

**CHALLENGE ADVENTURES
WILDERNESS ADVENTURES FOR GIRL SCOUTS
INSTRUCTIONS AND HELPFUL HINTS**

ACTIVITIES

We will be walking 5-8 miles each day on mountain trails. We will go as fast as the slowest person in the group can go. The guides and the lead llama will decide how fast that is. We will stop and rest as often as we need to. You will learn about backpacking, setting up camp, and getting along in the woods. You will also learn about teamwork and learn more about yourself and other people in the group. Most people find out that they can do a lot more than they thought they could.

WHERE WE WILL BE

We will be hiking and camping in the Pisgah National Forest. This is near Asheville, NC. There are forests, small streams, and mountain meadows. If we are quiet on the trail, we may see deer, birds and other wildlife. There are no roads, bathrooms, buildings or running water. We purify water from streams for drinking. We will take in all our equipment and supplies, and pack out all our trash. Everyone will share responsibility for leaving the area at least as clean as we find it. We will be at about 6,000 feet altitude. At that altitude, the weather and the vegetation are about the same as in southern Maine.

LLAMAS

Llamas are a special part of our adventures. Each animal has his own personality. There will be seven with your group. All are friendly and used to young people. They are very quiet animals and make good listeners and trail companions. You will learn a lot about the llamas. You will feed and brush them, and lead them on the trail. You will also learn how to use heir wool to make bracelets. You will have a llama who will be your partner for the trip. You will share your llama with another young woman. In return, these gentle animals will carry most of the heavy equipment and supplies for the trip.

WHAT TO BRING

You carry your clothes and personal things like cameras, and your water. The total weight carried by each person in their pack should be no more than 20% of their body weight. When you sign up for the trip, you will get a clothing and equipment list. **Please read the clothing list and bring suggested items.** Besides clothes, you bring a sleeping bag and sleeping pad. These will be carried by the llamas. Try your local thrift store for bargain clothing and a raincoat.

In the mountains, it is much cooler at night than during the day. Even in the summer, you will need a sweater or jacket and one pair of warm pants. Wool or fleece is best for the sweater or jacket. They keep you warm even if they are wet. Summer day temperatures range from the 50's to the high 80's. Summer night temperatures range from low 30's to the low 50's. Fall and spring day temperatures range from 40° to 80° and night temperatures from 20° to 45°. There can be strong sunlight and sudden showers. Wearing your clothes in layers that you can take off and put back on is the best way to keep warm or cool off. Rain gear and comfortable hiking boots or shoes are very important.

We recommend water resistant boots or walking shoes with some ankle support. To keep them dry, put on three or four coats of silicone waterproofing spray. You can buy this in outdoor stores or in places like K-Mart or Wal-Mart. Be sure to break in your boots or shoes before the trip. Wear them for practice hikes where you live. Add insoles, padding, or extra socks, if you need them to take up space so your feet won't get rubbed. Blisters caused by rubbing are painful.

It rains a lot in the mountains, so be sure to have good rain gear. Often, we are hiking in the clouds, and you discover that clouds are made of water droplets! It is fun, but can be uncomfortable if you get too wet. Thin plastic ponchos will not last long. You will be better off getting something a little heavier in a poncho, or an inexpensive rainsuit. If you do get the thin kind, bring two or three because they will tear.

We know boots or hiking shoes are expensive. Don't go out and buy new ones unless you're going to use them a lot. Borrow some or get used ones.

CONDITIONING

Get your body ready for hiking. Start with brisk walking for at least 20 minutes three or more days per week. Then begin walking for a longer time and distance each day. Take the stairs whenever you can. You will have more fun on the trip if you are ready for it.

FOOD

We will provide wholesome food. Breakfast and dinner are at the camp sites. Lunches are picnic style. We can adapt to special dietary needs, such as allergies. Water will be available throughout the day, and extra food if it's needed. Do not bring candy, cookies, or other snacks with you on the trip.

EQUIPMENT WE PROVIDE

We provide the tents, cooking (but not eating) equipment, food, and other group gear like tarps.

OUR GUIDES

Our guides are mature people, usually 25 or older, and with the training required by the Forest Service and our own rules.

LIVING IN THE WOODS

We do not allow soap or toothpaste in the wild. The chemicals in them get into the soil and water. Water and a washcloth will get off the sweat and dirt. Water, a toothbrush and dental floss take care of your teeth. Mint or cinnamon flavored floss will give a fresh taste. It will substitute for toothpaste or mouthwash. Bring moist towelettes or packaged baby wipes for wiping off hands and face, or for washing all over if you want.

There are no toilets in the backcountry. But remember that the human race has been around longer than indoor plumbing. In the woods, you will defecate in your own "cat hole" so that all human waste is buried. We supply hand shovels and toilet paper. We will show you how.

MOST OF ALL, COME PREPARED TO HAVE FUN!