

Help
disadvantaged
children and
young people
across the UK

GRAND CANYON TREK FAQs



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96-107

95-106
CAPITAL
FM

CAPITAL
XTRA

CLASSIC *f*M

Smooth
Radio 97-108

LBC

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How big is the group?

Each group is intended to be a maximum of 36 people in order to run due to the wilderness environment in which the expedition is taking place.

Who do we fly with?

Subject to availability you will be flying with British Airways from London Heathrow to Phoenix. The flight is about 11 hours. You will return from Las Vegas to London Heathrow. Your flight tickets will be issued upon departure at the airport. If you choose to book your own flights you must confirm with the Charity Challenge office before paying otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance).



What's the luggage allowance?

As no formal clothes are needed, luggage should be kept to the absolute minimum - details on what to pack are provided in your Kit List. Your main kit bag or rucksack (suitcases are not appropriate) must not exceed 15kgs in weight.

For the days in the canyon you may only take 8kgs as the mules cannot carry any more. The rest of your kit can be safely stored on the vehicle. You will carry a day pack for your daily needs such as sun cream, water, camera, food and lightweight waterproofs.

What will the accommodation be like?

In Phoenix and Las Vegas we stay in comfortable rooms of tourist class standard hotels. During the trek you will camp in spacious two person tents with waterproof floors. If you would like your own room, this can be arranged but there will be a single room supplement. At campsites you will be expected to pitch in and set up your tents as part of your challenge. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please let Charity Challenge know in advance.

Do we need to take our own sleeping bags and mats?

Foam mattresses are provided. You should take a good four-season sleeping bag as it can get close to freezing at night. The dual bag that offers 3-season as standard and upgrade to four-season with fleece liner is ideal.

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What are the toilet/washing facilities like?

While hiking we will use the bushes and bury our waste with a small portable trowel while carrying out toilet paper. While camping in the wilds we will have a portable toilet set up for the group's use. Otherwise we will have access to organised toilet facilities. The toilet facilities in the Havasu Canyon are often not as clean as desired. While in Havasu Canyon, you can wash (without soap) in the creek and waterfalls. There is always a washbasin for personal use in case you feel you must use soap. This wash water must be disposed of at least 30m from any water source so to avoid contamination of surface water.



Will my valuables be safe?

We will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions. The general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Keep your passport and flight tickets with you during the trek, it should be kept in a plastic bag to protect it from damp or water damage. Do not leave valuables in your tent while hiking.

What is the food & drink like?

The meals we provide are nutritionally balanced according to the particular environment. Breakfast usually includes cereals, bread and eggs, fresh fruit, tea and coffee. Lunches will either be a self-made pack lunch to be carried in your daypack with snacks.

Dinners are cooked in camp and always include a soup or salad, main course and a dessert. Vegetarian food is accommodated for. The 2 dinners in Havasu Canyon are very basic as we lack refrigeration here. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

Who will be leading the group?

We employ a number of first aid qualified expedition leaders. They will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

What is a typical day?

Please be prepared for long road transfers. During the trekking days you rise early and pack up camp after breakfast, then trek carrying only daypacks for 4-6 hours. There will be packed lunches en-route.

There will be plenty of time to stop and view the remarkable scenery. The trek zone is remote and rare flora and fauna will be seen. The evenings are spent in beautifully located camps in the forests and canyons. You will be asked to set up your own tents and help in the cooking and cleaning up afterwards.

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How fit do I need to be?

Training and fitness are definitely required as this expedition is graded as Challenging. Anyone who leads a fairly active and moderately healthy lifestyle should be OK 'as long as they train regularly over a period of at least three months' leading up to the expedition. Don't forget that the temperature and the altitudes are different from the UK - the highest area en route is 2700m (8859ft). While strength is important, endurance training should be your primary focus. Walking up hills and climbing stairs are both ways to condition your lower body. Begin slowly, without the weight of a pack, eventually adding weight as you increase your training pace.

Take a long hike (6-8 hours) several times with a weighted pack, up and down hills or on small mountains (weigh your pack with water containers and pour out the water before your descent to minimise knee stress). Fitness training notes will also be provided



What happens if I fall ill, can't keep up or there is an emergency?

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's walking abilities, which is catered for. A group member will bring up the rear and the group will try to stay together as much as possible. Back up support can be brought in, in the event of an emergency. Your guides will aim to keep in contact with the various National Parks' Authorities along the trail. We will carry a first aid kit.

What is included in the cost of the expedition?

The following items are included in the cost of the expedition: International flights to Phoenix and from Las Vegas, all internal transfers, entrance fees and permits fees, all meals unless otherwise stated in the itinerary, all accommodation (whether in tents/hotels), group first aid supplies, an English speaking expedition leader and discount from various stores for personal equipment.

What is not included in the cost of the expedition?

The following items are not included in your expedition and will be at your own expense – lunch on day 8, travel insurance, tips for the local support team, activities not mentioned in the itinerary, alcoholic beverages, showers at campgrounds (about \$3) and extras such as laundry and personal spending money.

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What shall I do about spending money?

You will not need large amounts of money during this trip and other than at the start and end of the trip, you will be in the mountains away from any foreign exchanges or banks. You will only need money for tips, food & drink (additional) and gifts & souvenirs. There are a wide range of things to spend money on including rugs, Indian jewellery, books and so on. Average spending money advised is approx. \$300.

How much would you recommend for tips?

Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. However, guides in the US rely on tipping as it is customary in the country. You should only tip if you feel that you have received good service. We recommend approx. US\$10 per person per day (about US\$70 in total) and this should be given to the expedition leader at the end of the expedition.

What do you do to protect the environment?

Charity Challenge are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the International Porter Protection Group and Climate Care to ensure that challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. By keeping to small group sizes, ensuring that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit.

Can you recommend any literature about the region?

- I Am The Grand Canyon: The Story Of The Havasupai People By Stephen Hirst
- Carving Grand Canyon: Evidence, Theories And Mystery By Wayne Ranney
- A Field Guide To The Grand Canyon By Stephen Whitney
- National Audubon Society Regional Guide To The South Western States: Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah
- The Rough Guide To Grand Canyon By Greg Ward

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NB: The information provided above was correct at the time of going to print.

