



Pureland Travels & Treehouse Abroad

Health, Safety, and Security Policy

Participation on this trip requires a certain degree of risk-taking. This trip includes extensive time on the road. In order to reach our destination, the group travels over roads that are long, dangerous, bumpy, and dusty. We may need to cross rivers in jeeps, wait for landslides to clear, and push our vehicles out of sticky spots or make detours. The altitude is high, the food choices are limited, and the group may camp for several days. There is also no internet, no cell phone coverage, limited solar electricity, no showers, and only outhouses. The travel is challenging and rewarding! Stamina, patience, and good teamwork are required. This area is incredibly remote and untouched by many external influences, it is a privilege to experience this region and its people. Be prepared for anything!

DUTIES OF THE STUDENT

Listen and observe. Throughout the program, instructors will provide essential information about health and safety. Follow advice and rules of program— though they sometimes seem odd, these rules are made for student benefit, and they will help keep you safe and healthy. Sometimes observing others can give you clues about appropriate behavior, but remember that what might be right for someone who has lived in an area all their lives may not be right for you as a newcomer. These are the kinds of topics that you will address throughout the program – please do not be shy in bringing these up with your leaders.

Ask questions. If you have listened carefully, read the orientation materials, and still have questions about a particular issue, please ask. If you have a question about a topic that has not yet been discussed, please ask. If there is something that just doesn't make sense, please ask. Trust your instincts -- if you have a question about something regarding your health, safety or security, we would prefer to answer your question than have a student make misinformed decisions. Plus, asking these tough questions can help you to understand the culture in which you are living more deeply.

Focus on making good decisions. Once you have taken in all of the information presented about health, safety, program rules, and your host culture, then it is time to start making your own decisions. Decide early on that you will make good decisions for your health and safety – for example, travel with others whenever you have been advised to do so, or if in a new place; keep your wits about you and maintain awareness of your surroundings at all times; trust your instincts; keep important documents, phone numbers and contact information easily available in case you need them; choose safe food and travel options based on the advice of your program's staff and what you know of your host country. While these preventative measures will not protect you from every possibility, they will go a long way towards keeping you safe and healthy.

Seek help when needed. When in doubt, ask for support – that's what we're here for.

PROGRAM ORIENTATION

During the first week of the program, the leaders will give cross-cultural, health and safety, and site-specific orientations. Through group discussions, readings, and participatory methods, students are introduced to Tibet and develop skills for successful cross cultural communication. Orientation is also a time to review academic requirements, understand program objectives, and develop relationships within the student group

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed in advance with the leaders. Meditation, Yoga and certain activities are optional, yet language study, and the majority of activities are compulsory.

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

Independent travel during the program is limited and restricted except when it is part of the program's educational excursions. Participants traveling independently before the program begins and following the close of a program assume total responsibility for their actions and safety. Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad and the trip leaders assume no liability for individuals before the beginning of the program and after the program has concluded.

PROBATION

A student may be placed on probation, and will be notified of such in writing if s/he:

1. Is continuously absent at program activities;
2. Repeatedly falls asleep in class, is repeatedly late;
3. Is repeatedly rude and/or shows a lack of consideration to the leaders, other students, lecturers, homestay families.
4. Repeatedly engages in behavior which is, in the opinion of the leaders culturally insensitive and/or inappropriate;

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5. Engages in behavior which endangers the group and/or host including, but not limited to, a repeated refusal to take action to address physical, behavioral, or mental health problems;
6. Commits a further transgression of a norm about which a warning was previously issued;
7. Failing to work up to the standards or within the spirit of the program.

DISMISSAL

A student is subject to dismissal and is so notified in writing if, in the opinion of the leaders,s/he:

1. Has used or is in possession of drugs or alcohol on the program;
2. Has intentionally put themselves, the group, or the hosts at extreme risk;
3. Demonstrated inadequate quality of participation.
4. Has been put on probation and has not shown improvement or change.
5. Is guilty of Sexual Harassment.

those dismissed will be sent home at their own cost and no program fees will be refunded.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES/ CODE OF CONDUCT

One of the goals of this program is to promote understanding among people from different parts of the world through a commitment to mutual learning and respect for others. Students attending the program become an integral part of a community striving toward these goals, which can only be realized if individuals honor the rights and privileges of all community members and take responsibility for their own actions. The following guidelines, policies, and procedures are designed to support this purpose.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Students are required to comply with all policies and codes of conduct introduced during the orientation portion of the program.

Students must take into consideration an accurate perception of the values and norms of the host communities, and the wellbeing of fellow group members and program staff, and act accordingly. The following is a non-exhaustive list of prohibited conduct:

1. Violation of safety practices or action or inaction that might cause injury or death to oneself and any other person.
2. Sexual or other harassment of any kind.
3. Creating excessive noise, disturbing the peace, violation of individual rights or privacy, or disruption of lawful activities of others.
4. Deliberately or carelessly damaging or stealing property.
5. Theft or unauthorized use of property from any other person or entity.
6. Unauthorized entry or use of facilities.
7. Possession or use, including the threat of use, of a weapon or other hazardous materials, such as, but not limited to, a firearm, knife, explosive, or other object that could be considered a weapon while on the program.
8. Violation of host country or US laws, including, but not limited to, those that relate to the use of alcohol and controlled substances on the program. Violation of local laws may result in fines, punishment, imprisonment, or deportation in addition to punitive actions by Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad.
9. Failure to comply with the reasonable directions of program employees acting in the performance of their duties.
10. Violations of policies and regulations as communicated in this packet.
11. Any conduct which jeopardizes the Pureland projects ability to maintain positive relations in host communities or to continue to carry out its programs, including but not limited to culturally inappropriate behavior or defamatory statements regarding host families, organizations, communities, or countries in "blogs" or other public media.

HARASSMENT POLICY

• INTRODUCTION

Harassment, sexual harassment, and sexual assault are acts of aggression, whether verbal or physical. They include various forms of sexual abuse and sexual assault, including both acquaintance and stranger rape. All such behavior is illegal under both state and federal law. It is also a violation of standards of conduct that are cherished in the Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad community and is not tolerated under any circumstances. Any individual who engages in harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual assault is subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the leaders, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension, termination, or expulsion. In addition, he or she may face criminal or civil liability. It is also illegal for an employee or student to attempt in any way to retaliate against a person who makes a claim of sexual harassment. Any such retaliation will also result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, and may also result in criminal or civil liability. Please note that Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad has no control over the behavior of host country individuals who are not associated with the program and cannot necessarily prevent harassment toward students and others in these locations where it may be considered culturally acceptable or otherwise. Yet the leaders will orient the students on the norms and protect participants with the best ability and assist victims to secure needed services.

•**Margaret (Meg) Ferrigno, Molly McGinn** are the individuals who will be able to help in assessing each situation, in clarifying possible courses of action, and in contacting the appropriate people once a course of action has been decided. They also will be able to direct people to needed services, such as counseling, translation, and medical or police assistance, within or outside of the programs. Care will be taken to protect the identity of the person with the complaint and of the accused party or parties, except as may be reasonably necessary to successfully complete the investigation. Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad requires participants and leaders to report all complaints or incidents of harassment, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Leaders are responsible for promptly responding to, or reporting, any complaint or suspected acts of

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sexual harassment. Failure by a supervisor to appropriately report or address such harassment complaints or suspected acts shall be considered in violation of this policy.

- ASSISTANCE FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT OR HARASSMENT

Any student who has been sexually assaulted should contact either his/her leader for immediate assistance. This person will be able to assist in obtaining needed services such as medical or police assistance, translation services, counseling, and other help.

- RETALIATION IS PROHIBITED

prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports.

POLICY ON ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

In keeping with its mission, it is the intent of Treehouse Abroad to provide an environment that fosters support for sobriety.

- ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE POLICY

Use of alcohol and drugs is strictly prohibited at all times. Due to the risk that drug possession causes to the group Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad leaders reserve the right to search suspect belongings.

- VIOLATIONS

Participants who violate the Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad Alcohol and Other Drug Policy are subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, dismissal from the program, and may face possible criminal or civil liability. Such persons may be referred to law enforcement authorities for prosecution and/or referred to substance abuse programs for evaluation or treatment.

- REFERRAL FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING & TREATMENT

Treehouse Abroad supports the prevention of substance abuse and encourages the rehabilitation of those persons who may be affected by alcohol and other drug problems.

PROGRAM RESTRICTIONS

Students are prohibited from engaging in certain activities for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to: potentially dangerous consequences for the individual(s) concerned; potential disruption of the program as a whole; non-insurability; or U.S. State Department or other authoritative warnings. Participation in these activities is not permitted and is grounds for dismissal. These include, but are not limited to: motorcycling, hitchhiking, driving, horseback riding, rock climbing.

HOUSING

Student housing will vary during the program and will include homestays, hotels, camping, hostels, and stay in a monastery. Students are responsible for their behavior and actions in their housing situations and students must respect the policies and practices of each establishment or facility at which they are housed, including respectfully following their homestay family's rules. Any damage to property or environment, disruptive activities, or willful disregard of policies and practices of any housing situation may result in disciplinary action, including expulsion from housing and/or dismissal from the program. Students should inform their academic director and/or homestay coordinator if conflicts arise during the homestay and efforts will be made to either resolve the issue or find an alternative placement.

VISITORS

Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad does not encourage any visitors during the term, due to the rigorous nature of the programs and the disruption that such visits cause in program flow and group dynamics. Students should be sure that friends and relatives are aware of this policy. All plans for visits are to be scheduled for dates after the formal conclusion of the program. Although visitors are discouraged during the program, any visitors to students during the period of enrollment must plan independent travel and accommodations which are almost impossible to make for this region. Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad prohibits students from bringing any visitor to stay at a homestay or other provided place of housing.

PEER RELATIONS

Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad fosters an environment of mutual respect for all program participants. It is incumbent upon each student to try to work out disagreements with peers. If the students cannot satisfactorily resolve the issues, students are urged to approach the leaders to assist students with resolving the disagreement. Sexual harassment issues or complaints will be handled in accordance with the Sexual Harassment policies and procedures.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad aims to facilitate an accessible educational experience for students with disabilities and to serve as a resource to all members of the academic community in furthering this goal. Students with disabilities (including physical, learning, or other types of disabilities which have been diagnosed by a qualified professional) should contact Margaret Ferrigno as possible to discuss their needs and to obtain information about accommodations. Each situation will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and every effort is made to work collaboratively with qualified students to facilitate an accommodation though the villages have limited accessibility.

LGBTQ STUDENT ISSUES

Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad aims to offer an excellent program regardless of sexual orientation. It is important to recognise that sexual orientation and sexual identity are viewed differently by the various host communities a student may have contact with

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during the program. While on the program, students may be challenged by vastly different beliefs and boundaries than those in their home community. Specific local cultural and religious realities, as they apply to LGBTQ issues, should be discussed with the leaders during orientation.

STUDENT LEGAL SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATIONS OF DISCIPLINARY AND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Violations of the codes of conduct may result in one or more of the following sanctions:

- **OFFICIAL WARNING**

A warning is given in verbal and/or written form to the student stating that s/he has violated Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad policy and that any additional violations may result in more serious disciplinary action during the stated period of reprimand. Documentation of warnings will be kept on file.

- **DISCIPLINARY PROBATION**

Probation is a period of time during which a student's actions and behavior are subject to close examination. Any further violation committed during this time period can result in further sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the program. While on probation a student may be denied permission to participate in certain program activities. A copy of the written and signed probationary letter will be kept on file.

- **DISCIPLINARY DISMISSAL**

Dismissal serves as a sanction for violations of the Conditions of Participation and codes of conduct. In addition, Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to dismiss any student for failure to observe published policies or procedures;

SAFETY STATEMENT

Participant and Host safety is Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad's highest priority. Given the socioeconomic, political, environmental, and medical conditions are very low in this region of Tibet, it is required that all students adhere to the policies and procedures put forth in this document.

STAYING HEALTHY

Students receive Health Recommendations as part of the pre-departure materials on the website. Students should read these guidelines and requirements carefully and discuss precautions and preventive measures with their health care professionals before departure. Students must acknowledge that they have read and understood the contents of this document before they will be permitted to participate on the program. During orientation, students will receive an additional health briefing and are expected to follow the recommendations and requirements set forth by program staff.

MEDICAL REVIEW

Full and timely disclosure of any medical or mental health issues or special student needs is required and helps Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad assist students to have the best possible program experience.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad programs offer exciting academic and personal challenges, including the experience of adapting to another culture. The cultural adjustment process requires psychological flexibility in the face of different customs, beliefs, and living conditions. These new situations may trigger "culture shock" while studying abroad, marked by symptoms such as sad mood, anxious thoughts, homesickness, and difficulties eating and sleeping, to name a few. Students who are currently managing a mental health condition are encouraged to discuss any concerns with their health professional and leaders.

Cultural views on mental health vary greatly, as do the types of resources that are available. Tibet has very limited options for health care. However, students can best prepare for a positive study abroad experience by developing a set of healthy coping strategies that they can utilize while on the program.

STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad does not provide students with illness and accident insurance. All students are required to have travel insurance or sign a waiver form. Participants should read the insurance policies carefully and arrange personally for any supplemental coverage desired. Although Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad can make no representation as to the availability or level of proficiency of medical care in all circumstances, in the event of accident or illness we will attempt to ensure that appropriate care is provided. Financial responsibility for medical treatment rests solely with the student.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Students should not plan for communication with family and friends at home, while on the program in Tibet. There will be certain locations where phones and internet communication are available, but they can be slow and difficult. In the event of an illness, crime, or emergency while on the program, students should immediately contact their leader with all relevant details to communicate home. Students can give **MEGS phone number 86-138-8014-9723** to family, yet it is against policy to offer the numbers of host families, or leaders to family and friends at home without the specific permission of the people involved. Parents, relatives, and friends needing to urgently contact a student while on a program should do so through the Treehouse Office in Arizona who will communicate to the leaders abroad.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR, RELATIONSHIPS, AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION AND DRESS

Students must be fully aware that both verbal and non-verbal communication, including dress, conveys specific sexual expectations in every culture. The subtleties of acceptable sexual behavior vary widely and it will be difficult at first for students, as outsiders, to

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grasp the host communities' sexual norms. Students' assumptions about what is acceptable may be frequently challenged. Students need to become sensitive to these differences, and strive to educate themselves quickly on appropriate behavior. This is a matter of personal safety as well as of cultural learning. Appropriate dress for is required, and students in will be informed by the leaders and the website of what clothing is unacceptable in the new cultural setting and what is required instead. One of the greatest concerns regarding safety for those choosing to engage in sexual activity is the use of effective protection against life-threatening diseases and other associated risks. It is vital to obtain the most current information possible regarding sexual relationships, host-country expectations in this regard, and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. Students should make every effort to address these issues before going abroad. If necessary while enrolled in the program, students should seek medical advice on how best to protect themselves and the availability of different methods of protection.

REFUND POLICY

It is the policy of Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad that students who withdraw from the program for any reason 50 days before the program are entitled to a refund in accordance with federal and school policies, whether or not they are recipients of federal or institutional financial aid. The effective date of withdrawal is the date SIT is notified. Students who are dismissed from a program are not entitled to any refund.

DISMISSAL FOR NONPAYMENT OF FEES

Students are expected to pay their tuition fees in full 30 days prior to departure. If payment is not made on schedule, the student may be withdrawn for nonpayment.

PROGRAM CHANGES

Although Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad will attempt to maintain its programs as described in its publications, the leaders reserve the right to terminate or alter a program at any time and for any reason, with or without notice, and shall not be responsible for any expenses or losses resulting from such changes.

DOCUMENTATION CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

I understand that future Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad publicity materials, including but not limited to its Web site, may include statements made by participants and/or their photographs, film or video images and voices, and I consent to Treehouse Abroad's free and perpetual use of any statements, photographs, likenesses, film or video images and voices in any medium, including those that Pureland/ Treehouse Abroad obtains from me or any participant or other source.

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE ACCORDING TO ALL RULES AND POLICIES

I have fully read and understood all policies in this document and agree to adhere to all requirements and policies included here and explained during the orientation. I understand that these policies are for the well being of myself, the group and the hosts and will make the most of this experience by following the guidelines. All of my questions have been fully answered regarding my role in this program and its policies and I am prepared to participate.

Participant Signed Name

Date

Participant's Printed Name

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