Wander the Great Wall

Valid for all departures before 31 December

Introduction

Welcome to Sojourn travel experiences. We hope that you enjoy exploring the world as much as we do.

Imagine the Great Wall in all its former glory and tread the elevated highway as it stands today. Dating back 2,000 years, the wall was originally made of compacted earth and built to keep out marauding nomads from the north. Gradually the structure has deteriorated, and some sections have turned to dust, but over the subsequent dynasties, several strategic sections have been rebuilt and reinforced. Travel at a leisurely pace with a local guide and picnic amid the breathtaking scenery. Complemented with time in Beijing, this Great Wall adventure is a great way to experience one of the most iconic parts of the world and see this great land from another perspective.

Itinerary Disclaimer

The itinerary attached is correct at time of printing. Please note occasionally our itineraries are updated during the year to incorporate improvements stemming from past travellers' comments and our own research. Our brochure is usually released in November each year. As such the information given in this itinerary may be slightly different to that in the brochure. It is VERY IMPORTANT that you print and review a final copy of your Trip Notes a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans. For the latest updated trip notes please visit our website: [www.sojourntravel.com](http://www.intrepidtravel.com/)

Itinerary

Day 1 Beijing

Ni hao! Welcome to China.

Upon arrival at Beijing Airport, you are met by our local operator and transferred to your hotel (transfers cannot be arranged on arrival, please advise flight arrival details at least 14 days prior to departure).

The remainder of today is at leisure in Beijing so you can start your explorations of this vast and amazing city. Perhaps track down a bargain at the wonderful silk markets, see the hutongs or back lanes of Beijing by rickshaw, walk to Tiananmen Square or find a great restaurant for Peking duck!

Meals included: None

Overnight: Tian An Rega Hotel, Beijing

Our hotel in Beijing is clean, twin share with private bathroom and in a great location.

Days 2-3 Great Wall

No trip to China is complete without a walk on the Great Wall, an incredible piece of engineering which stretches over 6,000 km from the eastern coast of China all the way to the mountain ridges north of Beijing. Originally constructed to protect the Chinese empires from the Mongolian 'barbarians' of the north, the Wall ultimately failed in its purpose but remains a poignant reminder of the power of the Middle Kingdom.

The fun begins as you set off on your Great Wall adventure on day 2. You will be advised on departure time from reception. You travel by private vehicle to the Jinshanling section of the Great Wall to start your trek. A guide will meet you here and will stay with you for two nights.

The trek takes 5-6 hours and has some very steep parts and narrow paths, so make sure you have strong shoes with good grip. Your guide will provide a picnic lunch which you carry yourselves. The walk from Jinshanling to Gubeikou is spectacular. It follows the original unreconstructed wall, with many steep, crumbling staircases and ruined watchtowers that are overgrown with vegetation along the way. At Jinshanling, the wall zigzags up the steep terrain and straddles peaks like a suspension bridge so be prepared for some tough going. All in all, it's a demanding day but also a very rewarding one, particularly on a clear day when you can see range after range of mountains unfolding in the distance.

On day 3 you continue your trek to Wohushan (Crouching Tiger Mountains) Great Wall for a full day's hiking (approx. 5-6 hours). The walk is slightly easier than the previous day, but no less spectacular.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Overnight: Local hotels

Our basic guesthouse is clean, twin-share and located just a short walk from the Great Wall.

Days 4-5 Beijing

On the morning on day 4 you are transferred by private vehicle to Mutianyu. Your guide will advise you on departure time. The section of the wall at Mutianyu has been restored and is notable for its numerous guard towers and sweeping views. Enjoy a picnic lunch on the wall before taking the slow road back to Beijing, which offers time to observe the rural Chinese way of life.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch

Overnight: Tian An Rega Hotel, Beijing

The morning of day 5 is free to explore Beijing further or enjoy a leisurely breakfast after your adventure. A transfer is included to the airport for your departure flight so please let us know your return flight details at the time of booking. Note that hotel check-out is normally 12:00 pm. Extra nights can be added at the hotel if you wish to extend your stay.

Meals included: breakfast

Important Notes

Please note that during China’s national holidays it is peak travel season for Chinese nationals. During this time literally the whole country is on the move - that's over a billion people! Although these are fascinating and exciting times to travel in China, please be aware your group will almost definitely experience transport delays and massive crowds at tourist attractions and train stations. It is common for there to be difficulties in securing train or flight tickets at our preferred times, hotels become overbooked, traffic chaotic and often changes to the itinerary are necessary as a result. If clockwork organization is important to you we advise to book outside of the weeks of Chinese New Year (Spring Festival), the first week of May and first week of October for a much more enjoyable experience of travelling in China!

This itinerary is offered from 15 March to 15 November. This is due to the safety risks and decline in weather conditions during the winter season.

Please note this Sojourn trip is operated by our experienced local partner. This tour is not escorted by a Sojourn leader. A local guide will accompany you on the trekking. All the information given in this itinerary is intended as a guide only. Sojourn Travel or their agent cannot be held responsible for any changes that may occur due to local conditions or circumstances beyond their control. This includes festivals and public holidays that may affect the itinerary. NO REFUND IS AVAILABLE ON ANY UNUSED PART OF THIS ITINERARY.

This is a join-in trip so you will likely share included activities with other travellers, if others are booked on the same date.

Culture Shock Rating

Expect some culture shock. You will be exposed to signs of poverty and access to services may be sporadic. The food will be quite different and English speakers harder to find. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and really experience the location.

Physical Rating

This trip will raise your heartbeat. Moderate physical activities are included, and a good level of fitness is required.

Physical Preparation

For the trekking on this trip the general rule is the more preparation you have done for it, the more you will enjoy it. Although we are not walking at altitude or setting any distance records each day, the trek can still be demanding, as we walk through hilly terrain with the possibility of extreme variations in temperature. We recommend that you undertake regular aerobic exercise in the weeks before you travel, particularly if you are not in the habit of regular exercise. Walking, jogging, swimming or riding a bike are all good ways to increase your aerobic fitness, which will allow you to enjoy the trek to its fullest.

Included Activities

This is a list of included activities on this trip. All other activities are optional and at your own expense. For a list of optional activities and sightseeing available on this trip, see the optional activities section below. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not be refunded.

Roundtrip airport transfers

Transport to/from the Great Wall - Beijing

Day treks with guide - Great Wall

Optional Activities

We list the following optional activities for your information. This is not an exhaustive list and should be used as a guide only.

They are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Sojourn nor included in price of this trip. If you do any of them, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Sojourn.

Acrobats, Beijing - CNY100

Kungfu Show, Beijing - CNY100

Summer Palace, Beijing - CNY50

Beijing Opera, Beijing - CNY150

Bicycle Hutong Tour, Beijing - CNY100

Temple of Heaven, Beijing - CNY35

Peking duck Dinner, Beijing - CNY80

Lama Temple, Beijing - CNY30

Underground City, Beijing - CNY25

Got extra time before or after your Sojourn adventure? Maybe there is an URBAN ADVENTURE in one of the cities that you're visiting on your trip?

Sojourn's Urban Adventures are the city tour with a difference - there are more than 100 to choose from in over 30 cities around the world, with new trips added regularly. They are a great way to get under the skin of the city you're visiting, in just a few hours. To make a booking contact your local travel agent, Sojourn consultant or visit [www.urbanadventures.com](http://www.urbanadventures.com)

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping, participating in optional activities and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Tipping

If you are happy with the services provided a tip - though not compulsory - is appropriate. While it may not be customary to you, it is of great significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels, inspires excellent service, and is an entrenched feature of the tourism industry across many Sojourn destinations. We recommend that any tips are given to the intended recipient by a member of your group, rather than collected and passed on by the group leader/guide.

The following amounts are based on local considerations and feedback from our past travellers:

Tipping in China is not customary, but in the travel industry it is.

Please do not tip with coins, notes of and less that 1CNY, dirty and ripped notes. This is regarded culturally as an insult.

Restaurants: Tipping is not common practice at restaurants in China or Tibet.

Local guides: Throughout your trip you may at times have a local guide in addition to your leader. We suggest 5-10 CNY per person per day for local guides with the amount adjusted accordingly for guides who are with you for less than a full day.

Porters: In some hotels a porter may offer to carry your bag to your room. We suggest 5 CNY per bag for porters.

Drivers: You may have a range of drivers on your trip. Some may be with you for a short journey while others may be with you for several days. We would suggest that you tip only those more involved with the group (for example those that help you with your bags etc.) 5 CNY per person per day is generally appropriate, with the amount adjusted accordingly for drivers who are with you for less than a full day.

Of course you are free to tip more or less as you see fit, depending on your perception of service quality and the length of your trip. Remember, a tip is not compulsory and should only be given when you receive excellent service.