

## **Values Charter for Travelers**

How does Women Rockin' Pamirs strive to facilitate rich and culturally sensitive encounters between travelers and the Tajik population ?

We have learned from experience that encounters with people from very different cultures can be intimidating and that facing the poverty experienced in certain communities is not always easy. While travelers generally have the best of intentions their actions can sometimes have a harmful impact on the people they meet.

In order to facilitate “human-level” exchanges between travelers and local populations, we take an active role in preparing and accompanying the trek. In a context of mutual trust, we strive to give travelers the tools they will need in order to feel comfortable in their encounters and satisfied with their trek.

### The Women Rockin' Pamirs Values Charter for Travelers

#### First and foremost...

Traveling with Women Rockin' Pamirs means traveling with an open heart. It means meeting women, men and families in tight-knit communities. It's a journey that brings you into contact with humans who have chosen to open their country and even their homes to “strangers” in the spirit of hospitality.

Traveling with Women Rockin' Pamirs is not about “checking Tajikistan off of one's list”. It is not for traveling behind one's phone or camera.

We are all, individually and collectively, responsible for respecting the privacy and the integrity of the people we meet.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, each traveler bears the responsibility to interest themselves with the country visited and to respect its inhabitants and their customs.

#### Pre-departure meeting

When possible, given time and geographical constraints, getting together for a preparatory meeting before the trip is an ideal way to be informed about various practical elements and to answer your questions about the trek (about the culture and history of the country, level of comfort, level of difficulty of the trek, lodging, etc.).

If it is not possible to meet in person, a telephone or video conference meeting will be arranged with the French and, when possible, the Tajik guides who will be accompanying you during your trip.

We encourage you to consult the information about Tajikistan and on how to prepare for your trek on our website as well as the bibliographic resources listed.

### During the trip

Find a balance that allows you to respect your own needs while adapting to local customs. Follow our advice concerning your attire and rely on your humility to avoid broadcasting signs of wealth (such as expensive jewelry), which can be in jarring contrast with local living conditions.

It is best to ask permission before taking anyone's photograph and to ask the permission of the parents before photographing any minors. It's a nice opportunity to strengthen ties with the people you will meet!

Even more so than elsewhere in the world, water and electricity are precious and rare in Tajikistan. Do not waste them!

Whenever you have non biodegradable waste, carry it with you until you find a garbage receptacle. Each person is responsible for her or his own waste. With this state of mind it will be easier to leave spaces untarnished by our passing. Whenever we cross protected natural spaces we will inform you of any specific regulations.

Be very careful not to encourage begging, especially that of children. If you wish to make a gift or donation, please speak first with your guide who can indicate the people who are appropriately positioned to receive them on behalf of the community: local organizations, schools, the village chief or religious leaders.

### After the trip

If you have promised to send photos to friends made in Tajikistan, honor that promise.

If you became aware of any situations which are dangerous or go against your moral principles, make them known to the agency that organized your trek.

If you found your trek to be meaningful, spread the word : encourage your friends to discover Tajikistan with solidarity, responsibility and sustainability.

### Offset your CO2 emissions

With a goal of ecological solidarity in mind, we invite you to offset the CO2 emissions produced by your trip.

The NGO GERES offers a CO2 calculator and a platform for offsetting CO2 emissions (of which air travel is the main source for a trip to Tajikistan).

<https://co2solidaire.org/en/i-am-an-individual/>

For example, a round-trip flight France/Lyon – Tajikistan Dushanbe (5,182 km) in economy class, for one person, emits the equivalent of a total of 2.2 tons of CO2.

This amount corresponds to the threshold of emissions per individual per year which should not be surpassed in order to fight against climate change.