



China - Chengdu, Dujiangyan & Yaoji

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Team!

Congratulations on making the commitment to join one of our expeditions. Welcome to a truly amazing experience, both in the run up to and whilst on expedition. Adventure travel provides you with an opportunity to develop as an individual and gain valuable life skills.

We have designed this pack to help you prepare for the expedition and you should refer to it frequently. If you still have any questions at any stage, please do not hesitate to give us a call - we are here to support and guide you through the months leading up to departure.

Adventures by Camps International provide exceptional ethical travel experiences worldwide. Operating from offices on five continents, we deliver treks, climbs and challenges to schools, charity fundraisers, corporate teams, and small groups. We uniquely own our ground operations, employing over 150 staff worldwide.

Top Tip: The first key to a successful expedition is to read, digest and absorb all details contained in this travel pack.

2. Information on China



Location of China



National flag

China, officially the People's Republic of China, is a sovereign state located in East Asia. It is the world's most populous country. Its vast landscape encompasses grassland, desert, mountain ranges, lakes and rivers. The iconic Great Wall of China runs East to West across the country's North.

Population Over 1.3 billion

Capital Beijing

Currency Chinese Yuan (CNY)

Language Mandarin is the official language spoken in China

Time Local time is GMT + 8 hours

Climate The climate in China varies from region to region due to the size of the country. In the northeast the summers are hot and dry and the winters are freezing cold. The north and central regions have frequent bouts of rain coupled with hot summers and cold winters.

Food and drink Chinese cuisine has been established over thousands of years using a variety of styles originating from the diverse regions of China. The diversity of geography, climate and resources in each region has led to the evolution of what is called the 'Eight Cuisines – Shandong, Guangdong, Sichuan, Hunan, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian and Anhui. The staple foods of Chinese cooking include rice, noodles, vegetables, and sauces and seasonings.

General The giant panda is known as the 'national treasure' of China. According to the census of 2014, there are only 1,864 giant pandas alive in the wild. It is one of the rarest and most endangered species in the world. They mainly live in the Qin Mountains in Shaanxi Province, and the Min Mountains in Sichuan and Gansu provinces.

3. Your Expedition Experience

Personal Development

Our expeditions provide a unique opportunity to explore new cultures, experience a different way of life and challenge yourself in a safe and stimulating way. They are designed to help you develop knowledge, skills and abilities to complement your academic achievements as you progress into further education or employment. The most common outcome is for our participants to develop excellent interpersonal skills and self-confidence, regarded as essential by any college, university or future employer.

Our expeditions offer you the following opportunities:

- A life changing experience that will make you stand out on any future college, university or employment application.
- The chance to develop key personal skills through adventurous and challenging experiences supported by Camps International's structured, safe and professional practices.
- Practical experience of teamwork, which allows valuable development of team building skills such as working effectively and cohesively as a group.
- To interact with different communities, cultures and languages to gain a deep understanding of how other people live.
- To discover and explore an exciting and fascinating part of the world.

Learning Objectives & Setting Goals

Expeditions provide a learning environment that is completely different to anything you can experience in a classroom. At times, it can be overwhelming and therefore difficult to take in all you are experiencing. Setting objectives both as a group with your team and for your own personal development can really help get the most out of your time on expedition. We recommend taking the time to consider the goals you want to achieve, and your teachers and the expedition leader will endeavour to provide you with the opportunities for individual development and time for reflection on your achievements.

Challenges on Expedition

Some people sign up to the expedition without knowing who else will be joining them. Remember that this is a great opportunity to make new friends and support each other in the months leading up to and whilst on expedition. It is a really good idea to chat and get to know each other, as the expedition will be more rewarding if you travel with a group of newfound friends.

Homesickness

Individuals who are not used to being away from their family and friends often

experience this, no matter what their age or gender. Remember, you will be with other students and staff who will experience the same at some point, so you will learn to help each other through this period. If you do feel homesick, we advise you not to contact home. Speaking to loved ones on your 'down' days will cause you to feel even worse. Additionally, those at home will become very concerned for you. In our experience, homesickness only lasts for a short time and remember, whilst you start to feel better and get on with things, your friends and family back home are still stressed and anxious because of the last thing they heard. Try talking to those around you and remember that there will always be a member of staff on hand to chat to if you would prefer. It is important to try and stay focused on what you have set out to do; having the most amazing experience of your life!

Cultural Awareness

You are going to be spending time in local communities, most likely with a different culture to your own, so it is important to be culturally aware. As part of your overall cultural experience you will meet people every day from a very different culture and you are expected to be open-minded towards other beliefs and ways of life. There are reasons for the way people do things that may not be immediately apparent. Please ask your Leadership Team for anything you should be aware of, such as local customs and any potentially upsetting behaviours. One of the most crucial things you must do is to ask permission before taking anyone's photograph to avoid annoying or even worse, insulting them.

Getting the most out of your expedition

We have spent years working to continually improve our expeditions to ensure we provide the best possible experiences to our participants. That said, the person who has the most control over what you get out of the expedition is you. We ask that you approach our expeditions with the spirit of adventure, a desire to learn, the energy to get stuck in, an open mind and willingness to try new things – then you really will have the best expedition possible.

The Role of your Teacher

The teachers on expedition are there in a caring, pastoral capacity and will monitor your welfare and happiness whilst away. The teachers will be working together to ensure you not only have the best time possible, but also achieve the objectives of the expedition in a safe and enjoyable way. It is important to remember that although you will have several adults around to support you on expedition, you will be responsible for your own actions in terms of keeping yourself healthy and respecting the people around you and the environment you are in.

The Role of your Camps International Leader

You will have a leader who will be with you all the way through your expedition. They are there to make sure the expedition runs smoothly and make sure what you are doing is being done in an enjoyable but safe way.

4.Documentation, Insurance & Money

Passport Information

Your passport must be current with a minimum of **six** months left to run from the date of your return from China before it expires, and must have adequate empty pages for stamping. Please note, you will be refused on the flight by the airline if your passport does not meet these requirements.

If you have recently renewed your passport, you must ensure you also carry the passport in which your UAE residency visa is.

It is advisable to take a photocopy of your passport with you when you travel – make sure you keep it separate from your actual passport. It is also a good idea to leave a copy at home. Normally your passport is collected from you on arrival in country for safe keeping so you will just need to carry around your photocopy.

Visa Applications

Obtaining the necessary visa for your son/daughters expedition to China is the responsibility of the parents. Please ensure the application for the visa is made well in advance. Any delays, or not obtaining the necessary visa will jeopardise your son/daughters trip to China. Please ensure that you check your nationality and that it is possible to obtain a visa.

According to the Law of the People's Republic of China concerning the administration of Foreigners Entering and Leaving the Country, foreign tourists must apply for visas at China's Foreign Affairs offices, Consulates or other organisations authorised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Note: Passports should be valid for at least 6 months before the intended date of travel.

For more information: www.dubai.china-consulate.org

People's Republic of China Consulate in Dubai:

Villa No. 14, Street 7a, Community 357
Umm Al Sheif Road
Safa 2 Area
Dubai, UAE

Tel: +971 4 394 4733
Sunday – Thursday 0900 – 1200

Alongside the required documents that the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China requires to process the visa application (listed on the above website), you will need to provide two invitation letters. Camps International will provide one of these and the school will provide the other.

The above information is a guide and embassies can update their policies on applying for tourist visas at any time. Please continually check online or contact the Embassy directly for up to date information / regulations and requirements.

Obtaining the necessary visa is the parents' responsibility and Camps International cannot be held responsible for any participant who fails to obtain a tourist visa.

Insurance

A blanket travel insurance policy is provided as part of your expedition. The insurance is provided by Campbell Irvine.

Below are a few points you need to be aware of:

- The policy does cover pre-existing medical conditions whilst on expedition as long as you are not travelling against medical advice.
- Pre-existing medical conditions that are unstable at point of booking may not be covered for cancellation prior to departure.
- If you suffer from depression, eating disorders, anxiety or similar you may not be covered for this, please discuss with Campbell Irvine the cover in place for you.

If for any reason the policy does not cover you, we highly recommend that you obtain appropriate travel insurance that does, prior to departure. It is your responsibility to inform the Camps International office of the details of your policy so these can be shared with your expedition leadership team in the case of an emergency.

If you wish to check if you are covered please contact the Camps International office for Campbell Irvine's details.

Valuables

Carrying large sums of money around and producing high value notes in public should be avoided at all times. Similarly, do not wear expensive looking jewellery or watches. If you leave property (even if it is of minimal value) lying around unattended, it may be stolen. Keep your personal belongings locked up in the secure facilities provided or keep them with you at all times. We accept no responsibility for any personal items or money lost during your stay. Please check your Home Contents Policy before departure regarding their claims procedure.

Money

The currency in China is the Chinese Yuan. Please liaise with the school for the recommended spending money amount. Some schools choose to have a maximum amount for each student.

Students should bring \$80 or the Chinese Yuan equivalent for the insurance

excess in case of emergency.

Pre- existing Medical Conditions

You should by now have completed the medical section of the online application form. If there are any points of concern to us, your declaration will be referred to our company doctor. Concerns may arise from medication; medical history or current medical status whereby we need to be assured that your child's taking part in the expedition would not put them, or those with your son/daughter, at undue risk.

It is important that you not only declare any medical conditions that you may have but that you keep us up to date on any changes in the lead up to departure.

Not declaring medical problems means they are more likely to become an issue whilst on expedition that could result in them missing out on elements of the programme or even result in them being repatriated back to their home country.

Notwithstanding the advice given, the responsibility for your child's own medical welfare and fitness with respect to taking part in the expedition rests with you and with your own family doctor, who must remain the primary source of advice to you. Our aim is to make sure that such advice is well informed. When our company doctor gives such advice, it does not imply or impart any obligation on Camps International or on our company doctor and we cannot be held responsible for any decisions that you may take based on such advice or on any outcomes that affect your child medically.

5. Health & Medical

Prior to Departure

Vaccinations

At least 6 weeks prior to departure you will need to consult your doctor to work out a vaccination schedule. Please make your doctor aware that as part of your expedition you will be working closely with local people, staying and working in rural areas.

For advice on the recommended vaccinations for China please visit the NHS Fit for Travel website:

<https://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations/asia-east/china>

Please be aware that we are not medical experts, so you must seek professional advice from your doctor or a travel clinic on the above. These medical experts will make recommendations based on your medical history, we cannot.

Fitness for the Expedition

Although you don't need to be an Olympic athlete to take part in our expeditions you do need a good level of general fitness. Being in a new adventurous environment is physically challenging and adapting to a new climate puts your body under more strain than usual. Ensuring you have a good level of fitness and undertaking some form of exercise 2-3 times a week will mean your participation in the expedition is a lot more enjoyable and you will get a lot more out of it. Fitness is naturally important and the fitter students are, the more they will enjoy the expedition. We advise all students to do some extra walking or some kind of aerobic activity in the months leading up to the trip.

On Expedition

Dehydration

Dehydration is extremely common so it is more than likely you will experience it at some point during your stay. The cause is very simple: your 'liquid input is less than liquid

output'. Normally your body will tell you when you are thirsty. It is very important to maintain a good level of hydration by being proactive about your liquid intake. The symptoms of dehydration vary between individuals and there are many symptoms seemingly unrelated such as fatigue, depression, headaches, stomach upset and fever. If you suffer from any of these symptoms, you must drink more water.

A sensible recommendation is to drink a minimum of two litres of water per day and more if you are doing community work or a physical activity. Energy boosting glucose/saline rehydration drinks are recommended and are readily available from local pharmacies or supermarkets. They are effective at speeding up the recovery process of dehydration or avoiding it all together. Dehydration can happen within an hour in the sun or over several days.

Think Prevention

- Be aware of your liquid intake at all times
- Drink plenty of fresh water
- Wear sun protection at ALL times including hat, t-shirt and sunglasses
- If you feel too hot: slow down, drink water and seek shade. Dehydration can also be experienced even during seemingly overcast periods. Do not underestimate the seriousness of dehydration; even mild cases can put you in hospital on a drip.

Heat Exhaustion/Dehydration

Dehydration or a salt deficiency can cause heat exhaustion. It is essential that you can recognise the symptoms in yourself and others. It is characterised by fatigue, lethargy, headaches, feeling faint and muscle cramps. To prevent heat exhaustion, it is essential that you drink enough fluids. Do not wait until you feel thirsty to drink, as your body will already be dehydrated. Dark urine and not needing to urinate are also indicators that you are dehydrated.

Sunstroke/Heatstroke

Sunstroke is a severe form of dehydration, which can occur when your core body temperature is raised by as little as half a degree usually due to dehydration. Symptoms include a lack of sweating, delirium, fever and possible unconsciousness. Other symptoms can include aggressive behaviour, lack of coordination and lethargy. Treatment normally involves hospitalisation and intense rehydration. Ensure you follow the guidelines for preventing dehydration above.

Sunburn

Sunburn can range from a mild irritation to severe burns, which may cause further complications. The effects of excessive sun are well documented and most people are aware of the long-term effects of increased exposure to the sun's rays. Protection from sunburn is achieved by wearing suitable clothing, high factor sun creams and effective head and eye protection.

If Medical Intervention is required

For students who are admitted as inpatients for hospital treatment, their parents/carers are immediately advised by a Camps International representative and kept constantly informed of any developments. They are also given the contact details of the staff member staying with the student.

Personal Hygiene and Health

During your stay, it is important to understand some of the changes your body will go through during your acclimatisation period. It is important to adjust to this new climate in order to avoid feeling run down.

It is important to wash and shower frequently during your stay, preferably with a medicated soap. Whilst you are working or playing, your body will sweat up to 10 times more than you would ordinarily. Small cuts, stings, bites etc. should be treated with the greatest of care and attention to avoid infection. Do not leave wounds dirty and uncovered. After showering (minimum once daily) check yourself and clean even the slightest wound or bite thoroughly with iodine or an antiseptic wash and cover if necessary to avoid tropical ulcers and possible infection. Wear shoes at all times. Going barefoot might seem to be a good idea, but it will result in stubbed and infected feet that may put you out of action for days or even weeks. Ensure that you apply an effective insect repellent (ideally containing 50% DEET) at dusk and dawn. Avoid using heavily perfumed toiletries and cosmetics as they can attract insects. Be aware that wearing closed shoes with open/uncovered wounds on your feet is asking for a painful infection.

It is important to be mindful that bacteria grows at a fast rate in heat so do not share water bottles or eating utensils with anyone whilst away. You should also ensure that you regularly and thoroughly clean your water bottle. If you are feeling unwell or have any cuts and blisters report it immediately to your Expedition Leader who will be able to complete an assessment. They will make an experienced, considered decision on your condition and will advise you of how to care for yourself.

6. Your Safety

Safety and Risk Assessments

With prevention being the primary objective, risk assessments are produced and continually reviewed to address day-to-day life in and around each of our destinations. On arrival, you will undergo a short orientation during which the expedition leadership team highlight key risks and outline details about our emergency procedures.

Medical Systems

First Stage:

Expedition Leader – your team leader who will accompany you throughout the expedition and is fully qualified in first aid procedures, has a comprehensive first aid kit and is experienced in leading young people.

Second Stage:

Doctor Assessment – by a local clinic or nearest hospital. More often, and depending on the seriousness of the problem, you will be taken to the local recommended hospital for treatment. We have identified hospitals to deal with incidences relating to whichever location you are at in your itinerary. Typically, this support is required to deal with minor ailments and to prescribe medication.

Third Stage:

Hospital Admittance – for each of our locations we have identified medical facilities in close proximity.

Emergency Support

Emergency Support will be provided by the Emergency Assistance Provider we have in place as part of your personal travel insurance. Please ensure that you have these contact details with you in case of emergency. Following any incident our leadership staff are directly responsible for maintaining an accident logbook and illness/injury record. All significant incidents are reported to the Camps International office.

A thorough Risk Assessment is carried out for all activities and our preventative procedures and systems are based on these findings. During the expedition, each group carries an extensive medical pack to complement your own and we have rehearsed and tested procedures to deal with an emergency.

Security

Travel anywhere in the world requires that extra attention be paid to the security of personal possessions. Theft is particularly common in airports and big cities where opportunists make a living from the carelessness of tourists and large groups. While we do what we can to ensure the security of students baggage, and our guide will brief the team, students should ensure that personal possessions are safe and secure throughout the expedition. Rucksacks should be tightly secured with their contents concealed from view. Do not attach items to the outside of your rucksack, as these are likely to disappear. Important items such as money should be carried in a money belt or inside zip-pockets, particularly when touring cities and towns. It is recommended you lock your kit bag with a small padlock for all flights.

Travel Advice

We also recommend that you familiarise yourself with the up to date travel advice for the areas you are visiting. We constantly monitor these sites and it is useful to do so in order to keep abreast of ongoing issues.

7. Life on Expedition

Behaviour on Expedition

Whilst our expeditions are not run as strict expeditions, there are certain guidelines and regulations that Camps International insist on applying in order to minimise any negative impacts of tourism and ensure safety standards are maintained.

We don't want to intimidate you with a long list of rules and regulations. This is your expedition - we want you to enjoy every minute of it. Every member of the expedition team must sign and return to us the Code of Conduct, the leadership team accompanying the expedition we also be required to sign a code of conduct. These documents are essential to ensuring a safe expedition.

Disregard or consistent failure to adhere to these regulations will result in action taken by the lead teachers and Camps staff. In severe circumstances this could lead to expulsion from the expedition and possible repatriation to the UAE at your own expense.

Communications with Teams

Each expedition leader carries a mobile phone and is issued with a local SIM card. The office is kept up to date with expedition activities as they occur and will notify parents of any hospitalisations or incidents.

Food and Drink

Students will enjoy a varied diet throughout the expedition in China. From sampling local cuisine to enjoying western dishes, all dietary requirements will be catered for. If you have any concerns, or have not highlighted a dietary requirement on the medical form, please do get in contact with us.

All bottled/filtered water and meals will be provided on the trip and are included in the trip cost.

Mobile Phones

Although we appreciate most students have a mobile phone, we do ask you to consider the following when deciding whether or not to take it on the expedition:

- Some schools have a no mobile phone policy: please check with your teacher
- Not all locations have signal so it will not be possible to contact home that often
- The cost of calling/texting home can be very expensive – we have a \$1400 record!
- Being in contact with home increases the likelihood of homesickness and can add to any existing homesickness
- It distracts from the expedition – and we don't want you to miss a moment of that!
- We will update your parents if you are unwell. Teachers and leaders will have mobile phones so parents can get a message to you if necessary

No News is Good News!

We work on a 'no news is good news' policy, which means we will not be guaranteeing updates on each expedition. If something happens that parents/carers need to know about, the Camps office will call. We work on this basis to ensure all our focus and energy is on the expedition to ensure we provide safe and enjoyable experiences for those that travel with us.

Tipping

Tips are included in the total cost of the expedition and will be made on behalf of the students by the Camps leader at the end of the trip.

First Aid

All of our expedition leaders hold a current first aid certificate. The expedition leader will be equipped with a comprehensive first aid kit containing a range of medicines and medical equipment. To compliment this kit, students are asked to carry a small personal first aid kit.

Remote Area Warning

Being away from populated areas in remote regions, with difficult access, carries certain risks. This expedition will take students away from normal emergency services and medical facilities. Therefore, the expedition will need to be self-reliant in terms of first-aid. However, in case of serious injury to students, which requires hospital treatment, it has to be accepted by you that getting your son/daughter to hospital may take longer than at home, which may impede their ensuing recovery. Given the constraints of communications and local infrastructure, not all regions have the ability to respond to

requests for emergency evacuation from remote areas, assuming such a call for help could be placed. Teachers and the Camps leader will carry a list of the nearest medical facilities to each location.

Feedback

At the end of your expedition you will be asked to complete a feedback questionnaire. We really value all the feedback you can give us - we want to know how you found the expedition and the areas you enjoyed or did not enjoy. This information is essential for us to continue to improve our expeditions. It is also essential that if you feel something is not right then tell us **during** the trip and don't wait until you get home afterwards – usually we can remedy it very easily!

8.Dress Code & Kit List

Dress Code

Remember to dress for your environment. During the heat of the day cover up by wearing loose fitting clothes, a hat and sunglasses. You should also use a high factor sun block, especially if sunbathing to avoid sunburn and sunstroke. Please be aware that some medications can cause an increased photosensitivity to sunlight, increasing the likelihood of sunburn.

Kit List

You should have this document accompanied with this pack. Please keep in mind that we are continually reviewing our recommended kit lists so we may need to make small changes. However, we will of course update you on any changes.

The list we provide is a guide only based on the expertise and feedback of staff and

students who have been there, done it and carried it around!

Finally remember, there will always be someone close at hand if you need support and never hesitate to ask for help if you need it. Equally, assure your family that they can contact us at any time if they need to. If you have any queries regarding the information provided in this pack then please do not hesitate to contact us.