

## Information Pack

# Great Wall of China Trek

**27th October -  
4th November 2018**

Spend five days trekking the Great Wall of China for Helen & Douglas House in 2018.

Experience beautiful rural landscapes with remarkable views of the Great Wall sweeping across the rolling hills, gain an insight into local culture and try delicious local cuisine.

*"Trekking the Great Wall was an unbelievable experience"*



  
**Helen & Douglas House**  
hospice care for children and young adults

This trip is operated by The Different Travel Company (ATOL 6706) for Helen & Douglas House (Registered Charity no.1085951). All the flights in this brochure are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: [www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate](http://www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate).



## **Great Wall of China Trek**

27<sup>th</sup> October – 4<sup>th</sup> November 2018



### **China**

China is a giant country which boasts seaside, jungles, massive mountains, wildlife, architectural heritage and fascinating culture by the bucket-load. The incredible variations of culture can be experienced in a number of ways, even just in the variations of cuisine throughout the country; from the spicy stir fries of the Szechuan province to the piquant Peking duck of Beijing. A journey to China is a mesmerising adventure that from start to finish leaves you with an appetite for more.



### **The Great Wall**

The Great Wall of China is the longest man-made structure on the planet. The Wall was built, rebuilt and maintained from 5 BCE to 16 CE in order to protect the Chinese empire from invaders. It stretches approximately 8850 km (5500 miles) across the rolling hills of northern China all the way to the sea. Some sections of the Wall are still in their original condition, scarred by battles of the past. A visit to the Great Wall of China is an opportunity to step back into history and marvel at the ingenuity and tenacity of the Chinese dynasties and the millions of soldiers who defended their land.



### **Beijing**

Also known as Peking, Beijing is the capital of China and one of the most populated cities on the planet. Beijing is home to a staggering 21.5 million people in an area of only 16,000km<sup>2</sup>. This city offers stunning ancient architecture next to high rise buildings and fast food restaurants, it gives you peace and serenity in enchanting temples located next to busy highways, and of course just slightly north of Beijing you find the awe-inspiring Great Wall. Beijing is also home to some of the most delicious cuisine on earth so take your time to explore the restaurants, sampling Peking duck, dumplings and noodles and much more.

# Great Wall of China Trek 2018



## Trek overview

This trek takes you to a remote section of the Great Wall of China, from Gubeikou to Simatai. Not only will you trek on the wall itself, meticulously built and restored over thousands of years, but you will also have the opportunity to trek through wild and remote landscapes with distant views of green rolling hills, mountain peaks and with one of the great wonders of the world as the backdrop.

Staying in guesthouses throughout the trek allows you to gain an understanding of the 'real China' as you discover more about lifestyle of the local people and also taste some incredible local cuisine.

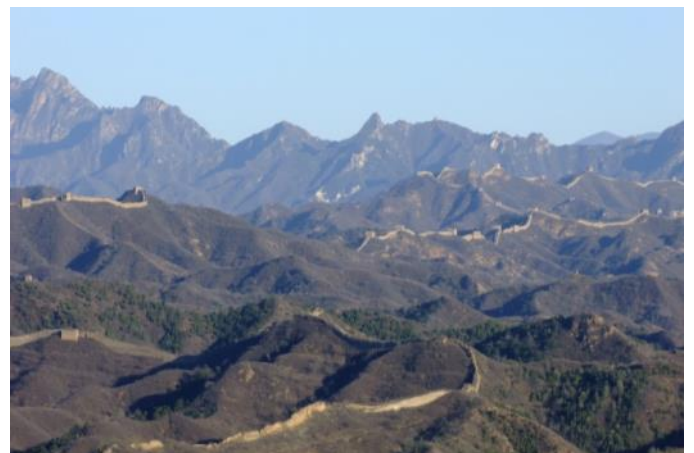


## Who accompanies us?

The trek is accompanied by local English-speaking guides who have an excellent knowledge of trekking in the region. The guides are first aid trained and will support you throughout your journey. You will also be supported by an excellent team of assistant staff, cooks and drivers and a Different Travel Company UK tour manager.

## What is the terrain like?

The trek is rated moderate as the terrain is hilly and undulating with steep sections to contend with both on and off the Wall. The distance trekked each day is 5-12km over 4-8 hours. You will not trek on the wall the entire time, often you will walk next to it through the countryside so be prepared for a variety of terrain underfoot from grassy, dry terrain of the countryside to the stone steps of the Great Wall. The Great Wall has been restored in some sections so you will find smooth paved ground with steps built up the hillside. In the original sections the Wall may be crumbling, with earth and stone rubble that shifts underfoot like scree, making it challenging to climb up it. In general you should expect to climb a lot of steps during the challenge so you must train with this in mind and ensure you do plenty of hill walking to prepare for the undulating terrain.



## What about the weather?

Temperatures will be dependent upon the weather which is usually clear and sunny. Rain is unlikely but possible in October as the weather is generally dry, seeing just 5 days of rain throughout the month historically. On average the temperature will range between 15°C to 20°C during the day and 10°C to 0°C at night. It's important to be prepared for all weather conditions and temperatures by packing non-cotton trek layers and waterproofs. It's better to have warm layers and waterproofs and not need them, than to not have any when you need them!

# Great Wall of China Trek 2018

Although the temperatures and conditions above are historically accurate, climate change can impact the seasons so you may experience uncharacteristic conditions during the trip which are out of our control. Should this happen the guide will assess the situation and make decisions to ensure the best enjoyment and ultimately safety of the group as a whole.



## What kind of food will we eat?

The trek day will start with a hearty breakfast of hot drinks, fruit, biscuits, noodles, rice or porridge. You will take a packed lunch each day which will consist of sandwiches, fruit, biscuits, dried fruit and nuts etc. A freshly cooked traditional Chinese evening meal will be served at the guesthouse comprising of rice, noodles, meat, tofu and vegetable dishes. Plates and mugs are provided as are chopsticks. If you're concerned about using chopsticks you may wish to bring cutlery. Please inform us in advance if you have any dietary requirements or preferences.



## Where will we sleep?

Each night you will stay in local guesthouses on a twin-share basis. Depending on the group size, you may sleep in two or more neighbouring guesthouses but you will eat all your meals and relax in the evening together.



## What are the bathroom facilities like?

There are basic toilet and shower facilities available. Toilet paper is provided at the guesthouses but you need to bring your own for use on the trek and also at any public toilets where toilet paper is never provided. During the trek you will need to pack up any toilet paper you use to dispose of properly at your guesthouse bin. NEVER leave toilet paper or other litter on the trail. Toilet paper must be disposed of in the bins provided, not flushed. You are recommended to bring a small pack of baby wipes and hand sanitizer for your general hygiene throughout the day (e.g. to clean your hands after toilet visits and/or before lunch).

## What about baggage?

The items you do not need for the trek will be left in a secure luggage room at the hotel in Beijing. During the trek you will only need to bring trek clothing, toiletries, water bottle, camera, personal items etc. You should pack a lightweight kit bag/holdall for trek items not needed during the day (transported by vehicle) and a daypack which you will carry yourself containing things you need access to during the day.

# Great Wall of China Trek 2018



## How tough is it?

The trek is rated moderate so you are advised to train to a good fitness level before departure to ensure fast recovery from each day's exertions. An ideal candidate for the trek would be someone who enjoys being out of their comfort zone and trying something new. Adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected so do not expect standards to be the same as you are used to at home. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable (be it because of group pace, weather conditions, local bureaucracy or other factors) and itineraries may be altered to allow for this. For you to get the most out of your challenge it is important that you are flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. Suitable fitness preparation before departure forms part of this.

## How should I prepare?

If you do not already regularly exercise it is crucial that you start training (**including plenty of hills!**) before departure to ensure your best chance of enjoyment on the trip. This could include hill walking, running, cycling, gym workouts, swimming, team sports, boot camps, yoga etc. You can download a number of free apps, which will help you train and track your progress e.g. MapMyRide, C25K, MyFitnessPal etc. Attempting to complete the trek without training will be difficult and will hinder your experience and the experience of your teammates.

## Online Fitness Training

Different Travel has teamed up with Brightside Personal Training to bring you a fun and unique way to train for your upcoming challenge without needing to leave the comfort of your home or signing up for an expensive gym membership. **For full details click here:**

<http://brightsidept.kajabi.com/sp/34357>



## Health declaration

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues **must** be noted and (if relevant) signed off by your GP. Any conditions that develop must be declared and a new medical form completed and signed.

**Trip cost:** £275 registration fee (payable at the time of booking) + raise at least £3,600 sponsorship for Helen & Douglas House.

**Trip Includes:** Return flights from London (inc. airport taxes), all transfers & transport in China, accommodation in 3\* hotel (3 nights), guesthouses on trek (4 nights), all meals, local expert English-speaking guides and support crew, trekking permits, a UK Different Travel tour manager.

**Trip Does Not Include:** Chinese visa (current cost £175 for postal application), personal expenses such as drinks, souvenirs, etc., vaccinations, travel insurance, tips (approx. £25-£35 per person), trekking kit.

# Great Wall of China Trek 2018



## Is there an age limit?

Anyone over 18 years old is welcome on the challenge (and 16 and 17 year olds if accompanied by a parent or guardian). There is no upper age limit and we welcome everyone from experienced trekkers to novices and everyone in between.

## How will I raise the sponsorship required?

Most people find that this is far easier than they imagined, and we will give you as much support as you need to reach, and even exceed your target!

Each participant will be allocated a Helen & Douglas House fundraising staff member who will meet with you and help you to create your fundraising plan. Materials such as collection buckets and tins, sponsorship forms, email banners, balloons and banners can also be provided to help you achieve your target.

Here are some suggestions for how you could meet your fundraising target:

- Non-uniform day at local school: **£300**
- Two supermarket bag packs: **£500**
- Car boot Sale/ eBay auction: **£250**
- Quiz Night: **£250**
- Sponsorship: **£300**
- Host a party charge £10 entry: **£400**
- Ask five friends/ family members to raise £100 each: **£500**
- Dress down day at work/ lunch money donation: **£300**
- Donate your skills - ironing, babysitting, gardening, DIY: **£250**
- Karaoke night: **£350**
- Sponsored beard-shave/ leg wax: **£200**

Total **£3,600**

## Is the trip ATOL protected?

Helen & Douglas House is acting as agent for The Different Travel Company, ATOL 6706. The flight-inclusive trip in this brochure is financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay your registration fee you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate and ATOL Confirmation Invoice. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to:  
[www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate](http://www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate).

## How do I sign up?

Complete the booking form and email it to [info@different-travel.com](mailto:info@different-travel.com). You will receive an invoice with details of how to pay your registration fee.

*Please add @different-travel.com to your safe sender list and check your junk mail folder regularly to avoid missing important correspondence and updates.*

Alternatively you can post your registration form with a cheque for £275 made payable to The Different Travel Company to:

The Different Travel Company,  
4 Downs Park Crescent,  
Totton, Southampton,  
Hampshire,  
SO40 9GH.

Once your place is confirmed you will receive a confirmation email with a full trip dossier and kit list, discount vouchers, fitness training guide, a fundraising pack and much more!



## Itinerary

**Day 1 (Sat 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018): London - Beijing**  
Depart London on an overnight flight to Beijing.

**Day 2 (Sun 28<sup>th</sup> October 2018): Beijing**  
Arrive in Beijing and check into a central 3\* hotel in time for a group dinner and a briefing on the week ahead. If time permits, why not explore the maze of alleys (hutongs) where you will find traditional houses, small local shops and other wonders.  
Meals: Dinner.



**Day 3 (Mon 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018): Beijing – Gubeikou**  
Today we transfer by bus to the Great Wall (approx. 3 hours). After lunch we enjoy an introductory trek to familiarise ourselves with the terrain of the days ahead. We wind our way uphill and reach the Great Wall at the top, from where you will enjoy views of the wall stretching across the countryside. We descend next to the wall then through a forest to a small town and to our first guesthouse at Gubeikou. Approx. 3 hours walking. *Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner.*

**Day 4 (Tue 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018): Gubeikou**  
This morning we transfer from our guesthouse to explore the Gubeikou section. This area dates from the Ming Dynasty and is completely original, quite challenging and one of the lesser visited sections. It is believed to have seen more battles than any other part of the Great Wall and has long been a place of military significance and an important passage to the capital city. The start of the walk today is up a part of the wall which is almost completely worn away.  
We return to the guesthouse tonight. Approx. 6-7 hours walking. *Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner.*

**Day 5 (Wed 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018): Gubeikou**  
We set off early today to transfer to the start of our trek. Today we will trek up to a section of the wall known locally as the 'dragon standing on the beautiful golden mountain'. It's easy to see how the wall resembles a dragon as it weaves across the land. The views are stunning and you will have hundreds of great photographic opportunities. Unlike other sections of the wall, this area has seen little restoration and many of the stairs and turrets have crumbled away to leave steep stone slopes between each watch tower. We descend through forests and past farmland before transferring to our guesthouse in Simatai. Approx. 6-7 hours walking. *Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner.*



# Great Wall of China Trek 2018



## Day 6 (Thu 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018): Simatai

After breakfast start our exhilarating half-day trek up to a remote and rarely visited watch tower at the top of a small mountain with sweeping views of the hinterland. This area has seen little restoration and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After lunch we transfer to our next guesthouse (approx. 2.5 hours). Approx. 4 hours walking.  
*Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner.*

## Day 7 (Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2018): Huanghuacheng - Beijing

Today's trek takes us along the uncrowded and beautiful Huanghuacheng section with views of the Xishuiyu Reservoir along the way. Huanghuacheng, meaning 'Wall of the Yellow Flower', offers a contrast to the unrestored sections of the previous days, as parts of this wall are restored so you can see how it would have looked when it was built centuries ago. After a packed lunch on the wall we descend through the forest and transfer back to Beijing. Approx. 6 hours walking. *Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner.*

## Day 8 (Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2018): Beijing

Today you will have guided visits to the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square before some free time and a special farewell dinner tonight. *Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner.*

**Day 9 (Sun 4<sup>th</sup> November 2018): Beijing - London**  
Transfer to the airport for the return flight to London. *NB you may arrive in London the following day, depending on flight schedules.*  
*Meals: Breakfast.*



N.B. This itinerary may change due to unusual weather patterns, the ability of the group and so on. We will do our best to keep to the set itinerary however we cannot be held responsible for changes that might occur outside of our control. In all such circumstances your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest of the health and safety of the group. Please note that this trip is subject to minimum numbers in order to operate.

