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Lhasa
Shigatse
Saga
Mount Kailash Kora
Zanda
Guge Kingdom Ruins
Ali
Yecheng
Kashgar

This extraordinary overland trip travels from Tibet to Xinjiang province. Feel the great Tibet culture as you visit Holy Mount Kailash a key pilgrimage site, Jangtang plain and sandstone canyon. Changing terrain as you get closer to Xinjiang.

Type
Private
Duration
20 days
Theme
Natural scenery, Overland
Trip code
WT-306
Price
From £ 1,684 per person

Itinerary

The journey starts from the holy city Lhasa and then to Shigatse, where you can feel the different lifestyle and existing culture of the roof of the world. Monasteries and shrines are the centre of the religious faith, which plays an important role in their day to day life since from thousand years. Then rest of the days the journey across the great Jangtang (Northern Plain) into Far-west Tibet passes through a land greatest extremes of dryness. The landscapes are huge and like a treeless moonscape. Lone groups of nomads dwelling in low, black tents, tend flocks of sheep and goats as well as herds of the yak. Heavily eroded sandstones and sand-dunes are beautiful along the road. The extraordinary peak of Mount Kailash is the prime focus of the journey, which lies at the heart of the region. It is the pilgrimage destinations of Buddhists, Bon, Hindus and Jains. Further within the heavily eroded sandstone canyon and valleys of the upper Sutlej River are numerous ruins of ancient cities that once comprised the kingdom of Guge, temples in that area are still intact and contain exquisite murals and decorative motifs having history of more than 10,000 years. Then gradually to Ali-the largest city in the far west Tibet, through the high passes and beautiful valleys will descent it down to the Kashgar.

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. **(B)=breakfast**

Day 02 :

Holy Lhasa City sightseeing, visit Potola Palace & Jokhang Temple (B)

Today is your first day of sightseeing on the high plateau, so we have purposely arranged only Jokhang temple and Potala Palace. Jokhang temple is Tibet's most sacred shrine built in 7th century, Located at the heart of old town of Lhasa and the circuit around it called Barkhor street. 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. After the sightseeing continues acclimatize for rest of the day or your can do some gift shopping in Barkhor street.

Day 03 :

Holy Lhasa City sightseeing, visit Drepung monastery, Sera monastery & Norbulingka summer palace (B)

Today we will visit Drepung monastery, Sera monastery and 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.

Day 04 :

Lhasa (3,600m) / Yamdrok lake (4,300m) / Gyantse (3,900m) / Shigatse (3,800m) (360KM, 7hour) (B)

Morning drive up to Kampala pass (4,794 m), you will have a glimpse of Yamdrok-tso and spectacular views of Holy Mount Nyenchen Khangsar in the distance, the turquoise coloured Lake Yamdrok Yutso is one of the three holy lakes in Tibet, the unforgettable vista of pincer-shaped turquoise water of the lake and amazing spectacle of Mt. Nyenchen Khangsar glacier from Karo la pass is wonders of the day. Then along the Friendship southern Hwy drive to Gyantse, visit the famous stupa - Gyantse Kumbum, the most stunning architectural wonder in Tibet. Late afternoon drive to Shigatse. Overnight at Shigatse.

Day 05 :

Shigatse (3,800m) / Sakya / Lhatse (200KM, 5hrs) (B)

Morning you will be arranged to visit Tashilunpo Monastery and the spectacular tombs of Panchen Lamas, monks of this monastery are nice looking with their home-made traditional shoes. Then drive to Sakya, visit Sakya Monastery, which is the main monastery at Sakyapa, hike around the monastery northern ruins. Late afternoon drive to Lhatse. Overnight at Lhatse.

Day 06 :

Lhatse / Saga (4,500m) (300KM, 7hrs)

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

Day 07 :

Saga(4,600m) / Paryang(4,750m) / Lake Manasarovar - Chiu Monastery(4,560m) (505Km, 7-8hours)

Morning drive from Saga to Lake Manasarovar via Paryang, you weave your way through small dusty town of Zhongba amidst enchanting panoramic views, dotted nomads tents are mingled with their herds of animals on the open plateau. Pass numbers of villages and camps of Yak herders with the distance view of snow capped mountains, cross the Mayun-la pass (5216m), if lucky might see many wild animals at the plateau grasslands. After arrival at Lakeside, make a walk to Chiu Monastery which is the best point to see Lake Manasarovar. Overnight at Chiu Monastery village guesthouse. (guest house, dorm bed without bathroom).

Day 08 :

Lake Manasarovar (4,558m) / Darchen (4,600m) (60km, 1.5hours)



Manasarovar is the lake of compassion, tranquility and bliss. After completing the memorable morning bath and Puja, we will be heading towards Darchen, the tiny village of Darchen is the starting and ending point of the Mt. Kailash trekking, in the afternoon prepare for the trekking and guide will arrange needed yaks and porters. Overnight at Darchen (Guest house, dorm bed).

Day 09 :

Trek from Darchen to Dira-puk Monastery (20km, 6hrs)

The first day's trekking is start from the Serzhong and a gradual walk with multitudes of other local pilgrims chanting and praying. From the valley you can see the Choku Monastery up on the hillside. The trail leads to few ups and downs till we reach our camp at Dirapuk (4,750 m). You will meet many more Bon pilgrims going in the opposite direction (Anticlock-wise), because Mt. Kailash is being worshipped by four different religions,viz Buddhisms, Bons, Hindus and Jains. Overnight at Dirapuk guesthouse.

Day 10 :

Trek from Dira-puk Monastery to Dzutul-puk Monastery by crossing Drolma-la Pass, (15KM, 6-7hrs) (Camping)

Today our trekking leads to much higher side of the holy path just beneath the Mount Kailash. The walk will bring us to one of the highest point at Drolma La, 5,200 m, and the pass is quickly descending to the gradual field towards Dzutul-puk for the overnight camp, Dzutul Puk in Tibetan and which means magical cave, this small monastery is connected to a interesting story of talend competition between Great Yogi Milarepa(Buddhist) and Naropa(Bon). Overnight at Dzutul-Puk guesthouse.

Day 11 :

Trek back to Darchen (14Km, 4- 5hours)



The winding gradually comes out of the valley and the river allows to follow in to the Barka plain, the trekking stops at Trangser Trangmar and your car take you to Darchen. Overnight at Darchen(Guest house, dorm bed).

Day 12 :

Drive from Darchen to Zanda (228 Km, around 6-7hours)

Drive from Darchen to Zanda along the Xinjing-Tibet Hwy, and drive off the main Hwy after 150Km, go across a few mountain passes, you will see the magnificent Tholing Forest. Afternoon visit Tholing Monastery. Overnight at Zanda.

Day 13 :

Zanda (3,650m) / Guge Kingdom (18KM, 40 minutes)

Morning drive to Tsaparang Guge Kingdom ruins, in the vast valley of Sutlej river you can find ruins of ancient famous Guge kingdom among the remarkable sand-dunes, a number of temples are still intact and contain exquisite murals and decorative motifs, some are dating back more than 10,000 years, make a half day tour at there. Afternoon drive back to Zanda and have a rest or look around Zanda town. Overnight at Zanda.

Day 14 :

Zanda / Ali (4,280m) (240Km, 7-8 hours)

Drive from Zanda to Ali, pass Laochi-la and Lalung-la over 5,000m, the road is equally tough going. Overnight at Ali (Guest house, dorm bed).

Day 15 :

Rest day at Ali



Rest one day at Ali, it is the central most city in the far-west area, you can take a hot shower and quick laundries, fix the land cruiser for the following 4 day long driving

Day 16 :

Ali (4,280m) / Rutok / Domar (4,400m) (226km, 6-7hours)

Drive to Rutok in the morning enroute visit Pangong-tso Lake, today the road follows the eastern shoreline of Lake Pang-gong, and the landscape along this stretch is breathtaking in its beauty, the extreme clarity of the atmosphere gives the strange, multi colored earth of the hills, cliffs and plains a surreal visionary quality. Have your camera ready to take some memorable landscape photos. Overnight at Durma Army station (Guest house, dorm bed).

Day 17 :

Durma (4,400m) / Dahongliutan (4,100m) (358Km, 8-9hours)

Drive about 2 or 3hours on the desert over 5,000m, start to pass over Jieshan Daban which is 6,700m high (The real high altitude should be around 5,400m). Overnight at Dahongliutan Army station (Guest house or camping, dorm bed).

Day 18 :

Dahongliutan (4,100m) / Mazar (3,000m) (253km, 6-7hours)

How long it will take for the driving depending upon road and climate conditions. You are now on the Lingzi Thang Plains; the Kunlun mountain ranges are on the right and the Karakorum mountain range left. The road is very straight, and the landscape fantastic: out of the window scenery appears in brown and red alternatively; emerald small lakes shine under the sunlight. After crossing a high pass (4950m) , you will reach Mazar, overnight at Mazar Army station local guest house (Dorm bed) or camping.

Day 19 :

Mazar (3,000m) / Yecheng(1,100) (234KM,5-6hours)



Soon after pass by Mazar you begin to cross the Kunlun Mountains. The Chiragsaldi (4.960 m) is the last pass you have to cross on the way. Afterwards drive downward along the Yecheng ravine to Xinjiang. Situated at the edge of the Taklamakan desert, Yecheng is a city with a pretty Bazar inhabited by Uygur and Han Chinese. Overnight at simple Qiaogeli hotel.

Day 20 :

Yechang (1,100m) / Kashgar (250KM, 4-5hours) (B)

Morning drive about 250 km to Kashgar (1300), the largest oasis of China. The tar road runs at the edge of the Taklamakan desert. On the way enjoy the landscape of the Kunlun. Grey-black rocks and sand dunes compose the major feature of the landscape of Taklamakan. On the last section of the way we pass by an expanded, watered field. The Islamic oasis city is coin-shaped and inhabited mainly by Uygur. It was once an important communication on the Silk Road, being the starting point of the northern and southern routes. Upon arrival at Kashgar, end 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.

Guide fluent in English, Chinese or Japanese that is certified by the state tourism build and from the local community. (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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