

India: Majestic Civilization™



Highlights

- Behold the Taj Mahal
- Meet cutting-edge non-profit organizations
- Hike the snow capped Himalayas
- Hear from leaders of the Tibetan refugee community
- Reflect in the temple of the Dalai Lama
- Learn to cook Tibetan and Indian food
- Visit a clinic using only Tibetan herbal remedies
- Contemplate three amazing UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Experience the world's largest democracy

India: Majestic Civilization™

India is at once an ancient civilization with deep historical and cultural roots and also an economic and political juggernaut dominating the world stage. High tech parks sit next to ancient Hindu temples; majestic architecture lines streets that have cows meandering down them.

Journey from majestic Himalayan peaks, rural villages and mountain towns all the way to Delhi, the nation's capital. We'll end our voyage with a visit to the Taj Mahal, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Along the way, we will engage in meaningful community service and meet pioneers engaged in service to society.



Community Service

During the first week of the program, you will volunteer with farmers, working in the fields and experiencing life in the mountains. The second week, we will volunteer with an environmental non-profit organization in the Tibetan town of Dharamsala, raising awareness of environmental issues in the Himalayas. During the third week we will join innovative non-profits in New Delhi working with impoverished children; we will teach English, arts & crafts and share our culture with them.

Quick Facts

21-Day Flagship Program

- Duration: 21 days
- Tuition: \$4,395
- Max. group size: 24 students
- Community service hours: 60
- Location: Dharamsala, Delhi
- Airport: Delhi (DEL)

2011 Dates

- June 26 - July 16, 2011
- July 17 - August 6, 2011
- Sunday to Saturday

Learning

During the program, we'll learn about the diversity of Indian culture, pressing social issues and about India's role on the global stage. You will have the opportunity to converse with grassroots leaders, environmental activists, and local political figures.

Because we'll spend time in a Tibetan refugee town, you'll also learn about Tibetan Buddhism, arts, and music. You'll also taste the flavors of Indian and Tibetan cuisine and even learn to cook some meals.

Adventure

The journey begins and ends in Delhi. We'll travel by sleeper bus into the Indian Himalayas, one of the most visually stunning regions on earth. We'll then hike out to a remote village where we will work with farmers for four days. We then descend to Dharamsala where we will learn about the struggle of the Tibetan refugee community, meet their leaders and engage in cultural exchange with the children. Then we head to Delhi for a few days of volunteering and to learn about contemporary India. We will end our journey by seeing "the jewel of India," the Taj Mahal. By exploring the rural and urban areas, you'll get a deeper understanding of India.



Lodging

In the Himalayan village, we will camp for four nights as a group, along with our chef, medic, and guides. In Dharamsala, the GLA Home Base is a large house where our staff and students will live together in shared rooms and enjoy home-cooked meals made from local organic produce. The nights in Delhi and in Agra (where the Taj Mahal is located) will be spent in hotels.

Tuition

Tuition includes all in-country expenses including lodging at GLA Home Base, camp tents, meals, transportation, all activities and entrance fees, tips, community service materials, all excursions, once a week laundry service, backup medical insurance, 24-hour on-call medic, and experienced program leaders.

Tuition does not include: Indian Tourist Visa, souvenirs, snacks, laundry, sleeping bag, or internet access at internet cafés.



Program Schedule

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

Day 1: Sunday - Students typically arrive at the Delhi airport late Saturday night or very early Sunday morning (between 9pm Saturday and 6am Sunday). You'll be met at the airport by our staff holding a GLA sign. They'll take you to our hotel to rest, freshen up and eat. We will have a brief welcome, and then students will have free time to get to know each other and settle in before catching the sleeper bus for our overnight ride to the Himalayas.

Day 2: Monday - We arrive in Dharamsala around 7:30am and head directly to our GLA Home Base. We will have breakfast and time to rest. In the early afternoon we will convene for orientation to the program and for the following day's hike to our camp area. We will also have the opportunity to use the internet and buy snacks at a convenience store. You'll be able to leave the bulk of your things in the GLA Home Base as we venture out to the rural area to camp for a few days.

Day 3: Tuesday - After breakfast we will begin our 8km (approx. 5 mile) hike to the GLA Base Camp at Kareri village which will be our temporary home for the next four nights. After about four hours we will reach our destination and set up camp after a tasty lunch. Around 5pm we will break for further orientation to our temporary home, play ice-breakers and have our first session on leadership.



Day 4: Wednesday - After an early breakfast we will tour the nearby village. In the afternoon we will begin our service project with local families in Kareri village. Service work will involve helping families with daily life: farming, planting, cooking and other tasks. After lunch we will participate in a lecture on the basics of trekking and camping and learn how locals live in this terrain. After dinner we will have free time to further get to know each other and do some stargazing.

Day 5: Thursday - This morning we will go on a nature walk to explore the local flora and fauna with an expert. Afterward, we will resume our community service work in the village. After lunch we will engage in a local soccer match with village youth. After dinner we will discuss our first few days in the village, journal and have some thought provoking discussions about what we're experiencing.

Day 6: Friday - After breakfast we will prep for our 9km (approx. 5.5 mile) trek to Lake Kareri. This is a high altitude lake which is fed by a glacier on the western side of the pristine Dhauladhar Mountains. Since the source is fresh melting snow and the lake is shallow, visibility is very high; the lake bed can be seen. Upon arrival we will have lunch and then our guides will show us around the lake, and see how local shepherds live in these rough living conditions. We will then head back to the GLA Base Camp where we will have dinner.

Day 7: Saturday - After breakfast and packing up our gear we will prepare to leave the camp. It is a 6km (approx. 3.5 mile) hike downhill to Dharamsala, where we will spend the next week. This mountain town is the center of the Tibetan exile community in India. Following the 1959 Tibetan uprising against China, there was an influx of Tibetan refugees who followed the Dalai Lama here. Dharamsala literally means, "Pilgrims rest house" or "Spiritual dwelling."



Day 8: Sunday - Today we begin volunteering with an innovative non-profit organization called The Mountain Cleaners. It was started by a British woman who moved to Dharamsala, and it was founded on the premise that environmental pollution in the Himalayas is closely related social issues affecting people.

We may have the opportunity to host a summer camp for local village children and teach them about the environment and sustainable living, as well as accompany outreach workers educating villagers about pollution control. After an inspiring talk from the founder, we will break for lunch on a beautiful meadow. We'll spend the afternoon discussing leadership.

Day 9: Monday - Today, we will begin work with the outreach workers and scout the area and learn about the group's sustainable development work in the area. After dinner we will participate in leadership workshop and discuss and reflect on the day's work.

Day 10: Tuesday - We'll spend another morning volunteering with the Mountain Cleaners. After lunch we will tour the base of the Tibetan government in Dharamsala and meet with a local leader. We will then participate in a Tibetan art and cooking class. Afterward we will have dinner and free time.

Day 11: Wednesday - We will resume service work in the morning. After lunch we will venture to *Men Tse Khang*, a large hospital specializing and exclusively practicing ancient Tibetan medicine. This institution is well known for its respected doctors and handmade medicines made out of the ancient formulae of herbs and medicinal plants grown locally on site.

Day 12: Thursday - The morning will consist of volunteer work with the Mountain Cleaners. After lunch, we'll visit *Norbulingka*, an amazing UNESCO World Heritage Site dedicated to reviving and preserving traditional Tibetan arts. It is a beautiful building where the artists are constantly at work. You will even have a chance to practice making some art.



Day 13: Friday - After a morning of volunteering we will dine at a Japanese restaurant which is ran by the founders of a non-profit organization called *Gu Chu Sum*. They employ former Tibetan political prisoners and all proceeds from the restaurant go towards funding the Free Tibet movement. Afterward we will have free time to explore McLeod Ganj, also known as "Little Lhasa" due to its large population of Tibetan refugees. That night we'll pack our things and take the overnight sleeper bus back to Delhi.

Day 14: Saturday - We will arrive from our overnight journey around 7:00am. We will take our bus to the GLA Home Base in Delhi and have breakfast and free time to rest. In the early afternoon, we will visit our three NGO service placements where we will be volunteering during our third week:

Vidya: works with women and children living in the slums of Delhi and Mumbai, and helps individuals break away from the cycle of poverty and get a chance at a better life.

Amarjyoti: provides rehabilitative services to persons with disabilities through inclusive and integrated education, medical care, and job training.

Mobile Creches: delivers Early Childhood Development services to 6,000 children at 21 day care centers based at construction sites and slums across Delhi.

Day 15: Sunday - After breakfast we will spend the morning volunteering at one of these inspirational non-profit organizations. In the late afternoon we will visit a *Gurudwara*, a Sikh Temple, and learn more about this fascinating religious tradition.

Day 16: Monday - After a full morning of volunteering, we will attend a lecture on urban sustainability and learn about the complex issues people face in their urban lives. We will then have lunch at *Hauz Khas* village, a small commercial area set up for the artists and designers. There are many well-known specialty restaurants here which we will sample. In the late afternoon we will attend a lecture on the role of non-profits (NGOs) in India.



Day 17: Tuesday - After breakfast we will visit *Jama Masjid*, the largest mosque in India which was completed in 1656 A.D. We will dine at *Kareems*, a Mogul restaurant, famed for still using recipes handed down over the generations. We will then tour the famed area *Nizamuddin*, and learn about the many famous Sufi masters that lived in this area. After dinner we will see a Bollywood film.

Day 18: Wednesday - Today we will complete our last day of community service and then return to our GLA Home Base for lunch. The afternoon is intentionally left open to allow the group to focus on topics of interest to the students.

Day 19: Thursday - We will get an early start today as we will have a jam packed day of exploration. We will first head to *Fatehpur Sikri*. This historical city was constructed by the Mogul emperor Akbar in 1570 and served as the empire's capital from 1571 until 1585. Though the court took 15 years to build, it was abandoned after only 14 years because the water supply was unable to sustain the growing population. The surviving palace and mosque are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The site itself is now a ghost town with ample history. Afterward we will depart for Agra, and finally stand amidst the great **Taj Mahal**, another UNESCO World Heritage Site is considered to be the finest example of Mogul architecture, which combines Persian, Islamic and Indian styles.

Day 20: Friday - In the morning, we will visit the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, a famous avifauna sanctuary that sees thousands of rare and highly endangered birds. It was created 250 years ago and is named after a Keoladeo (Shiva) temple within its boundaries. Next we will begin our trek back to Delhi and then check into our hotel for the last night banquet and ceremony.

Day 21: Saturday - Students whose flights leave in the evening will be taken to Dilli Hut - an open air bazaar of Indian handicrafts and clothes. Our staff will accompany departing students to the airport and assist them in checking in.

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