



# Hiking the Great Wall of China

October 11-19, 2010

**Plan your arrival in Beijing for October 10**

**Plan your departure from Beijing for October 20**

Join us on this hiking adventure on the Great Wall of China. You'll experience the finest, less trammled sections of this world monument on foot. From Laolongtou where the wall plunges into the Bohai Sea to the wilder wall at Dongjiakou to the magnificent stretches of the Simatai and Jinshanling walls this journey is designed with the hiker in mind!

## **Day 1**

### **Overnight in Beijing**

#### **Breakfast, lunch and dinner included**

Enjoy a guided tour of the principal monuments of Beijing including Tian'anmen Square, the Forbidden City and the Temple of Heaven. Enjoy a welcome dinner this evening.

## **Day 2**

### **Overnight in Qinhuangdao**

#### **Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

Travel east from Beijing to the Bohai Sea at the city of Qinhuangdao. Here, the Great Wall of China plunges into the sea at Laolongtou ("Old Dragon's Head"). Walk along the trace of the wall toward the walled fortress of Shanhaiguan ("First Pass Under Heaven") where we'll visit the Great Wall museum. Travel by vehicle back to your hotel near the Bohai Sea.

## **Day 3**

### **Overnight in Qinhuangdao**

#### **Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

Hike along the Great Wall as it makes its first ascent into the mountains at Jiao Shan ("Horn Mountain"). Enjoy views over the fortress of Shanhaiguan and out to the Bohai Sea. If you desire a full, challenging day of hiking, continue from the peak of Jiao Shan following the wall on a narrow mountain path to reach the pass of Sandaoguan. Return by vehicle to Qinhuangdao for the evening.

## **Day 4**

### **Overnight in Qinhuangdao**

#### **Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

Travel by vehicle north from Qinhuangdao to the small village of Dongjiakou where you can explore the remains of an old fortress as well as the Cihou Tower, an unusual roofless watchtower with two dozen observation portals. The villagers of Dongjiakou are descendants of the builders of this section of the wall and today work to protect it. Hike along the Dongjiakou wall to Chengzhiyu village. The Dongjiakou Great Wall (also known as the Jizhen Wall), punctuated by forty-five towers and three fortresses, winds for five miles through a landscape of gentle, forest-cloaked mountains. Return to Qinhuangdao for the evening.

## **Day 5**

### **Overnight in Huangyaguan**

#### **Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

This morning, travel by vehicle to the Eastern Qing Tombs (Qing Dongling), perhaps more splendid than the more famous Ming Tombs. There are fifteen tombs at the site in which are buried five emperors and fifteen empresses including the first Qing Emperor and the Dowager Empress Cixi. Following the visit, a half hour journey by vehicle brings you to the Huangyaguan ("Yellow Crag Pass"). On either side of the pass, the Great Wall winds through the

dramatic landscape of the Yan Mountains. Spend the afternoon exploring Tapingzhai section of the wall to the east of the pass or wander through the labyrinth of Huangyaguan fortress designed to confound would be attackers.

### **Day 6**

#### **Overnight in Simatai area**

##### **Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

Ascend the steps of the “Heaven’s Ladder” to gain a ridgetop above Huangyaguan. Follow the trace of the Great Wall as it undulates across the mountains before gradually descending into a valley. From here, a vehicle will transport you north to the Simatai-Jinshanling Great Wall which is for hikers perhaps the most magnificent part of the Great Wall. Overnight in a simple, courtyard-style hotel near the Simatai village.

### **Day 7**

#### **Overnight in Jinshanling**

##### **Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

Hike westward today along the magnificent stretch of the Simatai-Jinshanling Great Wall. This section is known for its variety of walls and towers as well as its generally unspoiled character. It’s one of the least visited and best preserved parts of the Great Wall. Complete the day’s hike at the Jinshanling village where simple accommodations await at the foot of the Great Wall.

### **Day 8**

#### **Overnight in Nali**

##### **Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

Continue hiking westward from Jinshanling along the wall. The undulations of the wall become gentler as you make your way to the General Tower near the town of Gubeikou where the day’s hiking concludes. Travel by vehicle to your overnight accommodations at a small hotel in Nali, a popular weekend mountain retreat for Beijingers.

### **Day 9**

#### **Overnight at Beijing**

##### **Breakfast, lunch & dinner included**

From Nali, travel by vehicle to the Mutianyu section of the Great Wall dominated by the three-towered fortification of Zhengguantai. Hike along the length of the restored section of this wall before descending a trail into a valley where the hike ends. A more challenging option takes you from the village of Xihazi to a lofty vantage point where you can enjoy a view of the unreconstructed and crumbling Jiankou Great Wall as it traverses perhaps the most dramatic and precipitous mountain terrain in the course of the wall. After enjoying the view, hike along the wall to reach Mutianyu. Return to Beijing in the afternoon. Time permitting, we’ll stop to admire some of the architectural gems of 2008 Summer Olympics including the “Water Cube” and the “Bird’s Nest.” Enjoy a farewell dinner featuring Beijing imperial cuisine to celebrate the conclusion of your Great Wall adventure!

## **Other Details about this Trip**

**Trip Dates:** October 11-19, 2010

**Price:** \$3,895

**Single Room for entire trip:** \$675. Single accommodations are subject to availability and may be limited.

**Meeting Point:** Beijing, China

**Departure Point:** Beijing, China

**Accommodations:** Seven nights in hotels with private bath. Three nights in simple village accommodations where bath facilities may be shared. Ten breakfasts, nine lunches, and nine dinners are included. Note: Your accommodations on the evening of October 10 are included.

## **Other Resources**

For a discussion of the challenges facing the Great Wall, read *The Great Wall of China Is Under Siege* by Brook Larmer in the August 2008 issue of Smithsonian Magazine.

Get ready for your China trip by studying this primer on Chinese etiquette. Read *Etiquette 101: China* in the October 2008 issue of Conde Nast Traveler magazine beginning on page 116.