

hidden valleys of ladakh



trip highlights

- Witness the celebrated Hemis festival
- Trek along the well-defined trails in the Markha Valley
- Explore the wild and remote Tibetan borderlands
- Wander the shores of the serene waters of Tso Moriri
- Visit the ancient monasteries and forts in the upper Indus Valley
- Experience traditional hospitality in our hotel in Leh



Trip Duration	20 days	Trip Code: HVL
Grade	Moderate	
Activities	Trekking	
Summary	20 day trip, 9 day trek, 10 nights hotels, 9 nights camping	

welcome to World Expeditions

Thank you for your interest in our Hidden Valleys of Ladakh trip. At World Expeditions we are passionate about our off the beaten track experiences as they provide our travellers with the thrill of coming face to face with untouched cultures as well as wilderness regions of great natural beauty. We are committed to ensuring that our unique itineraries are well researched, affordable and tailored for the enjoyment of small groups or individuals - philosophies that have been at our core since 1975 when we began operating adventure holidays. Our itineraries will give you the very best travel experience, designed by people with incredible local knowledge who share our vision of authentic exchange and real exploration with a responsible tourism approach. Whether you like your adventures to include trekking, touring, cycling, mountaineering, kayaking or cruising World Expeditions can make it happen for you. We hope you will join us for a life changing experience!!

why travel with World Expeditions?

When planning travel to a remote and challenging destination, many factors need to be considered. World Expeditions have been pioneering treks in the Indian Himalaya since 1975. Our extra attention to detail and seamless operations on the ground ensure that you will have a memorable trekking experience in the Himalaya.

Every trek is accompanied by an experienced local leader who is highly trained in remote first aid, as well as knowledgeable crew that share a passion for the region in which they work, and a desire to share it with you. We take every precaution to ensure smooth logistics. We use comfortable 3 star accommodation in hand picked hotels, and well maintained, good quality camping equipment on trek. The highest standards of hygiene are strictly maintained, and our cooks will surprise you with a varied menu that's sure to please at the conclusion of each trekking day. World Expeditions are also the only company to provide food for our porters on trek.

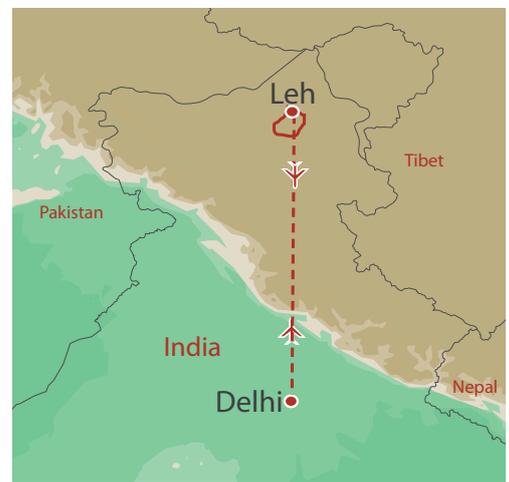
Most importantly, our adventures have always sought to benefit the local peoples we interact with, safeguard the ecosystems we explore and contribute to the sustainability of travel in the regions we experience. World Expeditions pioneered the use of kerosene as an alternative to wood, in an effort to combat the growing problem of deforestation in the Himalaya.

We invite you to read more on our philosophies and projects further in these trip notes.



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trip cost

Joining Delhi from: \$2799
All prices are per person

options & supplements

Single Supplement (Tent only): \$80
Single Supplement: \$470

World Expeditions does not require single travellers to pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above.

For competitive airfares to Delhi and stopover ideas, contact our expert staff today to receive a detailed quote.

the trip

This is an outstanding trek and an ideal introduction to the visually stunning and culturally rich region of Ladakh, high in the Indian Himalaya. We explore this rugged land characterised by exquisite Buddhist monasteries and ancient forts where the snow leopard seeks out the highest ridges at the margins of the season. We have scheduled our trek to coincide with the famous Hemis Festival complete with masked dances and much celebration. Finally we journey to the vast lakes of Rupshu and camp in spectacular terrain on the borderlands of Tibet.

at a glance

DAY 1	ARRIVE DELHI
DAY 2	FLY TO LEH
DAY 3	IN LEH
DAY 4	LEH TO RUMBAK (DRIVE APPROX. 1 HR, WALK APPROX. 3 HRS)
DAY 5	IN RUMBAK (DAY WALKS)
DAY 6	RUMBAK TO CAMP BELOW GANDA LA (WALK APPROX. 3HRS)
DAY 7	BASE CAMP TO SHOGDO VIA GANDA LA (WALK APPROX. 6HRS)
DAY 8	SHOGDO TO NARDING(4-5 HRS)
DAY 9	NARDING TO MARKHA (3-4 HRS)
DAY 10	MARKHA TO HANKAR (WALK APPROX. 3-4 HRS)
DAY 11	HANKER TO THE BASE OF THE ZALUNG LA (6 HRS)
DAY 12	CROSS THE ZALUNG LA TO TSORKA (6-7 HRS)
DAY 13	TREK TO DAT SETTLEMENT (WALK APPROX.5HRS)
DAY 14	TSO MORARI
DAY 15	AT TSO MORIRI, RETURN TO LEH
DAYS 16-17	ATTEND HEMIS FESTIVAL
DAY 18	IN LEH
DAY 19	FLY LEH TO DELHI
DAY 20	IN DELHI, TRIP CONCLUDES

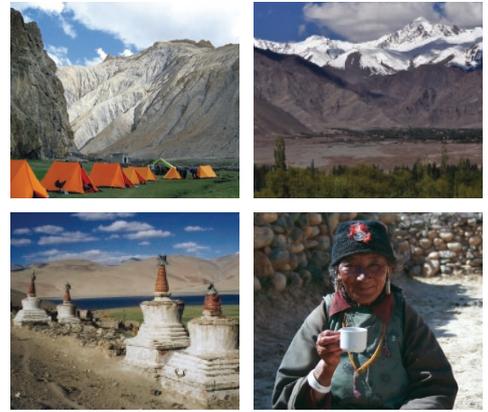
what's included

- 19 breakfasts, 17 lunches and 17 dinners
- 3 hearty meals per day on trek prepared by our cooks
- airport transfers on Day 1 and Day 20
- expert bilingual guide
- group medical kit
- good quality accommodation in Delhi & Leh
- souvenir World Expeditions kit bag
- private transportation
- all park entrance fees and trekking permits
- horses to carry all personal and group equipment
- the use of a World Expeditions trek pack which includes a quality sleeping bag, down or fibre fill jacket and insulated mat (valued at over US\$500)

Local cash payments are becoming increasingly popular with many operators in the adventure travel industry. The policy seems to benefit the tour operators, more than the local economies or travellers, as it avoids local taxes and transfers the cost and risk of cash handling to travellers. In accordance with our Responsible Travel practices we have chosen a policy not to ask for such payments.

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trip dates

2019 26 Jun - 15 Jul

2020 15 Jun - 04 Jul

important notes

NB: - Flights Delhi/Leh/Delhi not included

fast facts

Countries Visited:

India

Visas:

Yes*

Vaccinations:

Please consult a travel vaccination specialist for up to date information

Private Groups:

Private group options are available for this trip*

Singles:

A single supplement is available for this trip*

Advice for people with limited mobility

This trip is not suitable for people with limited mobility.

Brochure Reference:

Himalaya and Indian Subcontinent

what's not included

- International flights
- Flights Delhi/Leh/Delhi
- Lunch & Dinner in Delhi
- Bottled water, aerated and alcoholic drinks
- Items of a personal nature such as phone calls, laundry etc.
- Tips
- Airport and departure taxes
- Visa's
- Travel insurance

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Arrive Delhi

On arrival in Delhi you will be met by a World Expeditions representative and transferred to your hotel. Should you arrive earlier in the day we are happy to assist with any optional sightseeing. Overnight group hotel.

Note: If you are arriving in Delhi on a late night flight, you may like to arrive the day before the trip commences. Please talk to your World Expeditions reservations consultant or travel agent for pretour accommodation options.

meals: NIL

DAY 2 Fly to Leh

We take the early flight from Delhi to Leh in the Indus Valley. If the conditions are clear you will be rewarded with grand views across the Great Himalaya and Zaskar ranges before landing at the capital of Ladakh. On our first day in Ladakh we spend time wandering the bazaar and imposing Leh Palace. We have the opportunity to visit the Victory Fort (above the Palace) built in the 17th century to commemorate Ladakh's independence from the invading armies from Baltistan and Kashmir. From the Palace we can also appreciate the alleyways that comprise the old town of Leh, located to the east of the main bazaar.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 3 In Leh

We include a sightseeing trip to Shey Palace, before visiting Tikse monastery. Shey Palace originally housed the Ladakh royal family before they moved to Leh in the 17th century. A few km up the Indus valley is the spectacular setting of Tikse monastery perched on the summit of a sugarloaf mountain. On return to Leh we have the opportunity to visit to the Shanti Stupa at Chanspa, as well as visiting the Ladakh Ecological Centre to appreciate how the Ladakhi people have been able to incorporate new technology into their traditional lifestyles.

meals: B,L,D

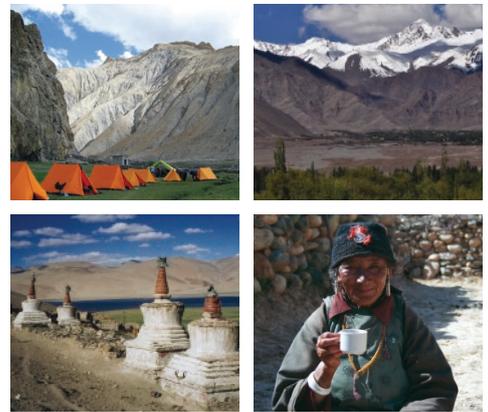
DAY 4 Leh to Rumbak (drive approx. 1 hr, walk approx. 3 hrs)

From Leh we drive to Zinchen (3380m), a small settlement to the south of the Indus Valley. After our packhorses are loaded we head up a spectacular gorge to our campsite (3850m) below the village of Rumbak.

meals: B,L,D

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thoughtful travel

The environments we travel through are fragile. It is our responsibility as visitors & to minimise the impact of our presence.

World Expeditions were the proud recipients of the inaugural Australian National Travel Industry's Environmental Achievement award for our Responsible Travel Guidebook.

This detailed guide to responsible & sustainable travel is provided to all World Expeditions clients before they travel. Please ask your consultant if you have not received your copy of our award winning book. Alternatively, you may like to download a copy from our website

www.worldexpeditions.com

trip grading Moderate

To determine the grade of a particular adventure we consider a number of factors. These include the condition of the walking terrain, the altitude, the number of pass crossings and the length of the trek.

The Hidden Valleys of Ladakh trek is graded moderate. This is primarily due to the altitude as we commence the trek from 3500 metres. While the stages are not unduly demanding the trail is ill defined in places and both pass crossing – the Ganda La (4920 metres) and the Zalung La (5050 metres) will test your resolve – for even in July they may be under snow.

In order to complete a moderate trek we advise that you undertake regular exercise – one hour of swimming, cycling, jogging, three or four times a week and extended periods of exercise during the weekend will accustom you to regular exercise for at least three months prior to your departure.

These adventures involve trekking, cycling, rafting or sea kayaking for up to 6 or 7 hours a day at a steady pace. You will need a good level of fitness and be in good health. The majority of our moderately

DAY 5 In Rumbak (day walks)

A further opportunity to acclimatise. We undertake day walks to Rumbak village and up side valleys leading to the base of the Stok La that afford spectacular views of the Trans Himalaya.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 6 Rumbak to camp below Ganda La (walk approx. 3hrs)

A short day following a trail that winds up past the solitary house at Yurutse to our camp (4350m) at the base of the approach to the Ganda La. From camp there are impressive views of the Stok Kangri. That afternoon we have devised a more challenging walk that heads way above the scree slopes to a magnificent viewpoint affording views back down to the Indus Valley and across to the high peaks that form the Stok Kangri range.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 7 Base Camp to Shogdo via Ganda La (Walk approx. 6hrs)

Above our camp we gain views of the snow-capped Stok Range. After gradually ascending a series of switchbacks we make the final gradual ascent to the Ganda La (4950m). From the pass there a views south across the endless folds of the Zaskar Range and the snow capped summits of the main Himalaya Range before completing the gradual descent to the village of Shingo (4150m).

meals: B,L,D

DAY 8 Shogdo to Narding(4-5 hrs)

Below Shogdo the trail enters a narrow gorge where willow, poplar and rose bushes provide a natural canopy alongside the river course. The Skui monastery (3435m) marks the confluence of the stream coming from Shogdo and the Markha Valley. We then head up the Markha Valley to Narding (3530m) and a comfortable, grassy campsite.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 9 Narding to Markha (3-4 hrs)

The trail gradually ascends the Markha Valley passing a few small settlements en route to Markha (3770m) the largest village in the valley. That afternoon we visit the derelict fort above the village and the gompa that has recently been renovated by funds from trekkers and Hemis monastery.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 10 Markha to Hankar (walk approx. 3-4 hrs)

Our trail crosses the Markha river twice to reach the village of Umlung. A few km beyond the village the valley widens and the imposing peak of Kangyaze (6400m) can be appreciated before reaching Hankar (3980m), the highest village in the Markha Valley.

meals: B,L,D

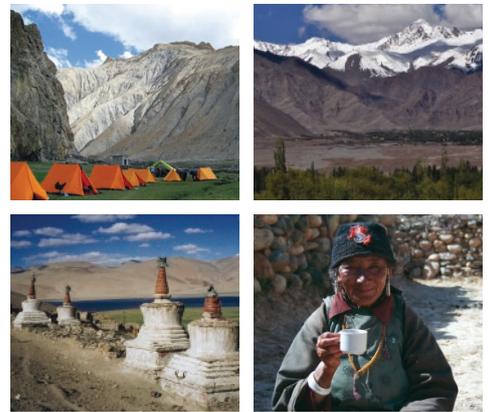
DAY 11 Hanker to the base of the Zalung La (6 hrs)

From Hanker we divert from the main trail and commence our ascent across yak herders pastures to our camp at the base of the Zalung La (4650 metres).

meals: B,L,D

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graded treks involve the carrying of a day pack only, though some may involve carrying a full pack. Be prepared for potential variable weather conditions.

adventure travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. In remote and developing countries do not expect standards you are used to at home. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable and itineraries may be altered. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. If you are uncertain about your suitability for this trip we recommend that you speak with your consultant of travel agent.

important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information in the current brochure, including but not limited to the itinerary and price.

DAY 12 Cross the Zalung La to Tsorka (6-7 hrs)

From camp it is a steady and long climb to the top of the Zalung La (5190 metres). This pass offers impressive views of the peaks and jagged ridges of the Zaskar Range. From the pass it takes about three hours to reach a delightful grassy camp near to the abandoned encampment known as Tsorka (4200 metres).

meals: B,L,D

DAY 13 Trek to Dat settlement (walk approx.5hrs)

From Sorro we trek to the head of a nearby gorge. Anticipate a cold start to the day as this section necessitates two or three river crossings. We then enter a side gorge that we follow for three hours to the settlement of Dat. (4340 metres). During the summer the settlement is practically deserted as most of the villagers are grazing their yaks and goats on remote grazing pastures. The shepherds are known as Chang pa and follow lifestyles similar to their counterparts in nearby western Tibet.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 14 Tso Morari

En route to Tso Morari we spend time at the smaller salt lake at Tso Kar with an opportunity to view the rare black necked crane, before driving over two high passes and past Chang Pa encampments to reach the vast lake of Tso Morari

On arrival we head to a secluded campsite before visiting the nearby village of Kursoc, the headquarters of the Chang pa in this wild and remote region of Rupshu. Later we heading to the shores of Tso Morari where brahmini ducks and a host of birdlife nest close to the lake.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 15 At Tso Moriri, return to Leh

In the early morning we ascend the high ridges above Tso Moriri and gain panoramic views of the surrounding snow capped peaks that stretch to the horizon. After an early lunch we break camp and complete the drive back to Leh.

meals: B,L,D

DAYS 16-17 Attend Hemis Festival

The two-day festival at Hemis commemorates the Indian sage Padmasambhava who introduced Tantric Buddhism to this region of the Himalaya in the 8th century. The festival consists of an elaborate series of masked dances depicting the life of Padmasambhava and the moral victory of knowledge over ignorance etc. Several hundred Ladakhi villagers from throughout the Indus Valley attend the festival. Besides its religious significance it is a time to renew acquaintances, visit the many stands and drink large quantities of butter tea and barley beer. In essence it is more of a medieval fair than a religious festival that reflects much of the contemporary cultural life of Ladakh. On both days we return to Leh for overnight accommodation.

meals: B,L,D

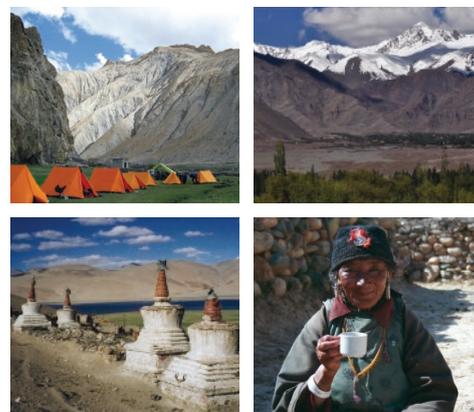
DAY 18 In Leh

A rest day in Leh with time to explore the bazaar and complete shopping.

meals: B,L,D

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DAY 19 Fly Leh to Delhi

An early morning departure to board the one-hour flight from Leh to Delhi. On arrival in Delhi we will transfer to our hotel and the rest of the day is at leisure.

meals: B

DAY 20 In Delhi, trip concludes

The trip concludes today and you will be transferred to the airport for your return flight and onward arrangements.

meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

suggested extensions

- Delhi to Kathmandu
- Taj Mahal, Agra Fort & Fatehpur Sikri
- India's Golden Triangle

country information

India has fascinated travelers for thousands of years. It's exotic, romantic and diverse – from the Himalayan mountains in the north, to the barren deserts in the west, to lush rainforests and sandy beaches in the south. India's population of around 1.3 billion people are predominantly Hindu, however many cultures and traditions have greatly influenced modern Indian life, including Islam. Some of the most impressive temples, particularly in the north, have been built by the smaller Jain and Buddhist communities. While many regional languages are spoken in India, Hindi is the national language. English is the second language and is widely taught and spoken throughout India. Ladakh is often referred to as 'Little Tibet' on account of its close cultural and geographic ties with Tibet. It is a spectacular landscape of high mountain passes, remote villages, ancient Buddhist monasteries and lush valleys fed by glacial streams contrasted against the otherwise rugged and barren high Himalayan landscape.

climate

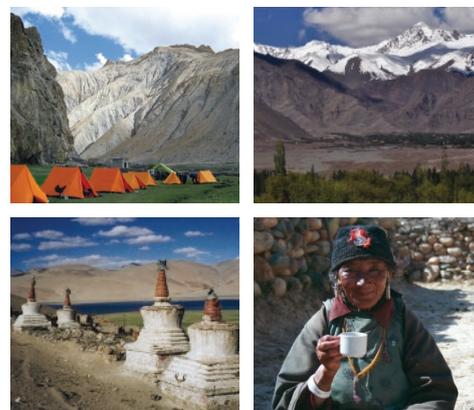
Ladakh, situated to the north of the main Himalaya Range is beyond the influence of the Indian monsoon. Humidity is low and rainfall no more than a few centimetres each year. Daytime summer temperatures will vary around 20C-25C while at night they may drop considerably. On the trek we provide excellent tents and sleeping bags to combat variations in these conditions.

a typical day

You will be woken with a cup of tea brought to your tent around 6:30am, followed by a small bowl of warm water for washing. Before breakfast you pack your gear into your kit bag which is then taken by the pack-animals or porters and will not be available to you until you reach camp that afternoon. After a wholesome breakfast we are usually on the trail between 7.30 – 8am, depending upon the duration and nature of the day's walk. We will walk for around 3-4 hours and then generally break for lunch for about 1 hour. Some of our staff will walk ahead and select a suitable place to stop. The afternoon walk is generally a little shorter and camp is usually reached by around 3.30 - 4.30 pm. Once we have reached camp and the kitchen is set up, afternoon tea will be prepared. From then until dinner there is time to rest or explore the surrounding area. Dinner is usually served between 6-7 pm. Remember to bring your headlamp and your water bottles to the dining tent so they can be filled with boiling water. Trekking evenings afford some of the best memories of your trek, whether it is talking, playing cards, chatting with the crew or joining in some singing and dancing with the local people. Much of the enjoyment of an expedition is in the journey itself.

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meals during the trek

We provide a full service while on trek. An important aspect of this service are the meals that are prepared for you and we are frequently complimented by returning travellers about the food provided. Ensuring that you stay healthy is one of our highest priorities. Therefore, each of our treks is accompanied by a trained cook as well as kitchen staff who provide you with three hearty meals each day. High levels of hygiene are engaged to ensure that our travellers stay healthy and fit. Our cooking staff has mastered the preparation of a varied and balanced menu and there is always plenty of food for those who may like seconds. Our cooks are trained to provide excellent food for vegetarians and anyone who has a limited diet including those who are lactose or gluten intolerant. Our meal inclusion on your trek is for your benefit and takes all the hassle, expense and worry out of your holiday. Typically, you can expect breakfast to consist of muesli or cereal, eggs, local breads and pancakes and hot drinks. Lunch will generally be vegetables, salads, bread, cheese pasta style dishes, tinned fish and meats and are normally eaten picnic style. Dinner is always three courses and includes soup, seasonal vegetables, meat, rice or pasta and bread with some local specialties also in the mix. Dessert is always served after the main meal each evening followed by hot beverages.

dietary requirements

Provided we are advised in advance of your departure we are able to cater for vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (at least 1 month prior to your trip) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in very remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

what you carry

In your daypack you will need to carry extra warm clothing (depending on the altitude, location and weather), a rainjacket, water bottle, camera gear, valuables and personal items such as sunscreen, lip-eze etc. Porters and mules carry all group gear and your trek pack.

equipment required

Specialist gear required include walking boots and day pack (a comprehensive gear list is provided in the pre-departure information provided on booking).

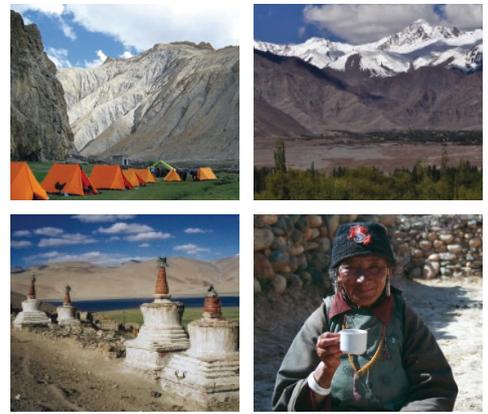
acute mountain sickness

When we ascend above 2500 meters our bodies have to acclimatise to the decreasing amount of the oxygen available. To allow our bodies to adjust we have structured our treks so that you ascend slowly, allowing acclimatisation to occur. However, during the acclimatisation process, you may experience some of the following symptoms.

- Headache
- Tiredness
- Disturbed sleep
- Loss of appetite/nausea
- Shortness of breath
- Cough

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- Palpitation
- Swelling of the hands and face

Individuals acclimatise at different rates. Your best strategy is to take your time and drink plenty of water. These symptoms may not indicate the onset of A.M.S. and if you experience them it does not necessarily mean that you should not continue. All our group leaders have extensive first aid training and we urge you to communicate with the group leader at all times should you believe you have any symptoms in order that we can effectively monitor your symptoms. The only cure for Acute Mountain Sickness is to descend.

Please note that your group leader has ultimate responsibility and may ask you to descend if symptoms persist.

vehicles & safety

During the course of your trip, we will use a variety of vehicles, all of which are fit for purpose and the conditions encountered. It should be noted that laws governing transportation safety may differ from those in your home country and whilst wherever possible, vehicles with seatbelts are provided, on occasion some vehicles may not have seat belts fitted.

visas

Visas are required to enter India and visitors from some countries including Australia and New Zealand can obtain an online visa, the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) prior to arrival. For stays of less than 30 days, travellers can apply for an ETA online (US\$100 for US and UK passport holders, US\$80 for most other nationalities, rates subject to change) at the official website <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/tvoa.html>, no less than four days and no more than 120 days before the date of travel.

At present other nationalities including the UK and Canada and those clients regardless of nationality visiting Sikkim and other restricted areas must have an Indian visa stamp in their passport prior to arrival in India.

Please bear in mind that visas may be required for countries you are visiting en route or transiting through on the way to your destination. It is important that you check the requirements of all countries you will visit. Visa costs and requirements do change regularly so we suggest you check with your travel agent or World Expeditions reservations consultant. It is your responsibility to obtain all necessary visas.

info nights

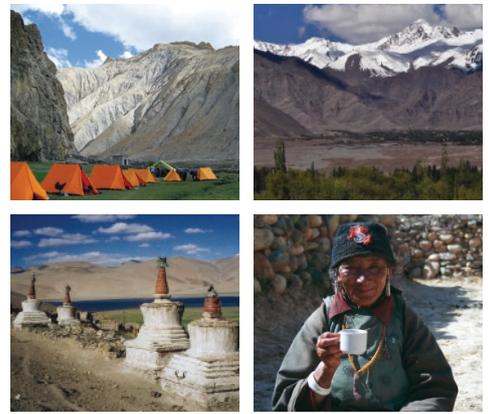
World Expeditions invites you to attend our inspiring adventure travel slide shows. These special evenings are designed to inform and entertain and are hosted by our most experienced and passionate adventure travellers and mountaineers. Ask our staff for a slide show schedule or register on our website - www.worldexpeditions.com. Shows can fill early so it is important to register your attendance so we know to save a seat, or two!

private groups

The adventures featured in our brochures, and on our website, are just a starting point for many of our private group travellers. Working closely with our Groups Department we can organise custom designed itineraries for groups of friends, clubs, charity's, schools or even work colleagues. Our team will assist you with all aspects of your private group adventure from itinerary design to group flights. Contact our team today.

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subscribe to our e-newsletter

Subscribe to our newsletter! To keep up to date with our new and exciting adventure opportunities, special promotions and adventure news, subscribe to our monthly newsletter! You can do this online through our website, www.worldexpeditions.com or contact our office.

social networking

Connect with us on social

FACEBOOK: [@worldexpeditions](https://www.facebook.com/worldexpeditions)

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Follow us at [instagram.com/worldexpeditions](https://www.instagram.com/worldexpeditions)

YOUTUBE: World Expeditions

Subscribe to our channel at [youtube.com/worldexpeditions](https://www.youtube.com/worldexpeditions)

Share the love

Use the hashtag #WorldExpeditions on your best travel photos and videos to be featured.

trip availability

If this trip seems right for you then we encourage you to call us now to check availability as we operate strictly small group adventures. Many of our adventures require us to secure services on your behalf; such as permits, hotels and flights to name but a few. The demand for these services is increasing each year making it difficult to join a trip last minute. To ensure we can assist you onto your adventure of a lifetime we ask that you check your trip availability with our team at your earliest convenience.

how to book

To book a World Expeditions trip, you will need to complete a booking form which is found at the back of our brochure or can be downloaded from our website www.worldexpeditions.com. On completion, fax or post the form to your nearest World Expeditions office along with your non-refundable deposit. World Expeditions has access to competitive airfares to India. Call your nearest World Expeditions office or travel agent for assistance with your travel arrangements including flights, travel insurance and additional accommodation.