

TREK THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA 2027 – TRIP 2



DURATION: 9 Days

DEPART: London airport to Beijing

Step off the beaten track and explore one of the greatest wonders of the world

Take on an unforgettable 5-day trek through one of the world's most iconic landmarks. Journey across a remote section of the Great Wall, from Gubeikou to Jinshanling and Simatai where history, culture and breathtaking scenery come together.

You'll walk on ancient stones that have stood for centuries, winding through rugged mountains, forested valleys and rolling green hills. With the Wall as your constant backdrop, every step brings a new perspective on this awe-inspiring wonder.

Along the way, you'll stay in traditional guesthouses, giving you a glimpse of authentic Chinese culture and the chance to enjoy delicious local cuisine.

BEIJING also known as Peking, is China's capital and one of the most populated cities in the world, with over 21 million people living within its 16,000 km² area. Here, ancient traditions sit side by side with modern life. Centuries-old temples stand in the shadow of gleaming skyscrapers, while tranquil gardens and historic courtyards provide a calm escape from the bustling highways.

Just north of the city lies the awe-inspiring Great Wall of China - the highlight of your adventure. And no visit to Beijing would be complete without sampling its famous cuisine. From world-renowned Peking duck to freshly made dumplings and hand-pulled noodles, you'll have plenty of opportunities to savour authentic flavours.

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA is the longest man-made structure on Earth, stretching an astonishing 8,850 km (5,500 miles) across the mountains and valleys of northern China to the sea. Built, rebuilt, and maintained from as early as the 7th century BC, it served as a mighty defence for the Chinese empire against invading forces.

Today, many sections of the Wall remain unrestored, bearing the marks of centuries of battles and time. Walking along its ancient stones is like stepping back into history, giving you a chance to marvel at the ingenuity, determination and resilience of the dynasties who built it and the millions who defended it.

DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1 (SATURDAY 8th MAY): LONDON TO BEIJING

We will leave the UK and fly to Beijing on an overnight flight.

DAY 2 (SUNDAY 9th MAY): BEIJING

Arrive in Beijing and check into a central 3* hotel. After freshening up, enjoy a traditional Chinese meal and a briefing on the week ahead. If time permits, explore the hutongs - the maze of alleys filled with traditional houses, local shops, and hidden gems.

Meals: Evening meal included

DAY 3 (MONDAY 10th MAY): BEIJING TO GUBEIKOU

Transfer by coach to the Great Wall (approx. 3 hours). After lunch, enjoy an introductory trek to get ready for the days ahead. Climb hills, take in stunning views of the Wall snaking across the countryside, then descend through woodland to Gubeikou and your first guesthouse.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 7.5km (4-5 hours)

Total ascent: 410 meters

DAY 4 (TUESDAY 11th MAY): GUBEIKOU

This morning, we transfer from our guesthouse to the Gubeikou section of the Great Wall, which is a remote and rugged stretch that remains almost entirely original. Less visited by tourists, it offers a true sense of history and adventure.

Gubeikou is thought to have witnessed more battles than any other part of the Wall, and its crumbling stones still bear the marks of centuries of conflict. The route here is demanding as much of the Wall is worn away, leaving rugged, uneven terrain underfoot.

After a challenging but rewarding day, we return to our guesthouse for the night.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 9km (6-7 hours)

Total ascent: 370 meters

DAY 5 (WEDNESDAY 12th MAY): GUBEIKOU – JINSHANLING

We set off early this morning to begin our trek at a spectacular section of the Wall known locally as the “dragon standing on the beautiful golden mountain.” As you follow its winding path, it’s easy to see how the Wall resembles a dragon weaving its way across the land. The views are breathtaking, offering countless opportunities for unforgettable photos.

Unlike more restored sections, this area has remained largely untouched. Many of the watchtowers and stairways have crumbled with time, leaving steep stone slopes and rugged terrain between towers. After exploring this dramatic stretch, we descend through peaceful forests and farmland, before rejoining the Wall near Jinshanling.

Our day ends with a descent via the reconstructed steps at Jinshanling, before checking in to our guesthouse nearby for a well-earned rest.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 15.5km (5-6 hours)

Total ascent: 370 meters

DAY 6 (THURSDAY 13th MAY): JINSHANLING – SIMATAI

Today's trek takes us along a beautifully restored section of the Wall, originally built in the 15th century. In contrast to the rugged, crumbling stretches of previous days, this part shows how the Wall once looked at the height of its power.

Here you'll gain a deeper appreciation for the immense effort behind its construction - the meticulous craftsmanship, the tactical brilliance and the subtle beauty that still shines through centuries later. The ascent can be steep at times, with steps of varying depths, so expect a mix of both shallow and challenging climbs. We finish the day with a descent through the forest before returning to our guesthouse for the night.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 9km (7 hours)

Total ascent: 450 meters

DAY 7 (FRIDAY 14th MAY): SIMATAI – BEIJING

After breakfast, we set out on our final half-day trek, following forest trails that lead to a remote, rarely visited watchtower perched high on a hill. The climb to the top involves some light scrambling, but the panoramic views make every step worthwhile.

After taking time to soak in the scenery and reflect on our journey, we retrace our steps through the forest to meet our vehicles. From here, we transfer to our lunch spot and share a final farewell with our trek support team.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trekking: Approx. 7.5km (4-5 hours)

Total ascent: 450 meters

DAY 8 (SATURDAY 15th MAY): BEIJING

On your final day, immerse yourself in the sights and stories of China's capital. With a guided tour of Tiananmen Square and the magnificent Forbidden City, you'll step into the heart of Beijing's history and culture. Wander through vast courtyards, ancient halls and intricate palaces, imagining the lives of emperors and dynasties who once walked these grounds.

In the afternoon, enjoy some free time to explore at your own pace, perhaps browsing local markets, strolling through traditional hutongs, or simply soaking up the city's vibrant atmosphere.

We come together in the evening for a special farewell dinner, celebrating the end of an unforgettable adventure and the memories made along the Great Wall of China.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

DAY 9 (SUNDAY 16th MAY): BEIJING – LONDON

After breakfast, we transfer to the airport for your return flight to London. Depending on flight schedules, you may arrive the following day (Monday 28 September 2026).

Meals: Breakfast

OPTIONAL FOUR DAY XI'AN AND TERRACOTTA WARRIORS EXTENSION

DAY 9 (SUNDAY 17th MAY): BEIJING – XI'AN

Enjoy some free time this morning to soak up a little more of Beijing. Perhaps a final stroll through the bustling streets, markets, or temples before transferring to the station for an overnight sleeper train to Xi'an. (*Times tbc but approx. dep. 20.40, arr. 08.30*).

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10 (MONDAY 18th MAY): XI'AN

On arrival, your local guide will take you on a journey through Xi'an's historic Old City. Explore the impressive City Walls, wander through the fascinating History Museum, admire the Wild Goose Pagoda and visit the Great Mosque, where Chinese and Islamic traditions intertwine.

You'll stay overnight in a centrally located hotel, such as the Skytel or similar, putting the city at your doorstep for further exploration.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

DAY 11 (TUESDAY 19th MAY): XI'AN – BEIJING

Today we visit one of China's most extraordinary archaeological treasures - the Terracotta Warriors. These life-sized sculptures were created to guard the tomb of China's first emperor Qin Shi Huang over 2,200 years ago and were rediscovered by a farmer in 1974. Marvel at the thousands of soldiers and horses, each with unique features, and appreciate the scale and craftsmanship of this ancient army.

In the evening, board your overnight train back to Beijing.
(*Times tbc but approx. dep. 18.30, arr. 07.25*).

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

DAY 12 (WEDNESDAY 20th MAY): BEIJING – LONDON

Arrive in Beijing and transfer to a hotel for breakfast. You may have some free time to enjoy a last glimpse of the city before transferring to the airport for your flight back to London. *Flight times TBC*

Meals: Breakfast

Extension Price:

Minimum of 5 participants: £775pp

Single supplement (hotel only): £50pp

NB. This is based on a twin share basis. Single supplement is subject to availability. Prices for larger groups are available on request.

Cost Includes:

- ✓ All transfers & transport in China on a private basis
- ✓ Accommodation as mentioned

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- ✓ Return train fare in 2nd class soft-sleeper carriage
- ✓ Escorted transfers in Beijing, local guide in Xi'an (depending on the number of participants, you may not be accompanied on the overnight train but will meet your guide on arrival in Xi'an).

Cost Does Not Include:

- ✗ Personal expenses (such as drinks, laundry etc),
- ✗ Visas and vaccinations
- ✗ Personal travel insurance
- ✗ Optional tips.

A deposit of £300 is payable directly to The Different Travel Company to confirm your place. This must be received by 17th July 2026. Please log in to your online profile to join the extension.

Email bookings@different-travel.com with any queries.

CHALLENGE INFORMATION



Who accompanies us?

You'll be in safe hands every step of the way. Throughout the trek, you'll be led by experienced, English-speaking local guides with excellent knowledge of the region. They are first-aid trained and dedicated to supporting you on your journey.

Alongside them, there will be a team of assistant staff, cooks and drivers who will ensure everything runs smoothly. You'll also be accompanied by a UK tour manager from The Different Travel Company, as well as a representative from Julia's House.

How tough is it?

This trek is rated **moderate to challenging**. Expect long, steep ascents and descents, countless uneven steps, and the need to carry a daypack of around 6–7kg.

While the daily distances may seem short on paper, the hilly terrain means progress is steady - it can take 6-7 hours to cover just 5km. Each day you'll face elevation changes of 515m–866m, so it's important to train for this trek.

On one trek day you will also walk along sections with a steep drop to the side.

What is the terrain like?

The terrain is varied, hilly and often steep. You won't be trekking on the Wall all the time as many sections of the route run alongside it through the countryside. Be prepared for a mix of ground underfoot, from grassy, dry trails to uneven stone steps.

On restored stretches of the Wall, you'll encounter smooth paved paths with regular steps built into the hillside. In contrast, the original unrestored sections can be crumbling, with loose earth and rubble that shift underfoot like scree, making the climb more challenging.

Throughout the trek, you should expect to tackle countless steps of all shapes and sizes - many of them steep. Training with hill walking and step climbing is essential to prepare for the demands of this challenge.

Where will we stay?

In Beijing, you'll stay in hotels, while during the trek you'll experience traditional local guesthouses. Accommodation is provided on a twin-share basis. If you're travelling with a friend, let us know and we'll pair you together. Solo travellers will be matched with someone of the same gender and where possible, a similar age.

All hotels and guesthouses offer ensuite rooms with Western-style toilets.

What is the food like?

Each trek day begins with a hearty breakfast to fuel your adventure, with options such as hot drinks, pancakes, toast, noodles, rice, eggs, Chinese dumplings and fresh fruit. Lunch will either be delivered to you on the Wall or prepared as a packed meal, typically including sandwiches with jam or peanut butter, fruit, biscuits such as Oreos, dried fruit and nuts. We recommend bringing along some of your own favourite snacks to enjoy throughout the day.

In the evenings, you'll be treated to freshly cooked, traditional Chinese meals at the guesthouses. Expect a variety of rice, noodles, meat, tofu and vegetable dishes - the perfect way to refuel after a day on the Wall.

In Beijing, meals will be taken either at your hotel or at local restaurants.

If you have dietary requirements, please let us know in advance and we will do our best to accommodate them.

Travel App

When you sign up, you will receive an email inviting you to download Different Travel's travel app, Vamoos. With the app you will have instant access to everything you will need for the trip, including:

- ✓ Full itinerary
- ✓ Important documents
- ✓ Maps and local recommendations
- ✓ Live flight updates
- ✓ And more, all in one place!

PRACTICAL INFORMATION



Who can take part?

You must be 18 or over to take part. It may be possible for 16–17-year-olds to join if accompanied by a parent or guardian. There is no upper age limit - what matters most is your attitude and preparation.

This challenge is ideal for someone who enjoys stepping outside their comfort zone and embracing new experiences. Adventure travel always carries an element of the unexpected, so don't expect everything to be just like home. Remote areas can be unpredictable, whether due to weather, group pace, local bureaucracy or other factors and itineraries may occasionally change.

To get the most out of your trek, it's important to be flexible, positive and ready to embrace whatever comes your way. Good fitness preparation before departure is also key to enjoying the experience to the full.

How should I prepare?

A good level of fitness is essential to get the most out of this trek and to help your body recover quickly after each day on the Wall.

Training in advance is vital. Regular hill walking is the best preparation - aim for steep, uneven terrain to mimic the conditions you'll face. This will give you the best chance of enjoying the challenge rather than finding it overwhelming.

To support you, Julia's House will be offering free training walks in the beautiful Wiltshire and Dorset countryside. These are a great opportunity to build your stamina, meet your fellow trekkers and share the journey together before you even set off.

Other activities such as running, cycling, gym sessions or boot camps can also complement your hill walking and boost your overall fitness.

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 specified.

All your data, including medical details, are treated in the strictest confidence. The information will be securely screened by a qualified medical professional and details provided to your tour manager and local guides, so our staff are adequately informed and prepared to support you during the trip. It is a condition of your registration that you give full and accurate details. If any details change, you must update us.

By completing the booking form, you are giving consent for us to contact you confidentially with any follow-up questions regarding your health. If your medical issues at the time of booking represent a concern for your safety and wellbeing, or the safety and wellbeing of others in the group, it may be recommended that you do not take part. If this happens, your deposit will be refunded. If you develop a new medical condition after making a booking and this results in your withdrawal from the Event, this will be treated as a cancellation by you. We therefore recommend arranging your travel insurance as soon as you have registered for the trek.

Please refer to the terms and conditions at the time of booking. Please note that we will never unreasonably deny participation on a trip nor contravene the Equality Act 2010.

Health and safety

Your health and safety are our top priority so rest assured that we are taking steps to ensure you not only have a memorable experience, but a safe one too.

We constantly monitor and follow the advice of the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) who provide recommendations and advice to British travellers about travel to a certain destination. Health and safety is our top priority so we will **NEVER** operate a trip in an area where there is clear and present risk to our team members, whether that is due to a health outbreak, political instability, natural disasters or anything else. If travel restrictions either in the UK or China prevent safe travel we will look to either postpone or cancel your trip at no cost to you.

With regards to vaccinations, The Different Travel Company and Julia's House cannot provide specific medical advice or recommendations. We recommend speaking to your GP or travel health professional. You can find general health information and advice on vaccinations here: <http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk> and <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk>.

We will keep you fully informed of any updates relevant to your travel arrangements.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to us at info@different-travel.com.

TRIP COSTS AND FUNDRAISING

The registration fee for the trek is £495.

You can pay this in two instalments, with the balance to be paid by **8th August**.

Once registered, you can choose the fundraising option that works best for you:

Option A: Fundraise

Pledge to raise or donate £3,500 to Julia's House

Option B: Self-funded (pay your own trip costs)

Pay £1,865* to fully cover your trip costs and then fundraise as much as possible. We would love you to try and raise at least £1,500.

Option C: Flexi (pay part of your trip costs and fundraise the rest)

Pay £600 towards your trip costs and fundraise a minimum of £2,900 for Julia's House.

80% of your fundraising is due at least 12 weeks before departure and we ask that you raise the remaining 20% by 25th June

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2027.

*Trip costs are based on a minimum of 20 participants.

Trip includes:

- ✓ Return flights from the UK (including airport taxes and fuel supplements)
- ✓ 3 nights in 3-star hotels and 4 nights in traditional guesthouses
- ✓ All transfers, trekking permits, meals, and drinking water
- ✓ Local English-speaking guides, porters, and full support crew
- ✓ A full day exploring Beijing, including the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square
- ✓ Celebratory farewell dinner
- ✓ 24-hour emergency support and ATOL protection
- ✓ A Julia's House contact joining you on the trek
- ✓ Free Julia's House t-shirt, medal, and certificate
- ✓ Invitation to visit our hospice and meet fellow trekkers
- ✓ Ongoing fundraising support, tips, and regular updates

Trip does not include:

- ✗ Personal expenses (e.g. drinks, souvenirs, etc.)
- ✗ Visas and vaccinations
- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips (approx. £40-45 per person)
- ✗ Trek kit and equipment
- ✗ Optional Xi'an extension

Fundraising ideas

Most people find fundraising is far easier than they first imagined. We'll support you every step of the way to ensure you reach and even exceed your target!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Ask your friends, family and colleagues to sponsor you through JustGiving:** £650
- **Six cake sales at work throughout the year:** $£40 \times 6 = £240$
- **Car boot sales, eBay auctions or sell items on Facebook Marketplace:** £350
- **Host dinner parties and charge your friends £10 to come:** £250
- **Hold a quiz night at your local pub:** £500
- **Ask your work or local school to hold a non-uniform day:** £200
- **Ask your local supermarket if you can bag-pack or hold a collection:** £160
- **Hold a couple of sweepstakes with family, friends and colleagues throughout the year:** £250
- **Ask local companies to donate prizes for a raffle:** £300
- **Matched funding through your employer:** £500
- **Ask for birthday or Christmas donations instead of gifts:** £100

Total: £3,500 – target met!

This trek is exclusive to Julia's House fundraisers and offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore China while raising vital funds for the children and families we support. Whether it's your very first challenge or one of many, we'll be with you every step of the way. By signing up, you're making a commitment - not just to the adventure, but to reaching your fundraising goal, whether through your own efforts or with a personal donation.

ATOL Protection

This trip is operated by The Different Travel Company Ltd (ATOL No 6706). This flight-inclusive holiday is 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.caa.co.uk.