

Cover story



# The greatest journeys on Earth

Travel through the alphabet – and to the furthest reaches of the planet – with our A to Z of amazing adventures. From Annapurna to the Zambezi, the world awaits ...

BY MICK WEBB

enormous Tibetan monastery at Labrang and the city of Samarkand. World Expeditions offers a 28-day, small-group adventure holiday between Beijing and Tashkent, including rail and vehicle transfers, accommodation and meals, but excluding flights from the UK, for £2,950. Next departure is 8 April (0800 074 4135; [worldexpeditions.com](http://worldexpeditions.com)).

## T

### Trans-Siberian Railway

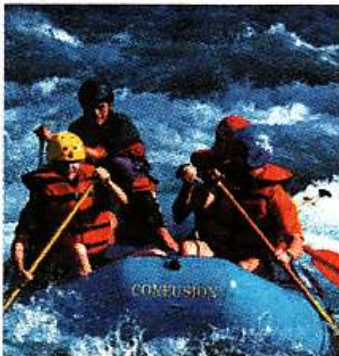
The world's greatest railway line crosses much of Russia from Moscow to the eastern port of Vladivostok. The 9,000km railway which links Europe with the Pacific crosses seven time zones on its one-week journey. As of this month you can cross the Volga, marvel at limpid Lake Baikal and get a tantalising taste of the trip, all from the comfort of your desk ([www.bit.ly/Transib](http://www.bit.ly/Transib)). For the real thing, one-way fares start at around

at [walkni.com/ulsterway](http://walkni.com/ulsterway). Let's Go Walking provide packages for sections of the walk: five nights bed-and-breakfast with luggage transfer costs from £379 (01837 880075; [letsgowalking.com](http://letsgowalking.com))

## V

### Vía de la Plata (Spain)

A fine alternative to the better known and much more crowded pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela along Spain's north coast, the “Silver Way” starts at the southern city of Seville and ends at Gijon in the north. The journey of almost 1,000km takes six to seven weeks to complete,



## X

### X-country skiing on the King's Trail (Sweden)

Of course it should be X for Xanadu, but that fabled destination is now just a neglected ruin in Inner Mongolia. So instead we have settled on the King's Trail: the crowning glory of cross-country skiing routes. It starts deep in the Arctic Circle, 50km north of Kiruna, a mining town in northern Sweden. Then it winds southwards for 440km to Hemaavan, paralleling the frontier with Norway. Accommodation is in mountain huts a day's trek apart.

Nature Travels runs eight-day tours along the most picturesque section of the trail between Abisko and Mount Kenekaise, Sweden's highest mountain. There are several departures in March and April, costing from £559 (excluding travel to Kiruna and ski rental) (01929 463 774; [naturetravel.co.uk](http://naturetravel.co.uk)).