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A blind date with the world

GreatEscape 2008: The Global Scavenger Hunt, the self-styled "one and only, annual, open-to-the-public, around-the-world, travel adventure competition" is due to kick off on April 11 and run until May 3.

For this, the fourth such event, 25 teams of two-single applicants will also be considered will be selected to travel to at least 10 nations on four continents within the space of three weeks. The contestants, who are not given advance notice of their itineraries, accumulate points for completing hundreds of culture-oriented "scavenges" during that period. This year their tasks will include: meditating with monks; doing basic "ninja training"; taking flamenco-dancing and yoga lessons; cooking Asian cuisine with native chefs; searching for "lost cities"; riding elephants to reach sacred temples; making local handicrafts; and decoding local languages to unravel "scavenger hunt" clues.

The World's Greatest Travellers, organisers of the competition, are hoping to raise \$1 million (33.4 million baht) for humanitarian organisations such as Partners in Health, Doctors Without Borders, Unicef and Care.

The competition entry fee of \$9,900 (331,056 baht) per person covers all international air fares, 23 nights' accommodation in first-class hotels and about 40 per cent of meals.

For more information or to fill in an application form, visit www.GlobalScavengerHunt.com/