



EXPERIENCE 5,000 YEARS OF CHINESE TRADITION, NATURE & ADVENTURE

Join us on this exceptional fourteen day expedition that takes you from the classic sites of the Capital of China to remote Tibetan villages in Western Sichuan. If there were a perfect way to immerse yourself in the rich cultural diversity and natural wonders of China and Freeland's Wildlife Protection and Community Development Program, this is your trip.

Prepare yourself for a unique and challenging experience as you traverse the length and breadth of China on a journey that includes China's unparalleled highlights - the Forbidden City, the Great Wall, the "Terra Cotta Soldiers," endangered Pandas and Snow Leopards - and a visit to Freeland's Camp high on the Tibetan Plateau to restore an ancient Tibetan Trail. The Camp is located at the Yunhe Center for Nature-Based Learning and Sustainable Community Development.

Enrich your life by interacting with local cultures that until recently have had limited contact with the outside world; try new things you have never done before; help restore a lifeline for a remote Tibetan village; learn about efforts to save endangered species and habitats – all designed to help you explore the relationship between man and nature.



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Destinations

Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. Combining both modern and traditional architecture, Beijing is a megacity rich in history and Chinese cultures. Beijing is China's political, cultural, and educational center.

Chengdu is the capital of Sichuan province, the hometown of the Panda. It is a famous historical and cultural city with a history spanning over 3,000 years. Archaeological discoveries at the Sanxingdui and Jinsha sites have established that the Chengdu region was inhabited over four thousand years ago and was the center of one of China's most important early cultures.

Xi'an is the capital of Shaanxi province. It was named a world historical city by UNESCO and one of the nine ancient capitals of the world. Xi'an has a large Muslim community, with 50,000 Hui Muslims. Two thousand

years ago, Xi'an was the capital of ancient China (Han Dynasty) and served as the starting point of the ancient Silk Road. Different kinds of merchandise traveled along the famous Silk Road which stretched from China through India, Asia Minor (Turkey), up through Mesopotamia to Egypt, on the African continent, to Greece and Rome. The greatest value of the Silk Road was the exchange of culture, art, religion, language, science, architecture – the basic elements of civilization.

Wolong Panda Nature Reserve & Research Centre - Wolong National Nature Reserve is a protected area located near the Aba Tibetan and Qiang minority communities in the Sichuan province of China. The reserve was established in 1963 and is the leading Panda habitat with nearly 150 wild pandas living in the region. The nature reserve is also home to other endangered species including snow leopards, red pandas and golden monkeys. In June 1980, the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda was established with joint efforts of WWF and the Chinese government.

Danba Zhonglu Village where The Freeland Nature Camp is located was created by Dragon Expeditions in 2015. The program is designed to try to achieve a balance between nature and modernity, where traditional peoples share their ancient wisdom with camp visitors, and visitors engage in sustainable environmental development and protection programs.

Trip Highlights

- Visit the Great Wall, Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven
- See China's First Emperor and the Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an
- Learn about the unique Muslim culture in Xi'an and the history of the famous Silk Road
- Visit the Endangered Panda in its native habitat
- Experience the unique Chinese & Tibetan cultures
- Participate in a community project in the Tibetan region to help the locals

Program Itinerary

Day 1 Arrival in Beijing



Flights from the U.S. arrive the next day in Beijing due to the time change.

The group will be picked up from airport by the guide and transported to your Beijing four star hotel. Have a free evening and good rest adjusting to the new time zone.

Notes:

Overnight: hotel

Meals: Chinese food

Day 2 Beijing – Forbidden City , Temple of Heaven and Hutong Tour



On your second day we will visit Tiananmen Square and the magnificent Forbidden City in the morning and the Temple of Heaven in the afternoon. The Temple of Heaven was built in 1420 A.D during the Ming Dynasty to offer sacrifices to Heaven.

After that, we'll have a Hutong Tour. Hutongs are fascinating ancient city alleys or lanes typical of early Beijing, where there were once several thousand surrounding the Forbidden City. The Hutongs you'll visit were built during the Yuan (1206-1341), Ming (1368-1628) and Qing(1644-1911) dynasties.

Notes:

Overnight: hotel

Meals: Chinese food

Day 3 Beijing - Great Wall of China



We will visit the Mutianyu Great Wall where it is less touristy, walk 1000 steps up to the Great Wall and walk along the top imagining great invading hordes. The construction of this section was started in the mid-6th century during China's Northern Dynasties (386 - 581) and what now remains is from the restoration made during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). It has served as a northern barrier of what is now Beijing 1,500 years. You will take a cable car up the hill and toboggan down.

Notes:

Overnight: hotel

Meals: Chinese food

Day 4 Beijing – XiAn



Take an early 5 hour trip on the famous high speed bullet trains from Beijing to XiAn where you will be picked by your guide from the station and escorted to your youth hostel.

Enjoy a relaxing afternoon walking tour around XiAn the ancient capital of China and learn the history in the home of the famous Silk Road.

Notes:

Overnight: hostel

Meals: Chinese food

Day 5 Xian Terracotta Army



Just outside of XiAn visit the world famous Terra Cotta Soldiers museum and the Mausoleum grounds of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China.

Take the late afternoon 4 hour high speed train ride from Xian to Chengdu traveling the 643 kilometers at 300 km/hour. You will be picked up by your guide from the train station and escorted to your 4 star hotel in Chengdu.

Notes:

Overnight: hotel

Meals: Chinese food

Day 6 Chengdu – Giant Panda Breeding Center in Wolong -- Mt Siguniang



This day's journey will take you up onto the Tibetan Plateau and deep into the ancient Tibetan Kingdom of Kham. An early start is required as Rilong is over 250km from Chengdu. After an hour or so there will be a brief stop at the town of Yenzhing (Chinese: Yingxiu), which was devastated by an 8.0 Richter scale earthquake in 2008. On the way, you will stop for lunch at Wolong (Mandarin for sleeping dragon). Immediately after lunch visit the Giant Panda Breeding Center in Wolong to experience pandas close-up and personal.



The Wolong Valley is the prime Giant Panda habitat in China. As you travel deeper into the Mountains of Kham, the scenery becomes more impressive, the steep sided green hills are dotted with picturesque Tibetan villages.

After climbing the final stretch of 40km the tour will reach the Balang pass at 4,520m. Here it is possible to get your first view of Bumoshi Mountain. The region is referred to as the 'Oriental Alps.' From the pass the road sweeps down to the Tibetan town of Rilong, where you will eat and stay at a guesthouse.

Notes:

Overnight: guesthouse

Meals: Chinese food

Day 7 Rilong – Danba Zhonglu (Tibetan Village)



In the morning we will travel approximately 3 hours to Danba in Zhonglu. Our group will receive a traditional welcoming by the host families. You will then be taken to your Tibetan guesthouse where you can settle in and rest. After lunch we will divide into small groups and walk around the village and get to know the life and culture here. We'll visit and talk with the local Tibetan families along the old trail and learn the history of the trails.

Notes:

Overnight: Tibetan guesthouse Max Altitude: 2,000m

Day 8 – 10 Danba Zhonglu Community Projects



Project: Building a Trail for the Village

Mountain trails are the lifeblood of Tibetan Villages. You will participate in helping the villagers to build a trail.

You'll learn the traditional techniques of building trails and how to use the ancient tools from local craftsman. Also you'll begin to pick up a few simple Tibetan words. Over these 3 days, you will work alongside local villagers and learn how to build mountain trails during the day, and in the evening participate in group discussions - learn to draw trail maps and conduct research on specific features of physical geography which affect the village.

Other cultural exchange programs during your stay include:

- Learning some Tibetan words from the locals.
- Learning the traditional Tibetan embroidery and print prayer flag using traditional Tibetan method.
- Singing and dancing with the local villagers.
- Campfire celebration



Day 11 Danba – Chengdu

In the morning we will board a shuttle bus and travel back to Chengdu, where you will stay at a four star hotel.

The evening will be free time with a group dinner.

Notes:

Overnight: Hotel Meals: Chinese food

Day 12 Chengdu



Spend a day experiencing one of China's great inland cities. This city of 14 million is the capital of the Sichuan Province. Chengdu's history dates back over 3,000 years when it served as the capital of the Shu Kingdom.

After a leisurely mid-morning, participate in a Chinese cooking class complete with shopping in the local markets and cooking your own group lunch under the guidance of a leading Sichuan chef.

In the afternoon take a private tour of the Jinsha Site Museum, the most important archeological discovery in China this century. The museum holds relics of gold, bronze, stone and ivory from the ancient Shu Kingdom that flourished over 3,000 years ago in Chengdu.

Finally after soaking up the extraordinary Chengdu Culture enjoy a final celebration Sichuan dinner together with your guides.

Day 13 Chengdu to the U.S.

Prepare to say goodbye to your guides at the airport and board a return flight from Chengdu to the U.S. to complete a trip filled with memories, accomplishments and appreciation of different cultures.

Trip Dates

The expedition is 14 days long including travel. Freeland's Nature Camp Expedition dates are as follows:

Fall dates are available for those groups interested in traveling in September and October. 2019 Summer Dates are:

June 15 – June 29

June 29 – July 13

July 13 – July 27

July 27 – August 10

August 10 – August 24

Trip Costs

The full trip cost is \$3,975 USD including accommodation, transportation, meals, guides, entrance fees, project fee and the flights from Los Angeles. The cost is for groups of ten or more. Groups less than ten add \$200. Cost include China VISA fees, but do NOT include passport fees, personal insurance, shopping expenses and other personal requirements.

Reserve Your Trip

E-mail Contact: camps@freeland.org

Phone: 1-310-301-6686

Trip Reservations can be made by sending a \$500 non-refundable deposit to the address below. Full payment is due no later than 30 days prior to your departure date.

Payments

Make out your check to **Freeland Nature Camps'** and mail to 1536 W. 25th Street, No. 335, San Pedro, California 90732-4402.

Trip Preparedness

Accommodations

You will experience a mixture of different types of accommodations. In Beijing and Chengdu, you will stay at four star hotels. In XiAn you will have the opportunity to experience an international youth hostel.

Boys and girls are given separate lodging.

In the remote villages along the way, you will be staying at traditional Tibetan guesthouses run by the locals.



Meals

Mostly Chinese style meals served with rice and come as separate vegetable and meal dishes.

Breakfast normally consists of Chinese plain porridge, bread, buns, eggs, sausages and etc.

Lunch will be quite simple and limited on options but your guide will make sure the food is tasty and suitable for your trip.

Dinner is normally ordered as a group and you can order several different dishes to share with your group.

Upon request, we could arrange sandwich & Pizza meals.

Trip Difficulties

Physical rating: moderate

Insurance

Our clients are required to apply for insurance at their home country with international coverage. This insurance policy is secondary to your existing health insurance policy. Dragon Expeditions carries a Professional Indemnity Policy of \$3.25 million USD.

Guides

Private English speaking guided tours throughout the whole itinerary. The guide ratio is 1: 7.

Health

Routine Immunizations, if you have any discomfort regarding headache, nausea & dizziness, loss of appetite, fatigue, shortness of breath, disturbed sleep, general feeling of malaise, please inform your guide.

China VISA

Travelers from the United States will require a Chinese VISA which will be provided by the tour once we receive your passport. A Dragon Expeditions will issue the VISA invitation letter. Allow seven days for issuance. VISA and passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the dates of travel.

Freeland Nature Camps

Surviving Together – *Freeland's Wildlife Protection and Community Development Program*

Freeland Nature Camps provide real life learning experiences that explore how man can live in harmony with nature. Participants learn hands-on field ecology, large mammal protection, forest preservation, outdoor adventure, and living interactions with local cultures. With current camp programs in Zhonglu, China and Khao Yai National Park in Thailand, and camps in development at Ranthambhore and Corbett National Parks in India, at Masai Mara National Park in Kenya; Kruger National Park in South Africa, and the Pantanal in Brazil, the Freeland Nature Camp program provides a global platform for youth conservation education.

The Zhonglu Forest School is a laboratory for exploring sustainable living in the Tibetan conservation area of Zhonglu, China. Founded in 2015, The youth Forest School is a multi-purpose platform for rural revitalization. Based upon four community pillars: Local Wisdom – farming and architecture; Local Art – crafts, painting and play; Outdoor Education – environmental education, survival learning and nature appreciation; and Community Construction – village infrastructure; along with training programs presented for sustainable community development. To date youth from 20 countries have participated in the Zhonglu Forest School programs.

Freeland Program Offices



SURVIVING TOGETHER PROGRAM

Improving Front-Line Protection | Developing Wildlife Monitoring Systems
Strengthening Protected Area Management | Empowering Local Communities



ABOUT

Since the program began in 1999, Surviving Together has developed a comprehensive approach to conserving protected areas and their biodiversity, bringing together local rangers and reformed poachers as unlikely allies. Through these collaborative efforts, the program addresses the root causes of environmental degradation and bolsters protection on the front lines of conservation, where it is needed most. Surviving Together also educates teachers and children to ensure the lessons learned will continue to reap positive benefits from healthy eco-systems for decades to come.

WHERE WE WORK

In Thailand, the focal site for Surviving Together is the Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai (DPKY) Forest Complex, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2005. The site comprises five protected areas, covering more than 6,000 square kilometers across six provinces. This area is a refuge for a number of threatened species, such as the Indochinese tiger, clouded leopard, Asian elephant, pangolin, and Malayan sunbear.



COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Surviving Together gives local communities, too often marginalized, a voice in how to best manage and protect the precious natural world in their backyards. It also unites them with park officials, previously perceived as the enemy, in a spirit of cooperation. It's a strategy that is a win-win for both biodiversity and local communities. The result is a sustainable park protection system that can be adapted to almost any terrestrial or marine protected area around the world. Proving its versatility, the program has already operated in Thailand, Myanmar, and Cambodia.



Southeast Asia is home to an estimated 20% of the world's plant, animal, and marine species, representing a globally important stronghold for threatened and endangered species. But for how much longer? This remarkable biodiversity is now under threat from a variety of forces, such as climate change, poaching, illegal logging, and encroachment.

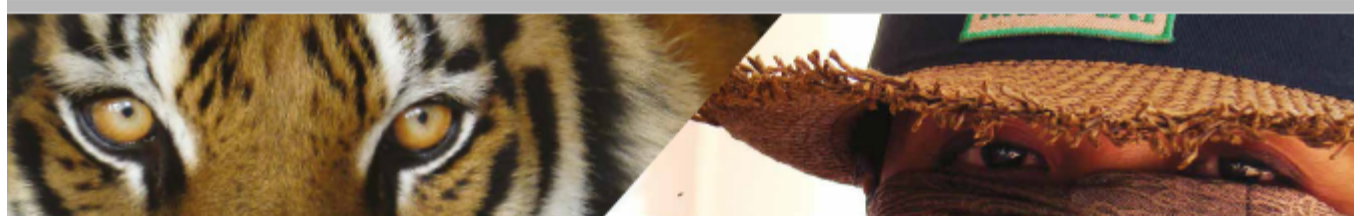


Limited resources, capacity and monitoring systems are among the many challenges facing the front-line rangers tasked with defending Southeast Asia's protected areas. Well-organized and dangerous poaching gangs exploit these weaknesses, and, as forests deteriorate, locals become trapped in a vicious cycle of over-exploitation and diminishing economic opportunities that has a disastrous effect on the eco-systems, wildlife and, ultimately, human welfare.



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Join us on    via freeland.org
Share your thoughts on how to protect endangered wildlife via
ithink-now.org or finfreethai.org



Camp Qualifications & Accreditation

Dragon Expeditions has over 15 years of experience managing group nature tours in China and we understand the importance of risk management and safety precautions.

Qualification & Certification



Member of the Red Cross Society of China



Member of China Mountaineering Association



Wilderness Advanced First Aid Training Certificate



Member of Sichuan Mountaineering Association



Senior Alpine Guide of China and France



Member of Chinese Mountain Rescue Team

Membership & Accreditation



Member of 1% FOR THE PLANET

PROUD PARTNER



leave no trace™
CENTER FOR OUTDOOR ETHICS

Member of Leave No Trace



Member of ECOPEACE ASIA

Freeland is Proud to Partner with Dragon Expeditions on ‘Surviving Together’ – Freeland’s Wildlife Protection and Community Development Program

Freeland is proud to partner with Dragon Expeditions who shares our commitment to habitat protection and sustainable community development. Dragon Expeditions is one of the few travel agencies that lead tours in China’s Tibetan region; it is their mission to use tourism as a tool to promote sustainable development for these local communities by focusing on environmental protection and cultural preservation. With 15 years of experience in eco-tourism, all of their in-depth tours and projects are consciously geared so that tourists and volunteers can enjoy authentic cultural experiences while being ethically responsible and benefitting local communities. By tailoring their programs to satisfy both their clients and the community they serve they share Freeland Camp’s mission to practice social sustainability and maintain high environmental standards.

Freeland Nature Camps are a Non-Profit Program

Freeland is a registered U.S. non-profit NGO. Revenues generated from the Nature Camp program are used to address Freeland’s core mission of habitat protection, community development and reducing and ultimately eliminating trafficking of endangered species.

We partner with organizations like Dragon Expeditions that share our values. Dragon Expeditions puts the welfare of the local Tibetan community first and any revenues they generate from their programs are reinvested to address their long term social goals.

Both Freeland Nature Camps and Dragon Expeditions welcome cooperation in various fields to further our core missions - either with international travel companies, NGO’s or academic institutions. We are interested in potential opportunities to cooperate in endangered species protection, sustainable development of rural areas and conservation of the environment in remote regions throughout the world.

Freeland's Schools & Academic Institutions Program

Freeland Nature Camps are education without boundaries – youth of all ages from 12 - 24 are encouraged to learn through intimately “experiencing” nature. Freeland Nature Camps in remote locations around the world like the Yunhe Tibetan Centre, create a space for young people to develop a sense of curiosity about nature and proactively engage in activities that provide a positive impact. Freeland also designs nature focused education programs specifically for academic & research institutions.

Freeland's Volunteer & Partnership Support Program

Freeland Nature Camps provide the opportunity to experience diverse cultures, nature-based learning and community development projects. We can customize various forms of community engagement for volunteers that have a desire to participate in community development projects and experience true local cultures around the world. Find out more about the possibilities of working with Freeland Nature Camps. For partnership and volunteer opportunities, please contact camps@freeland.org.

