

The Giant Panda Conservation Project

Working for the future of China's giant pandas

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Highlights

START A RELATIONSHIP with one of the world's most peaceful, adorable creatures – a once-in-a-lifetime experience!

VOLUNTEER at one of the most progressive panda centers in the world and help ensure a future for this endangered species.

CARE for the giant pandas alongside researchers and handlers who have dedicated their lives to helping these gentle giants.

CREATE a memory that will last for a lifetime during a sitting with an adult panda.

Program Details

Ages: 14 and up

Length: 10 days from the USA

Hours: Up to 22 hours awarded

Cost: CHF 2'275 + 835 Internal Airfare

International airfare is not included in the above cost.

Departures

Departs Tue	Returns Thu	Availability
18 Jun	27 Jun	Available
25 Jun	4 Jul	Available
2 Jul	11 Jul	Limited
23 Jul	1 Aug	Available

Dates shown are inclusive of travel time from the United States.

Giant Pandas – The Few, The Adored

Perhaps the most famous and beloved endangered mammal in the world, giant pandas are truly charming creatures. Playful, adorable, and easy going, they have won the hearts of millions of people across the globe. Since the Western world first learned of them in the 19th century, pandas have been shrouded in mystery. Scientists have struggled to classify them and even today know very little about their natural behavior. Low birth rates coupled with the depletion of Chinese bamboo forests have left these gentle creatures struggling to survive. The Chinese government estimates that there are fewer than 1,600 wild giant pandas left in the world today. Concerned global citizens have united to save the panda.

Sichuan Province, known for its soaring peaks (some over 20,000 feet tall) and tranquil rivers, will provide a dramatic backdrop for your program. This idyllic setting will be your home as you work to protect these charming animals and their precious habitat. Established in 1958, Wolong National Park was China's original giant panda sanctuary. The Sichuan earthquake on May 12, 2008 largely destroyed this facility and left the pandas without a home. In the frenzied months after the earthquake, Ya'an Conservation Center was identified as the main relocation base for the pandas, and we are proud to announce our partnership with this world-class conservation center. Together we will work to make Ya'an and the pandas that live there thrive by providing dedicated service and funding for conservation work.

Your program will begin in Chengdu – the heart of Sichuan Province – where you will immerse yourself in the sights, sounds and flavors of this fast-growing city. After a Sichuan-style feast (known as the hottest in China) and a good night's sleep, you'll travel to Ya'an, where you'll stay just outside the Conservation Center for the duration of the program.

Learn the Panda to Save the Panda

Nestled beneath the dramatic peaks of the Bi Feng Xia National Reserve, the Ya'an Conservation Center is an ideal place to learn about, care for, and help the panda in its natural habitat. The center features large communal areas with trees the pandas can climb, as well as enclosed areas where they can find peace and quiet. While at the Conservation Center, you will help the caretakers with their daily routines, which will include learning about the pandas' diet, preparing their food, feeding them (they eat a lot!), cleaning their living quarters, and working on maintenance projects. You'll also help out with panda research whenever this is possible. You'll leave this program with an invaluable experience, comprehensive knowledge, and deep compassion for these docile creatures.

The Opportunity of a Lifetime!

While you will receive a great hands-on education about panda conservation and participate in genuine environmental preservation activities, you will also help the panda in a more sustainable way. A portion of your program fees will go to the Ya'an Conservation Center. In return we will be able to schedule an opportunity for each student to sit with an adult panda. Our donations will support the continuing efforts of this great institution and help rebuild the areas of Sichuan that were devastated by the earthquake. This program combines well with our Shaxi Village and Dali Language programs.

This trip easily connects with our other China programs, as well as with our programs in Southeast Asia, Mongolia and India.