

## China Hiking Challenge 5 -15 April 2014

### The Great Walk of China

**Welcome to Team Macmillan and to your first China newsletter! We're delighted that you've decided to join us on this incredible hike across one of the Great Wonders of the World.**

This will be our 7th Great Wall of China Challenge, so we can promise you that it will be an enormously rewarding - if tough - 11 days. You will return home with a fantastic sense of achievement, not just physically but also in the knowledge that you have raised invaluable funds for the work of Macmillan Cancer Support.

We will send you regular updates over the coming months, in the form of e-newsletters. Our aim is to make sure you have all the support you need regarding fitness and fundraising, as well as lots of information on the hike itself.



Left: The spectacular Great Wall of China winding across the Yanshan Mountains

### The Macmillan team

If you have any questions or concerns about the challenge in the lead up to the hike, we are here to help. Simply get in touch with **Sarah or Margaret** by emailing [hiking@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:hiking@macmillan.org.uk) or calling **020 7840 7887**.

Office hours are Monday to Thursday 9-5 and Friday 9-4.30

## Discover Adventure

Like all Macmillan's overseas Challenges, this event is organised on our behalf by tour operator Discover Adventure (DA). Since 1997 they've delivered safe, enjoyable tailor-made trips for us. DA will be responsible for the flight and ground arrangements (accommodation, food, local crew etc), and will provide our tour leaders and doctors for the trek. If you'd like to speak with a Discover Adventure representative at any stage please contact 01722 718 444 or [info@discoveradventure.com](mailto:info@discoveradventure.com)

## The hike

As with all our overseas events, this Macmillan Hiking Challenge is all about the camaraderie and the overall experience.

We will walk, on average, 5 to 8 hours each day, covering around 80km by the end of the hike. The terrain, steep climbs and countless steps (!) make this a real physical challenge.

We begin each day with an early start, to allow time to have breakfast and sort our day packs, and get on our way. We break for lunch and typically have a mid-morning and mid-afternoon break as well. Most people will then arrive in camp around 4.30-5pm, depending on the distance, weather and ability.

**Luggage/equipment:** During the hike, the luggage, water and other equipment will be carried by local guides and small 4x4 trucks. Please only bring soft kit bags or hold-alls for the hike.

**Accommodation:** Much of the trip takes us through remote and rugged areas of China, which makes for an exciting trip, but the down side is the distinct lack of creature comforts. The hostels and lodges we stay in will be basic so please don't expect 5\* accommodation.

NB: We spend one night in a local family-run hostel, which is a wonderful opportunity to experience rural Chinese life and be treated to local home cooking.

**Toilets & washing facilities:** Be warned, these are very basic too! Water is limited, and primarily for drinking. We recommend you take wet wipes and anti-bacterial hand wash that doesn't need water. In camp there are 'long drop toilets', which are simply a hole dug in the ground with a 'tent' pitched over it for privacy. While hiking, it's a case of finding a quiet spot.

**Drinking water:** Water is collected from springs and streams along the route, and sterilized so you can fill your water bottles regularly.

### How fit will I need to be?

This is a challenging hike and you do need to be reasonably fit and commit to a fair amount of training. Experience has shown that the more training you do, the more you will enjoy the experience. April 2014 may sound a long way off now, but our advice is to start as soon as possible. A detailed training guide is included with this pack.

We've also enclosed a comprehensive challenge guide / event itinerary with more information about the hike itself.



*Top Tip:* If you need to buy new boots, get them well in advance and make sure they are well worn in. Wear them round the house, to work, not just when out training – this way they will be comfortable by the time you leave for China.

## Kit

Everything you need while on the trek is included on the enclosed kit list, which has been drawn up in conjunction with Discover Adventure.

If you need to buy or hire kit, Macmillan challenge participants are entitled to discounts at:

**Cotswold Outdoors:** 15% off all non-sale purchases. Whether buying in-store or online, quote the discount code AF-MACCS-NC.

**Snow & Rock:** 10% off all non-sale purchases. Please email us for a voucher.

**Trek Hire UK:** 15% discount on all hire purchases over £70. Simply mention Macmillan when purchasing.

We have enclosed two Macmillan T-shirts for you to wear whilst training, fundraising and on the Challenge itself.

## Important forms and deadlines

With an event of this scale there are a number of important things to remember and action over the course of the next few months.

### Medical details

The enclosed medical questionnaire must be completed and countersigned by your GP before **5 October 2013**. Please note this is a requirement of the challenge and failure to mention an existing condition may invalidate your insurance.

### Insurance

You must organise adequate travel insurance before **5 February 2014**. You can either purchase the DA

insurance or provide details of your own policy using the relevant side of the insurance form enclosed.

### Flights and extending your stay

We will fly from London to Beijing. Full details on the flights, departure times etc will be supplied nearer the time of the trip. If you wish to extend your stay in China or change your flights, this can be arranged direct with DA by completing and returning the enclosed flight extension form by **5 January 2014**. There is an administration fee of £75 for this Service.

### Vaccinations

As with most overseas destinations, visiting China brings with it a degree of risk of infection or illness. You must therefore speak to your doctor or travel clinic nurse, or contact MASTA on 0906 8225 100 for the latest information and health advice for overseas travel ([www.dh.gov.uk/home/fs/en](http://www.dh.gov.uk/home/fs/en)).

All of the relevant forms are included in this fundraising pack so please keep them safe.

## Social media

A great way to keep in touch with the Hiking Team, your fellow trekkers, and previous Macmillan participants is to join our Hiking Facebook group [facebook.com/macmillanhikingevents](https://www.facebook.com/macmillanhikingevents)

You can also follow the Challenge Team on twitter at [twitter.com/@TeamMacmillan](https://twitter.com/TeamMacmillan)



Top tip: If you do need a replacement form at any stage you can download them from the participant area on our website [macmillan.org.uk/china/resources](http://macmillan.org.uk/china/resources)



## Fundraising

We appreciate that £3,500 is a lot of money to raise and the target may seem daunting at times. We hope that the guide in this pack will give you some ideas to get you started.

From our experience and those of previous participants, simple ideas are often the best. Check out the *Little Book of Fundraising Ideas* at [macmillan.org.uk/fundraisingideas](http://macmillan.org.uk/fundraisingideas) for inspiration.

Also included in this pack are forms to order fundraising materials, balloons, posters etc, and collection tins. Please allow plenty of time before any event for items to be posted out.

### Justgiving/Virgin Money Giving

These sites are a great way to boost your fundraising and publicise what you are doing. Details on how to set up your page are in the fundraising guide. The money is transferred directly to Macmillan and credited against your individual record.

**Gift Aid** Do ask everyone who donates off-line to fill in your sponsor form. For every £1 donated, Macmillan can claim another 25p. While the money cannot be added to your individual total, it will help make a real difference.

**Sending in donations** Please note that your first instalment of £1,350 has to be with us four months before departure (**5 December 2013**).

However, please send money in as soon as you have it. It's much harder to fundraise after the trip, and we can put the money to work to help people living with cancer that much sooner.

If, for any reason, you are unable to raise sufficient funds by the four month deadline, you have the option to:

- transfer to a later trip
- make up the shortfall yourself
- cancel and forfeit your deposit.

## What is it all for?

You will be asked more than once in the coming months why you have chosen to take part in a Macmillan Challenge. Of course the trek itself is hugely rewarding and will leave you with unforgettable memories for years to come.

But more importantly, your commitment to raise £3,500 really will make a difference to the lives of people living with cancer in the UK. The money you raise will help Macmillan to provide the expert care and practical support that they and those close to them, most need.

We are a source of support, helping with all the things that people affected by cancer want and need. We provide practical support, emotional support, financial help, and we are a force for change.

One in three of us will get cancer. Two million of us are living with it and this number is rising. We are all affected by cancer. We can all help. We are Macmillan.

## And finally

Best of luck in the coming months. Remember that we're here to support you so please let us know if you need any help or advice along the way.

# THANK YOU!

'This was the most amazing experience of my life. Watching the sunset on The Great Wall is breathtaking and fantastic to share with the great friends you've made on the challenge. It's a wonderful way to help an amazing charity.' **Natasha, China 2012**