

CHALLENGE ADVENTURES

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, electricity, 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 eight with your group. Many of the Challenge Adventure llamas were born in North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia. All of the Challenge Adventures llamas have a brother in the herd whom they have never been away from. The brothers are Speckles and Britt, Don Diego and Davy, Walkie and Joshua and Flatt and Scruggs.

All the llamas are friendly and used to children. 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 have a llama who will be your partner for the trip. In return, these gentle animals will carry most of the heavy equipment and supplies.

WHAT TO BRING

The llamas will carry the group gear. Humans carry their own clothing and personal items. The total weight carried by each person in their own pack should be no more than 20% of their body weight. You will get a clothing list. **Please read the clothing list and bring suggested items, but not more than what is on the list.** Try your local thrift store for bargain clothing and a sturdy 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 get warm or cool. Rain gear and comfortable hiking boots or sturdy 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. Be sure to keep your shoes laced so you won't trip!

It rains a lot in the mountains, so good rain gear is necessary. 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 waterproof poncho or an inexpensive rain suit. If you do get the thin ponchos, 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 a day for three or more days per week. This is a chance to break in your boot or hiking shoes. Then begin walking for a longer time and distance each day. Try to get up to 60 minutes of fast walking every day. Take the stairs whenever you can. You will have more fun on the trip if your body is ready for it.

FOOD

We will provide wholesome food. Breakfast and dinner are at the camp sites. Lunches are picnic style along the trail. We can adapt to special dietary needs, such as allergies. Water and snacks will be available throughout the day. Do not bring candy, cookies, gum or other snacks with you on the trip. The odors are an invitation for the skunks to come visit you.

LIVING IN THE WOODS

It is a good idea to keep clean each day. We do not allow regular soap or regular toothpaste in the wild. The chemicals in them get into the soil and streams. Wiping your face and body with a washcloth and warm water will get off the sweat and dirt. Warm 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. We provide baby wipes for wiping off hands before meals. You can bring a small supply of unscented wipes for washing all over if you want, but remember you have to carry them in your pack and then haul them out in the trash.

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

Please pack only those items on the clothing list and leave scented products and lotions at home.

**MOST OF ALL,
COME PREPARED TO MEET NEW CHALLENGES AND HAVE FUN!**

