

2018 ULTRA GOBI Main Info

Run further than you ever imagined possible – take on a challenge that you thought you never would.

Ultra Gobi is China's first super ultra – distance race. We welcome both professional and amateur runners to test their stamina, strength and will in this unique event, in the splendour of the unforgiving Gobi desert, running through millennia - old ruins.

The race concept is based on the journey of a Buddhist monk, Xuanzang, who, fifteen centuries ago, travelled through the wilderness of the Gobi, in the modern day Gansu Province and Xinjiang Autonomous Regions of Western China. Xuanzang's memories of his nineteen year journey are told in the classic of Chinese literature – *Great Tang Records of the Western Regions*. This is how this book describes the area where the race is now held: “For eight hundred *li*, there is nothing but barren sand and dry river beds; there is not enough water to nourish even a single blade of grass, one looks for birds in the sky and beasts on land, but finds none”. The climate here is brutal and the weather can change in a blink of eye. In the words of Xuanzang himself: “When it is hot, the heat sears you like a flame, when it is cold, the wind cuts your flesh like a knife”.

Ultra Gobi is not only the ultimate challenge for energy, determination and braveness, also an amazing journey together with Chinese and Western culture. The first edition of Ultra Gobi was successfully held from between September 28th to October 4th, 2015. Thirty runners, including several international elite athletes, took part, with 18 finishing the race. The winning time was 92 hours 52 minutes and 58 seconds. And the 2016 edition of Ultra Gobi was successfully held at the same time with last year. Thirty runners, including 15 international elite athletes, took part, with 22 finishers. The winning time was 92 hours 26 minutes and 15 seconds. The 2017 edition of Ultra Gobi was successfully held at the same time with last year. Forty-three runners, including 15 international elite

athletes, took part, with 32 finishers. The winning time was 70 hours 51minutes and 45 seconds.

What makes this race unique?

- Four hundred kilometers, non-stop, self-navigation, self-supported race. China's first super ultra-distance event.
- Held in a true wilderness – 80% of the race is held in uninhabited areas.
- Run in one of the most arid regions in the world, and China's protected desert ecosystem.
- Test yourself against the world's strongest winds – Guazhou County, where the race is held, is known amongst the Chinese as the Wind Storage Room, and some of the strongest winds(wind grade 12) in China have been recorded here.
- Get ready for extreme temperature changes –In 2015, the lowest temperature here is -13°C , the highest 30.8°C .
- Great variety of terrain– you will run on the flat and in the mountains, cross sandy and rocky deserts, wade across crystal clear rivers, traverse glaciers, snowfields and dry riverbeds, run in high altitude pastures and amongst yardangs – great rocks carved into outwordly shapes by desert winds.
- Ancient ruins from the time of the Great Silk Road – you can enjoy the magnificent ruins of ancient towns and fortifications, the total number is more than 60:
 - UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Suoyang City and Xuanquanzhi Post
 - 6 national protected areas: Yulin Grottos, Eastern Thousand Buddha Caves, Double Entrance Towers of the Great Mausoleum, Kunlun Fortress, Ancient Stone City, Beacon Tower of the Ancient Tuhulu City.
- Make your mark in history! The organizers, working together with the Cultural Relics Protection Ministry, have designated an ancient Beacon Tower made in

Tang Dynasty(618-907)found recently, and name it using Champions name by each year. In 2015, this ancient Beacon Tower is named “Zhao Ziyu Tower”. In 2016, it is named “Bai bin Tower”. And in 2017, it’s named “Daniel Lawson Tower”.

- Run into history - every runner who completes the race earns a unique finisher gift - "tiger tally" an ancient symbol of authority in China and, depending on the runner's result, an ancient honorific title that used to be awarded to distinguished military commanders in ancient China. The top three shall also be awarded with Yinxi Cup trophies.

Race information

The 2018 Ultra Gobi starts on the 28th of September (race start follows Beijing time)from the ruins of Ashoka Emperor Temple, which is where the monk Xuanzang started his great pilgrimage fifteen centuries ago.

- Location: three counties and municipalities of Gansu Province: Guazhou, Dunhuang and Subei.
- Self-navigation: the race organizers provide the coordinates of checkpoints and rest stations only, not the track line of the race course.
- The race is self-supported: the runners must prepare all the compulsory equipment required for the race as well as food provisions with the total calorific value not lower than 25,000 calories. The food can be stored at the rest stations, while the compulsory equipment must be carried by the runners at all times.
- This is a non-stop race: the cut-off time to complete the entire course is 149 hours, the rest stations will be closed according to the designated cut-off times, and there is no limit on time the runners can spend at the rest stations.
- Rest stations are set up approximately every 35 kilometres. Drinking water and hot water are provided at the rest stations, together with charging, camping / resting areas and simple medical services.

- 1 Checkpoints are set up approximately every 15 kilometres. There is only drinking water provided. Runners are only permitted stay in checkpoint at most two hours.

Race organization

- Organizer: Beijing Xingzhi Exploring Culture Development Group Corp., Ltd,
- Contractors: Beijing Xingzhi Race Management Co., Ltd,
Gansu Xuanzang Route Culture Development Co., Ltd.
- Technical support: Neusoft Corporation, Race Events Division

2018 Race Schedule

- September
 - 25th Participants meet in Beijing
 - 26th Arrival in Dunhuang – race registration in race hotel
 - 19:00 Race briefing
 - 27th
 - 08:00 – 13:00 Equipment check
 - 21:00 Buses leave for race start – camp near Ashoka Temple
 - 28th
 - 00:00:00 Race starts from the ruins of Ashoka Temple
- October
 - 4th
 - 05:00 Cut-off time for the race, welcoming the last competitors at the finish
 - 08:00 Runners – volunteers activity, runners swap roles with volunteers
 - 10:00 – 18:00 Race for volunteers, starts from Ashoka temple
 - 18:00 – 22:00 Post race banquet and ceremony
 - 5th

Return to Beijing

Race completion

- In order for a participant to complete the race he or she must have gone through all the timing stations within the cut off times (to be announced before the race), swiping the timing card at each and maintaining the timing chip intact; arriving at the finishing line within the cut off time; not having used any transport to complete the race; not having received any external help to complete the race; not have accumulated time penalties in excess of 4.5 hours.
- From 2017 the cut off time shall be reduced by one hour each year. The cut off time for 2018 stands at 148 hours.

Race qualifications

Due to the unique nature of this race, the number of individual participants is limited. The number of competitors for 2018 is limited to 50.

The race organiser opens the door to the team participating in the race from 2018 Ultra Gobi. The team could be built by the brand or runners themselves, two runners of the team must run together and simultaneously pass the check points during the whole race. The team will be deemed stop the race, if one runner of the team quits. More details please see *2017 Ultra Gobi Race Regulations*.

Race requirements

Age requirements: the participants must be between 18 and 60 years old.

Physical requirements: The race is opened to competitors between the ages of 18 and 60. Every competitor must present a health certificate acquired within the period of one year before the race date. The following medical conditions will prevent the competitor from taking part in the race: heart disease (including congenital heart disease, rheumatic heart disease and so on), myocarditis, coronary artery disease, severe arrhythmia, hypertension, cerebrovascular disease, diabetes with much high blood sugar, as well as any other medical condition deemed unsuitable for taking part in this extreme race.

Health requirements: Every competitor must present a medical certificate of being in good health acquired within three months before the race date. The following medical conditions will prevent the competitor from taking part in the race: heart disease (including congenital heart disease, rheumatic heart disease and so on), myocarditis, coronary artery disease, severe arrhythmia,

hypertension, cerebrovascular disease, diabetes with much excessively high blood sugar levels, as well as any other medical condition deemed unsuitable for taking part in this extreme race. Every competitor must fully fill out the Participation Declaration completely, and have it re-signed during the race check-in.

Race Experience:

Individual

In order to be eligible for the race the runner must have the minimum of 20 ITRA points, obtained in no more than 4 races attended during the two-year period before the race registration date. These races must include at least one 100km race completed within 22 hours, or a successful completion of a 100 mile race.

The organizing committee shall also consider applications from outdoor and endurance athletes who have, for example, having successfully summited an 8000m peak, or completed very long distance running expeditions (such as transcontinental runs); each such application requires a submission of an outdoor CV and shall be considered on its individual merit.

Successful completion of Ultra Gobi allows the competitor to be exempt from ITRA point requirements for the following year's edition of the race.

Team

The team could be built by brand or runners themselves. One of the runners in the team must meet the requirements above (for individual), and another runner must finish at last one 100km running race during the two-year period before the race registration date.

Registration fee

- Race participation fee is 3,500 US dollars per competitor and 7,000 US dollars per individual team, 12,000 US dollars per brand team.
- The tracker equipment deposit is 100 US dollars per unit, to be returned after the race, if the equipment is undamaged.
- Registration fees include the following and cover the following services rendered to the competitors: pre-race training and briefing, rescue and medical services, body repatriation expenses, fee paid for protection of historical relics, bus to and from the race starting point, use of rest stations and checkpoints in uninhabited places, hire of race personnel, and race starting and closing ceremony.
- Registration fee does not include: competitors' travel expenses to and from the race, accommodation and food at the designated race hotels,

personal expenses during the race, personal accident insurance (as settlement claim methods vary between different countries), costs for passport and visa (travel documents service are not provided by organizer), costs of losses and damages caused by individual.

Race principles

1、 Safety first

The organizers of the race put safety first. All competitors are required to familiarize themselves with the safety regulations and the lists of compulsory equipment formulated by the organizers, and follow and respect these regulations.

The organizers remind all the competitors to be aware of safety risks involved in running this extreme race, and to fully understand and prepare for any possible risks and dangers they may encounter during the race.

2、 Fairness

The race organizers pledge to stage a fair and impartial race, treating all the participants fairly and equally. Competitors must not use unfair and unsportsmanlike methods during the race.

3、 Respect for fellow competitors and yourselves

All competitors must adhere to race regulations and treat fellow competitors and race personnel with consideration and respect.

Competitors must not endanger their health by using performance – enhancing substances. In case of a medical problem, competitors must seek, as quickly as possible, professional medical attention from medical personnel employed by the race organizers, rather than taking unnecessary risks and attempting to treat the problem themselves.

4、 Respect for the environment

The race organizers are committed to minimize as much as possible the race's impact on the environment and will immediately rectify and repair any environmental damage that may occur.

The race participants must minimize their own impact on the environment and adhere to the following rules:

- Do not throw litter on the race course and in residential areas
- Respect plant and animal life encountered on the race course, do not harass wildlife

- Respect the laws and regulations of China's national protected areas

The race organizers have set up an independent environmental protection commission for the race composed of personnel from the race organizing committee, cultural relics protection organizations and professional environmental protection institutions. The commission will carry out a professional environmental impact assessment of the race and put forward suggestions on making the next edition of the race more environmentally friendly.

5、Camaraderie and mutual assistance

It is the wish of the organizers that the participants will, when required, pool their efforts to overcome the challenges and hardships of this extreme race. In an event of a competitor sustaining an injury or requiring assistance, the race organizers hope that other competitors shall come to his or her aid and offer assistance and help within their capabilities.