

Charter of Values

What is Women Rockin' Pamirs' vision of tourism ?

The treks which aim to support Women Rockin' Pamirs combine fair tourism with the pursuit of solidarity and sustainability.

Fair tourism... because our goal is to ensure that local populations receive the revenue generated by tourism. The involvement of the local population is vital, as our project is one of partnership between a French team, Women Rockin' Pamirs, and a Tajik team, Zanon Dar Kuhhoi Pomir. These two organizations work together with a common goal: to generate equitable income through tourism in the Tajik territory and within households (favoring the employment of women).

Solidarity in tourism... because the human experience remains at the heart of our action, as does the liberation of women both through their new profession as mountain guides and the inclusion of local populations and institutions through all phases of the project. Our Franco-Tajik partnership is founded upon open-mindedness and mutual understanding of one another's cultures.

Sustainable tourism... because we also concern ourselves with respecting a balance between the needs of tourism, local aspirations and the preservation of the natural environment. Our actions through tourism are an opportunity for peoples and cultures to meet and for the appreciation of nature - not an object of consumption. We are conscientious of our great responsibility to prevent environmental and social degradation in connection with tourism and we strive to keep our impact-evaluation tools relevant.

We have developed objectives, categorized by theme, which lay out a framework for the way we practice tourism.

Our objectives are the following:

Transportation

- limit vehicular transport to the strict minimum to reach the treks' departure and arrival points
- favor foot travel or shared transportation during stops at Dushanbe and Khorog
- establish a ratio of passengers per vehicle which meets the needs of comfort while lessening impact on the environment
- build relationships with organizations and other actors in neighboring countries and in other sectors of Tajikistan in order to propose and advise travelers on how to extend their stay and take fuller advantage of their air travel to the area
- optimise the remuneration of drivers
- ensure that drivers respect their working hours and that they take regular breaks

Lodging

- favor homestays in local homes over impersonal lodging options in order to encourage

intercultural exchanges

- share traditional meals in local homes
- offer the possibility for travelers to experience traditional housing (Pamiri houses or yurts depending on the geographic region)
- work with families to be able to offer vegetarian or even vegan meals

Relations with local populations

- build an egalitarian relationship founded on exchanges and common ground, refusing to exoticize local culture
- allow travelers to participate in everyday life (work in the fields, housework, festivities...)
- contribute financially to community projects
- provide travelers with basic key vocabulary words to facilitate exchanges
- ensure the presence of a guide/interpreter on each trek

Natural environment

- respect the environment, provide travelers and the local team with the means necessary for leaving no trace of our passage in the mountains

Quality of accompaniment

- provide double accompaniment: one English- and French-speaking international mountain guide with experience in Tajikistan, and one local guide who has already acquired an advanced level in her training and a good mastery of English
- make the additional presence of an intern systematic (15 USD/day in 2018)
- pay local guides and other workers the optimum rates for Tajikistan (50 USD/day in 2018)

A vision for tourism in the long term

- vary itineraries as regular use of the same routes can leave a negative ecological impact and tarnish the natural beauty of the mountains
- create new itineraries reaching valleys which have thus far had no access to tourism revenues, thereby fostering fair repartition of incomes in the Pamiri region
- work with professional guides and high-quality teams and services to be able to receive tourist independently

Choice of itineraries

- chose original and wild itineraries which see few visitors
- favor adventure and wilderness in certain treks
- plan for and accompany travelers' adaptation to their new surroundings, from designing the trek to keeping vigilant during the trek

Choice of local partners

- collaborate with local teams which demonstrate sincerity and professionalism

Treatment of pack animals

- ensure that the treatment of donkeys is in keeping with the criteria of respect for animals: use of equipment which does not incur injuries, loads not exceeding 40/50 kg per donkey, days of rest during the trek...

Why female guides?

- to valorise female potential in a traditionally patriarchal and conservative society
- to offer guidance specifically adapted to individual women or female groups
- to allow the Tajik women in charge to gain self-confidence when leading mixed-gender groups