



Great Wall of China Expedition 2026

Trip details



The British Expedition Company

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Web: www.thebec.co.uk



Trek the Great Wall of China

...for a spectacular taste of the Far East

The Great Wall of China, one of the Seven modern wonders of the world, and one of the greatest technological achievements in all of mankind, has long held the imagination of writers, scientists, soldiers, and now of course, travelers and adventurers. Within its countless bricks and watchtowers lies the boundless spirit of 2000 years' worth of Chinese civilization. This challenge is physically demanding but offers fabulous, never ending scenery and a fascinating insight into a rich culture and history.

Scheduled Trip dates: Monday 15th June to Thursday 25th June 2026.

Private trip details

We recommend trekking the Great Wall of China May to September as weather during this time is perfect for the trek with warm clear days and nights. We can operate our private treks for any given departure date and for any group size making this option ideal for family and friendship groups who wish to trek together.

Itinerary

Day 1: Fly for London Heathrow to Beijing. Transfer to the hotel.

Day 2: Day to relax and sightseeing in Beijing. There will be a briefing by the guides in the evening.

Day 3: Beijing-Shixiaguan-Badaling (Lunch and dinner. 8km/6miles, 5 hours)



In the early morning your guide and driver will pick you up from your hotel. From there we will be driven to the Badaling Great Wall. The ruined Badaling Great Wall (now officially named "Ancient Badaling Great Wall") is 10km southwest of the restored Badaling Great Wall. So, as its name hints, this section of the Great Wall is partially restored and more adventurous, while not being easy to climb. Its hikers are mainly foreign travelers instead of domestic travellers, who

prefer hiking at the restored Badaling Great Wall.

After about 2-3 hours of hiking, we'll cross over into Shixiaguan (Stone Gorge) Pass, 5km southwest of the Badaling section of the Great Wall. It is one of the most intact parts of the whole Great Wall. In spite of serious damage, the winding wall set in the lofty mountains reveals its grandeur. However, a castle in Shixiaguan was pulled down during the Great Leap Forward. Nevertheless, the wall remains relatively intact because of its strategic location. Shixiaguan Pass was originally built in the reign of Ming Emperor Wanli (about 1600 AD), which was then a key pass guarded by a large number of soldiers. There are sites such as official residences, the ancient castle, clay walls and brick walls in the village. After our hike we will drive to the village of Huanghuacheng for overnight accommodation.

**Day 4: Huanghuacheng-Xishuiyu
(Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. 8 kms/6 miles, 3-4 hours)**

Our trek continues from Huanghuacheng to Xishuiyu. Huanghuacheng is fast becoming popular with hikers and tourists who are looking for something a little different in their Great Wall experience. The wall here is a combination of both restored and unrestored areas, giving your hike a little more variety and adventure. When you reach the middle of the wall you will be able to see that the countryside is swathed in yellow, as masses of wild flowers come into bloom. We will then cross over onto the Xishuiyu section.



Today's hike is quite special-part of the wall is under water! In 1974 China built the Xishuiyu Reservoir, and when the water level rose, some low-lying sections of the wall were submerged under water. Seen from the dam of the reservoir, this stately sunken wall is still visible under the water's smooth and glimmering surface. Following our hike we will drive back to our inn in Huanghuacheng village for the night.

Day 5: Huanghuacheng-Jiankou Trekking (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner - 3 to 4 hours of hiking) After waking up in the morning we will begin our drive to the Jiankou Great Wall, which should take around 3 hours or so. In order to hike on Jiankou, first we have to climb up a path for about 60 minutes to reach it. Our hike will today will take about 4 hours and will cover 10km/ 6 miles. Jiankou is translated as 'Arrow Nock' in English, for the shape of the mountain is like an arrow, with the collapsed ridge opening as its arrow nock. The Jiankou section is known for its ruggedness and wild beauty, and you will be in awe of the marvellous views it affords. As soon as we reach Jiankou we will see a deserted watchtower that gives you a panoramic view of the entire valley. In the early morning the view is priceless with its morning fog. This section of the wall is not well known by tourists, although if you see a picture of the Great Wall from exotic traveling magazines, chances are it is from Jiankou. This is the pinnacle of exotic Great Wall scenery.

This part of the wall is often empty, so you will have some peace and serenity on your hike today. Another highlight of Jiankou is the enemy observation tower known as, "Ying Fei

Dao Yang", so named because this watchtower was erected on the highest peak in the area, and eagles and hawks often perch on it. Although the majestic wall is slowly being conquered by small trees and brambles, but the view from the top is still stunning! Following our hike of Jiankou we will scale down the wall where we will spend the night at a farmer's inn. The farmer's family will prepare for you a dinner of traditional Chinese dishes.

Day 6: Jiankou-Mutianyu (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. 4 hours of hiking)

Today we scale the mountain to reach the Jiankou Great Wall. After hiking for about 2-3 hours we will cross over onto Mutianyu, a section of the wall that has been largely restored. Although it has a face-lift, it avoids the army of tourists that plague Badaling. Mutianyu offers some breath-taking views of the valley and wall below, and if you look to your right you'll see a large sign engraved in the side of the mountain encouraging you to "Cherish the teachings of Chairman Mao".

You can either hike, take a cable car or a toboggan ride (highly recommended, and lots of fun!) down to meet our driver. We will then drive to Gubeikou Great Wall to spend the night and sleep in Gubeikou Village. This will offer you a chance to experience the true lives of Chinese farmers. You'll have the chance to learn Chinese traditional paper-cutting and make your own dumplings.

Day 7: Gubeikou-Jinshanling (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. 10 km, 4-5 hours of hiking)



Gubeikou Great Wall occupies a strategically important location, which is difficult to access. Situated between Shanhaiguan Pass and Juyongguan Pass, and about 62 miles to Beijing, it is the bastion protecting the northern gateway to the capital. There are 14 beacon towers, 143 watchtowers, 16 strategic pass, three citadels and many other military constructions. Many of them are famous cultural relics, such as the Big Flower Beacon Tower of the Northern Qi Dynasty, Fairy Tower, General Tower, and the dominant Wangjing Tower.



After walking on Gubeikou we will cross over to Jinshanling. Much of the hiking that we will do on Jinshanling today is relatively easy, as much of the wall here is restored and the surface smooth. Jinshanling has five main passes and 67 watchtowers.

Following our day of hiking on the Great Wall we'll take you to have a gorgeous Chinese countryside-style dinner at Mr. Duan's Restaurant. Mr. Duan is a famous Great Wall

photographer and is the winner of several national photographing competitions. His wife and her niece will cook traditional Chinese dishes and dumpling for you. Mrs. Duan will serve you Kong Pao Chicken, Stewed beef and potato, Green Pepper and Pork, Fried Tofu in Spicy Sauce, Fried Egg Tomato, Sweet and Sour Chicken, and lots of vegetables (great for vegetarians), and soup. She changes her menu daily, so you may have different dishes from the above. What's more important is that all the vegetables she uses are planted in her yard, so it is organic and fresh! Rice and Chinese dumpling are also fresh and of genuine local flavour. Beer and other drinks are free!

Before it gets dark, we'll set up our tents and other equipment in a watch tower. We'll prepare the necessary camping facilities such as sleeping bags so you don't have to bring anything but yourself. If you prefer sleeping in a local hostel or a farmer's house, you certainly can without extra charge..

Day 8: Jianshanling-Second Valley (the West Wing of Simatai) –Beijing (Breakfast and Lunch, 8 km, 3 hours of hiking)



The first thing we'll do today is to watch the magnificent sunrise early in the morning. After a hearty breakfast we will resume our hike on Jinshanling's right wing, where we will hike until we reach Simatai West (aka Second Valley.) As we head west the wall will start to gradually deteriorate, making the hike progressively more challenging, but also interesting to observe and compare.

As there are relatively fewer tourists at the Second Valley part of the Jinshanling Great Wall, it is a good place to explore on foot. If

you are looking for breathtaking views with a relatively peaceful walk, then the Second Valley of Jinshanling can't be better, so we hope that you remembered to bring your camera! The Second Valley features a complicated and well preserved fortification system at Jinshanling. The Second Valley Great Wall meanders through fantastic natural scenery and connects to the Gubeikou Great Wall to the west.

In addition to the gorgeous scenery on your hike, you'll also get to see how the wall was designed for practical purposes, that being the defence against outer enemies and how the Great Wall was supposed to keep them out. There are 'obstacle-walls' built perpendicular to the parapets - a feature quite unique to the Second Valley part of Jinshanling Great Wall. These 'walls-within-walls' were used for defence against enemies who might have succeeded in scaling the outer wall. The steps of the Great Wall at Second Valley are rather steep and rocky with loose stones at times. It is important to choose comfortable footwear with a good grip and support for the feet.

After about 2-3 hours of hiking on Second Valley, we'll again meet up with our van and you'll be taken back to Beijing, where you will be dropped off at your hotel.

Day 9: Breakfast and full day to relax and enjoy Beijing. Night in a hotel

Day 10: Breakfast and transfer to the airport for a return flight back to London.

Day 11: Land in the UK

Training Event – Spring 2026 (exact dates will be confirmed in January 2026)

A training event is provided for all Great Wall of China participants. The day provides an opportunity for the whole team to get to know each other prior to your departure and to run through important information about the trip. It also gives you plenty of opportunity to ask questions and collect advice.

Food

During the hotel stay breakfast is included giving the option to explore the city and not be tied in to dinner in a set place. During the trek we provide breakfast, lunch and dinner. The food is excellent, plentiful and varied and prepared to a very high standard. We cater very well for vegetarians and for all special dietary requirements.

Flight details

We aim to book the very best flight for all our groups and we only use the very best airlines. The flights are protected by our Air Tour Operators Licence (ATOL 10222) and once booked we cannot alter the dates or flight times. Flight tickets are emailed out to all group members around 3 weeks prior to travel and it's best to leave one on your emails and print off 2 copies for the trip.

VISA

To legally enter China you must have a valid tourist VISA. This involves an online application form and sending your passport to the VISA office in London. The current cost of the VISA is £66.

We provide a detailed information sheet about the VISA in the Spring during the training event and run through the procedure.

Passport validity

Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months from the date of your visa application. If you have less than 6 months' validity on your passport, but have a valid visa, you should be able to enter China for the duration of that visa.

The Chinese authorities have confirmed they will accept British passports extended by 12 months by British Embassies and Consulates under additional measures put in place in mid-2014.

Insurance

It is vital that you have a comprehensive travel insurance policy that covers you when in China and there are a number of insurance policies on the market for careful consideration.

Inoculations

Before going to China you must be inoculated against Hepatitis A, Typhoid and Tetanus via your local G.P.

Baggage

We advise you to have two bags and to split your kit between them so that in the unlikely event of the airline misplacing one of your bags you will have enough kit to carry on. Also it is highly recommended that you wear your walking boots that you will be wearing on the trek onto the plane.

Currency

The unit of currency in China is the Yuan Renminbi and is widely available from your local currency stores and the Post Office.

Emergency Contact Number

Please ensure that you leave the following details with someone at home so that they can contact you in an emergency:

Jonathan Reilly: Tel: 01747 871564

Health Matters

Everybody should have with them a small personal first aid kit. Some things to include are:

A diarrhoea treatment and sachets of re-hydrating drink, high factor sun screen, some antiseptic, aspirin, ibuprofen or similar, safety pins, bandages, throat sweets, micropore tape, plasters, moleskin, blister treatment, and pain killers.

Other travel information

China uses different plug sockets to the UK so you will need a transformer to use the hotel plug sockets. This can easily be purchased in the UK prior to travel.

Kit Details

Boots: 3 season (spring-autumn) fabric boots are best, such as the Karrimor KSB range or the Berghaus Explorer variety, although there are plenty of other makes out there. They cost between £50 and £100 but are definitely worth it! In previous years participants have worn both fabric and leather boots and have found that fabric boots are warmer plus they fit your feet and break in quickly hence less pain! Boots are the one of the most important things to get right so please go to a reputable shop and book a boot fitting.

Waterproof: Please invest in a good waterproof jacket and trousers, although you'll be well above the cloud base for most of the expedition – a good waterproof acts as a wind proof and this is definitely needed.

Clothing: The two most important layers are the base layer and the outer layer (waterproof). The base layer is designed to wick moisture away from your body before you get cold and regulate your body temperature. Go to a camping store and you'll find a wide variety of base layer varieties. Buy 2 or 3 base layer tops if you want your tent partner to talk to you ever again.

If you need any further advice then give us a mail or speak to an experienced member of staff at your local camping

What's included

All our expeditions are 'all inclusive' this means that the cost covers all the accommodation, flights, flight tax, transfers, guides, porters and cooks + all food throughout your expedition. The price also covers the local training day. *The only costs **not included** are travel insurance, tips, lunch, dinner and drinks as per the itinerary above (this gives you plenty of opportunity to explore the cities and eating out is very inexpensive).

Costs and payment structure

The cost of the trip is **£2,795**. There is a £250 trip deposit (non-refundable) to book your place and the remaining balance is paid in instalments.

Trip deposit (at time of booking)	£250
1 st December 2025	£1,000
1 st February 2026	£600
1 st April 2026	£500
1 st June 2026	Balance payment

Trip organiser

The Great Wall of China trip is organised by Jonathan Reilly the company director of the British Expedition Company. Our worldwide treks and expeditions have been running since 2001 and all provide a fantastic experiences. We are a fully ATOL protected company (licence number 10222). Each group is led by a fully qualified experienced Guide assisted by porters and cooks.

How to reserve your place on the trip

To book a place on the trip simply return the reservation form with a £250 trip deposit (this is non-refundable or transferable) to Jonathan Reilly, British Expedition Company, Meriden House, Park Road, Tisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 6LF. Alternatively you can send through your trip reservation form via email and your trip deposit via internet banking to the following HSBC business bank account;

Account Name: TheBEC Limited,
Account Number: 62049414

Sort code: 40-40-14

Reference: **Your Name** (this is very important as we can link the payment with your reservation form)

On advancement of deposit for a booking on any of our trips or expeditions the deposit acknowledges that he/she has read and understands the below booking conditions and agrees to be bound by them.

If you have any questions or queries regarding this trip or would like any further information then please email Info@thebec.co.uk or call Jonathan on 01747 871564.

Reservation form follows on the next page



British Expedition Company
Reservation Form

Please fill in and email or print off and post with your deposit to:

Jonathan Reilly, British Expedition Company,
Meriden House, Park Road, Tisbury, Wiltshire SP3 6LF.

Full Name This must be exactly as is appears on your passport	Mr / Mrs / Miss / Other _____ First name: _____ Middle names (if applicable) _____ Surname _____	
Date of Birth		
Home Address		
Phone - Land line		
Phone - Mobile		
Email address 1 Email address 2		
Nationality		
Which Expedition and trip date do you prefer?	Expedition	
	Trip date	
Passport details	Passport number	
	Passport expiry	
Any special food requirements?		

Next of Kin / Emergency Contact

Name	
Relationship	
Address	
Telephone number (Land and Mobile)	

Sharing contact information

Your privacy is important. With your permission we would like to share your contact details in the departure information. This is so all team members can contact each other prior to departure.

Your details will only be shared with other clients on the same trip as yourself.

☐

Please tick this box to confirm that you give permission for your year of birth, email address and mobile number to be shared with the other clients on your trip.

Medical Details

Know allergies to food/medication/insects etc...

Do you have any specific medical conditions that we need to be aware of when you are away on expeditions?

Please give any additional information concerning your health that you think is necessary for us to know, especially in the case of an emergency.

Questionnaire

1. Briefly describe your reasons for wanting to attend the trip

2. Where did you find out about the trip?

3. Which description below best matches your level of fitness? (Tick or highlight)

☐ Very good level of fitness

☐ Quite strong level of fitness

- ☐ Normal fitness level e.g. can do a day walk in hills with a small rucksack
- ☐ Need to improve my fitness

4. Briefly describe your camping and walking experience...

Booking Conditions and Specific Information

All the flights and flight-inclusive holidays are 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.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate

The British Expedition Company recognises that hill walking, trekking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

1. All bookings are made with The British Expedition Company whose office is Meriden House, Park Road, Tisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 6LF, UK. Registered company number: 6957339

2. All our package expeditions are ATOL protected and our ATOL number from the Civil Aviation Authority is 10222.

Your Financial Protection

When you buy an ATOL protected flight or flight inclusive holiday from us you will receive an ATOL Certificate. This lists what is financially protected, where you can get information on what this means for you and who to contact if things go wrong.

We, or the suppliers identified on your ATOL Certificate, will provide you with the services listed on the ATOL Certificate (or a suitable alternative). In some cases, where neither we nor the supplier are able to do so for reasons of insolvency, an alternative ATOL holder may provide you with the services you have bought or a suitable alternative (at no extra cost to you). You agree to accept that in those circumstances the alternative ATOL holder will perform those obligations and you agree to pay any money outstanding to be paid by you under your contract to that alternative ATOL holder. However, you also agree that in some cases it will not be possible to appoint an alternative ATOL holder, in which case you will be entitled to make a claim under the ATOL scheme (or your credit card issuer where applicable)."

If we, or the suppliers identified on your ATOL certificate, are unable to provide the services listed (or a suitable alternative, through an alternative ATOL holder or otherwise) for reasons of insolvency, the Trustees of the Air Travel Trust may make a payment to (or confer a benefit on) you under the ATOL scheme. You agree that in return for such a payment or benefit you assign absolutely to those Trustees any claims which you have or may have arising out of or relating to the non-provision of the services, including any claim against us, the travel agent (or your credit card issuer where applicable). You also agree that any such claims may be re-assigned to another body, if that other body has paid sums you have claimed under the ATOL scheme."



3. The terms and conditions of all agreements made with the Company shall be subject to, and governed by, English Law.
4. In order to make a booking, complete and sign the Booking Form and post it to The British Expedition Company with your deposit. Unless the trip is full you will receive confirmation of booking and further details.
5. It is important to be aware that once your deposit/installments are paid, should you wish to cancel at any time thereafter, these are non-refundable/transferable. In addition the cancellation penalties detailed below will be applied. It is strongly recommended that you have suitable cancellation insurance coverage from the time of booking. It is a condition of the booking that clients follow the agreed payment plan to ensure that flights and permits can be purchased by the company at the appropriate time. The company has a right to cancel the booking if the client fails to pay the installment within 14 days of the agreed payment date (in this instance no refunds will be issued) or charge additional fees up to 10% of the total trip cost - this is at the discretion of the company.
6. Cancellation of a trip by the BEC will entitle you to a part refund unless cancellation has been forced by unforeseen government (or similar) intervention in which case costs incurred by the Company will be subtracted from any refund due. No other compensation will be allowable.
7. Cancellation of bookings must be notified in writing. The £250 trip deposit is non-refundable as are 100% of all installment and balance payments.
8. Whilst every effort will be made to adhere to the planned itinerary, it must be realised that in this type of adventurous travel, changes to the itinerary may occur for which the Company accepts no responsibility, however caused. The BEC will make every effort to inform you of any change. Your final itinerary may differ in respect of the places where you stay overnight. In particular it may be necessary to alter your itinerary at short notice due to adverse weather, mountain conditions, client or leader illness, road conditions, or to operating conditions imposed by owners and operators of accommodation, facilities, aircraft, vessels and other forms of transport. Should such conditions involve clients in extra costs such as accommodation, transportation and meals, such costs should be borne by the client.
9. The BEC cannot be held responsible for any missed connecting transport.
10. The Expedition Guides will do their utmost to ensure that any problems are solved for the benefit of the group as a whole. Signing the booking form signifies your acceptance of the Guides authority to make decisions affecting the group or individuals. For instance, he/she may require an individual to leave the group if he/she believes that person's health is at risk, if an illegal act is committed, or their behaviour becomes detrimental to the safety, enjoyment or well-being of the group. Should the Guide take such action, that person would not be entitled to any refund.
11. Please understand that there are certain hazards involved in climbing and trekking, which you must accept at your own risk. The Company will not be liable for any illness, injury or death sustained during an expedition, or course, nor will it be liable for any uninsured losses of your property.
12. The Company cannot be made liable for the consequences of strikes, industrial action, wars, riots, sickness, quarantine, government intervention, weather conditions, or other untoward occurrences.
13. It is a condition of booking, that you are adequately covered by insurance prior to departure, which must cover the cost of repatriation and evacuation if you become too ill to continue. Failure to provide a copy will result in the cancellation of your expedition.
14. Trip prices are based on an exchange rate of US\$1.40 - UK£1 and operating costs at the time of booking. The Company reserves the right to levy fuel and/or currency surcharges following currency fluctuations or operating costs beyond our control. We sincerely hope that surcharges will not be necessary, but in the unlikely event that they are, you may cancel your booking without penalty if the surcharge amounts to more than 10% of the cost of the trip.
15. Any air travel that is part of any trip is subject to the conditions as stipulated by the airline concerned and liability is limited in accordance with International Convention.
16. If the UK Foreign Office does not issue advice against travel, and you decide not to travel on the basis of a perceived threat or hazard, howsoever formed, will be interpreted as a voluntary cancellation and the charges set out in booking condition 8 applied.

17. Non-UK Nationals should consult their own government for advice on travel to the destination country and all countries transited en route.

18. Having made every effort to ensure correctness of the trip details and booklets we cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies, errors or omissions.

19. The Company can use photographs supplied by its Guides or members of the expedition for future marketing and publishing without further permission from those featured on the images. I also give my permission for my contact details to be shared with other clients booked on the same departure.

20. On advancement of deposit for a booking on any of our trips or expeditions the deposit acknowledges that he/she has read and understands the above booking conditions and agrees to be bound by them.