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15 days Yunnan Tibet tour to Kathmandu

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Kunming

Dali

Lijiang

Shangri-la

Lhasa

Shigatse

Mount Everest

Gyirong Border

Kathmandu

This tour from Yunnan to Tibet involves two of the most beautiful places in China. Shangri-la, Mount Everest, every stop is overflowing with picturesque scenery. Much more awaits to be discovered as you have an overland trip to Kathmandu.

Type

Private

Duration

15 days

Theme

Culture and Heritage, Natural scenery, Overland

Trip code

CTT-01

Price

From CN¥ 14,400 per person

Itinerary

Travel from Yunnan to Tibet is one of the most fabulous journey in China. Stop at several dreamlike places: Kunming, Shangri-la, Lhasa and Mount Everest to enjoy the breathtaking landscapes and the plain and sincere folkways. Mixed with a Tibetan cultural tour as you explore the magnificent Potala Palace and other famous monasteries in Tibet. This fantastic tour ends with an overland trip to Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal.

Day 01 :

Arrive Kunming

Your fabulous journey gets started upon your arrival in Kunming, the capital city of Yunnan Province. You will be warmly greeted at the airport or railway station and assisted to the downtown hotel by your local guide and driver. Have the rest of the day to relax or explore this city on your own.

Day 02 :

Kunming Stone Forest Tour

Start today's trip with a visit to the **Bamboo Temple** in the western outskirts of Kunming city. The temple is noted for over 500 colorful and lifelike arhat statues built during Qing dynasty. These arhats were famous monks who had achieved great attainment in Buddhism. Learn about their stories from your guide while wandering in the temple.

In the afternoon, immerse yourself into the fabulous world of the **Stone Forest** located southwest of Kunming. Known as the

world's Karst landscape museum, the stones in the forest appear numerous unique shapes including swords, mushrooms or towers, representing the greatest miracle that nature could make.

In the evening, you may choose to enjoy an impressive dance musical 'Dynamic Yunnan' as optional sightseeing (ticket fee is not included) before driving back to your hotel.

Day 03 :

Bullet train to Dali - Dali City Tour

Take a morning bullet train to Dali, a great place for romantic relationships. It's four views, namely, wind, flower, snow and the moon are long celebrated by Chinese lovers.

Upon arrival, you'll head to the **Three Pagodas**, a symbol of the history of ancient Dali city. It was once a temple that contained three independent pagodas forming a symmetrical triangle. Walk around the pagodas and the Reflection lake (Juying Chi) behind them. Be sure to check out the reflection of these pagodas.

Afterward, enjoy a cruise on **Erhai Lake**, where you will enjoy the blue and peaceful water long known as Pearl at the Plateau. Appreciate the breathtaking scenery of **old Dali city** along its banks. Lastly, soak into the old town of Dali.

Day 04 :

Drive to Lijiang - Explore Lijiang Old Town on your own

Take a 2.5 hour drive to Lijiang this morning, a fantastic place known for romantic encounters. Along the way, you will make several stops. The first is **Xizhou village**, where you will visit **Yan's Compound of the Bai Minority**, one of the most representative Bai-style residences in Yunnan Province. Next, you'll stop at **Zhoucheng village** to learn about **traditional tie-dyeing by visiting a local workshop**. Another potential stop is **Shaping Bazaar**, a historic market located in Shangguan Town, where you can shop for souvenirs like jade articles, embroidery, curios, and more.

Upon arrival in Lijiang, you will be assisted with check-in at a local hotel in the old town. The rest of the day is free for you to explore Lijiang Ancient Town at your own pace. You might consider visiting Dongba Museum to learn about the Naxi's Dongba culture, strolling through Square Street at the heart of Lijiang Old Town, or exploring Mufu, the historic residence of the Naxi's ruling Mu clan. You can also head to Lion Mountain for a panoramic view of Lijiang Old Town.

Day 05 :

Lijiang Jade Dragon Snow Mountain Tour

Today you will visit the **Jade Dragon Snow Mountain** and **Baisha Village**.

Resembling a jade dragon lying in the clouds, the **Jade Dragon Snow Mountain** offers a splendid backdrop to the tranquil town of Lijiang. Take a cable car up to **Glacier Park** (altitude 4,680 m), where you can witness the 13 lively peaks lively in distance. As you descend the mountain, Every step will reveal a breathtaking view. You may choose to enjoy the large cultural show 'Impression Lijiang' in the outdoor theater in front of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, which is demonstrating the traditions and lifestyles of the Naxi, Yi and Bai peoples, and takes place outdoors.

Afterward, head to **Baisha Village**. This village was the first settlement of Naxi people as well as the economic and political center of Lijiang for centuries. Stroll through the village and pay a visit to the most precious treasure of this village - **Baisha Murals**, blending the styles of Han, Tibet, and Naxi. These murals reflect that Buddhism, Taoism, and Tibetan Buddhism have coexisted harmoniously in this village for over 600 years. You will also be arranged to visit a **local Naxi family** to learn about their traditional culture that still in practice today. Later afternoon return to Lijiang, stop at the **Black Dragon Pool** to enjoy an outstanding view of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain (Yulong mountain) in distance and explore traditional stone buildings and bridges here. Then the rest of the day is on your own.

P.S.:

There are **three key vantage points** to view Jade Dragon Snow Mountain via cable car:

- **Glacier Park** (altitude 4,680m) offers stunning views of the glaciers covering the mountain's peaks.
- **Yak Meadow** (altitude 3,650m) is known for its lush green fields where yaks graze, with snow-capped peaks in the background.
- **Spruce Meadow** (altitude 3,249m) provides picturesque views of the mountains framed by dense spruce forests.

Choose the one that best suits your condition. For seniors or families with young children, Glacier Park is not recommended due to its high altitude.

Day 06 :

Drive to Shangri-la - Shangri-la Sightseeing

Today drive to Shangri-la, and along the way you will have several stops to visit the **First Bend of Yangtze River, Stone Drum Town, and Tiger Leaping Gorge**. While arriving at the First Bend of Yangtze River, you will see an extraordinary turn which forces the Yangtze to make a sudden V-shaped bend and flow to the northeast, presenting numerous beautiful and marvelous views. Stone Drum Town is the second famous spot along the way. The town got its name from a drum-shaped marble plaque, which is a monument commemorating the victory of Lijiang's Naxi ruler over an invading Tibetan army.

Afterwards head to the **Tiger Leaping Gorge**, from the top of the gorge, it offers spectacular sightseeing of the steeply angled mountain siding to the rushing Golden Sands River with its 18 frothing rapids more than 200 m. (700 ft.) below. Upon arrival in Shangri-la, take a rest in your hotel or freely explore on your own.

Day 07 :

Shangri-la Tour

Spend the whole day on visiting the highlights in Shangri-la, a mystical and harmonious place that was firstly described in the 1933 novel *Lost Horizon* by British author James Hilton. Start the trip by heading to **Sumtseling Monastery**, which is regarded as the largest Tibetan Buddhism Temple in Yunnan. The monastery was constructed imitating the design of the Potala Palace in Lhasa, and hence came the alias 'the little Potala Palace'.

Afterward, drive to **Pudacuo National Park**, the park well preserves many classic features of China's southwestern region together with various aspects of traditional nomadic Tibetan plateau life. Bitahai Lake is also called the pearl of the Plateau because of its intact natural landscape, while Shudu Lake is famous for the various wild animals and plants around the lake. Visit a local Tibetan family during the visit to the park.

Lastly, explore Shangri-la Tibetan Ancient Town. It will be a great experience to climb up to the top of Guishan Hill to witness the largest Prayer Wheel of the world and have a panoramic view of Shangri-La county.

Day 08 :

Fly from Shangri-la to Lhasa

Drive to the Shangri-la airport for the departure for Lhasa, and the flight will take about 2 hours. Upon arrival, be met and assisted to the hotel in the Lhasa old town by your local guide and driver. The rest of the day is left free for you to relax and start acclimatizing the high altitude. Start your overland tour in Tibet tomorrow morning.

Day 09 :

Lhasa City Tour

This morning will cover a visit to the magnificent **Potala Palace**. Served as the religious center of Tibetan Buddhism culture and the dwelling place for Dalai lamas for centuries, Potala Palace has been always regarded as the landmark of Lhasa city. Its unique fortress-like appearance is a wonder even by modern architectural standard, astonishing every visitor who had the chance to come here.

Afterward, head to the center part of Lhasa old city and visit **Jokhang Temple**, the holy shrine to all the Tibetan Buddhists. Atop the roof, it offers an excellent view of the Potala Palace in the distance. You can also see many pilgrims prostrating themselves at the entrance of the temple. Next up with a walk along the Kora around Jokhang Temple, called Barkhor Area. It is also a famous street for selling local souvenirs.

Day 10 :

Lhasa Monastery Tour

The tour today will be focused on visiting two of the great three Gelugpa Sect monasteries in and near Lhasa city, Ganden Monastery and Sera Monastery. Morning drive to **Ganden Monastery** located atop of a hill 50 km. (31 mi.) northeast of Lhasa. This monastery is the first one that was built by the founder of Gelugpa Sect himself. and now is well known for its Kora. While walking along the Kora path leading to the top of the hill, you will see many pilgrims and monks offering prayers, rubbing holy rocks and prostrating themselves.

After lunch, drive back to Lhasa city to visit **Sera Monastery**, which is famous for its debating tradition every afternoon. Debating is one part of learning Buddhism scriptures that all the monks need to involve themselves in, so that they can further their comprehension and proceed to more advanced levels of study.

Day 11 :

Drive to Shigatse via Yamdrok tso lake & Gyantse, 360km, about 6.5-7 hours drive (B)

In the morning, drive up to Kampala Pass (4,794m), where you'll catch a glimpse of **Yamdrok-Tso Lake** and enjoy spectacular views of Holy Mount Nyenchen Khangsar in the distance. The turquoise-colored Yamdrok-Tso is one of the three holy lakes in Tibet. The unforgettable sight of the pincer-shaped turquoise water, combined with the stunning view of the Nyenchen Khangsar glacier from Karo La Pass, will be the highlights of your day.

Afterward, drive along the Friendship Southern Highway to Gyantse. Visit the famous **Gyantse Kumbum stupa**, one of Tibet's most remarkable architectural marvels. If time permits, explore the old town of Gyantse to experience local life. Then, continue your journey to Shigatse (about a 1.5-hour drive) for your overnight stay.

Day 12 :

Shigatse Tour, drive to Shegar [4,150m] with stop to Sakya [4280m], 300KM, 6-7hrs drive (B)

In the morning, visit **Tashilhunpo Monastery**, the seat of the Panchen Lama and a major center of Tibetan Buddhism in Rear Tibet. The highlight of the visit is the Stupa-tomb of the 10th Panchen Lama, adorned with gold, jewels, and precious stones. It is said that the Panchen Lama's body showed no signs of decomposition for years. You can also walk along the monastery's Kora path, which offers an excellent view of Shigatse city.

Later in the morning, drive to **Sakya Monastery**, the main monastery of the Sakyapa sect, known for its distinctive gray-colored buildings. After exploring the monastery and hiking around the northern ruins, continue driving to Shegar. After a short drive crossing **Gyatso-La Pass** (5,200m), you'll get your **first glimpse of Mount Everest** in the distance on a clear day. Overnight in Shegar.

Day 13 :

Drive to Everest Base Camp [5,150m], Sunset at E.B.C, 100KM, 2-3 hour drive (B)

Early in the morning, begin your drive to **Everest Base Camp (E.B.C.)**. As you enter the Mount Everest National Nature Reserve, the winding road leads you to **Gawula Pass** (5,250m), where you'll be rewarded with breathtaking panoramic views of the Himalayas, including an incredible view of Mount Everest.

At Tashi Zong Village, you'll switch to the local sightseeing bus, and after another hour's drive, you'll arrive at E.B.C. In the afternoon, visit **Rongbuk Monastery**, the highest-altitude monastery in the world at 5,154 meters. Relax and, weather permitting, witness a stunning **sunset over Mount Everest**.

Overnight accommodation will be at the tent guest house at E.B.C. or the monastery guest house near Rongbuk.

Day 14 :

Drive from E.B.C to Gyirong Border [2,250m], 390KM, 6.5-7 hours drive

If weather permits, you'll have the chance to witness a **stunning sunrise over Mount Everest** in the early morning. Afterward, bid farewell to Mount Everest and begin your drive to Gyirong, passing through Old Tingri and the beautiful **Peikutso Lake** (4,590m). From Peikutso, you will start to experience a significant altitude change as you descend towards Gyirong Town (2,700m). This dramatic drop of nearly 2,000 meters offers a striking contrast between the high-altitude Tibetan plateau and the lush lower valleys. Overnight in Gyirong Town.

Day 15 :

Drive From Gyirong to Kathmandu

After breakfast, drive for about half an hour to reach the **Gyirong border**, where our Tibetan guide will assist you in clearing customs. On the Nepal side, your Nepalese driver will be waiting for you with a warm smile. Once you've cleared customs at the Nepal Immigration office, you'll begin a 7-9 hour drive to Kathmandu, enjoying scenic views of white-water rivers along the way. Your trip will conclude upon arrival in Kathmandu, but it can be extended to explore other parts of Nepal if you wish.

Inclusions

Tour notes:

Please note prices are based in CNY.

General inclusions:

2 bottles of mineral water provided daily.

All required government taxes and fees.

All required Tibet permits and domestic travel documents.

Where possible 3 star hotels will always be provided, if the city or town does not have then the local guest house or monastery guest house will be provided (i.e. tent / dormitory bed, no private bathroom etc.)

The hotel accommodation is based on two persons sharing one standard twin room with private facilities in all relevant locations. If a single client requests a twin room alone, the single room supplement will be charged.

Local Tibetan guide fluent in English, Chinese or Japanese that is certified by the state tourism build. (If your native language is not listed please let us know, we are certain we can assist your needs.)

Airport and/or train station pick-up and drop-off.

All domestic flight and train tickets. Economy-class for flights and soft sleeper / seat for train tickets.

Transportation will be provided via a comfortable and clean car, minivan or tourist bus depending upon the groups size.

Nepal border pick up and transfer to your hotel in Kathmandu.

Meals as remarked in the itinerary. (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)

General exclusions:

Personal expenses such as laundry, drinks, internet access, fax, telephone calls etc.

Tips for your guide and driver.

Optional Attractions that are not specified in the itinerary.

Flight and/or railway ticket(s) to the first city of the tour and departure from the last city of the tour.

Meals not specified in the itinerary.

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