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Lhasa
Shigatse
Saga
Manasarovar Lake
Mount Kailash Kora
Guge Kingdom Ruins
Saga
Lhasa

This 17-day Tibet Mt Kailash tour takes you on an in-depth journey through Far Western Tibet, featuring Mount Kailash trekking, the Guge Kingdom, Mount Everest, monasteries, and stunning landscapes. This tour starts and ends in Lhasa.

Type
Private
Duration
17 days
Theme
Overland, Photography

Trip code
WT-304

Price
From CN¥ 12,500 per person

Itinerary

Tour Highlights: A Journey from Lhasa to Mount Kailash, Guge Kingdom, and Everest Base Camp

Start in the Holy City of Lhasa: Explore the heart of Tibetan culture, visiting sacred landmarks and immersing yourself in the unique lifestyle and traditions on the "Roof of the World."

Shigatse: Discover the second-largest city in Tibet, rich in monasteries and shrines that have been central to spiritual practices for thousands of years.

The Vast Jangtang Plain: Travel across the remote Northern Plain, a treeless moonscape of stunning contrasts, dotted with nomadic tents and herds of yaks, sheep, and goats.

Mount Kailash: The spiritual centerpiece of the journey, revered as a pilgrimage site by Buddhists, Bon, Hindus, and Jains, situated in a breathtakingly rugged and sacred region.

The Guge Kingdom: Explore ancient ruins and well-preserved temples nestled in the dramatic sandstone canyons of the Sutlej River, adorned with murals and motifs dating back over 1,000 years.

Mount Everest Base Camp: Conclude your journey with a stop at the north face of Mount Everest, offering unparalleled views of the world's highest peak.

This extraordinary tour blends spirituality, history, and unmatched landscapes, providing an unforgettable journey through the heart of Tibet.

Day 01 :

Arrival at Lhasa [3,658m]

Upon arrival at Lhasa airport or train station, to be met and transferred to your hotel / hostel in Lhasa. Afternoon have a good rest to acclimatize the high altitude. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 02 :

Lhasa City sightseeing, visit Potala Palace & Jokhang Temple

Today is your first day of sightseeing on the high plateau, so we have purposely arranged only to visit Jokhang temple and Potala Palace. Jokhang temple is the most sacred shrine in Tibet which was built in 7th century and located at the heart of old town in Lhasa, the circuit around it called Barkhor street, which is a good place to purchase souvenirs. Potala Palace is the worldwide known cardinal landmark of Tibet. The massive structure itself contains a small world within it. Mostly it is renowned as residence of the Dalai Lama lineages (Avalokiteshvara). Both of them are the focal points of pilgrims from entire Tibetan world, multitudinous pilgrims are circumambulating and prostrating in their strong faith. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 03 :

Lhasa City sightseeing, visit Drepung monastery, Sera monastery & Norbulingka summer palace

Today you will be arranged to visit Drepung, Sera monasteries and Summer Palace - Norbulingka palace. Both Drepung and Sera monasteries are Gelugpa (yellow hat) sect monastic colleges. Drepung monastery was the seat of the Government prior to Potala, it was once the world largest monastery in the history with 10,000 monks hailed from different monasteries all over Tibet. Sera monastery is famous for its Buddhism philosophical debate practice, the clapping sound and aggressive expression of the monks are well worth to see. Norbulingka is the summer palace of Dalai Lama, you can visit the residences of different lineages of the Dalai Lama. The park is crowded with picnickers and traditional activities during the Shoton (Yogurt festival) in August. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 04 :

Drive from Lhasa to Shigatse (3800m/12,467ft) Via Yamdrok lake (4,300m) & Gyantse (3,900m) - 360KM, 6.5-7 hour drive
In the morning, drive up to Kampala Pass (4,794m) where you will have the first sight of Yamdrok-tso and enjoy spectacular views of Holy Mount Nyenchen Khangsar in the distance. The turquoise-colored Lake Yamdrok Yutso, one of the three holy lakes in Tibet, presents an unforgettable vista of pincer-shaped turquoise water, and the amazing spectacle of Mt. Nyenchen Khangsar glacier from Karo La Pass is a highlight of the day. Continue along the Friendship Southern Highway to Gyantse, a mid-sized town located at 3,950 meters above sea level, known for its impressive hilltop military fort and the Pelkor Chode Monastery, which houses the Kumbum Stupa — the largest stupa in Tibet and a marvel of Tibetan Buddhist architecture. Then, head to Shigatse, the second-largest city in Tibet, for an overnight stay.

Day 05 :

Shigatse Tashilhunpo monastery, Shigatse market, then drive to Sakya (4,300 m /14,108 ft) - 150KM/about 3 Hours' drive
Morning you will visit Tashilhunpo Monastery, one of the six prominent yellow hat sect monasteries and renowned as the seat of the Panchen Lama. Tashilhunpo Monastery houses the world's largest statue of Maitreya Buddha. The monastery's impressive halls and intricate artwork provide a glimpse into Tibetan spirituality and culture. Visitors can explore the vibrant religious life within its walls and admire the stunning architecture.
You will also visit the Samzhubze Old Market in Shigatse, where you can explore the lively market, interact with friendly residents, and immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere that defines this authentic Tibetan market. Late morning drive west to Sakya, enjoy the beautiful landscapes on the way. Upon arrival, visit Sakya Monastery, the principal monastery of Sakya sect of Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet, it is famous for its collection of thousands of religious scriptures, artwork and its striking gray and red exterior, which symbolizes the sect's name, "Sakya," meaning "grey earth." Hike around the monastery northern ruins to feel the 1000 history. Overnight at Sakya town.

Day 06 :

Drive from Sakya to Saga (4,640 m /15,220 ft) - 350KM, 6-7 hour drive

Today drive from Sakya to Saga, pass several high plateau lakes, towns, herders tents and along the route with plateau mountain ranges, diverse forms of mountains are overlooking through the valley. Overnight at Saga.

Day 07 :

Drive from Saga to Darchen (4,600m /15,090ft) via Paryang (4750m) - 500Km, 7-8 hours drive

In the morning, drive from Saga to Paryang, weaving your way through the small, dusty town of Zhongba amidst enchanting panoramic views. Scattered nomadic tents mingle with herds of animals on the open plateau. You'll pass numerous villages and yak herder camps, enjoying distant views of snow-capped mountains. Cross the Mayun-la pass (5,216m), where you might see many wild animals on the plateau grasslands. Arrive in Darchen and check into hotel.

Darchen, a small village at the foot of Mount Kailash, is the starting and ending point of the Mt. Kailash trekking, prepare for the trekking and your guide will assist you to arrange porter at your request (fee will be on your own). Overnight at Darchen.

Day 08 :

Mount Kailash Trekking - Day 1 / Darchen - Dirapuk Monastery [5,080 m], 13KM, about 6 Hours' Trekking

Today start your first Kailash Kora. In the early morning, take the local eco-bus from Darchen to Prayer Square, where you will begin the first day's trek (about 13km). It will be a gradual walk, accompanied by the chants and prayers of many other local pilgrims. From the valley, you can view the Choku Monastery perched on the hillside. The trail will have a few ups and downs until you reach the camp at Dirapuk monastery [4,750 m], located at the foot of the western slope of Mount Kailash. Along the way, you will encounter many Bon pilgrims traveling in the opposite direction (anti-clockwise). This is because Mt. Kailash is revered by four different religions: Buddhism, Bon, Hinduism, and Jainism.

Check into the guesthouse at Dirapuk Monastery, and, if the weather permits, enjoy the awe-inspiring spectacle of the sunset over Mount Kailash from this vantage point.

Day 09 :

Mount Kailash Trekking - Day 2/ Dirakpuk Monastery - Drolma La Pass [5,630 m] - Zuktulpuk Monastery (4,820 m/15,813ft), 22KM, 7-8 Hours' Trekking

On the second day of your Mount Kailash trek, you will face the most challenging part of the route. The trek will lead you along a higher section of the holy path just beneath Mount Kailash, and you will ascend to the trek's highest point - Drolma La [5,630 m]. This part involves a steep uphill climb. After reaching the pass, you will encounter a steep and rocky descent, where at times you may need to jump from stone to stone. Upon reaching a sandy hill, you might consider to take a short break and drink some warm tea at the rest stop. Then following the path through gradual fields, you will reach Dzutul-puk for an overnight camp. Dzutul-puk, meaning "magical cave" in Tibetan, is a small monastery linked to an intriguing story of a talent competition between the Great Yogi Milarepa (Buddhist) and Naropa (Bon). Overnight at Dzutul-Puk guest house.

Day 10 :

Mount Kailash Trekking - Day 3 / Trek Zutulpuk Monastery to Zongto, 6Km/about 2-3 Hours' Trek, then Drive to Zanda, 250km/about 4-5 hours drive

Complete the Mount Kailash trekking and rest, refresh yourself at Darchen.

Today's trek is an easy walk back towards Darchen, taking only about 2-3 hours in total. The path gradually winds out of the valley, and you'll follow the river into the Barka plain. The trekking journey finally concludes at **Zongto** (Zongdui) from where you will take the local eco bus to Darchen. Congratulations, you have just completed a lifetime spiritual trek!

After a short rest at Darchen, then start driving to Zanda, firstly drive along the Xinjiang-Tibet Highway, then off the main Hwy after 150Km, go across a few mountain passes, you will see the magnificent Tholing Forest. You will driver through the Tholing forest to reach Zanda. Overnight at Zanda.

Day 11 :

Guge Kingdom Ruins & Tholing Monastery(18KM, 40 minutes)

Begin your day with a visit to the Tsaparang Guge Kingdom ruins in the Sutlej River Valley, once the seat of a powerful dynasty that ruled the western Tibetan plateau for 700 years before vanishing mysteriously 400 years ago. Explore remnants of fortresses adorned with carvings, gold and silver Buddha statues, and well-preserved murals like the famed "Guge Silver Eyes". Spend half a day to explore these ruins and learn some of the Tibetan Buddhist art and political history.

In the afternoon, return to Zanda and visit Tholing Monastery, one of Western Tibet's oldest and most significant monasteries, founded in 996 AD. Featuring a fusion of Indian, Nepali, and Tibetan styles, it boasts exquisite murals and carvings, rivaling the Dunhuang Mogao Caves, and is encircled by 83 stupas. Overnight in Zanda.

Day 12 :

Drive from Zanda back to Lake Manasarovar (228 Km,5-6hours, 4,560M high)

After breakfast, retrace your route to Lake Manasarovar, one of Tibet's three holy lakes. Revered in Buddhism and Hinduism, this sacred lake symbolizes compassion, tranquility, and bliss. Spend the afternoon relaxing along the serene lake shore or climb to Chiu Monastery for a panoramic view of the lake and surrounding landscapes. Overnight at a local guesthouse (dorm bed).

Day 13 :

Drive from Lake Manasarovar or Darchen to Saga via Paryang, Approx. 8-9 Hours' Drive



This morning, bid farewell to Mount Kailash and Lake Manasarovar as you begin your journey back to Saga. The route retraces the scenic path through the windswept plains, offering another chance to capture the breathtaking landscapes and

the rugged beauty of this remote region. Take in your final views of Mount Kailash and the tranquil Lake Manasarovar along the way. Overnight in Saga.

Day 14 :

Drive from Saga to Everest Base Camp via Pelku Tso lake, 370km, 6-7 hours drive

Today, cross the Brahmaputra River and drive through vast sandy plains, passing nomadic herders with their yaks and sheep. Midway, stop to admire the breathtaking view of Pelku Tso Lake on your left and Mt. Shishapangma (8,012m) on your right.

Continue driving through pastures to join the Friendship Highway, reaching Old Tingri, where you can enjoy distant views of the mighty Mt. Everest (8,844m) and Mt. Cho Oyu (8,201m) to the south. Travel another 100KM to Rongbuk with a stop at Gawu-la Pass for the most spectacular panoramic views of the Himalayas mountain ranges.

Spend the evening marveling at the stunning sunset over Mt. Everest. Overnight at a monastery guesthouse or tent guesthouse (dorm bed).

Day 15 :

Everest Base Camp to Shigatse, 340KM, Approx. 7 Hours' Drive

Begin your day with the opportunity to witness a breathtaking sunrise at Mount Everest, where the first light of the day may bathe the peak in red hues, weather permitting. Visit Rongbuk Monastery, the world's highest Buddhist monastery, home to both nuns and monks, offering a profound spiritual experience.

After a morning of exploration, start your journey back to Shigatse along the Friendship Highway, pausing at Gyatso-La Pass for a final view of Mount Everest. Upon reaching Shigatse, celebrate your extraordinary journey to Mount Kailash, Guge, and Everest with a delightful dinner and traditional Tibetan dance performance at a local Langma Hall.

Overnight in Shigatse.

Day 16 :

Morning Drive Back to Lhasa via Northern Friendship Highway, 270km, 4-5hours drive

Start your morning journey back to Lhasa along the Northern Friendship Highway, following the scenic Brahmaputra River. The diverse landscapes along the way are sure to captivate your attention. Midway, stop at Nyemo Tunba County, where you can observe demonstrations of traditional Tibetan incense making, paper crafting, and wood-block carving. Visit the Tibetan Calligraphy First Character Museum to learn about the region's rich literary heritage before continuing to Lhasa.

In the afternoon, enjoy free time to explore the holy city of Lhasa at your leisure, soaking in its beauty and charm. In the evening, savor a delicious dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Lhasa.

Day 17 :

Lhasa airport/ train station dropping off



In the morning, your guide and driver will drop you off at Lhasa airport or train station. Bid farewell to your team and conclude your unforgettable Tibetan journey. End of the trip.

Inclusions

Tour notes:

Please note prices are based in CNY.

General inclusions:

All required government taxes and fees.

Please contact one of our Tour Advisors to get a custom quotation made to your requirements.

All required Tibet permits and domestic travel documents.

Necessary oxygen and medicine for the acute high altitude sickness.

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.)

All entrance tickets as noted in the tour's itinerary.

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.

Comfortable and clean 7/8 seats minivan for groups of 5 persons or less; for larger groups minibus and tourist coach are available.

General exclusions:

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

Tips for your guide and driver.

Meals that are not specified in the tour itinerary.

Optional Attractions that are not specified in the itinerary.

Flight tickets or train tickets in and out of Lhasa (Please note: We can offer you train and/or plane tickets in and out Lhasa from all cities within China. Please check the latest price with us via email.)

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