



2009 Discover China: **Volunteer, Immerse, & Explore in China**

Location	Orientation near Guilin; sites vary depending on project/activities selected
Start Dates	All year round. Minimum 2 weeks. Maximum 6 months. Volunteer projects start every 1 st Monday of the month in Fengyan (near Guilin)
Program Fees (in US\$)	2 weeks: \$1260 1 week Orientation + 1 week Volunteer \$1435 1 week Orientation + 1 week Trek or Panda or Beach Extra Weeks: \$265 -Volunteer, Cultural activities \$450 - Trekking, Beach, Panda Volun-teach (3 months minimum): \$1980
What's Included	All-inclusive orientation + volunteer, cultural or adventure travel Pick-up/drop-off and transfer to/from project site Accommodations (homestay or volunteer center) All meals during program Pre-departure and bi-lingual local support Traveler's Medical Insurance
What's not Included	International airfare
Accommodations	Safe, comfortable, clean basic accommodations in volunteer housing or host family. Shared bathroom. 2-3 meals per day available with projects or homestay.
Country Facts:	
Capital city	Beijing
Population	~1.3 billion
Currency and exchange rate	Chinese Yuan (CNY) http://www.xe.com/ucc/

Cultural Embrace's "Discover China" program consists of an exciting way for you to customize your own way to explore this beautiful country. A minimum of two weeks includes a week orientation to help you familiarize yourself with Chinese culture, lifestyle, language, people, food, attitude, habits, and environment. Then choose to volunteer with a variety of different type of projects such as: teaching/tutoring English, environmental/eco work, orphanage assistance, or panda work; or decide to continue with learning more traditional Chinese cultural activities. You could also go trekking or enjoy a beach week. All options are available for at least one week, so you can mix and match the different options so it will match your preferences and skills.

Or, if you would like to spend some more time in China and get really involved with the local schools and community, yet do not have a bachelor's degree, our *volun-teach* in China for a minimum of 3 months may be great and affordable option for you to live in China. You will be working as an assistant to the local Chinese English teacher, or you can lead students with any special activities that you may have (ie: sports, environment, computers, etc).

Projects & Activities Description

Orientation Week

The Orientation Week will take place in our regional center located in Fengyan village, with a group of participants from different parts of the world. During this time we will also engage in the following activities: Basic language lessons, learning about “do’s & don’ts” in China, team building activities, introduction to China and the local culture. Furthermore we will do some local sightseeing, such as visits to the local markets, day trips to nearby towns and visits to ancient temples.

You will have time to meet the local people, taste the delicious foods, and learn about the Chinese customs. During this period, you will also be informed about the program and project details.

Culture Week

In the Culture Week, you will have the opportunity to experience the simple and elegant town of Yangshuo, beautiful nature, the excellent combination of the Orient and the West culture, and the hospitality of the lovely and warm minority people.

We will cycle and to experience the beauty of the Big Banyan, Moon Hill, Yulong River, Li River, Cave of Yinzi and the peach blossom paradise, also will have the chance to explore to Fuli culture street and the well preserved ancient city of Daxu with more than 2000 years of history.

Village Experience

Our Volunteer China Program will give you the possibility to make real friends among students, teachers and the local villagers. Volunteering Options include Teaching, Farming and Conservation.

Trekking Week

We will see the most adventurous side of China. Experience the quietness of the Dali Mountains, trek and overnight stay in a temple in the Chicken Foot Mountain (3240 meters high) and observe the harvest of rice, corn and tobacco in the autumn, wheat and bean in the spring. We will also visit the Shang Qing Village in Bin Chuan and do another trek through the mountains into the lake village Shuang Lang. The itinerary will be adapted to the season.

Beach Week

Our Beach Week takes place in the beautiful town of Beihai, with day trips planned to the Weizhou Island, this is one of the most ideal locations to relax by the sea.

Panda Program

Volunteers are needed to play a part in safeguarding the future of these cute buddies. The Giant Panda is one of the most delightful and captivating of animals, yet one of the most endangered species in the world. The best scientific estimates place the total number of all pandas at only about 1600. Pandas are one of the cutest, most magnificent, adorable animals on the earth giving joy to adults and children alike.

Volun-Teach (minimum 3 months)

Work as a classroom assistant to the local English teachers, or you can lead students with any special activities that you may have (ie: sports, environment, computers, etc). This is a great option for someone that wants to commit at least 3 months in China, but does not have a bachelor's degree, or feel comfortable leading and planning classroom curriculum.

Program Details & Highlights

Volunteer in China Offers:

- A first-hand experience to see and improve China.
- A broader perspective on world views.
- Opportunity to learn about Chinese lifestyles and community initiatives as well as other cultural activities (ie: language, crafts, dance, etc)
- Memorable experiences while traveling and seeing exotic sites
- Lifelong friends from all around the globe
- International work and cultural experiences that strengthens your resume
- Support and development of self-confidence and personal skills

Cultural Embrace Offers:

- **Guaranteed Program Placement Prior to Departure**
Cultural Embrace pre-arranges your complete program before you leave home to ensure an easy and hassle-free transition to your new life abroad.
- **Accommodations & Meals**
All accommodations and meals are included during the program. Housing will be located at either host family or volunteer sites.
- **Arrival Assistance**
You will receive an airport pick-up and transfer to an eco-house, which will be your home during the Orientation week.
- **International Traveler's Insurance: Major Medical Coverage**
Our policy include comprehensive medical coverage.
- **Arrival Orientation & Training**
An one-week all-inclusive comprehensive orientation will be included. The orientation introduces the local community, Chinese cultures, basic Chinese language, and Chinese cuisines/cooking.

- **Volunteer, Cultural Activities and/or Excursions**

Choose from one-week options to volunteer, take cultural activities and/or go on local excursions. You may mix and match these options to maximize your time in China, or opt to spend more time at a specific location to become familiar and involved with the activity

- **Visa Assistance**

Cultural Embrace will assist you with the information to obtain a visa, but we have no control nor the ability to guarantee of government issuances and visa availability.

- **Cultural Embrace's Culture Kit**

Useful tips, advice, and information to prepare you for the amazing adventure of living and working abroad.

- **Full-time Representation**

Cultural Embrace provides English-speaking representation in the United States and China before, during, and after your time abroad.

Program Requirements

- Volunteers must be at least the age of 18. Or, if younger than 18, you must have parental or guardian consent
- Minimum commitment of 2 weeks, maximum 6 months
- Enjoy working and serving others in an underprivileged and struggling environment
- Open to foreign cultures and living abroad.
- Responsible and dedicated to full-term of commitment

2009 Schedule & Fees

Program	Length	Price
Orientation (1) + Volunteering (1)	2 wks	\$1260
Orientation (1) + Trekking (1) or Panda (1) or Beach (1)	2 wks	\$1435
Extra week – Volunteer or cultural activities	1 wk	\$265
Extra week – Beach, Panda, Trekking	1 wk	\$450
Volun-teaching (3 months minimum)	3 mo	\$1980

**Prices listed in US Dollars*

***Prices are subject to change according to world currency exchange rate.*

How to Apply

- 1) Obtain Volunteer Program Information and Application Forms.
 - Download the forms on our website. - OR -
 - Fill out our easy online application request form and the forms will be mailed to you within 7-10 days. - OR -
 - Call 1-512-469-9089/1-888-214-8570 (US toll-free) to have the forms mailed to you in 7-10 days.
- 2) Read the instructions carefully and complete all forms.
- 3) Submit your completed application packet to:

CULTURAL EMBRACE
7201 Bill Hughes Road
Austin, TX 78745 USA

- Completed packet should include
 - Volunteer Application
 - Signed Volunteer Program Agreement
 - Copy of your passport - information page only
 - Copies of diploma or certificates related to field of interest (if applicable)
 - Resume/CV
 - Cover Letter explaining why you want to join this program, and provide a service in China.
 - Two references: preferably professional references and/or character reference
 - Doctor's certificate verifying that you are in excellent mental and physical health
 - Copy of Police Clearance (obtainable from your community's local police station)
 - Two 1½" x 2" official passport style photos (with name printed on each photo's back)
 - One smiling full-length picture of yourself
 - \$200 Non-refundable application (credited towards your program fee)

Upon receipt of your application, a *Cultural Embrace* coordinator will contact you for a 20-30 minutes phone interview. Once we accept you in to our program, you will receive an invoice for the remainder of your program fee. In order for us to contact our local partners to start your placement process, we require at least 50% of your program fee.

We recommend submitting your application and program fee at least 12-16 weeks prior to your desired start date in order for us to organize and arrange your volunteer placement.

**Cultural Embrace* requires an expedited application fee for those applying 12 weeks or less before the desired date of departure. Applications received 8-12 weeks prior to desired departure date will be charged \$150. Applications received less than 8 weeks before the desired departure date will be charged \$250.

Frequently Asked Questions

1) *Why should I pay Cultural Embrace to volunteer?*

Cultural Embrace and our local partners specialize in arranging a guaranteed volunteer placement, housing and insurance prior to your departure. This will alleviate the troubles and stress of getting everything organized in a new country, so you will have more time and energy to spend on your volunteer project. Your time abroad will still be an independent and memorable one, but we are here to guide you to a safe, healthy and comfortable experience before, during, and after your adventure.

Fees vary according to project, destination, and length of stay. Most of the costs go toward operational project and field expenses, (ie: housing, food, transportation, supplies, etc) plus the administrative fees to cover office and local support (ie: legal, accounting, insurance, advertising, etc) and donations to the local project communities. **Cultural Embrace** does not add on any profits on their volunteer programs

2) *What are the living conditions like?*

Accommodations vary with each project and location. For the orientation week you will be staying in a comfortable center where you will have a shared room. You will partake in all meals with your group.

Other project and cultural activities' accommodations vary, but expect basic standards. Some of the regions have poor living conditions (ie: straw and padded mattress, non-flushable toilets, limited running water, etc), but they still maintain a clean and safe environment.

3) *What are the meals like?*

All food during your "Discover China" program is included. Chinese food is delicious and tasty, for those that have a knack for spicy and flavorful dishes. Vegetarian and dietary meals may be met, however, if you have specific allergies, you may need to provide your own food. Please list any special dietary requirement on your application.

4) *What type of visa assistance does Cultural Embrace provide?*

A tourist visa can be used for this program, and many countries do not need anything to enter the country. Please check with your local consulate.

Please note, that any visa fees are the responsibility of the applicant. And, while **Cultural Embrace** can assist you during the process, ultimately it is your responsibility to ensure that you have obtained the appropriate visa for your volunteer experience. **Cultural Embrace** has no control over the visa process and cannot guarantee that your visa application will be accepted.

5) *How long will it take to make my placement?*

We ask applicants to apply at least 12-16 weeks in advance of your desired start date. The placement may take less time than this, but we want to ensure that we have enough time to find a great placement for you! There are additional administrative fees if you apply less than 12 weeks in advanced, and we do not contact our local partners until we receive at least 50% of the program fee payment.

6) *What should I wear and bring to China?*

Depending on the time of year and location of your placement, you will need to dress accordingly. Since space is limited at volunteer sites, we ask that you keep your luggage to a minimum. We strongly recommend safety work boots with protective toe caps, and clothes that are loose and comfortable that will also fight out the harsh sun rays. Please note that shopping in China is a highlight for many participants, and clothes as well as other crafts are inexpensive and easily available. **Cultural Embrace** will provide you with more details in your **Cultural Embrace** pre-departure kit.

7) *Can I volunteer and/or live with a friend or partner?*

Yes, you can enroll in this program with other people, and we encourage it since it will enhance your experience and memories. Additionally, you will receive a discount for referring friends and family to join you on the same or other CE programs. Although you may state your preferences for shared housing, you will need to be flexible and respectful of local customs.

8) *When should I buy my plane ticket and does **Cultural Embrace** provide any resources to help with plane tickets?*

Plane tickets should not be purchased until after your placement has been confirmed. **Cultural Embrace** volunteers with consolidators and discount travel agencies that can help find cheaper tickets than those that are available to the general public.

9) *What do I do when I get to China?*

Cultural Embrace will provide you with a handbook prior to your departure with the names and contact information of your local representative, company, and other useful resources for your time in China. You will be picked up from the airport on a Sunday, and transferred to the orientation home, located outside of Guilin. You will attend a week-long orientation at this site, with more specific details of what to expect at the other locations you opt for. If you plan to arrive earlier than the program start dates and need assistance in Guilin, please contact your CE coordinator, and we will assist you with more local options. Additionally, you will have an on-site local supervisor for any questions.

10) *What do I do if I have a problem or complaint within my volunteer placement?*

You must speak to your local bi-lingual volunteer coordinator or representative to give them an opportunity to explain or investigate the situation. If the complaint still exists, please let **Cultural Embrace** (Austin office) know so we can mediate on your behalf.

11) *Why should I pay to volunteer abroad, and where does my money go to with **Cultural Embrace**?*

Cultural Embrace and our local partners in China specialize in arranging a guaranteed volunteer placement, housing and insurance prior to your departure. This will alleviate the troubles and stress of getting everything organized in a new country, so you will have more time and energy to spend on your internship and living abroad. Your time abroad will still be an independent and memorable one, but we are here to guide you to a safe, healthy and comfortable experience before, during, and after your adventure.

Your program fee includes your customized volunteer placement, comfortable, clean, and safe accommodations with all meals, comprehensive international traveler's health insurance, orientation, training, cultural activities and excursions, and all of the administrative and logistical costs to set up your placement in the States and China. ***Cultural Embrace*** also pro-rates the expenses for marketing, advertising, and site visits/communication among all of our programs within our fees.

For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@culturalembrace.com or you can call us at 1-512-469-9089 or 1-888-214-8570 (US/Canada toll-free)

*Discover the Similarities. . .
Share the Differences. . .*