

Great Wall Hike



trip highlights

- Hike quieter and lesser-visited sections of the Great Wall beyond the main tourist routes
- Experience both restored and unrestored sections with panoramic ridgeline walking and dramatic mountain scenery
- Stay in locally run guesthouses and experience regional cuisine, village hospitality and traditional dumpling making with local families
- Travel with experienced local guides, vehicle support and carefully designed logistics throughout
- Discover the history of Imperial China with visits to Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City in vibrant Beijing
- Enjoy a traditional Peking Duck farewell dinner with your fellow travelling companions and guide



Trip Duration	8 days	Trip Code: GWE
Grade	Introductory to Moderate	
Activities	Trekking, Adventure Touring	
Summary	5 day trek, 3 nights hotel, 4 nights guesthouses	

welcome to World Expeditions

For over 50 years, we've been creating high-quality, expedition-style adventures for active travellers with a curious spirit. From our very first trek in the mountains of Nepal to pioneering remote routes across all seven continents, our journeys are built for those who want to truly explore – not just visit.

At the heart of what we do is a simple philosophy: take the paths less travelled.

This means travelling with care, supporting local communities, minimising our impact, and unlocking experiences that most travellers will never have.

If you're ready to go further and dig deeper, we invite you to join us on the Great Wall Hike, a journey that captures the essence of a unique adventure.

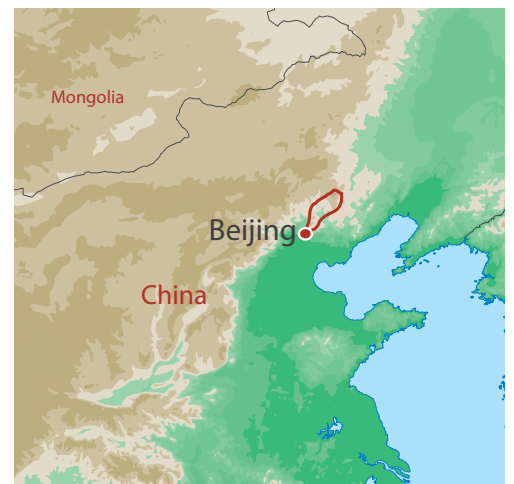
why travel with World Expeditions?

This Great Wall trek focuses on remote, less-crowded sections in Hebei Province, combining immersive walking with cultural experiences and historical insight. With experienced guides, full logistical support and comfortable accommodation, the journey offers a reliable and well-structured way to explore one of the world's most iconic landmarks beyond the main tourist areas.



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World Expeditions does not require single travellers to pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we cannot match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. Please refer to our website for the additional cost.

the trip

Hike along remote sections of the Great Wall in Hebei Province, where quieter, less-visited stretches reveal a more authentic side of this iconic landmark. Walking between rural villages, the route follows a combination of restored and unrestored sections, crossing farmland, ridgelines and open valleys with expansive views across the surrounding countryside. Accommodation is in locally run guesthouses, offering simple comfort with twin-share rooms and hot showers. Staying within village communities provides a closer connection to daily life in rural China and adds depth to the overall experience. The journey begins and ends in Beijing, where visits to major historic sites such as the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square provide cultural context, alongside opportunities to experience the city's renowned food scene.

at a glance

DAY 1	JOIN BEIJING
DAY 2	HIKE JIANKOU GREAT WALL (670M / 2198FT, 9KM / 5.6MI, 3-4HRS)
DAY 3	HIKE GREAT WALL GUBEIKOU (11KM / 6.8MI, 709M / 2326FT ASCENT, 4-5HRS)
DAY 4	HIKE GUBEIKOU TO JINSHANLING (15.4KM / 9.6MI, 866M / 2841FT ASCENT, 4-5HRS)
DAY 5	HIKE JINSHANLING TO ERCHU (7.67KM / 4.8MI, 697M / 2287FT ASCENT, 3-4HRS)
DAY 6	HIKE TO WANG JING TOWER AND RETURN BEIJING (6.24KM / 3.9MI, 539M / 1768FT ASCENT, 2-3HRS)
DAY 7	TIANANMEN SQUARE & THE FORBIDDEN CITY
DAY 8	IN BEIJING, TRIP CONCLUDES

what's included

- 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 7 dinners
- Twin-share hotels and guesthouses
- Private air conditioned vehicles
- Support vehicle during hiking
- Entry fees and sightseeing as per itinerary
- Expert bilingual guide and mountain guide
- Medical kit

Local cash payments are becoming increasingly popular with many operators in the adventure travel industry. The policy seems to benefit the tour operators, more than the local economies or travellers, as it avoids local taxes and transfers the cost and risk of cash handling to travellers. In accordance with our Responsible Travel practices we have chosen a policy not to ask for such payments.

what's not included

- International airfares and departure taxes
- Visa costs
- Travel Insurance (compulsory)
- Emergency transport costs
- Meals and drinks not listed
- Personal expenses
- Tips and gratuities
- Any items not listed as included

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trip dates

2026 08 Jun - 15 Jun
07 Sep - 14 Sep
19 Oct - 26 Oct

2027 05 Apr - 12 Apr
10 May - 17 May
07 Jun - 14 Jun
06 Sep - 13 Sep
18 Oct - 25 Oct

fast facts

Countries Visited:
China

Visas:
Yes*

Vaccinations:
Please consult a travel vaccination specialist for up to date information

Private Groups:
Private group options are available for this trip*

Singles:
A single supplement is available for this trip*

Leader:
Expert local leader

Advice for people with limited mobility
This trip is not suitable for people with limited mobility.

*Ask our staff for more information.

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Join Beijing

On arrival in Beijing you will need to make your own way to the group hotel. The afternoon is free time for sightseeing in the central city district. Perhaps barter for a bargain in the colorful silk markets or do as the locals do and hire a bike for a spin through the bustling back roads of this vibrant city. This evening we will meet in the hotel lobby at approximately 18:30 (please check with reception to confirm this time) for a group meeting before we head out to enjoy our first meal together.

Accommodation: Dong Fang Hotel or similar
meals: D

DAY 2 Hike Jiankou Great Wall (670m / 2198ft, 9km / 5.6mi, 3-4hrs)

Travel from Beijing to the foothill of the Great Wall at Jiankou near the border of Hebei Province to begin our hike. Jiankou Great Wall, located 73 km north of Beijing in Huairou District, is a picturesque section built in 1368 (Ming Dynasty) atop steep, rugged cliffs. Translating to "arrow nock," the name derives from the ridge's W-shape, resembling a, bow-and-arrow notch. The Great Wall extends more than 5000km across China, from the Bohai Gulf to Gansu Province. After lunch, we transfer to Gubeikou.

Accommodation: Yeshufang Guest House or similar
meals: B,L,D

DAY 3 Hike Great Wall Gubeikou (11km / 6.8mi, 709m / 2326ft ascent, 4-5hrs)

After breakfast, climb to a spectacular section of the Inner Great Wall above the Gubeikou Valley. This section formed a second line of defence behind the main wall and remains unrestored, with some areas overgrown by vegetation. The route offers wide views across the rugged surrounding landscape before reaching the junction of the Ming Dynasty wall. Descend by a small trail back to the village visiting a number of small temples on the way.

Accommodation: Yeshufang Guest House or similar
meals: B,L,D

DAY 4 Hike Gubeikou to Jinshanling (15.4km / 9.6mi, 866m / 2841ft ascent, 4-5hrs)

Return to the main outer Great Wall and walk remote, unrestored sections through mountain scenery. This quieter route stays well away from the main visitor areas. A short detour through a village is required near a military restricted zone, offering insight into rural village life. The route later returns to the Wall as it approaches Jinshanling, a carefully restored section that reflects the Wall's original design.

Accommodation: Jianxia Guesthouse or similar
meals: B,L,D

DAY 5 Hike Jinshanling to Erchu (7.67km / 4.8mi, 697m / 2287ft ascent, 3-4hrs)

Today is a more relaxed day on the Great Wall. The morning begins with an introduction to Tai Chi, offering insight into this traditional Chinese practice before continuing the walk from Jinshanling toward Erchu. This section of the Wall is known for its rugged and less-visited character, often described as a highlight for hikers and photographers. The route includes a mix of steep, unrestored and partially restored sections, with expansive views across the surrounding landscape. Along the way, pass a dense concentration of watchtowers, over 67 structures built between 1368

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thoughtful travel

Our World Expeditions adventures are grounded in a deep commitment to regenerative travel, going beyond minimising harm to actively restoring and enriching the places we visit. We partner closely with local communities, ensuring that our trips support cultural preservation, fair livelihoods, and community-led initiatives. Each expedition is designed to protect and regenerate natural ecosystems through low-impact practices, climate action, and education that fosters respect for biodiversity. We prioritise meaningful connections between travellers and place, encouraging a sense of stewardship that lasts well beyond the journey. By embedding sustainability into every layer of our operations, we aim not only to explore the world responsibly but also to leave it healthier, more resilient, and more vibrant for future generations.

trip grading

Introductory to Moderate

The theme behind most of our trips is action holidays and the fitter you are, the more easily you will adjust and enjoy yourself. On a trekking trip such as this you need to be in general good health and moderately fit. The grading overall would be moderate, with some "strenuous" activity. Before departure aerobic-type exercise, which increases your breathing, is an obvious advantage. We recommend that for about two to three months prior to departure you try to exercise most days for 30 - 45 minutes or aerobic type activity.

and 1644, reflecting the strategic importance of this section. In the afternoon, we spend time with the Zou family, learning how to make traditional dumplings before sharing them for dinner, providing insight into daily life in rural China.

Accommodation: Jianxia Guesthouse or similar

meals: B,L,D

DAY 6 Hike to Wang Jing Tower and return Beijing (6.24km / 3.9mi, 539m / 1768ft ascent, 2-3hrs)

An early start leads to a hike toward Wang Jing Tower, also known as Beijing Tower, located at the summit of the Simatai section of the Great Wall. The ascent is challenging, following a rugged and steep section of the Wall, but is rewarded with expansive views across the surrounding landscape. On clear days, it is said that Beijing can be seen in the distance. Historically, this section played an important defensive role. Beacon towers were used to send signals using smoke, often referred to as "wolf smoke", to warn of approaching Mongol forces, with messages able to be relayed across vast distances in a short time. After the hike, return by road to Beijing.

Accommodation: Dong Fang Hotel or similar

meals: B,L,D

DAY 7 Tiananmen Square & the Forbidden City

Today is spent exploring Beijing's major historic sites, beginning with Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City. The Forbidden City served as the imperial palace for the Ming and Qing dynasties and was closed to the public for more than 500 years. Later, visit the Bell Tower and Hou Hai district in northern Beijing for a traditional lunch in a courtyard setting. In the evening we enjoy a farewell dinner featuring traditional Peking Duck.

Please note: Should the Forbidden City be closed for an official visit (which happens often and suddenly) your tour leader will adjust your daily itinerary accordingly to try to ensure a visitation without losing any listed activities.

Accommodation: Dong Fang Hotel or similar

meals: B,L,D

DAY 8 In Beijing, trip concludes

After breakfast our trip concludes in Beijing.

meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

places of interest

Tiananmen Square

Tiananmen Square is the world's largest public square and is located only a short distance from our hotel. People flying kites, a popular pastime all over China, stand next to guards under the ever-watchful eye of Chairman Mao's portrait. Which ever way you turn there is another photo opportunity to be found in this huge open space.

The Forbidden City is a masterpiece of 5000 years of Chinese civilization and still vividly displays the power and prestige of the former dynasties. Sprawling over acres, the City is a magnificent group of palaces, pavilions, courtyards and deep terracotta walls. Ornatly furnished palace rooms, priceless artworks and treasures are all now open to the public after 500 years of seclusion.

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adventure travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. In remote and developing countries do not expect standards you are used to at home. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable and itineraries may be altered. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. If you are uncertain about your suitability for this trip we recommend that you speak with your consultant or travel agent.

important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information on our website, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

The Temple of Heaven itself is an architectural highlight however it's the crowds of people that makes this spot so interesting and memorable. Thousands of people gather here to practice ballroom dancing, Tai chi and calligraphy.

The Great Wall of China

When cavalry from the hostile territory northeast of ancient China rode to the gates of the Great Wall at Shanhaiguan they found no resistance by the Ming Dynasty soldiers stationed there to halt invasion. Dispirited and lacking faith in their corrupt imperial masters in Beijing they took bribe, opened the gates and allowed a rush of armed nomads to besiege the walled capital Beijing. Outnumbered and without purpose, hostile to the emperor, the capital's garrison surrendered to the Manchus, the Ming Dynasty was dethroned and China's last dynasty, the Qing, began its reign to 1911 until it itself was overthrown by popular rebellion.

Thus the Achilles Heel of the Great Wall, a colossal monument to the folly of blind military dogma, was its human weakness and not the fortifications so carefully constructed to protect the emperor in the Forbidden City and the empire from invasion. Tribes to China's northeast and the Mongolians raided continuously, plundering as they wished, despite a vast treasure of silver and scores of human lives committed to the wall's construction.

This extraordinary building, which draws gasps on first sight, and its intriguing, complicated history are explored and explained in our innovative Great Wall Trek, a challenge which encapsulates not only the wall and rural life, but also the highlights of the capital. It is the interpretation of the Wall's history by our expert guides, telling of the reason for its construction, at what cost, the circumstances of its failure and the events that lead to the rise of modern China that garnishes this tour. It is more than simply a trek. It is a journey through history.

country information

China is a destination that captures the imagination with its vast landscapes, enduring traditions and deep historical legacy. Stretching across nearly four million square miles (over 9.5 million square kilometres) and home to more than 1.3 billion people, it is a land of extraordinary contrasts – from alpine plateaus to subtropical forests, bustling megacities to quiet rural villages.

Long shrouded in mystery for Western travellers, China began opening its doors to tourism in the late 1970s. Since then, dozens of previously restricted regions have become accessible, and many ancient sites have been sensitively restored. Today, visitors can explore a remarkable breadth of cultural and natural wonders – including ancient temples, imperial palaces, sections of the Great Wall, and sacred mountains such as Huangshan and Emei.

China is home to 56 officially recognised ethnic groups, each with distinct customs, dress, languages and traditions. This cultural richness is visible in everything from local festivals and tea ceremonies to regional cuisines and architectural styles. While Mandarin is the national language, dialects and minority languages are widely spoken across different provinces.

Modern infrastructure including high-speed rail, well-connected airports and an expanding domestic tourism network makes travelling within China increasingly smooth. Yet much of the country still retains its traditional rhythm, especially in smaller towns and remote landscapes where daily life continues as it has for generations.

This striking blend of old and new, along with the hospitality of its people, makes China a truly rewarding destination for those seeking insight, challenge and cultural depth.

climate

Beijing and Hebei provinces experience a rather broad temperature range throughout the year. In late spring (May) the weather is mild to warm with the possibility of some showers. In late summer, early autumn trips (August to September) expect warm to hot days with temperatures up to 25-30C (77-86F) and a slight chance of rain.

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During October the days are mild and dry, from 15-20C (59-68F), and nights are cooler. After mid-October there is increasingly a cooler (but not cold) westerly wind, which lowers temperatures, particularly at night. The days, however, remain mild. Sometimes, in October, a cold wave from Siberia may cause overnight temperatures to plunge below freezing for a day or so, but the days are mild. In Beijing in late summer the days may be hot, up to 30C (86F) but it is more likely to be quite pleasant. Rain can occur at any time but is more likely in spring (March-May). You must pack a waterproof jacket with hood for all departures.

a typical day

The average distance hiked each day is between 5-12km. The pace is leisurely with an average of 4-8 hours walking each day. The trip provides a total of about 40kms of walking through generally hilly but not steep country. There are no problems with altitude sickness. The Great Wall remains paved in some areas but generally you would walk on a combination of stone paving, earth and stony rubble. Most people would find a light bushwalking boot or rugged trail shoe suitable footwear. The walking is easily achievable for a person with reasonable fitness but is at times strenuous. The trekking will be largely in the morning and mid-afternoon. On all sections there is flexibility in movement, and progress can be adjusted to satisfy consensus (if the group wishes to stop to inspect something, or spend longer at a nearby community, such can be achieved within the schedule).

During the stay in Beijing we will see two of the major sights of this huge capital city. There will also be the opportunity for shopping and leisure time. Please be aware of the fact, however, that Beijing is a major tourist area and the scheduling in this portion of the program is a little more regimented. The order of our activities is dependent on arrangements and may sometimes differ from those outlined in the itinerary.

dietary requirements

Provided we are advised in advance of your departure we are able to cater for vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (at least 1 month prior to your trip) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in very remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

accommodation on the trip



Four nights will be spent in locally owned guesthouses in rural locations along the wall and in small villages. There will be hot showers, powerpoints for charging. In Beijing we have 3 nights in a comfortable 3-4 star hotel.

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what you carry

In your daypack you will need to carry extra warm clothing (depending on the altitude, location and weather), a rainjacket, water bottle, camera gear, valuables and personal items such as sunscreen, lip-eze etc. The bulk of your luggage will be left in Beijing and the bag containing the gear you require for the trek will be transported for you on trek days.

equipment required

Specialist gear required include walking boots and day pack (a comprehensive gear list is provided in the pre-departure information provided on booking).

vehicles & safety

During the course of your trip, we will use a variety of vehicles, all of which are fit for purpose and the conditions encountered. It should be noted that laws governing transportation safety may differ from those in your home country and whilst wherever possible, vehicles with seatbelts are provided, on occasion some vehicles may not have seat belts fitted.

visas

Australian, New Zealand, Canada and the UK passport holders can travel to China for tourism without a visa if their stay is 30 days or less. This visa-free policy is effective to 31 December 2026. If you are staying over 30 days you will need to apply for a visa before your trip.

If you require a visa, it is advisable to apply for your visa approximately 6 weeks before your intended entry into China, but not earlier than three months prior. Applying too early may result in your visa expiring before your arrival. Passport holders from Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand and the United States, please visit: <https://consular.mfa.gov.cn/VISA/> to be directed to your dedicated city and countries website for instructions.

If you have any doubt about your eligibility, verify the conditions for visa free entry with your nearest Chinese Embassy.

Depending on your passport and location, different requirements apply and they change at short notice. Please refer to websites above for the latest information.

All other nationalities should check with your nearest embassy or consulate.

You must complete an electronic Digital Arrival Card (CDAC) prior to arrival to China. This free, mandatory, and 100% digital process is done via the National Immigration Administration (NIA) website, generating a QR code for immigration inspection. <https://s.nia.gov.cn/ArrivalCardFillingPC/entry-registration-home>

Please bear in mind that visas may be required for countries you are visiting en route or transiting through on the way to your destination. It is important that you check the requirements of all countries you will visit. Visa costs and requirements do change regularly so we suggest you check with your travel agent or World Expeditions reservations consultant. It is your responsibility to obtain all necessary visas.

webinars & events

Catch a Webinar – Live or On Demand - to learn more about a particular trip. Make sure the trip you choose is right for you. Watch them live, so you can ask our presenters a question, or catch the recording later at your leisure and watch it On Demand. Visit our website or keep an eye on our newsletter for upcoming presentations.

private groups

The adventures that you see on our website are just a starting point. We operate many of our trips, which means we can be flexible and create an itinerary to suit your interests and dates. Talk to our

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team, you'll be surprised how much more affordable it can be when you get a group of friends, colleagues, a club – you name it, to travel with you!

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social networking

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INSTAGRAM: @worldexpeditions

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YOUTUBE: World Expeditions

Subscribe to our channel at [youtube.com/worldexpeditions](https://www.youtube.com/worldexpeditions)

Share the love

Use the hashtag #WorldExpeditions on your best travel photos and videos to be featured.

trip availability

We operate small group adventures, which means availability is always worth checking early. Check trip availability online or call our team who might be able to dig a little deeper for you to find what you want, when you want.

Many adventures require services that, if not available at the time you book (like an internal flight or permit) could mean the trip is unavailable. So, book early to avoid missing out on your dream adventure.

how to book

Check trip availability and book your tour online, or call or visit one of our offices. To book a trip, you will need to complete a Booking Form (online or request a PDF) and pay a non-refundable deposit. Please note that when booking our tours to not confirm any additional arrangements until all services related to your tour are confirmed by your dedicated Reservations Consultant.