

## London to Beijing: Ace to Ace

This exceptional 12 week motorcycle expedition starting at the Ace Cafe London and finishing at Ace Cafe Beijing – we ride across Asia, traversing the fabled Silk Road across a formidable expanse of territory, with a rich tapestry of cultures to uncover and extraordinary roads to ride. We take the road less travelled, through countries where tourism is only in its infancy. From the far east of Turkey, through Iran and into Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan – heart of the Silk Road – and Kyrgyzstan.

The Pamir Highway in Tajikistan, the Tibetan Plateau and the route to Everest are just some of the extraordinary roads to ride on what is an extremely challenging and unpredictable journey, testing your abilities both on and off the bike, before you reach Lhasa, Tibet. Once you've arrived in the east of the country, your [China Motorcycle Tour](#) will take you alongside the Giant Pandas, Terracotta Army and Great Wall! Then a huge welcome in Beijing from the Ace Cafe Beijing – this is our Ace to Ace journey!

You may join this tour in Istanbul, Turkey and can select this option when you make your booking; £1,200 discount will be applied.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: We must submit all individual and vehicle details / documents to Chinese authorities three months prior to our start date. Therefore no bookings can be taken for this tour at short notice. Last date for booking is no later than 31 January 2019.**

### At a glance

Duration (days): 90  
Miles Covered: 13000  
Riding difficulty: Difficult  
Unpaved Roads: 15%  
Culture Shock: Large

### Highlights

Here are some of the amazing sights that you will see on this 90 day motorcycle expedition:

- The old imperial capital, Istanbul where Europe meets Asia. Visit the Blue Mosque, the Hagia Sophia & Topkapi Palace or maybe just bargain in the Grand Bazaar!
- Wander the tiny streets of the perfectly preserved Ottoman village, Safranbolu and overnight in a caravanserai
- Explore the unique moon-like landscape, underground cities, cave churches and houses carved in the rocks in Cappadocia and overnight in a cave hotel
- The UNESCO listed historic bazaar in Tabriz, Iran and time to explore Iran's capital, Tehran
- The marble white city of Ashgabat, capital of Turkmenistan
- North through the Karakum Desert. Stopover in a teahouse and head for a night viewing of the Darvaza Gas Crater, known locally as "The Door to Hell"!
- Experience a yurt home-stay in the south to try the culinary delights of plov, manti or lahman! Great back roads through the mountains of Kyrgyzstan
- Follow in the tracks of Genghis Khan, as we head into Uzbekistan and continue to follow the Silk Road to the ancient walled city of Khiva, where you can wander through the narrow alleys to see the mosques, minarets and madrasahs.
- Samarkand, with the UNESCO listed Registan and its three madrasahs. Break bread with the locals and enjoy fresh kebabs cooked over coals.
- Desert roads in Turkmenistan to the marble white capital city of Ashgabat.
- Ride the Pamir Highway through the sparsely populated mountain regions of Tajikistan. With its peak at 4,655m, this is the second highest altitude international highway in the world.

- The Wakhan Valley, bordering Afghanistan & the 2nd century Yamchun Fortress, with magnificent views of the Hindu Kush. Stay with local families in home-stays and try yak with onions.
- Unique experience spending the night in a yurt camp in Kyrgyzstan
- The very leafy, almost European style city of Almaty, Kazakhstan and a ride through the rugged Charyn Canyon
- Over the Khitai Davan Pass at 5,300m. Enter Tibet, the 'Roof of the World'. High altitude riding continues past the sacred Mount Kailash.
- The holy Lake Manasarovar and explore the tiny Buddhist monastery.
- The Himalayas and take the spectacular road to Mount Everest Base Camp & Rongbuk Monastery and spin the golden prayer wheels.
- Lhasa! Visit the Potala Palace and the Buddhist temples of Jokhang and Barkhor.
- Often called one of the most dangerous roads in the world! The Tibet-Sichaun Highway and another three 5,000 metre passes.
- Mount Emie is littered with Buddhist temples, and you can explore the lush green mountains, feed the monkeys and burn incense.
- Xi'an to view the warrior figurines of the Terracotta Army, take a walk around the ancient city walls and to the Bell & Drum Tower.
- Chengdu, where you can visit the Giant Panda Research Base. Feast on a dumpling banquet, whilst you gasp at the Chinese acrobatics.
- Beijing. A spectacular welcome by Ace Cafe Beijing. Tian'anmen Square and the Forbidden City. There's time to walk the Great Wall of China, before we have a final celebration meal of roast Peking Duck.

## Itinerary

This itinerary is for 90 days, covering around 13,000 miles (21,000 kms). It starts in London, UK and finishes in Beijing, China.

### Week 1: Europe

Depart Ace cafe London. France, the Alps, Bavaria – Germany. Bled, Slovenia. Croatia & the Adriatic Coast and a night in Dubrovnik. Montenegro, Albania and Lake Ohrid. Greece – Mount Olympus and Meteora.

### Week 2: Turkey

Enter Turkey. East meets West in Istanbul. (Istanbul is also an official start Point for this Expedition). Two full days to explore the Blue Mosque, Tokapi Palace and Hagi Sophia. Ottoman preserved village Safranbolu. Caves, rock formations and underground dwellings in Cappadocia.

### Week 3: Turkey & Iran

See the stone heads of Mount Nemrut. Erzurum and Mount Ararat. Enter Iran. UNESCO listed city of Tabriz and the historic bazaar.

### Week 4: Iran & Turkmenistan

Iran's capital city, Tehran, with Golestan Palace & Azadi Tower. The Caspian Sea and Gorgan. Marble white capital city of Ashgabat.

### Week 5: Turkmenistan & Uzbekistan

North through the Karakum Desert. A night viewing of the Darvaza Gas Crater – "The Door to Hell"! Enter Uzbekistan. Desert terrain to the Ancient Silk Road Cities. The ancient walled city of Khiva & UNESCO listed Itchen Kala. Bukhara and then Samarkand, with the UNESCO listed Registan. Minarets, mosques and madrasahs abound.

### Week 6: Tajikistan

The capital city, Dushanbe. Dirt roads of The Pamir Highway and Wakhan Valley, on the Afghanistan border. Khorog, the regional capital. 3rd century Yamchun Fortress. Experience home stays with the local villagers.

**Week 7: Kyrgyzstan & Kazakhstan**

Enter Kyrgyzstan. Overnight yurt camp at Sary Tash. Osh. The Tien Shan Mountains. Enter Kazakhstan. Almaty (Official Departure Point / Official Arrival Point)

**Week 8: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Xinjiang Province, China**

Charyn Canyon. Enter Kyrgyzstan. Izzyk-Kul Lake. Naryn. Ride over the Torugart Pass to Xinjiang Province, China. The ancient city of Kashgar. Get your Chinese Driving Licence and Registration Plate for your bike!

**Week 9: Tibet**

Enter Tibet, the 'Roof of the World'. Ride at over 5,000 metres high. Remote settlements. Mount Kailash & the holy Lake Manasarovar. Mount Everest Base Camp & Rongbuk Monastery.

**Week 10: Tibet**

Lhasa – two full days to explore the Potala Palace and the Buddhist temples of Jokhang and Barkhor. Tibet is not over yet! The Tibet-Sichuan Highway – more 5,000m passes. The small villages of Linzhi, Bomi, Zuogong to Kangding.

**Week 11: China – Sichuan Province**

Sichuan Province. Descend from the Tibetan Plateau to the Buddhist temples of Mount Emie. Chengdu and the Giant Pandas. Foping.

**Week 12: China**

The ancient walled city of Xi'an, the start point of the Silk Road. Two full days to explore the Old Bell Tower and visit the Terracotta Army. Continue north to the capital

**Week 13: China**

Arrive Beijing and celebration party of the Ace Cafe, Beijing. See The Great Wall, Ti'anamen Square & Forbidden City. Take bikes to Tianjin for freight home.

**Accommodation**

There is a wide variety of hotel and home-stay accommodation and we have one camp night in the desert. In Europe and Turkey, we primarily use 4\* hotels and have some characterful hotels, such as an old caravanserai and a cave hotel! Iran's hotels are 3\* – 4\* but standards are generally lower than the equivalent in Europe, with the exception of the 5\* hotel we use in Tehran.

For Central Asia, we also use 3\* and 4\* hotels, but as we push east, standards are not the equivalent of Europe and North America. In Iran and Central Asia, most rooms have en suite bathrooms and hot water. However wifi use may be restricted and not freely available.

There are a number of days across Xinjiang Province and Western Tibet, where we are very remote and accommodation is extremely basic, with no bathrooms, no hot water, no electricity. You need to be prepared to use communal outside toilets and there will be no showers for a few days in this area.

Good hotels are then available close to Lhasa and our hotel in Lhasa is good 4\* standard. On the Tibet Sichuan Highway, the hotels remain basic, but with en suite bathrooms. Once in Eastern China, hotels standards are 4\* standard and we finish at old The Raffles Hotel, Beijing to celebrate an incredible journey.

## Whats Included

You have the benefit of booking your motorcycle expedition with a UK tour operator who has in place Financial Payment Protection Insurance with Towergate Stevens & Chapman, so that your money paid to us in advance is protected in accordance with The Package Travel Regulations 1992.

### Before you go

- The assurance of booking with a fully bonded UK operator, ensuring your money paid in advance is protected.
- Two day pre-departure team expedition briefing and GlobeBusters Guidance Handbook with all pre-trip information.
- Assistance with the procurement of visas for each country and provision of Letters of Invitation, if required.

### En Route

- All accommodation on shared basis (or a single room, if booked)
- All breakfasts
- 13 group dinners, with water or soft drink (no alcohol).
- Local overnight hotel parking charges.
- Euro Tunnel Train for you and your bike, Folkestone to Calais, and other ferry crossings en route
- Chinese Driving Licence & Chinese Bike Licence Plate for your motorcycle, required for travel in China
- Daily hard copy route notes with GPS co-ordinates, loan SD Card with GPS mapping for the region.
- Expedition Tour Polo-Shirt and Ace Cafe Goodies

### Motorcycle Freight

- Group freight of your motorcycle (including crating, where required, and Customs Clearance) from Tianjin Port to the depot of our UK freight agent, or to other destinations if additional charges are paid.
- In transit insurance for your motorcycle, during freight, subject to an excess of £500.

### Support Crew

- Motorcycle Expedition Leader on bike to accompany the group.
- Motorcycle Support Rider, where the group is more than 12 riders
- Support Vehicle, equipped with satellite phone, spare fuel, water, tools, selected spare parts and emergency first aid kit.
- Support Driver, with motorcycle mechanical experience and first aid qualifications
- Second local Support Vehicle in Xinjiang and Tibet, with two National Chinese Guides, acting as fixers / translators
- Local fixers/translators that travel with the group in Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan

Please note that **international passenger flights are not included** in your price. Once this expedition is a guaranteed departure you will need to book your return flight from Beijing.

\*For non-UK riders, please contact us for your own bespoke freight arrangements.

## Useful Info

### What type of bike do I need?

We recommend that you use a medium to large capacity dual purpose / adventure style bike. We support any make and model. Our Support Crew ride the Triumph [Tiger 800XCA](#) or [Tiger 1200XCA](#). We also have lots of experience with the BMW GS range. What is important is that you have a reliable and robust bike that you are comfortable riding and has been fully serviced prior to the start and has new tyres.



### What riding experience do I need?

This trip is not suitable for novice riders. It is our toughest expedition and is only suitable for those with advanced road riding skills, experienced in riding up to 400 road miles in one day and be confident at tackling up to 250 miles on challenging, unpaved roads. Three weeks of riding is at high altitudes over 4,000 metres, where it is often cold. Ideally you should also have other travel experience in developing countries, either on or off the bike.

### How does motorcycle freight work?

We start the expedition from the Ace Café, London. If you are a non-UK resident, we can facilitate the freight of your motorcycle to the UK from your own country. We Customs clear your motorcycle and you simply need to collect it from our freight agent's depot and ride to London. This is an additional cost to you. At the end of the trip, all bikes are sea freighted back to the UK from Tianjin. From the UK, your motorcycle can then be freighted back to your own country – again at your own cost. If we get at least 3 riders from another country, we can do a separate sea freight arrangement direct to that country.

### What about servicing & tyres?

There are no authorised motorcycle dealers for Triumph, BMW, KTM once we leave Istanbul and before China. All motorcycles must arrive at the start fully serviced and with new tyres. A minor service is then done around 6000 miles into the trip (Samarkand / Dushanbe). We also carry in our support vehicle a change of tyres – knobbly tyres (Conti TKC 80) for the dirt roads ahead – for riders for the half way point (tyres at your cost)

### Is it difficult to get fuel?

We have never had any issue with finding fuel. In certain regions, once en route, we will warn you in advance of any possible fuel shortages or if there is a route with a key fuel stop, where everyone must fill up with fuel to get to the next destination. It is not necessary to fit any after-market large fuel tank or carry fuel bottles, although some riders chose to do so. Our support vehicle also carries spare fuel for emergencies.

### What is the average group size?

Our groups are normally between 10 – 12 riders (some have passengers). Our groups are often very international and whilst the majority of riders come from the UK, we also get riders from USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia, Switzerland, Scandinavia, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and so on. Groups are predominantly solo male riders.

### Is this ride suitable for a passenger?

We have had other riders successfully complete this ride with a pillion passenger. Your passenger needs to also be an experienced tourer. It is a tough ride and there are places where as a couple you will not get privacy and bathroom facilities can be off putting for women.

### Is there a support vehicle?

All our expeditions have a dedicated GlobeBusters [Support Vehicle](#), driven by a GlobeBusters Support Driver. It is capable of carrying two motorcycle and two passengers. Our support vehicles carry a satellite phone, mobile phone, medical bag and spinal board, spare fuel, water, tools, some spare parts, some spare tyres. Our support vehicle provides temporary assistance to you if you have a mechanical problem or an accident and are injured.

On this ride, we also have a second local support vehicle in China. These are not luggage vehicles – you must carry your own luggage on your motorcycle. For more information, please see our [Support Vehicle](#) section.

### **Do I have to ride in a group?**

No! We do not make you ride in convoy. We offer you the freedom to decide how you would like to ride. We give you a road book, GPS co-ordinates and hotel information. You can use this to self-navigate. If you prefer to ride with our Expedition Leader, then you can do this. However, there are some politically sensitive places where we must ride together. In Iran, China, Turkmenistan, whilst we don't have to ride in convoy, we need to make sure that we are travelling closely together. We will also ask you to ride in a group when we are crossing a border or if there is a security issue.

### **What documents do I need?**

You will need your original documents as follows: Passport, Motorcycle Registration Document or Title, Driving Licence, International Driving Permit. Scan copies of your documents must be supplied to us no later than 31 January 2017. These are submitted to the Chinese Authorities and once logged cannot be changed. A Carnet de Passage is required for your motorcycle for travel through Iran. In addition you must have travel/medical insurance and 3rd party motorcycle insurance (where available).

### **Do I need visas for travel?**

As visa requirements are dependent on your nationality and a complex with constantly changing requirements, we appoint a visa agency to assist with the process [www.thevisamachine.com](http://www.thevisamachine.com). They will have a dedicated GlobeBusters Portal on their website for you to order your visas, which they can get for all nationalities via the Embassies in London. The only exception to this is the Chinese visa, which MUST be obtained in your own country of residence. We will supply Letters of Invitation and hotel confirmations to you. At our pre-departure meeting, we cover this in detail to ensure you have all the right documents and visas in place.

### **Special note about logistics for entry and exit of China**

Your price includes entry and exit of China, as part of the group arrangement. Our entry point is the Torugart Pass. Our exit point is Beijing / Tianjin. This is agreed as part of the permissions given for our group to ride overland across China, and is done well in advance of travel. You are not able to change your exit point after 31 January 2019. Should you wish to have a different exit point to the main group, you must inform us on booking and additional charges will apply, depending on the exit arrangement that you want.

### **What about my health when I am abroad?**

Before you travel, we strongly recommend that you visit your GP or a specialised travel clinic to get advice on the recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures needed for the countries on this trip. As background, the websites listed below may prove useful.

<http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/>

<http://www.masta-travel-health.com/>

It is a condition of your travel with us that you have in place travel / medical insurance to cover you for medical treatment and repatriation if you suffer any illness or injury when on the expedition, including any injury sustained from riding or being a passenger on a motorcycle.

Please note that many countries on this route do not have the same level of medical infrastructure nor consistent medical standards that you may be used to. In particular, emergency services often may be a long distance away, with no co-ordinated response, or sometimes no medical response available within reasonable times.

## **Available Dates & Prices**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Rider Shared Room</b>	<b>Single Supplement</b>	<b>Passenger Shared Room</b>	<b>Bike Rental</b>
Apr 19 – Jul 16, 2019	£24,995	£5,495	£14,295	Triumph Tiger 800: £7,189