenge has chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance

providers Campbell Irvine (for UK residents) and Rise & Shield* (for **non**-UK residents). Both companies can arrange cover for an extensive number of activities, such as high-altitude trekking and cycling events, which include emergency medical treatment and repatriation expenses. Please note that Charity Challenge is not able to advise on matters relating to individual travel insurance policies and does not accept any liability for policy matters or claims. We recommend you make sure any policy you consider is appropriate for your specific requirements and the adventure you're undertaking.

* Rise and Shield do not provide cover to Cuba.

TERRACOTTA WARRIORS & PANDAS EXTENSION – £797.0



Travel by high-speed train from Beijing to Xian to uncover one of China's greatest archaeological wonders – the Terracotta Warriors. Hidden for over 2,000 years and unearthed in 1975, this vast army of more than 6,000 soldiers, horses and chariots is an unforgettable sight. Continue by express train to Chengdu to visit the Giant Panda Research Base and come face to face with China's most beloved animals. Along the way, enjoy ample evening and free time to sample China's rich culture and outstanding cuisine, before flying home from Chengdu Tianfu International Airport.

- Registration fee £100.0
- Balance £697.0

- Single Room £150.0

Level of Difficulty

The Great Wall Discovery trek is graded as challenging. A “challenging” trip will test someone who is relatively fit and has a spirit of adventure. You may have had some previous experience, but this is not necessary as long as the correct training is undertaken.

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.
- trekking up and down thousands of stairs.
- exposed to the elements, rain, wind or sunshine along the wall.
- trekking on un-renovated sections of the wall, with tricky terrain
- taking on sections at height with drops at either side
- staying in basic lodges each night

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.

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, an advanced and thorough safety management system. 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 steep 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 recommended travel insurance policy will not cover you for this specific activity.

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 flying from London Heathrow to Beijing. The flight time is approx. 9-10 hours if flying non-stop or 14-16 hours if indirect. Your flight tickets will be emailed to you before your deparure.

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.

Please note: From September 2019, Beijing will be opening their new airport - Beijing Daxing Airport. This is located approximately 45km south of Beijing city centre and is an extremely long transfer to meet the rest of the group who will be arriving into Beijing Capital International Airport.

Timings of the group flights are subject to change so please take this into consideration when booking domestic travel arrangements to reach your departure airport i.e. book flexible tickets where possible. We are unable to take responsibility for the consequences of missed international flights due to delayed travel arrangements to the airport. We therefore advise you, when booking transport and making any arrangements, to plan to get to the airport in plenty of time allowing for any possible delays which may occur on the day (bad weather, break down, cancellations etc). If you book a domestic flight, in order to get to your international departure airport, please do consider that this flight ticket cannot be linked to the ticket we are organising for you; you will need to collect your luggage, possibly change terminal and check-in again as normal.

Visa

Until 31 December 2026, you can enter China visa free for stays of up to 30 days for business, tourism, family or friend visits or transit. Charity Challenge will inform you of any changes to the visa requirements as soon as we have official guidance. For UK passport holders a full passport is required. You must have at least six months to run on your passport from the end of the challenge and 2 blank pages for stamping. Non UK passport holders should consult their nearest embassy regarding visa requirements.

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.

On 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 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.

Vaccinations & Medicines

For up to date vaccination information please check the Travel Health Pro website: https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/49/china#Vaccine_recommendations

The Charity Challenge team are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your doctor or travel nurse to discuss vaccination requirements. Your doctor 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

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!

Training

Training and fitness are 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 mountains 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.

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 & 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 20kg.

You should only need around 15kg-17kg. 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, passport, visa etc.) in case they get lost or damaged.

Portable chargers or power banks containing a lithium ion battery must be packed in carry-on bags. Specific regulations regarding power banks may vary depending on the airline, the country you're traveling to, and the type and capacity of the power bank. It's always a good idea to check with the airline and the destination country's regulations before your flight to ensure that you comply with their specific rules regarding power banks.

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.

Group Size

Each group is intended to be 15 people minimum in order to run and a maximum of approx. 35 people. We will be able to run this challenge for 10 to 14 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).

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, however we would recommend training with these prior to your trek. Please pack long trekking trousers as the vegetation on certain days can be very prickly and cause scratches if unprotected.

Please click here for a full kit list for this challenge. As a Charity Challenge participant, you will get members only benefits and/or discounts at a wide range of clothing and equipment suppliers including Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor, Snow + Rock, Water to Go, Sporttape and Nomad & MASTA.

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 the lodges will provide clean linen and washing facilities. 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

There will be basic, western style toilets in the lodges and there will be en-suite toilet and washing facilities at the hotels. Depending on the season, hot water may be limited in some of the lodges along the wall. Along the trekking route, toilet facilities will be limited to the great outdoors!

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.

Money

Currency: The currency in China is the Yuan ¥. We usually recommend exchanging currency before you go; however, we have been informed by the local team that the exchange rate is not very good so withdrawing cash in China might be a better option. 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.

Bank Cards: Major hotels, international retail chains, airports, and some larger restaurants usually accept credit and debit cards. However, many smaller businesses, local shops, cafés, and street vendors may not accept foreign cards directly. For this reason, you should not rely solely on using a physical bank card.

ATMs: You will have no access to ATMs on the trekking days, but once back in Beijing, you will be able to withdraw cash if needed. Some businesses may have limited change available because most customers pay digitally. Carrying a small amount of cash is useful as a backup for situations where electronic payments are unavailable.

Alipay and WeChat Pay: The two most widely used payment methods in China are mobile apps - Alipay and WeChat Pay.

Before you travel, it's a good idea to download both apps, complete the identity verification process, and link your

payment card/s. Once your account is verified, you can simply scan a merchant's QR code or present your own payment code to complete a purchase. Having both Alipay and WeChat Pay gives you the greatest flexibility, as some merchants may prefer one platform over the other.

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 have a lot of money during the challenge, but as there are daily opportunities to buy soft drinks and snacks on the wall, we would suggest a maximum amount of about £15 a day. Most, if not all, purchases can be made using the Alipay and WeChat Pay apps. However, it's advisable to carry a small amount of Chinese Yuan (RMB) in cash. This can be used for discretionary tips or as a backup if your phone runs out of battery.

Tipping: Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. We suggest around 700 Yuan in cash (approx. £75). This should be given to the challenge leader who will distribute it among the support team, including guides, assistant guides, cooks and drivers.

Phone, Wi-Fi & VPN

China's "Great Firewall" blocks most of the apps a lot of us rely on daily - Google, Gmail, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, and more. We have provided an advisory document for you that walks you through the steps to take to make sure you can stay connected.

It is strongly advised that all eSIMs, VPN apps, and any other apps mentioned in this document are downloaded, installed, and tested before you leave the UK. Most of these services cannot be purchased, downloaded, or configured once you are inside China.

China Travel Advisory - Internet Access

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.

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 suffer from a severe allergy, you are required to contact us to discuss any requirements. 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. Whilst we will do our best to put in place appropriate measures we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

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.

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Any more questions?

Contact us:

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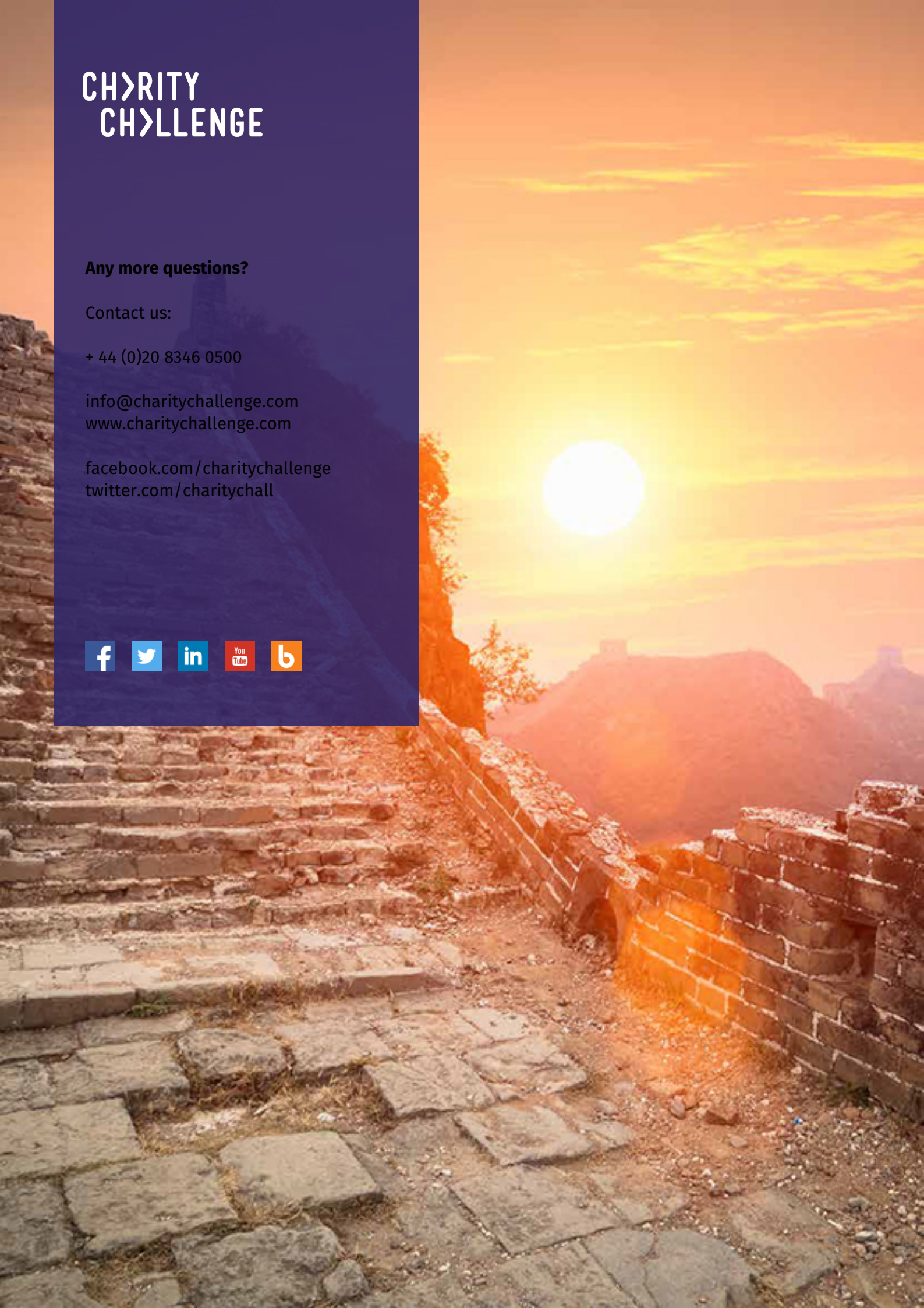
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