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Spiritual Journeys – a pilgrimage tour of Muktinath, Mount Kailash & Lake Manasarovar

From **To**

2010

Available on request – minimum 2 persons

Please note current pricing valid for travel until December 2010. For travel after Dec 2010 please contact us.

Best times to visit – mid April to early October

Duration: 26 Days

Grade: Strenuous
Max elevation 5600m



Land only price per person (join in Kathmandu). Includes luxury hotel in Kathmandu, deluxe hotel in Pokhara, best available teahouse lodges on trek in Nepal and local hotels and tented camp in Tibet. Includes use of down jacket and sleeping bag during days on trek in Nepal and during time in Tibet.

Group Size 2-6 7 plus group members

Luxury hotel in Kathmandu, £4995 £4395
teahouse lodges on trek in Nepal,
best available local hotels & tented
camps in Tibet

Flight Price From £600

Single hotel/camp supplement Kathmandu/ Pokhara £365, Single supplement teahouse on trek in Nepal £35, single supplement in Tibet £450.

Tibet visa and permit fee from US\$60 - \$200 – please see page 9 for details on type of visa and processing times

Introduction:

This rare and unique journey follows centuries old pilgrimage routes to three of the most important, holy and revered pilgrimage sites in Asia. You'll travel from colourful and heady Kathmandu through the lush countryside of Nepal to reach Muktinath, the first sacred site on this remarkable journey. From here you'll journey across the Tibet Plateau on the roof of the world and enter into the ancient and mystical land of Tibet, full of mysteries, rites, age old traditions and spiritualism. You'll join countless pilgrims and nomads who are called to legendary Mount Kailash where a full circuit of this awesome mountain is said to wipe away the sins of a lifetime and you'll gaze into the waters of holy Lake Manasarovar, said to



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have been created to reflect the depths of the soul of Brahma. Your journey will take you past high pastures, traditional villages, impressive cliffs, peaceful meadows, glistening streams, ancient mani stones, revered monasteries, high Himalayan sky burial sites, solitary hermit caves and through beautiful Tibetan and Nepalese countryside with stunning panoramic views on a spiritual journey of a lifetime.

Day 01: Arrive Kathmandu

Namaste and welcome to Nepal. You'll be met and assisted at the airport by our local representatives who will arrange your transfer and check in to your hotel. After time to get refreshed and have lunch, enjoy a relaxed and easy walking tour to Kathmandu's central Durbar Square site of the ancient palace complex, the living goddess Kumari temple, Hanuman Dhoka and Kastamandap temple. After your gentle walk enjoy a complimentary welcome dinner at a restaurant in the heart of Kathmandu, before turning in for a good night's rest at the hotel.

Day 02: Kathmandu

Enjoy a full day sightseeing around Kathmandu and the Valley. Visit Swoyambhunath Stupa, also known as the Monkey Temple, with its fine views over Kathmandu and many interesting features as well as the great stupa itself. Join the devotees, pilgrims and wandering siddhus (holy men) at Pashupatinath. Pashupatinath is the most important Hindu temple in Nepal as well as being one of the most important Shiva temples on the subcontinent, situated on the banks of the holy Bagmati River. Take time to walk around Bodhnath (Boudha) stupa, the largest in Nepal and one of the largest in the world. Boudha is also the centre of Tibetan culture in Nepal and a wonderfully vibrant, interesting community. This evening is free for you to relax and explore the surrounding area.

Day 03: Pokhara

After breakfast this morning we'll drive (around 4 hours) through the Nepalese countryside to the wonderful lakeside resort town of Pokhara. Pokhara is one of the best places to relax in Nepal as well as the starting point for many treks and adventure activities. It's an enchanting town of remarkable beauty and a laid back atmosphere, nestled in a lush tranquil valley on the shores of Lake Phewa against a stunning backdrop of the Annapurna range and the dominating presence of Machhapuchhre. Arriving in Pokhara we'll check in to our hotel and then enjoy an afternoon of guided sightseeing. This evening is free to relax at the hotel or explore the lakeside area.

Day 04: Jomsom to Kagbeni

Today we'll take a scenic morning flight to Jomsom from where we'll begin our trek. A 3 hour walk along the banks of the Kaligandaki River will take us to Ekley-Bhatti village. After another hour of trekking we'll reach Kagbeni, which lies at the junction of two rivers. We'll spend tonight at a local teahouse.

Day 05: Muktinath (3817m)

Muktinath is a very sacred place for Hindus, Buddhist Pilgrims and ascetic Sadhus. Muktinath is said to have been consecrated in the first (good) age by Padmasamba and later in the intermediate age by the '84 great magicians'. The temple is situated in a gorge full of trees with 108 water ponds emerging from sacred water springs. Legend says that the 84 great magicians sanctified the water of Muktinath spring by sprinkling on to it water carried from holy Lake Manasarovar in Tibet. In one of the holy pools is one where natural burning gas is said to represent the eternal burning flame. As well as exploring this sacred



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site we'll be able to enjoy the superb mountain views from here. This evening we'll relax and reflect on today at our home for the night in a local teahouse.

Day 06: Muktinath

Today is free to explore the area around Muktinath shrine and temple, to relax and reflect in this peaceful setting or to take a short trek to visit the magnificent fortress town of Jharkot and the local monastery. We'll stay at a local teahouse tonight.

Day 07: Jomsom

Today we'll follow the mountain trails and trek back to Jomsom, enjoying the wonderful views and scenery en route along the banks of the Kaligandaki River and past local villages. We'll spend tonight at a local teahouse with our evening free to relax.

Day 08: Jomsom to Pokhara to Kathmandu

Today we'll fly back to Kathmandu via Pokhara, 2 short but scenic flights. Arriving in Kathmandu we'll check in to our hotel and the rest of the afternoon and evening is free to explore the local area and to get a good night's rest.

Day 09: Kathmandu

Today we'll be preparing for our journey into Tibet tomorrow. After a late morning group briefing and check of all equipment and requirements the remainder of today is free for you to relax and perhaps explore the local temples and squares. Returning to the hotel tonight we should aim for a good rest before travelling to Lhasa tomorrow morning.

Day 10: Lhasa

Today we'll drive to the International airport to catch the short flight to Lhasa with wonderful panoramic Himalayan views en route. Arriving at Gongkar Airport in Tibet you'll be met by our local Tibetan representatives for the drive to Lhasa and check in at the hotel. The rest of today will be free for you to relax and acclimatise. We'll spend a few days in Lhasa, to see the highlights of this wonderful ancient capital as well as to acclimatise to the higher altitude.

Day 11 -12: Lhasa

During today and tomorrow we'll take time to explore the heart of Tibet, the holy and forbidden city of Lhasa. Explore the vast halls and chapels of impressive Potala Palace, former home of the Dalai Lamas and an awe inspiring landmark that dominates the skyline over Lhasa. Join the medieval bustle of pilgrims, worshippers, performers and traders in and around Jokhang Temple, the most revered religious structure in Tibet. Follow the pilgrimage circuit along the ancient streets of the old town around Barkhor Bazaar. Enjoy the solemnity of holy Dreprung Monastery, once the largest monastery in the world and now the largest and richest monastery in Tibet, founded in 1416 and a place of study for many of the most learned lamas. At serene Sera Monastery, enjoy watching the monks animatedly debating the Buddhist scriptures and see the wonderful collection of ancient murals and statues as well as scriptures written in gold powder, wonderful scroll paintings, tapestries and thangkas that can be seen throughout. Relax overnight at the hotel and surrounds in Lhasa.



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Day 13: Shigatse

Today we'll travel on with a four hour drive to Tibet's second largest city and seat of the Panchen Lama (ranking close to the Dalai Lama), Shigatse. En route we'll visit Tashilumpo monastery, the seat of the Panchen Lama and one of the most important monasteries in Tibet. Tashilumpo lies at the foot of Drolmari, or Tara's Mountain, on the western side of Shigatse. It is one of Tibet's most influential monasteries, founded in 1477 by Gendun Drubpa, the first Dalai Lama. Inside the monastery, the Maitreya Chapel is the tallest building and houses the world's largest brass statue of Buddha at 26.2 meters (86 feet) high, seated on a 3.8 meter (12 foot) high lotus throne made of gold, brass and precious gems. Arriving in Shigatse we'll check in to the hotel with the rest of the evening free.

Day 14: Saga (4400m)

Today we'll continue our drive across the Tibetan Plateau this time heading for Saga where we'll spend the evening in our tented camp. The journey will take around 6-7 hours with plenty to see en route.

Day 15: Zhongba (4450m) and Mayum La (4500m)

After breakfast today it's time for another scenic drive (6-7 hours) through the Tibetan countryside to reach Zhongba. We'll cross the high Himalayan pass the Mayum La today. It's a long day but with magnificent views. We'll rest at our tented camp tonight.

Day 16: Darchen to Darboche

A scenic drive today, around 6-7 hours, takes us to Darchen our set off point to trek to Darboche and the start of the kora around legendary Mount Kailash. Our trek today will be around 4-5 hours. Mount Kailash is believed by Buddhists, Hindus, Jains and Bons to be the centre of the universe from which spring 4 of Asia's most important life giving rivers. A single circumambulation around Mount Kailash is said to wipe away the sins of a lifetime and this remote Tibetan mountain attracts scores of pilgrims. Heading west we'll climb up to a series of prayer flags (around 4730m altitude) and the first of the prostration stations on the pilgrimage circuit, from where we'll have fantastic views of Mt Kailash. After enjoying the view, we'll head north through Darboche and then relax this evening at our tented camp.

Day 17: Darboche

Today (spring departure only) we'll join in the wonderful Saga Dawa festival, that has been celebrated here for thousands of years. It's an important Tibetan Buddhist festival, held each year on the day of the full moon of the fourth lunar month of the Tibetan calendar, in order to celebrate Sakyamuni 's enlightenment. It's a magical event where people from all over Tibet gather to watch the flagpole being replaced, to attach their own prayer flags to it and help raise it. The custom is that the pole needs to stand perfectly upright and straight from the start, symbolising all is well with Tibet. If not perfectly straight on the first attempt it's a sign things are not good. The ceremony is led by a lama from the nearby monastery. We'll see the gathered Tibetans praying and throwing wind horses into the air (tiny pieces of coloured paper with Buddhist scriptures written on them) and helping to attach new prayer flags to the pole. All around the throngs of people will be watching with musicians and monks of the red hat order playing, horsemen galloping and everyone celebrating with a great sense of happiness and harmony all around – a truly special and spiritual occasion.

During our autumn departure we will visit the nearby sky burial site. A sky burial is the most common method of disposing of the dead in Tibet and is a private ceremony that few westerners have ever witnessed. The sky burial is said to be a time to reflect on the impermanence of life in a culture that



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maintains a sense of deep connection to the rhythm of life and the universe. We'll be able to visit the site as long as no sky burials are taking place – if they are we won't be permitted to visit and instead can enjoy the surrounding area, nature and views.

Day 18-19: Mount Kailash - Kora

Today and tomorrow we continue our trek, following the pilgrim route around the Kora. After a climb through the moraine and up to a meadow we'll cross the Dolma La, a high Himalayan pass at altitude 5630m. En route we'll be able to visit the cave in which the tantric saint and poet Milarepa is said to have meditated. Tonight and tomorrow we'll relax in our tented camp.

Day 20: Darboche to Lake Manasarovar (4560m)

After completing our circuit of Mount Kailash it's time to leave this legendary and sacred place and trek back to Darboche and from here we'll travel on (1 hour drive) to holy Lake Manasarovar, the most holy lake in Asia. Hindus believe that Lake Manasarovar was created by Brahma, the Hindu creator deity, to reflect the depth of his soul. Take time to explore the area around Lake Manasarovar, joining the Tibetan nomads and pilgrims who come to the holy shores to walk around the lake. This evening rest, relax and enjoy the tranquility. We'll camp overnight near to the beautiful revered lake and the rest of today and this evening are free for you to relax and reflect on the journey so far.

Day 21: Paryang

We'll leave Lake Manasarovar today and drive to Paryang, a beautiful small Tibetan village, where we'll camp overnight.

Day 22: Saga

This morning we'll leave Paryang and continue our journey which takes us back to Saga, where we'll camp overnight.

Day 23: Nyalam (3750m)

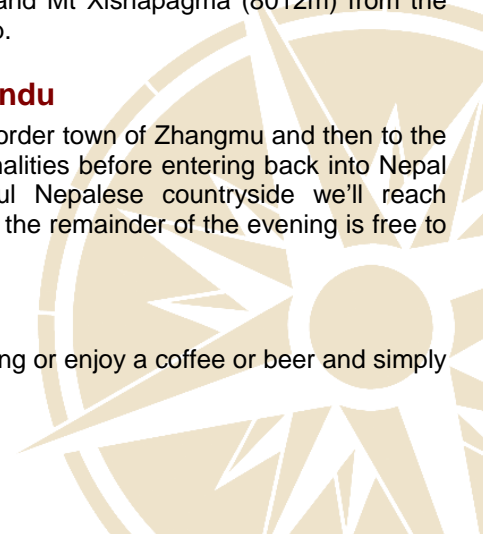
After breakfast today, enjoy the scenic drive through the beautiful countryside of Tibet with excellent panoramic views (weather permitting) of Mt Cho Oyy (8201m) and Mt Xishapagma (8012m) from the Lalung La pass, at 5050m. We'll spend tonight at our tented camp.

Day 24: Nyalam to Zhangmu to Kodari and Kathmandu

Today we'll drive down the Tibetan Plateau first to the Chinese border town of Zhangmu and then to the Nepalese border town of Tatopani for the necessary border formalities before entering back into Nepal across the border at Kodari. After a drive through beautiful Nepalese countryside we'll reach Kathmandu. Arriving in Kathmandu we'll check into our hotel and the remainder of the evening is free to rest and relax.

Day 25: Kathmandu

Today is free for you to rest, perhaps do some last minute shopping or enjoy a coffee or beer and simply watch the world go by, Kathmandu style.





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Day 26: Departure

Today is free to relax until departure or to commence any additional trips or activities you may have booked. If departing, you'll be transferred to the International Airport in time for your return flight home

Extending your holiday

There are many choices and options if you'd like to extend your holiday before or after your main booking. Here are just a few suggestions of extensions available for this trip:

- Take a jungle safari by charter elephant to spot rare species including the Royal Bengal Tiger in the Chitwan National Park
- Enjoy the adrenaline rush of white water rafting in Nepal
- Relax by the lakeside in Pokhara, Nepal
- See the wonder of the Taj Mahal and enjoy relaxed sightseeing around Delhi
- Play a round of golf on an international standard course in the Himalayan foothills
- Charter a private helicopter to retrace part of Sir Edmund Hillary's route to Everest

Please contact our UK office if you'd like to extend your stay by booking one of the above options, if you would like ideas or advice on how best to spend your time and budget or if you would like help with arranging any special celebrations during your trip.

Useful Information

The following information is aimed at helping you to decide whether this trip is right for you. Additional information can be found on our website and in our brochure. If you have any questions or would like advice on any aspect of this trip please contact us and we'll be happy to go through everything with you.

Day to Day Itinerary

It must be realized that with adventure travel changes to an itinerary may occur, for example due to unexpected weather conditions. The day to day itinerary is provided as a general guideline and is intended to give you a general sense of what to expect, including places visited and activities during the trip to help with your decision regards which trip is the best one for you. Activities and timings may vary slightly from those outlined Your guide will make any changes necessary and all arrangements during the trip, including explaining reasons for any changes to the itinerary that may occur.

Trip Duration and Grading

This trip is 26 days with Day 1 beginning in Kathmandu and ending with departure from Kathmandu on Day 26. The trip has been graded strenuous, due to the high elevations reached during this trip and which are part of any visit to Tibet. There will be a number of day treks for example around Lake Manasarovar as well as the main trek to both Muktinath in Nepal and around the kora of Mount Kailash which will be sustained walking with rest breaks. There will also be some easy day walks as part of your sightseeing, usually for a few hours, for example when visiting traditional villages and sites in Tibet and World Heritage sites in Kathmandu and the surrounding Valley. A good level of fitness is required for this trip as the trekking and altitudes make this trip a demanding journey.

Group Size

The maximum number of persons on this trip will be 16 and the minimum number 2 persons. By keeping group sizes small it means we can provide a more personal service to you.



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Local Representatives and Guides

You will be met at the airport on arrival by our local representatives who will always be available to help with your arrival, departure and any queries or requirements during your trip. The group will be accompanied by a local English speaking guide throughout the trip. Once you have confirmed your booking we will send you details of how you will be met on arrival and you will meet your guide just after you arrive.

Accommodation

During this trip you will spend 6 nights at a luxury (four or five star) hotel in Kathmandu (4 nights at the start of your trip and 2 before departure). In Pokhara you'll spend 1 night at a deluxe boutique hotel. During the part of the trip to visit Muktinath you'll spend 4 nights in local teahouse lodges. In Tibet you'll spend 4 nights at best available local hotels in Lhasa and Shigatse and 10 nights in a fully provisioned tented camp during the part of the trip to visit Mount Kailash and Lake Manasarovar.

All accommodation is based on twin share. If you are traveling on your own and are happy to share with someone, we will arrange for you to share a room with someone of the same sex, at no extra charge. If you request a single room the single room supplement charge for this trip will apply. It is usually possible to arrange single room accommodation but please contact our office to confirm this.

Meals

All meals on a full board basis (prepared by the camp chef and assistants who are part of the full Sherpa support crew) during the part of the trip in Tibet are included in the price. On the trek to Muktinath full board is included with all meals selected from the teahouse menus. During the days spent in Kathmandu and Pokhara on this trip, half board basis is included. This is to allow you the opportunity and freedom to try out some of the many wonderful eating places. Snacks, bottled drinks including mineral water and alcohol are not included in the price.

Flight Inclusive Price and International Flights

The flight inclusive price is based on best available price (at the time of producing our current brochure) of economy return flights from the UK added to the 'land only' price. Flight prices are subject to change and do vary throughout the year. We use a variety of airlines and scheduled flights on our trips including British Airways, Air India, Gulf Air, Qatar Air etc. Our ATOL licence is T7199 and we work with other ATOL holders to issue flight tickets. For exact air fares and flight classes available at the time you wish to travel please contact us.

Land Only Option

Our trips are based on 'land only' as well as flight inclusive options to allow you the flexibility to choose to make your own arrangements for flights or perhaps to arrive a few days earlier or leave a few days later than the trip or to join the trip from anywhere in the world. If you choose the land only option we will provide full details of how and when to meet the rest of your group, details of your hotel and local contacts upon confirmation of your booking. All accommodation during your trip is included in the price although additional days before or after the start and end dates of your trip are not included. We are happy to book additional accommodation or optional activities, based on your requirements and budget, on request.

Please note that whilst at all times we aim to run our trip even with just a few persons, on some of the longer treks or trips, should the group size be less than our minimum operating level we may cancel the



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trip up to 6 weeks before departure. In the rare event that this happens, we will offer alternative dates or trips or refunds as appropriate and agreed with you. If you are arranging your own flights and accommodation prior to the start date of a group trip we recommend that you book fully flexible and refundable accommodation and transport if booking more than 6 weeks in advance, as should we need to cancel the trip compensation will not be paid for any arrangements that have been made independently.

Climate and Weather

Nepal has a monsoonal two season year with the dry season from October to May and the wet season (monsoon) from June to September. From end September/start October to end November is one of the best times to visit. The vegetation is lush after the rains of the monsoon and the air is clean and fresh. The next best time to visit is February to April at the end of the dry season. It can be a little dusty at this time but the weather is warm and pleasant and it's a great time to see many wildflowers in bloom. December and January are still good in terms of climate and visibility but can be chilly particularly at higher altitudes as well as in the evening in Kathmandu. May and early June can be very hot and uncomfortable and mid June to September can be cloudy with poor visibility and muddy trails although some treks (rainshadow treks) can still be undertaken even during the monsoon.

Between May and early November are some of the best times to visit Tibet. Before and after these times the temperatures can get very low, particularly at night and in Western Tibet. May and June are pleasant but you may encounter small short lived dust storms and a wind factor. Lhasa and Shigatse in particular have very mild weather between May and November although the months of July and August can be quite rainy.

Clothing and Equipment

Generally lightweight to medium weight clothing in natural fabrics is best with warm clothing a must for the evenings and winter. For travel around Lhasa and Shigatse a warm jacket or windbreaker should be fine. For visits to more remote areas including Everest Base Camp, a warm down jacket, hat and gloves are suitable. It's also useful to wear several layers of clothing as temperatures can change suddenly. We also suggest you take comfortable walking shoes and a small day pack or shoulder bag. In the mountains and at high altitude the weather can change rapidly so it is important to have appropriate clothing and equipment. On fully provisioned camping style treks we provide twin share dome or A frame sleeping tents, kitchen tent, mess tent, toilet tent, tables, chairs, stools, lanterns/candles, thin sleeping mattresses, all crockery and cutlery and a fully equipped kitchen set up. Upon booking with us we will send you a suggested clothing and equipment list appropriate to your trip including details of any must have items or items that can be hired (if required).

Baggage Allowance

We request that you aim for a maximum weight of 15 to 20 kg for your main baggage including clothing and personal equipment. Many of our trips involve porters and/or local flights and 15kg is the maximum safe weight allowance for porters and permitted on local flights. International flights will usually permit up to 20kg maximum weight. If trekking, some additional baggage can usually be stored until you return from your trek. Remember you may also want to leave some weight allowance for any items you have bought during your trip! The Himalayan Adventure Company and our local partners are not responsible for excess baggage charges.



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Complimentary Himalayan Adventure Company Travel Gift

On confirmation of booking we will provide a complimentary Himalayan Adventure Company travel gift. In the past, gifts have included items such as trek bags and t-shirts and vary each season, and we aim to provide useful gifts which can be used and enjoyed during your trip with us and afterwards.

Passport and Visa Requirements

A full valid passport and a current visa is required for all trips and treks. Passports must have at least 6 months validity after the completion date of your trip. To secure your booking and avoid any additional charges, information (eg spelling of name) provided to us on your booking form must match exactly the details as shown in your passport.

To enter Nepal you will require a visa which can be obtained in advance from the Royal Nepalese Embassy in London (UK applications) or on arrival at the airport in Kathmandu for a fee of US\$25. The visa process has changed in 2008 and all visas are now multiple entry. We will provide up to date information on visa requirements, costs and the application process on confirmation of your booking or on request.

To enter Tibet all foreign travellers are required to have a separate visa valid for Tibet as well as a Tibetan Tourist Visa. Permit and visa regulations for Tibet are subject to change on a yearly and sometimes monthly basis. Through our local representatives in Nepal we will make arrangements for your Tibetan visa and entry requirements, as issued by the Tibetan Tourism Authority under the Chinese authorities who control all visas and permits and travel to and within Tibet. The Chinese Authorities have recently changed the visa fees and processing time for travel to Tibet for 2010 which are now as follows.

VISA TYPE	Normal	Urgent	Top Urgent
US PASSPORT HOLDER	US\$144 (approx GBP£89)	US\$166 (approx GBP£103)	US\$200(approx GBP£124)
OTHER NATIONALITY e.g. British passport holders	US\$60 (approx GBP£37)	US\$82 (approx GBP£51)	US\$114(approx GBP£71)
Please note visa fee is charged in GBP at the equivalent rate to the US dollar fee valid at the time of booking			

For all of the Tibet visa fees above we require a clear copy of each traveller's passport at least 10 days in advance to begin the application process. The hard copy of your passport must then be handed over after arrival in Kathmandu for the final stage of processing and visa stamp. If the passport hard is handed over to us on or before 7 working days ahead of departure time for Tibet the Normal Visa Fee will apply. If we receive your passport 5 days ahead of departure time the Urgent Visa Fees will apply and if it's 2 days ahead the Top Urgent Visa Fees will apply. These visa/permit fees are set by the Chinese authorities and are subject to change. As part of our service we arrange at no extra cost your Tibet visa/permit and collect the applicable visa fees on behalf of the Chinese authorities as required. We will provide up to date information on visa requirements, costs and the application process on confirmation of your booking or on request..



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You are responsible for ensuring you have a valid passport and visa prior to departure. Where appropriate, we will arrange any special permits or visas required to visit specific restricted areas included as part of the itinerary whilst you are in the country and may request information from you to allow us to do this.

Permits

To enter certain areas e.g. National Parks or other trekking or protected areas, you may require a permit. All our trip prices include the cost of relevant permits and entrance fees. Where this is not the case, for example you have booked a tailor made private trip, we will inform you of any required permit fees before you make a booking with us.

Health and Medical Information

It is your responsibility to ensure you are well and fit enough to join the trip. If you are unsure of this please contact our office to talk it through with one of our experienced staff members. We also recommend you speak to your GP if you are in any way unsure of your fitness level required to join the trip. We also suggest you have a thorough medical and dental check up before you travel. You may need specific vaccinations appropriate to the country or area you will visit. You must tell us if you have an existing medical condition or disability that might affect your holiday before you make a booking with us. If, in our reasonable opinion, your chosen holiday is not suitable for your medical condition, disability or level of fitness, we reserve the right to cancel the contract or to suggest more appropriate alternative options for you. A group medical kit will be carried on each trip or trek but we also recommend that individuals carry their own basic first aid kit and we will send a suggested list of items for this when you make a booking.

Please note that Tibet remains one of the most captivating but least developed part of the world and facilities for tourists can be quite basic and limited although are being continually improved. Travel in Tibet is an adventure involving high altitude, at times rough roads and can be strenuous. We will put every effort into making your journey as comfortable and enjoyable as possible but emphasize that travel in Tibet requires a willingness to accept flexibility and a spirit of adventure. If you are unsure that this type of travel is suitable for you please consider this carefully or speak to one of our office team before making a booking.

For useful health and general travel advice and information we suggest you visit the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo> and also obtain a copy of the UK Department of Health leaflet *Advice on Health for Travellers* or speak to your local GP or practice nurse for their recommendations.

What's Included in the Price?

Airport pickup and transfer, local English speaking guide services, pre trip briefing on arrival, all accommodation during the trip on twin share basis, meals on half board basis in Kathmandu and Pokhara, meals on bed and breakfast basis only in Lhasa and Shigatse in Tibet, meals on full board basis (prepared by the chef as part of the Sherpa support crew) in Tibet whilst camping, all sightseeing and activities as per the trip itinerary, all entrance fees to sites visited as per itinerary, flight Kathmandu to Lhasa one way including airport transfers, Tibet visa and permit arrangement service (excluding fees-please see page 9 Visa Information for details) including special permit for Kailash, entrance fees to monasteries, all transportation during the trip (by car, bus, jeep, local flight etc) as per itinerary, support truck for carrying luggage and equipment, travel to the Nepal-Tibet border both ways by comfortable non



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ac mini bus and by 4wd Toyota Land Cruisers in Tibet, trekking equipment such as tents, mattresses, toilet tent, kitchen and dining tent, kitchen equipment, lamps/candles, stools/chairs etc, yaks for carrying equipment, luggage and foodstuffs, 1 oxygen cylinder (800ml) per person, a group first aid kit, a free Himalayan Adventure Company travel gift, complimentary Safe Seat Plan confirming 100% financial protection of your booking with us at all times, international flights (flight inclusive priced package only).

What's Not Included in the Price?

Visa fees for Nepal and Tibet, personal travel insurance (available on request), international flights (available on request), vaccinations, airport departure and reentry fees, additional private bus, car or jeep rental to any destination on the trek other than transport provided during the trip, bar/alcoholic beverages, bottled water, personal expenses eg for souvenirs, personal clothes, food or snacks during transfer journeys, tips for guides, porters, driver etc, alternative transportation, accommodation or other service required as a result of missed, cancelled or delayed flights, illness, road or weather condition, landslide, strike or road blockage or other unexpected event outside of our control (payable locally and directly at the time if required), international flights (available on request), laundry, optional trips, holiday extensions and activities (available on request), excess luggage charges, additional accommodation before or after the start and end dates specified (available on request).

Please note: all Tibet tours are run strictly under the Tibet Tourism Authority. We or our agents shall not be responsible for any change or cancellation of programmes due to any unavoidable circumstances such as snow or flood or changes imposed by the Tibet Tourism Authority.

Our Experience

We have a love of and respect for the Himalaya. Our founders and office staff are all experienced travelers who share many years of helping other travelers achieve their ambitions. The fact that we specialise in travel to the Himalaya and that we have extensive local knowledge and experience of the area means that we can offer you a wide range of travel options and provide the best standards of service to you. Being an independent specialist travel operator means we can offer a friendly personal service and are able to be flexible and use our experience and contacts to build new and tailor made programs as well as to continue to develop new and improved services. We have a wealth of experience in helping many individuals and groups in designing and planning adventures, ranging from romantic breaks to personal challenges to school study programmes to extreme adventure expeditions, from low budget to no expense spared and we have lots of ideas, suggestions and experience to share with you. We are also delighted to say that many of our clients return again and again to travel with us and many of our new clients are through recommendations and word of mouth from happy and satisfied clients who have previously traveled with us.

Fair Pricing

We aim to provide you with the best service at fair and competitive prices and excellent value for money. As part of this, most of our trips are priced for different group sizes with the higher price applicable for smaller groups. With larger groups the price drops so that everyone benefits from a cheaper holiday. We offer 'land only' prices, for travellers who prefer to make their own international flight and transfer arrangements but are happy to arrange flights for you on request, using a variety of international carriers from regional and national airports. Our ATOL number is T7199 and we work with other ATOL holders to issue flight tickets. Additionally, we offer special discounts for groups of 10 or over, schools and group leaders. Contact us for more information.



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Your Financial Protection

We understand how important it is that the money you spend on your holiday is securely protected. You may also have concerns about booking with an independent operator. To give you peace of mind and confidence in our service to you we have a number of ways in which we protect the money you pay for your holiday. The company is a full member of the Travel Trust Association (<http://www.traveltrust.co.uk>) membership number U3237, in compliance with the EC Directive on Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours. For flight bookings and issuing of tickets our ATOL number is T7199 and we work only with ATOL licence holders. For flight bookings the money you pay is protected under the ATOL holder's licence. For all other arrangements, your payment to us is held in a separate Trust Fund and only released to us on your return. In addition, we provide free to you, a 'Safe Seat Plan' insurance cover which means that in the unlikely case of your money not being held in the Trust Account or of our insolvency, you will be fully reimbursed for the loss of any monies paid to us, up to a limit of £11 000 per person. Therefore, for your peace of mind and confidence, all money you have paid to us is always 100% protected and available to pay for the services you have booked.

Insurance

Before confirming your booking we will need to see evidence of adequate travel insurance. Contact us for more information

Responsible Tourism

We believe that tourism should benefit local communities and that responsible travel does not mean a compromise in standards. We aim to promote responsible travel that respects and benefits local cultures, communities and environments and we support Tourism Concern, are a sponsor of the International Porter Protection Group and a friend of The Sahara Group. We donate 5% of profits to local charities and are involved in local development and voluntary work in the Himalayas, particularly in Nepal. For every booking made we also donate £10 to The Sahara Group (<http://www.saharagroup.org.np>) to help continue their wonderful work with street children with HIV/AIDS, women and children affected by human trafficking and poor rural communities. We employ local guides, office and support staff and ensure they have good facilities and fair wages and we work as a team to ensure you a wonderful adventure holiday.

Suggested Reading

We recommend you learn about the places and cultures you will visit before you travel so that you can enjoy your travel even more. Below are just a few varied suggestions to get you started:

Lonely Planet Tibet, Michael Buckley, Bradley Mayhew (Editor), Monique Choy (Editor), John Vincent Bellezza (Editor), Lonely Planet Nepal (Travel Guide), Tony Wheeler, Richard Everist, Lindsay Brown (Editor), Bradley Mayhew (Editor), Wanda Vivequin (Editor), Heartlands: Travels in the Tibetan World, Michael Buckley, The Hotel on the Roof of the World: Five Years in Tibet (Summersdale Travel), Alec Le Sueur, The Dance of 17 Lives: The Incredible True Story of Tibet's 17th Karmapa, Mick Brown.



itineraries

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How to Book

Once you have chosen your trek or trip, contact our office to check availability and ask any questions you may have. We'll hold a provisional booking for 7 days. Please read our Terms and Conditions prior to making your booking. Then post or fax us your completed booking form (available in our brochure or downloaded from our website) along with the appropriate non refundable deposit of £250 per person to our UK office address. If you choose to phone us with your debit or credit card details, a signed and completed booking form will still be required for confirmation of booking. Bookings will only be confirmed once we receive a completed and signed booking form along with appropriate payment.

We will confirm your booking and send you a trip dossier which will include confirmation of your booking, a day by day itinerary, visa and trekking permit instructions, vaccination and health information, a suggested first aid pack list, a suggested equipment and clothing list, a suggested reading list appropriate to your destination, a responsible travel briefing and other useful information.

The final balance for your booking will be due 2 months before departure. **NO REMINDER WILL BE SENT.** Your invoice will show the price based on the group size at the time of invoicing. We will also send your confirmed flight details (if appropriate), instructions of how to meet up with others in your group and details of how you will be met on arrival. Also included will be a statement of any additional services or activities you have requested and a final pre departure reminder check list for last minute arrangements before you travel. Your free Himalayan Adventure Company travel gift will be mailed to you separately or provided to you at one of our pre-trek meets or on arrival at the start of your trip. For clients outside the UK, a gift will be sent on payment of delivery costs only.

We wish you a wonderful Himalayan adventure

