

## Great Wall of China

Walk back in time along little visited sections of the Great Wall, explore Beijing's cultural highlights and stay in hotels and guesthouses.



### Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

### Holiday overview

Style	Walking
Accommodation	Hotels, Guesthouses
Grade	Gentle / Moderate
Duration	10 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	Walks on: 6 days
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Local Leader China
Land only	Joining in Beijing, China
Max altitude	Approximately 1,000m, Jiankou, Day 9

**Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available**



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# Departures

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## Group departures

### 2024 Dates:

Fri 15 Mar - Sun 24 Mar

Fri 11 Oct - Sun 20 Oct

### Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

### Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

### No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

### Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

### Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

### Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday.

If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

## Your guide

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James is one of our English speaking local leaders - he is very knowledgeable about the Great Wall and in his company you will certainly gain an insight into the way of life, traditions and culture of China. If James is unavailable we will use another certified/registered guide.

## Your trip highlights

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- Mountains, sea and city - the Great Wall in all its splendour
- Walk some little-visited stretches of the Great Wall
- Cultural highlights of Beijing and the ancient burial tombs of the Qing Dynasty
- Optional extension to see the magnificent Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an
- A combination of comfortable hotel accommodation and simple village guesthouses at the foot of the Great Wall

## At a glance itinerary

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Days 1-3	Fly to Beijing, city sightseeing including Tian'anmen Square and the Forbidden City.
Days 4-5	Drive to Laolongtou and visit the Dragon's Head. Drive to Dongjiakou - short walks on the wall. Drive to Zunhua.
Day 6	Visit the Qing Tombs. Drive to Huangyaguan, walk a mountain section of the wall. Overnight at guesthouse in Qianganjian Village.
Days 7-9	Drive to Gubeiko and walk to Jinshanling. Walk a section of the Simatai Great Wall. Walk from Jiankou to Mutianyu. Drive to Beijing.
Day 10	Transfer to the airport and fly to London. Or, take our extension to Xi'an to see the Terracotta Warriors.

## Trip summary

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Travelling east from the point where the Wall touches the sea, our Great Wall of China walking holiday has been carefully put together to highlight the best of this incredible man-made structure. The itinerary enables you to see the wall in all its guises from earthen bank to full restoration, so that there is real cultural and historic interest at every step. You stay away from the crowds and walk on sections of the wall that few other visitors ever see and you travel in the spring and autumn when the climate is at its best for walking and the mountain sides surrounding the wall are either blanketed in delicate fruit blossom, or stunning autumn shades. You will also enjoy a fascinating visit to the Qing tombs - the burial site of the emperors of the Qing Dynasty. We use a combination of comfortable hotel accommodation and guesthouses throughout, rather than camping or village homes.

In addition to walking the Great Wall, we have included time in Beijing with tours of the Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven and the traditional Hutong district and if you want to see China's other great cultural attraction, there is an optional extension to Xi'an to view the magnificent Terracotta Warriors. This is an exciting time to visit China as it undergoes rapid economic and social transformation. In fact, it's the perfect time to see first-hand how its greatest ancient monument has become a symbol of its modern day dynamism.

### **The Great Wall - a brief history**

The origins of the Great Wall reach back to almost 650 BC, beginning with the building of small sections which over the course of many centuries, were loosely connected by various Emperors to form a line (or lines) of defence. Each of these walls sought to reinforce, extend and join together sections of previous walls in order to deter potential nomadic invaders from the north. Four of these periods of construction led to extensive 'Great Walls' the last being built during The Ming Dynasty (1369 - 1644). This Great Wall was reinforced many times and it is the impressive sections north of Beijing, built under the command of General Qi Jiguang, that have come to symbolize the Great Wall as we now know it and it is these that we mainly walk on during our Great Wall trip.

After the overthrow of the Ming Dynasty the wall was largely abandoned and left to the vagaries of nature and mankind. Consequently the Wall either fell into disrepair or was dismantled, with the bricks being used for housing and other building projects. This was particularly the case during the Cultural Revolution when Mao urged the people to 'destroy the old to build the new'. The ravages of time, nature and man therefore mean that the Ming Wall is not a single continuous structure - in many places it has disappeared completely or is little more than a mud bank. However, since the 1980s, and with Deng Xiaoping's exhortation to 'love China rebuild the Great Wall', an extensive rebuilding and restoration programme has been undertaken. As a result it is now possible to walk along many sections of the Great Wall and appreciate the enormous engineering achievement that it represents as well as its immense beauty.

# Your trip itinerary

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## Day 1: Fly London to Beijing

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Depart the UK on your overnight flight to Beijing.

**Overnight: In flight**

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## Day 2: Arrive in Beijing. Visit the Temple of Heaven.

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Upon arrival in the morning you will be transferred to your hotel.

In the afternoon, you will visit the Temple of Heaven complex where emperors once prayed for good harvests, making offerings of grain, silk and animals. Constructed during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), it is acknowledged as a masterpiece of Chinese architecture; the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests was built without a single nail. Surrounding the Temple is a park where local people, mainly the older generation, come to participate in a range of games and activities. It is quite impressive and great fun to watch them doing their T'ai Chi, playing ball games, dancing with ribbons and singing traditional Chinese songs. Dinner will be in a local restaurant where you will begin to explore the delights of Chinese cuisine.

**Overnight: Xizhao Temple Hotel or Similar, Beijing (Meals: L D)**

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## Day 3: Tour of Tian'anmen Square, the Forbidden City and the traditional Hutongs.

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In the morning, you will visit Tian'anmen Square followed by a tour of the Forbidden City. For 500 years the Forbidden City was the Imperial Palace for Ming and Qing dynasty emperors. The biggest and best preserved cluster of ancient buildings in China, this monumental complex, once strictly out of bounds to the general Chinese public, houses up to 800 buildings and, reputedly, 9,000 chambers. Highlights of the Forbidden City include the Clock Museum and Treasure Hall.



In the afternoon, you will explore the traditional neighbourhoods called Hutongs (literally alleyways) on a guided walking tour, where you will get an idea of what the entire city once looked like.

**Overnight: Xizhao Temple Hotel or Similar, Beijing (Meals: BLD)**

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## Day 4: Drive from Beijing to Laolongtou - 4-5 hours. Walk to Shanhaiguan - 1½ hours.

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After breakfast you will drive northeast of Beijing (315 km) to Laolongtou. Known as the Old Dragon's Head, this is the eastern starting point of the Ming Dynasty Great Wall and it extends about 20 metres into the Bohai Sea like a dragon drinking water, hence its name. On arrival you will have lunch in a local restaurant before visiting the Dragon's Head, the adjacent temple and the various museum exhibits.

You will then take your first steps along the Wall, walking for approximately 6 km into the modern city of Shanhaiguan. This gentle introductory walk provides an excellent illustration of what happens to the wall when it is left to the elements and the passing of time, becoming little more than an earthen bank topped with vegetation. The contrast you'll see with other restored sections of the wall you will see during your trip is considerable.

On reaching Shanhaiguan you will visit the strategically important First Pass Under Heaven and walk along the restored garrison walls. The impressive walls of the pass are 14 metres high, 7 metres wide and 4 km around. There are 6 gates into the pass topped with 5 watchtowers from which you can look down onto the entire fortress and the Great Wall stretching away into the nearby mountains and down to the sea.

Finally, you will drive to your hotel at Laolongtou.

**Overnight: Haisheng Garden Hotel or Similar (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 5: Drive to Dongjiakou - 2 hours. Dongjiakou Great Wall walk - 3-4 hours. Drive to Zunhua - 4 hours.**

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After breakfast, a 2 hour drive (80 km) will take you to Dongjiakou where there are three sections of the Great Wall open to walkers. En route, you will have a short stop at Jiumenkou Great Wall to take photos of the picturesque point at which the Wall crosses the Jiujiang River. On reaching Dongjiakou you will follow a good path uphill for 20-30 minutes before you step onto the Great Wall itself. This section, although short, is the perfect contrast to your walk from yesterday as here you can see the wall in its full glory, rising and falling along the ridges of Damao Mountain. The Dongjiakou Wall was initially built in 1381 and, despite its age, it remains one of the best-preserved sections of the Ming Dynasty wall. Largely in its original condition, any restoration work has been carried out by the local villagers, rather than the government, many of whom are descendants of the original wall builders and guards. As you walk along the wall you will also see elegant carvings above some watchtower entrances and an original carved stone tablet bearing the names of the original wall builders - all unique features.

The first section ends where the mountain acts as a natural barrier and a path takes you back down to your starting point. From here you move on to the next section where a path again takes you uphill to join the wall. This section is approximately twice the length of the first and, although undergoing greater reconstruction, still enables you to appreciate the engineering genius of the wall's creators. There may also be an opportunity to walk the third section of the Dongjiankou Wall - making a total of 9 km. You will take lunch at a local village restaurant between walking sections of the wall. After you have completed your walk, you drive to Zunhua (approx 4 hours, 210 km) where your hotel awaits.

**Overnight: Zunhua Soluxe Yishui Grand Hotel or Similar (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 6: Drive to the Eastern Qing Tombs - 1 hour. Tour of Eastern Qing Tombs. Drive to Huangyaguan - 1 hour. Walk Huangyaguan Wall to Qianganjian Village- 4 hours.**

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This morning you will have a drive of one hour (40 km) to reach the Eastern Qing Tombs where you will explore the splendid imperial mausoleums of the Qing Dynasty including the underground burial chamber of Emperor Qianlong and the exquisite tomb of Empress Dowager Cixi.

The Eastern Qing Tombs are considered the grandest, best-preserved and most complete of all the imperial burial sites in China. Building started in the 18th year of the reign of Shunzhi (1661) in the Qing Dynasty. Altogether 161 members of the imperial family including five emperors and 15 empresses were buried here together with their concubines. The last burial was of an imperial concubine in 1935. Entrance to the site is along the impressive Sacred Way where statues of guardian animals and other figures protect the route to the tombs.



Having completed a tour of the Qing Tombs you will drive for a further hour to the Huangyaguan section of the Great Wall, famous as the starting point of the annual Great Wall Marathon. Following lunch, the initial part of the walk takes you up the many steps of the Huangyaguan Wall which was renovated in 1987. Eventually, you climb a steep stairway known as the Skyladder after which the wall is replaced by mountain trails with delightful views. Your path contours around the mountainside and along ridge lines and you will encounter sections of the Great Wall built during the North Qi Dynasty - approximately 1500 years ago. This is the oldest wall you walk on throughout the entire trip. After around three hours you will descend to the village of Qianganjian where you will stay the night at a local guesthouse.

**Overnight: Mr Kong's Guesthouse, Qianganjian Village (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 7: Drive to Gubeikou - 1 hour. Walk to Jinshanling - 5-6 hours.**

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Gubeiko village lies approximately one hour's drive from Miyun and is the starting point for a very interesting day's walk. Initially, you will see the wall in an extremely dilapidated condition, little more than a large earthen embankment with no recognisable features. This is indicative of its pre-Ming Dynasty age as well as the stone looting that has taken place over the years. Gradually, as your walk progresses, more regular features appear and you will see the remains of watchtowers and ramparts. In places though, it is so overgrown with vegetation that you will need to take an alternative path through the countryside. As you get nearer to Jinshanling the views get more expansive and the wall takes on its more classic nature, snaking over the surrounding mountains.

By the time you reach Jinshanling you will be walking on one of the better preserved sections of the original Great Wall, which has undergone little reconstruction work and has protected status. You will leave the wall and transfer to your hotel in a nearby mountain village.

**Overnight: Ye Shu Fang Guesthouse (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 8: Day hike from Jinshanling towards Simatai - 4 hours.**

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Today you have the option of an early start to see the sunrise from one of the watchtowers at Jinshanling (payable locally). In the near silence of the morning, this is truly an unforgettable experience.

Extensive restoration work on the Jinshanling to Simatai section of the Great Wall means that your walk today will go from Jinshanling towards Simatai and then return to your starting point.

Unfortunately, access through to Simatai isn't presently possible.

However, the sheer beauty of the both the wall itself and the surrounding countryside still make this a very worthwhile exercise.

In fact, it is desirable to see as much of this section as possible before it is restored and its original qualities, are perhaps, lost forever. The slightly ruined nature of the wall here is much of its appeal and, though you may find yourself stepping carefully over plants and loose bricks, you can still appreciate its astonishing beauty and impressive construction. The watchtowers were built to a range of designs giving each in turn a different look whilst the mountainous nature of the countryside required steeply rising and plunging parapets and other special features such as perpendicular obstacle walls to aid defence.



Having walked as far as you can, and no doubt taken many photos, you will return to Jinshanling where your driver will be waiting to whisk you away to your hotel in Beijing.

**Overnight: CFGC Grand Hotel, Beijing or Similar (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 9: Drive to Jiankou - 1 hour. Walk from Jiankou to Mutianyu - 4-5 hours. Drive to Beijing - 2 hours.**

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In the morning there is a one hour's drive (40 km) to the foot of the Jiankou Great Wall. This section of the wall was built in 1368 during the Ming Dynasty and is named after its shape (like a bended bow). It is famous for its unique beauty and many photographers arrive in the early hours to capture sunrise here. You will initially walk up through trees for around 30 minutes to get to the Zhenbei watchtower. Standing on top, 1,000m high, there are beautiful views of the entire expanse of the Jiankou Great Wall and surrounding mountains.

Today's walk takes you along one of the most magnificent and virtually deserted sections of the Great Wall. The Jiankou section is largely in its original condition therefore you will need to tread carefully in places where the bricks are loose and crumbling and the vegetation is taking over. You may need to bypass the wall on a nearby path, but you will regain it shortly afterwards. After about four hours you will get to a section of restored Great Wall known as Mutianyu which, by way of total contrast to the peace and quiet of the previous few hours, may be inundated with Chinese tourists. When you finish your walk you can either stroll down or take the option of a cable car ride, or even a toboggan run (both options payable locally). At the bottom of the wall you will be assaulted by a teeming melee of stallholders selling all manner of tourist wares. It's a good place to barter for a bargain and buy your 'I climbed the Great Wall' t-shirt.

Leaving the wall behind, you will enjoy lunch in a nearby restaurant where you can celebrate your adventure. A two hour drive (90 km) will take you back to Beijing and a farewell evening meal.

**Overnight: Xizhao Temple Hotel or Similar, Beijing (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 10: Group transfer to airport. Fly to London.**

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After breakfast, you will be transferred to the airport for your flight back to London. **(Meals: B)**

## Our grading system

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Great Wall of China is graded as a Gentle/Moderate walking holiday, as described below.

### **Gentle**

Trips within this grade typically mix sightseeing with easy-paced half and/or full day walks. On these trips, walks will be on relatively low altitude trails, for a duration of around 4-6 hours. On all of our Gentle graded trips, some ascent and descent should be anticipated, and there may occasionally be a longer walking day. Holidays within this grade generally use hotels and comfortable lodges although a few do have some nights camping.

These holidays are suitable for people who enjoy easy-paced walks in the British countryside or exploring on foot rather than in a vehicle.

### **Moderate**

Holidays in this grade typically involve 5 to 10 days of walking or trekking. They will often venture into more remote country and can cross mountain passes. Altitudes though are still relatively low, going no higher than around 4,300m/14,000ft. Accommodation can include simple hotels, tea houses, lodges and camping.

## What the price includes

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Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

### What's included:

- ✓ A local English-speaking leader
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK & UK Departure Tax (flight inclusive only)
- ✓ Single, timed group airport transfers on arrival and departure
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ 6 nights hotel accommodation, 2 nights village guesthouses
- ✓ All meals included, and tea with meals
- ✓ Sightseeing where specified
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight-inclusive option)
- ✓ A free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle

### Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

### What's not included:

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Airport departure taxes, excepting UK Departure Tax, where applicable
- ✗ Tips
- ✗ Optional early morning walk at Jinshaling on day 8 (payable locally)
- ✗ Optional cable car/toboggan run on day 9 (payable locally)

### Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate.

For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>.

## Your accommodation

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We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.

Please note that outside of Beijing good quality hotels are in short supply with the general standard more akin to hostels or 1 or 2-star hotels back home. We therefore spent much time when creating this itinerary, finding comfortable hotels that we felt were suitable for our clients. At times this meant we needed to include a longer journey in order to reach a better standard of hotel at the end of the walking day. Wherever possible we have selected business-class hotels that have twin-bedded rooms although for two nights we use village guesthouses which, although simple in their facilities, have private bathrooms and twin bedded rooms.



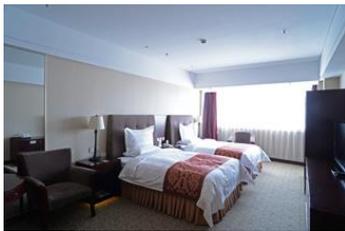
### **Xizhao Temple Hotel or Similar, Beijing**

Centrally located, the Xizhao Temple Hotel is close to several key attractions in Beijing. It offers an interesting blend of traditional and modern with a central temple courtyard surrounded by contemporary buildings. The hotel has a tea house and two restaurants, free Wi-Fi in public areas and comfortable spacious rooms.



### **Haisheng Garden Hotel or Similar**

The Haisheng Garden Hotel, a 4-star quality tourist hotel with a range of recreational facilities including a 50m swimming pool, tennis courts, sauna and gym (all payable locally).



### **Zunhua Soluxe Yishui Grand Hotel or Similar**

Conveniently located in Zunhua, the Grand Hotel is a great base from which to explore this vibrant city. With its convenient location, the hotel offers easy access to the city's must-see destinations. The rooms are comfortable and have good facilities.



### **Mr Kong's Guesthouse, Qianganjian Village**

Situated in Qianganjian Village at the foot of the Great Wall, Mr Kong's Guesthouse offers basic twin rooms with private, en suite bathrooms. The guesthouse is clean and has a nice front yard with seating area.



### **Ye Shu Fang Guesthouse**

This simple guesthouse is located in a mountain village not far from the Gubeikou Great Wall. It has 16 rooms which all have en suite bathrooms with hot showers.

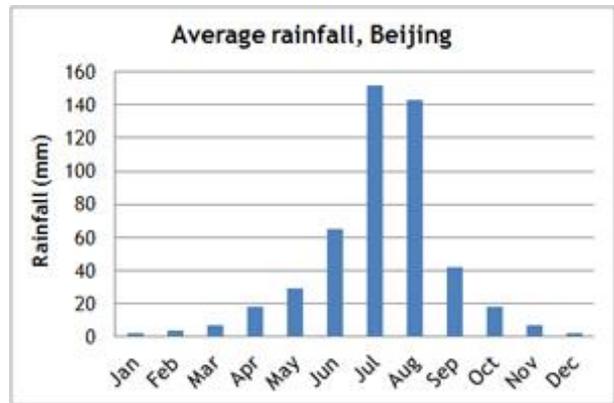
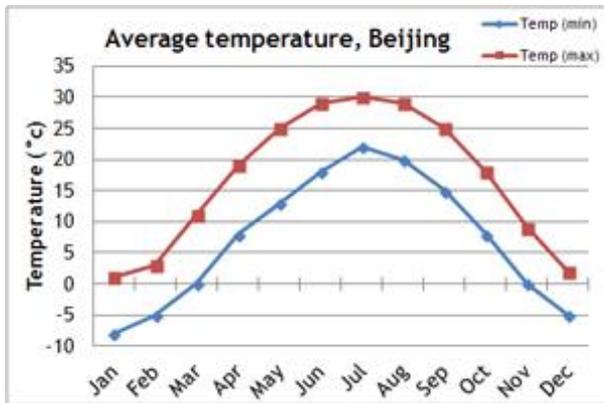


### **CFGC Grand Hotel, Beijing or Similar**

CFGC Grand Hotel offers comfortable accommodation in Beijing. Free WiFi is available in all areas. Every room at this hotel is air conditioned and is fitted with a flat-screen TV. The rooms are equipped with a private bathroom with shower. Slippers and free toiletries provided. CFGC Grand Hotel in Beijing has a 24-hour front desk.

# Climate information

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## Extensions

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### Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).



### Terracotta Warriors and Xi'an

Extend your far-east adventure by sampling the highlights of the city where China's history comes alive. Xi'an is considered to be the most historically rich city in China having been the cultural and political capital for many hundreds of years. It was also situated at the start of the Silk Road giving it a distinctly cosmopolitan feel which is still evident today.



We offer a two night extension from Beijing that takes you to all the major sights including the incredible Terracotta Warriors, the vibrant Muslim Quarter, the impressive city walls and the towering Big Goose Pagoda. Domestic rail or flight, transfers, an English-speaking guide, private transport and hotel accommodation are all included.

## Further information

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When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

## The nature of adventure travel

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Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

## Meal arrangements

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All meals included from lunch on Day 2 to breakfast on Day 10.

## Flight arrangements

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### **Flight inclusive from price**

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

### **Flight upgrades and regional Airports**

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

## Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

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- We believe you should be able to stay in comfortable accommodation whilst walking the Great Wall. We have therefore carefully designed this itinerary to ensure that you stay in hotels and simple guesthouses rather than camping or using village houses.
- We have selected sections of the Great Wall that take you away from the crowds and see few visitors. You will often be walking in splendid isolation.
- The itinerary has been carefully designed so that you will have the maximum opportunity to explore the rich cultural and historic interest of not only the Great Wall but also the Qing Tombs and Beijing's key attractions.
- Your tour will be led by a professional, English-speaking guide who will be delighted to share their expert knowledge of the history, culture and nature of their home country.
- Our departure dates have been chosen so that you are not walking during the excessive humidity and heat of the summer months. Instead, we visit in the spring and autumn when temperatures are most pleasant for walking and the mountain sides are replete with fruit blossom or autumnal hues.
- We offer the option of a two night extension to Xi'an to visit the incredible Terracotta Warriors.
- We have a maximum group size of 12 people to ensure all the benefits of a genuine small group travel experience.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights team for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, , bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

## What our clients say

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*Our guide was wonderful, nothing was a bother and he was very knowledgeable on the history of the wall.*  
-Ms McC, South Shields

*A very interesting and varied tour led by an excellent and understanding guide. I would definitely recommend the experience.*  
-Mr B, Reading

*An amazing taste of China, with Beijing, sea and mountains. Our tailor made holiday was everything we wanted and more.*  
-Mrs E J, West Yorkshire (Private Itinerary)



*What we enjoyed was walking on remote sections of the wall that were not crowded with tourists.*  
-Mr & Mrs D, Bristol

*Everything was superb; the guide went out of his way to see that every little matter was dealt with. Everything in the itinerary went without any hitches or delays. Thank you Mountain Kingdoms it was all wonderful.*  
-Ms H, Bedfordshire

# Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

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## **Truly independent**

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

## **Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality**

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

## **Complete financial security**

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

## **No Surcharge Guarantee**

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

## **Award winning Responsible Tourism**

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).

## **Genuine small group travel**

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

## **Loyalty Discount**

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

## **Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier**

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

## **Comprehensive information**

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



## RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit [www.tourismdeclares.com](http://www.tourismdeclares.com)

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

### Carbon Offsetting

#### Already doing:

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

#### Will do:

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

### Reducing Carbon Emissions

#### Already doing:

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

#### Will do:

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

