

Would these tourists be visible from space? Chaotic scenes on the Great Wall of China as EIGHT MILLION visitors swamp heritage site in one day



Looking more like a crowded city on a busy work morning than a historical landmark, China's Great Wall was swamped with millions of people on one day during the country's annual week-long holiday. And instead of taking pictures of the famous UN World Heritage Site, these sightseers can be seen snapping shots of the flood of visitors.

Incredible images reveal more than eight million tourists crammed on one of the world's most famous heritage sites, inching their way along the 13,177-mile attraction.

Sixteen million people visited the Great Wall (frequently billed as the only man-made object visible from space) throughout the country's annual week-long holiday, which started on 1 October, Rocket News 24 reported. It's the highest visitor number for five years.

Known as the 'Golden Week', the holiday was created by Chinese Communist Party officials to promote tourism within the country.

The plan however has caused major problems for the tourism industry as it struggles to cope with the huge number of visitors. All across China tourism destinations reported record numbers, but the flood of tourists has meant that attractions have been jam-packed and locals have had to face huge traffic delays on all transport networks.

The Great Wall was started in 500 BC and first linked up under leader Qin Shi Huang in about 220 BC to protect China's northern border and fend off foreign invaders.

It grew to link up 15 provinces and was reinforced and extended many times during later dynasties.

Only 8.2 per cent of the wall built during the Ming Dynasty remains intact, 74.1 per cent is in poor condition, and in some sections, only its foundation remains, according to China's State Administration of Cultural Heritage.

The wall was put on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's list of World Heritage sites in 1987.

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