

China: History Meets Globalization™



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What is the real China? It is a difficult question to answer because China is in a constant state of change. A 5,000 year old civilization with a billion people collides with Communism and globalization and creates hyper economic growth - forging one of the most dynamic and important countries of the 21st century.

This program is uniquely designed for students to come away with a deep understanding of China and its complexity - experiences that you can't get from reading newspapers or studying history back home. Students will explore Beijing, the political and cultural capital of China. From its neon lights and massive skyscrapers to the centuries old castles and gates that still stand in the city, it is clear why Beijing is considered one of the world's greatest cities. You will also visit the semi-rural countryside in the historic Mentougou District, nestled in a mountains region located two hours outside Beijing.

Throughout the program you'll have a chance to discuss globalization in relation to the strong historical and traditional customs which are often maintained. You will witness first hand the contrast of traditional and modern culture as it is similar and different in the urban and rural areas of this country.

Community Service

For approximately two hours each morning, you will teach conversational English to students. This is a great way to provide a valuable service and also to interact with regular Chinese people. While in the Mentougou District you will also volunteer on local farms, working in the fields plowing and harvesting. Here you will learn how the rural population maintains their traditional way of life and how they are coping with the vast changes caused by modernization and industrialization. Through interaction with farmers and students, you will make new friends and learn the Chinese perspective on world issues.



Learning

The program is an overview of China today through a mix of sessions on politics, history, culture, economy, and traditional art. We'll go out everyday to visit temples, markets, pagodas and places of social and cultural significance. We'll engage in debate about the issues facing modern day China. This program will also allow for a Mandarin Chinese course based on your level. On the first day students will take a placement exam to determine their Mandarin level: Beginning, Intermediate or Advanced. For the first five days students will take language course based on their level. During the second week of the program students will be able to use their language skills while doing service work on the farms and with students.



Excursions

You will experience all that Beijing has to offer with our excursions. We will venture to the Great Wall, built between the 5th century and the 16th century, and is the only man made structure visible from space. We will visit Tiananmen Square, the largest city square in the world and site of the 1989 hunger strikes and protests. We will also visit the 798 Arts District, home to some of Chinas most avant-garde artists and exhibits, the Forbidden City, The Temple of Heaven, the Summer Palace and various other temples and palaces of cultural significance.

Lodging

During the first week in Beijing, you will stay on the GLA Home Base located on the campus of a local university. You'll live in a dorm room with 2-3 other students and will have a private bathroom and shower. In the rural area, you'll stay at a local guest house and dorm with other students.

Quick Facts

Program Details

- Duration: 14 days
- Tuition: \$3,195
- Max. Group Size: 24 students
- Community Service Hours: 20
- Location: Beijing & Mentougou
- Arrival Airport: Beijing (PEK)

2011 Dates

- July 3 - July 16, 2011
- July 24 - August 6, 2011
- Sunday to Saturday

Tuition

Tuition includes all in-country expenses including lodging at GLA Home Base, entrance to the Great Wall, meals, all ground transportation, all activities and entrance fees, tips, community service materials, all excursions, Mandarin classes, backup medical insurance, and experienced program leaders.

Tuition does not include the following: international airfare, Chinese tourist visa, souvenirs, snacks, laundry, phone calls, medical expenses or internet access at local internet cafés.



Program Schedule

Disclaimer: Actual order of activities may vary from this schedule.

Day 1: Sunday – Upon arrival in the Beijing airport, you'll be met by our staff member holding a GLA sign and taken to our campus where you'll meet the other students and staff and receive a brief introduction to Beijing and GLA.

Day 2: Monday – Students who would like to learn Tai Chi can attend a class before breakfast. Every morning those students can join the local people doing tai chi in a nearby park.

After breakfast, we head out into Beijing to discover the Temple of Heaven, the historic Taoist temple where prayers and offering were given to ensure a good harvest. In the afternoon we'll take a Mandarin placement exam to divide students into classes based on language ability (or lack thereof). We also meet the students with whom we'll practice conversational English with. After dinner, a speaker will address your questions about China and discuss Western perceptions of China.

Day 3: Tuesday – If you get into tai chi, you can join the people at the local park before breakfast. Today we explore the Forbidden City and the Imperial Palace of ancient and recent history. From here we stop at the historic Tiananmen Square where we will reflect on the Chinese concept of democracy and the reform movement. In the afternoon, we'll have our Mandarin classes and then volunteer teaching English before dinner. In the evening, we'll have a speaker talk to us about recent Chinese history. Then, we'll learn to play *mah jong*, or Chinese chess.

Day 4: Wednesday – After Mandarin class, we will head to the Summer Palace; this palace built by the empress is incredibly beautiful. We will take a dragon boat across the lake. After lunch, we continue with Mandarin classes and then English tutoring. After dining at a local restaurant, we will spend the evening shopping at the well known Pearl Market. Here students can pick up souvenirs and “knock off” designer goods.

Day 5: Thursday – Today is a cultural bonanza! This morning we'll take part in two hands-on workshops: Chinese cooking and Chinese calligraphy. In the afternoon, we'll have our Mandarin classes and then volunteer teaching English before dinner. After dinner we will attend an Acrobat Show, to see how this type of performance art is influenced by Chinese culture.

Day 6: Friday - After a class on Chinese culture and economy, we will have lunch locally and then depart for the Hutongs and Hou Hai area. This rich historic area is best known for its Chinese lanterns and is one of the only historic sites still standing after the Cultural Revolution. In the afternoon, we'll have a short class on Chinese martial arts before we do our volunteer work. In the evening, we'll have a speaker on Chinese international relations.

Day 7: Saturday - Today students will have the opportunity to spend the entire day exploring the Great Wall. One of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Great Wall was built between the 5th and 16th centuries with the purpose of securing China's northern border from invading barbarians. At nearly 40 ft high and over 5,000 miles long the Great Wall is the only man-made structure visible from space. Once returning to the city we will have dinner and then engage in leadership and team building activities.

Day 8: Sunday - Today we make the transition from urban living to rural living. Upon arrival to our Home Base in the Mentougou Region we'll explore the new surroundings before jumping into service work the following day.

Day 9: Monday - Students will begin their community service, teaching English to Chinese students and working at a local peasant farm. Students will plow fields and harvest crops all in an effort to better understand the daily lives of local people.

Day 10: Tuesday - Service work will resume in the morning with farming and English teaching. Before dinner we will go on a hike to view the rural mountainous region. In the evening, we will have a guest speaker from the local village come to discuss the challenges of rural life.

Day 11: Wednesday - We will continue our service work farming and teaching. That afternoon, we'll split up into smaller groups to go visit local families. We will be welcomed into people's homes so that we can see how people live in the countryside. Many students will have the opportunity to speak with Chinese and hear stories of the past under Chairman Mao, as well as understand how Chinese youth are growing up in modern China. Back at the GLA Home Base, we will share our family experiences with each other and journal about the differences between our lives and local life in China.

Day 12: Thursday - After community service we will return to our Home Base for lunch and then participate in a dumpling cooking class. After dinner, we will meet with our group to read an article on globalization in China and then discuss it in relation to our experiences.

Day 13: Friday - We will have our last full day of community service today and bid farewell to our local students and farmers. We will pack our belongings and make our trek back to urban life. We will resettle into our Home Base in Beijing and then head to the Silk Market for another shopping spree. Afterward, we will get ready for our final banquet and farewell dinner.

Day 14: Saturday - Students will eat breakfast and have a chance to do some last minute shopping in Beijing before heading to the airport for their journey home.

About Global Leadership Adventures

Global Leadership Adventures, established in 2004, is the premier international community service-learning program for high school students. Students come back transformed.

GLA is unique because of its focus on leadership development and first-hand learning about global issues. Students learn first hand from social pioneers around the world who are creating positive social change in their communities.

Students are taught to use their heart, as well as their head, to become agents of positive change across borders.

GLA has been featured in:

The New York Times

The Boston Globe

seventeen



BALTIMORE TIMES ONLINE