

journey to mount kailash



trip highlights

Join devout pilgrims in a supported trek around Mount Kailash, considered to be the mythical Mount Meru

Experience the wonder of the Saga Dawa festival

Journey across the Tibetan Plateau with sweeping Himalaya views

Explore Lhasa, including the Potala, former home of the Dalai Lama

Traverse the Himalaya overland from the Tibetan Plateau to Kathmandu



Trip Duration 20 days **Trip Code:** JTK

Grade Moderate

Activities Trekking, Adventure Touring

Summary 20 day trip, 3 day trek, 3 nights Radisson Hotel, Kathmandu, 2 nights lodge, 2 nights Balthali Village Resort, 12 nights basic hotel

welcome to World Expeditions

Thank you for your interest in our Journey to Mount Kailash 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 has been pioneering trips in the Himalaya since 1975. Our extra attention to detail and seamless operations on the ground ensure that you will have a memorable experience in the Indian Sub-continent. Every trip is accompanied by an experienced local leader, as well as support staff that share a passion for the region, and a desire to share it with you. We take every precaution to ensure smooth logistics, with private vehicles throughout your trip. We use comfortable 3 to 4 star accommodation in hotels hand-picked for their local character and charm. In most cases, all internal transport, entrance fees, national park fees and transfers are included in the cost of your trip.

Most importantly, our adventures always aim to benefit the local people we interact with, safeguard the ecosystems we explore and contribute to the sustainability of travel in the regions we experience. We invite you to read more on our Responsible Travel philosophy and projects later in these trip notes.

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trip cost

Joining Kathmandu from: \$4599
All prices are per person

options & supplements

Single Supplement - Nepal, Lhasa, Gysntse & Shigatse Only: \$400

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 Kathmandu and stopover ideas, contact our expert staff today to receive a detailed quote.

the trip

Mount Kailash is said to be the mythical Mount Meru, the centre of the universe. It is revered in both Hindu and Buddhist legends, while its location, close to the sources of the four main rivers that flow across the Indian sub-continent, contributes to its mystique. Our adventure includes a week long journey from Lhasa (via Gyantse and Shigatse) across the vast Tibetan plateau. We plan to reach Mount Kailash at the time of the Saga Dawa festival when many thousands of pilgrims from throughout Tibet gather to pay homage to the mountain. After the celebrations we will undertake a three day trek, or kora, around Mount Kailash, with inspiring views of one of the world's most iconic mountains, before the drive back to Lhasa and onto Kathmandu.

at a glance

DAY 1	ARRIVE KATHMANDU, NEPAL
DAY 2	MORNING SIGHTSEEING IN KATHMANDU, TRANSFER TO BALTHALI
DAY 3	DAY WALKS AROUND BALTHALI
DAY 4	RETURN TO KATHMANDU VIA BHAKTAPUR
DAY 5	FLY KATHMANDU TO LHASA (3670M)
DAYS 6-7	IN LHASA (3670M)
DAY 8	COMMENCE DRIVE TOWARDS KAILASH TO GYANTSE (8-9 HOURS DRIVE, 3900M, 290KMS)
DAY 9	DRIVE TO SHIGATSE (3 HOURS DRIVE, 3800M, 90KMS)
DAYS 10-12	DRIVE ACROSS THE TIBETAN PLATEAU TOWARDS LAKE MANASAROVAR AND KAILASH.
DAY 13	IN DARCHEN, PRELUDE OF SAGA DAWA FESTIVAL
DAY 14	SAGA DAWA FESTIVAL. COMMENCE TREK AROUND MOUNT KAILASH TO DERA PHUK (30 MINUTE DRIVE FROM DARCHEN TO SERLUNG, 6HR WALK, 5000M). OVERNIGHT BASIC LODGE.
DAY 15	CONTINUE TREK AROUND MOUNT KAILASH TO ZUTRUL PHUK VIA DOLMA LA (5600M). (10 HRS WALKING, 4900M). OVERNIGHT BASIC LODGE.
DAY 16	COMPLETE TREK AROUND MOUNT KAILASH (4 HOURS WALK). OVERNIGHT BASIC HOTEL.
DAYS 17-18	DRIVE TOWARDS KATHMANDU ACROSS THE TIBETAN PLATEAU
DAY 19	DRIVE FROM KERUNG TO KATHMANDU
DAY 20	IN KATHMANDU, TRIP CONCLUDES

what's included

- 19 breakfasts, 12 lunches and 13 dinners
- airport transfers if arriving on day 1 and 20 or if you booked pre/post tour accommodation at the Radisson through World Expeditions
- expert bilingual guide
- group medical kit
- good quality accommodation in Kathmandu/Lhasa/Shigatse/Gyantse
- souvenir World Expeditions kit bag
- portable altitude chamber for group use
- private transportation
- all park entrance fees and trekking permits
- yaks to carry all group equipment
- sightseeing and site entry fees as listed
- 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)
- bottled Oxygen for emergency use

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trip dates

2019 04 Jun - 23 Jun

important notes

Note: - A Lunar Calendar is used in Tibet which determines the date of the Saga Dawa Festival. The dates are confirmed in February each year which may require a change in departure date by a few days.

fast facts

Visas:

Please check visa requirements with your reservations consultant*

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*

Leader:

Expert local leader

Advice for people with limited mobility

This trip is not suitable for people with limited mobility.

Brochure Reference:

Himalaya and Indian Subcontinent

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.

what's not included

- International flights
- Kathmandu-Lhasa flight. Please contact your local World Expeditions office to arrange your flights.
- Meals not included in the daily itinerary
- Alcoholic and bottled drinks
- Items of a personal nature such as phone calls, laundry etc
- Tips
- Airport and departure taxes
- Visas
- Travel insurance

detailed itinerary

As a general rule the further west you travel through Tibet the more basic the accommodation becomes. While we source the best available accommodation for you, there may be times where it will be necessary to stay in lodges utilising multi-share rooms with shared bathroom facilities.

DAY 1 Arrive Kathmandu, Nepal

You will be met by a representative of World Expeditions and transferred to the hotel. Remainder of the afternoon at leisure. A pre-trek briefing will be given around 5pm where arrangements will be made for the distribution of your kit bag, sleeping bag and down/fibrefill jacket and the completion of your Tibet visa application. There are a million things to see in Kathmandu and we recommend you spend this day wandering the town and exploring the valley on bicycle or by taxi.

Evening drinks are held in the hotel for all World Expeditions clients arriving today. Drinks and snacks will generally be served from 6:30 pm until 7:15pm, and this is a great opportunity to get acquainted with your fellow group members before heading out to dinner. Overnight Radisson Hotel.

meals: NIL

DAY 2 Morning sightseeing in Kathmandu, transfer to Balthali

This morning a sightseeing tour takes in the key attractions in and around Kathmandu. We will visit Pashupatinath and Boudhanath. Following lunch we will drive to the village of Balthali about 40kms outside of Kathmandu. Our visit here gives us the opportunity to get out of the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu life and experience the reduced pace of rural Nepal while the Tibetan visa formalities are being completed by the Chinese Embassy. If the weather is kind you may also get magnificent views of the Himalayan Range. It's best if you pack a day pack with the things you will need for the next couple of days as a short walk of about 20 minutes is required to access our accommodation from the road head. Overnight hotel.

meals: B,D

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thoughtful travel

The environments we travel through are fragile. It is our responsibility as visitors & sustainable travel is provided to all World Expeditions clients before they travel.

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 passes crossings and the length of the trek. The three day trek around Kailash is optional.

Alternative arrangements can be made if you elect not to undertake the trek. For those that do the trek it is graded moderate due to the high altitude as we ascend to the Dolma La (5630 metres), but short duration of only 3 days. The trail is well defined and given the time spent acclimatising en route to Kailash should not prove to be too challenging.

In order to complete this trek we advise that you undertake regular exercise – 1 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. Hill walking with a daypack is also recommended.

DAY 3 Day walks around Balthali

Today is a day to explore our surroundings with a walk around the village and nearby environs. Alternatively, you may opt to put your feet up in preparation for the Tibetan adventure that awaits. Overnight hotel.

meals: B,D

DAY 4 Return to Kathmandu via Bhaktapur

With visa formalities due to be completed today we head back to Kathmandu in preparation for tomorrow's flight to Lhasa. En route back to Kathmandu we stop in at Bhaktapur one of the three ancient cities that have fused to create modern day Kathmandu. We will visit the UNESCO listed Durbar Square that many relate to be the finest in the Kathmandu Valley. Despite some damage being done by the 2015 earthquake there still remains many reasons to visit this wonderful city. In the afternoon you will have free time to explore more of the city and make final preparations for your trip. Overnight Radisson Hotel.

meals: B

DAY 5 Fly Kathmandu to Lhasa (3670m)

The flight from Kathmandu to Lhasa takes an hour and is without doubt one of the most spectacular flights in the world. The flight path takes us just east of the Everest massif, with unrivalled views of Everest and many of the other giant peaks of the Himalaya. On arrival at Lhasa Airport you will be transferred to the city – a drive that takes around two hours. Overnight hotel.

meals: B

DAYS 6-7 In Lhasa (3670m)

Three days are scheduled to appreciate the rich cultural history of Lhasa. We include visits to the Jokhang, the Norbulingka (the Summer Palace of the Dalai Lama), and the famous Potala Palace. We also include visits to the nearby monasteries of Drepung, Sera and Ganden.

The Jokhang The Old City of Lhasa was built around the Jokhang, the most sacred temple in Tibet. Established in the 7th century when Buddhism was first introduced into Tibet, the temple has been considerably enlarged, particularly during the reign of the 5th Dalai Lama. Within the Jokhang, a series of temples are situated on the ground and the upper floors – some are closed to the public, but our guide will be able to give you a detailed description of each of the main chapels. The main entrance to the Jokhang is always full of activity, with pilgrims prostrating themselves as they conduct their prayers before continuing on their ritual circuit around the temple. This circuit area, together with the Barkhor – the marketplace outside the Jokhang – is a gathering place for Tibetans, who may have travelled for many months to reach Lhasa. The Barkhor is the 'real Tibet', with a multitude of stalls selling anything from ceremonial scarves to Chinese thermos flasks. You can spend many hours there people-watching, although be sure to ask first before taking any photographs.

Sera and Drepung monasteries. It is a short drive out of Lhasa to visit two of the most important Buddhist monasteries in Tibet. Drepung Monastery was founded in the 15th century. A century later the 2nd Dalai Lama established the Ganden Palace that was to be his residence until the 17th century when he moved to the Potala Palace in Lhasa. While at the monastery we visit the huge Main Assembly Hall and the famous teaching colleges.

Sera Monastery once housed a huge monastic population of around 5000 monks. However since the Cultural Revolution the number of resident monks has fallen to a

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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.

few hundred. Like Drepung it was founded in the 15th century and includes several important teaching colleges (including the famous debating courtyard) and the Main Assembly Hall with its important thangka's and impressive statues. The Norbulingka This large compound, situated to the west of the city, is where successive Dalai Lamas spent their summer months. Indeed, the 14th (current) Dalai Lama preferred to stay in this summer palace, rather than in the cold, isolated chambers of the Potala. The Palace of the 14th Dalai Lama is situated in the centre of the compound, and little seems to have changed since the time when he escaped into exile in 1959. Most of the private quarters are open to the public, which always includes a steady flow of Tibetan pilgrims keen to pay homage to their exiled leader. The Palace of the 13th Dalai Lama, situated on the perimeter of the Norbulingka, is also open to the public. The Potala Palace is one of the highlights of a visit to Lhasa. It is divided into two main complexes – the outer white building that housed the administration, and the Red Fort, where chapels, tombs and the living quarters of the Dalai Lama are located. Founded in 1645 during the reign of the great 5th Dalai Lama, the White Palace was completed in 1648, twelve years after the Dalai Lama's death. To avoid possible problems, the head monks related to the masses that the 5th Dalai Lama was in deep meditation until after the Red Palace was completed. It is normal to approach the Potala through the Western Gate and make your way slowly through the labyrinth of chambers to the lower floor of the Red Fort. The most impressive hall within this medieval building is the chamber housing the tombs of the former Dalai Lamas, including the massive golden tomb of the 5th Dalai Lama. This chamber is currently undergoing renovation, however, and is not open to the public. Nearby is the chapel commemorating Padmasambhava, the Tantric sage who introduced Buddhism to Tibet. On the upper middle floor is the tomb of the 13th Dalai Lama, while the next floor contains the official Reception Hall and living quarters, some of which are open to the public. We complete our visit to the Potala Palace by leaving through the main gate to the Red Fort, before descending the series of steps to the marketplace immediately in front of the palace. The time spent in the Potala will depend on the number of pilgrims and tourists that are visiting while we are there. Overnight hotel.

meals: B

DAY 8 Commence drive towards Kailash to Gyantse (8-9 hours drive, 3900m, 290kms)

Today we commence our drive across the Tibetan plateau, which is perhaps much more mountainous than you might expect, towards Kailash. It is approximately 1300kms from Lhasa to Darchen, at the base of the Kailash. There is a newly imposed lower speed limit of 60km/hr on the highways outside of Lhasa, which means plenty of time to take in the extraordinary Himalayan views!

From Lhasa we drive down the Kyichu Valley to the Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) before ascending to the Khamba La (Khamba Pass) at 4900m. The views are outstanding – in the foreground is the vast freshwater Yamdrok Tso or Turquoise Lake, while to the south the snow-capped ranges merge with the main Himalayan range. We drive around the lake before crossing the Karo La (5200m) to reach Gyantse. We visit the remarkable octagonal chorten, the Kumbum (or Pango Chorten) – built in 1444 on a series of four levels, each of which contains separate chapels. Overnight hotel.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 9 Drive to Shigatse (3 hours drive, 3800m, 90kms)

In Shigatse we visit the famous Tashilhunpo Monastery, founded in 1447 by the 1st Dalai Lama. Since the time of the 5th Dalai Lama in 1642, the abbot of Tashilhunpo has been known as the Panchen Lama (literally the 'Great Scholar'). Over the

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generations, the Panchen Lama became established as the chief spiritual and temporal adviser of the huge western portion of Tibet known as Tsang, and at times was even considered a rival to the Dalai Lama. Overnight hotel.

meals: B,L,D

DAYS 10-12 Drive across the Tibetan plateau towards Lake Manasarovar and Kailash.

The drive to Kailash is spectacular and demanding adventure across the roof of the world. From Shigatse, we head west across the Tibetan plateau to the trading town of Saga (4500m, 9-10 hours drive, 450kms) Overnight basic hotel.

The next day is the most demanding, we will pass through the settlement of Pharang (4600m, 5 hours drive, 240kms) and traverse a number of sandy sections en route to the to Chui Gumpa on the shores of Lake Mansarovar, our overnight stop on day 11. Our views of the Himalaya are magnificent and continue on the final day of this epic and memorable drive across the Tibetan plateau to Darchen only one hour further along the road (4600m, 40kms). Overnight basic hotel.

While we endeavour to stick to the projected itinerary, travel in Tibet is by nature unpredictable and a flexible approach is always needed!

meals: B,L,D

DAY 13 In Darchen, prelude of Saga Dawa Festival

We witness the arrival of many Tibetan pilgrims for the Saga Dawa Festival who may have spent up to a month travelling across Tibet to attend the festival. An ideal day to explore the trails in the vicinity of Mt Kailash that afford fine views of the South Face of this sacred mountain. Overnight basic hotel.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 14 Saga Dawa Festival. Commence trek around Mount Kailash to Dera Phuk (30 minute drive from Darchen to Serlung, 6hr walk, 5000m). Overnight basic lodge.

After the full moon the monks offer their prayers and blessings to the huge gathering before the ceremonial pole is slowly lifted by means of support poles. The event takes several hours creating a feeling of awe and expectation before the pole is finally put into place. It is then time for the more devout pilgrims to commence the 'kora' or pilgrimage around Mt Kailash, a 49km trek that we will undertake together with many of the pilgrims.

In the afternoon we commence our trek – the 'kora', around the base of Mt Kailash. We follow in the footsteps of the pilgrims that takes us past a dome outcrop known as "Padasambhavas Tomb" before the valley widens out below the Dri Puk Monastery. Overnight lodge.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 15 Continue trek around Mount Kailash to Zutrul Phuk via Dolma La (5600m). (10 hrs walking, 4900m). Overnight basic lodge.

The second stage we climb to the Dolma La (5600 metres). En route the trail passes an area referred to as Shive Tso which is marked by a large collection of discarded clothing – where pilgrims are said to undertake a symbolic death, leaving an item of clothing behind before proceeding to the pass. The final 200 metres climb to the pass is not unduly strenuous while on the pass the pilgrims pay homage to the gods of the pass. It is a very special occasion particularly at this time of the year. From the top of the pass we head down the valley to the small monastery of Zutrul Puk. The site known as the miracle cave marks the place where the celebrated Buddhist teacher Milarepa performed miracles in a contest with the high priest of the Bon Po's, the original

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animistic religion of Tibet before Buddhism. Milarepa won the contest but consented for the followers of Bon Po to continue their own pilgrimage around Mt Kailash in an anti clockwise fashion, a tradition that still holds today. Overnight lodge.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 16 Complete trek around Mount Kailash (4 hours walk). Overnight basic hotel.

From Zutrul Puk it is a further 4 hours trek across the open plains and past lines of mani walls and prayer flags to back to Darchen. We have the afternoon to savor our final views towards Kailash we are reminded of the sacredness of this region for the many pilgrims that venture here each year. Overnight basic hotel.

meals: B,L,D

DAYS 17-18 Drive towards Kathmandu across the Tibetan plateau

It is a 4-day drive to Kathmandu from Hor Chu, with overnight stops including: , Saga (9 hours drive), and Kerung the gateway back into Nepal (9-10 hours drive). Following the 2015 earthquake the former friendship highway was badly damaged resulting in its continued closure. This new route was opened initially to ensure that trade between Nepal and China could continue. In 2017 the border post was opened to tourists allowing for travel along this legendary overland route to recommence. This road is sure to add to the sense of adventure as it traverses parts of both Tibet and Nepal new to tourism. Road conditions along this route are changeable as improvements to the road continue to ensure that it can accommodate the traffic using it.

meals: B,L,D

DAY 19 Drive from Kerung to Kathmandu

Today we complete the final stage of our journey from Lhasa via the earthquake ravaged Langtang region. It is a fitting conclusion to an epic overland journey and the comfort of the Radisson Hotel will no doubt be welcomed with open arms. Overnight Radisson Hotel.

meals: B,L

DAY 20 In Kathmandu, trip concludes

After breakfast, your trip concludes.

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.

places of interest

The Jokhang

The Old City of Lhasa was built around the Jokhang, the most sacred temple in Tibet. Established in the 7th century, when Buddhism was first introduced into Tibet, the temple has been considerably enlarged, particularly during the reign of the 5th Dalai Lama. Within the Jokhang, our guide will be able to give you a detailed description of each of the main chapels. The main entrance to the Jokhang is always full of activity, with pilgrims prostrating themselves as they conduct their prayers before continuing on their ritual circuit around the temple. This circuit area, together with the Barkhor, the marketplace outside the Jokhang, is a gathering place for Tibetans, who may have travelled for many months to reach Lhasa. The Barkhor is the "real Tibet", with a multitude of stalls selling anything from ceremonial scarves to Chinese thermos flasks. You can spend many hours there people-watching, although be sure to ask first before taking any photographs.

Sera and Drepung Monasteries

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It is a short drive out of Lhasa to visit two of the most important Buddhist monasteries in Tibet. Drepung Monastery was founded in the 15th century. A century later, the 2nd Dalai Lama established the Ganden Palace that was to be his residence until the 17th century when he moved to the Potala Palace in Lhasa. While at the monastery we visit the huge Main Assembly Hall and the famous teaching colleges. Sera Monastery once housed a huge monastic population of around 5000 monks; sadly this number has declined to a few hundred since the Cultural Revolution. Like Drepung, Sera was founded in the 15th century and includes several important teaching colleges (including the famous debating courtyard) and the Main Assembly Hall with its important thangkas (painted or embroidered Buddhist banners) and impressive statues.

The Norbulingka

This large compound, situated to the west of the city, is where successive Dalai Lamas spent their summer months. Indeed, the 14th (current) Dalai Lama often preferred to stay in this summer palace, rather than in the cold, isolated chambers of the Potala. The Palace of the 14th Dalai Lama is situated in the centre of the compound, and little seems to have changed since he escaped into exile in India in 1959. Most of the private quarters are open to the public, which always includes a steady flow of Tibetan pilgrims keen to pay homage to their exiled leader. The Palace of the 13th Dalai Lama, situated on the perimeter of the Norbulingka, is also open to the public.

The Potala Palace

The Potala Palace is one of the highlights of a visit to Lhasa. It is divided into two main complexes: the outer white building that housed the administration, and the Red Fort, where chapels, tombs and the living quarters of the Dalai Lama were located. Founded in 1645 during the reign of the great 5th Dalai Lama, the White Palace was completed in 1648, twelve years after that Dalai Lama's death. To avoid possible problems, the head monks related to the masses that the 5th Dalai Lama was in deep meditation until after the Red Palace was completed. It is normal to approach the Potala through the Western Gate and make your way slowly through the labyrinth of chambers to the lower floor of the Red Fort. The most impressive hall within this medieval building is the chamber housing the tombs of the former Dalai Lamas, including the massive golden tomb of the 5th Dalai Lama. This chamber is currently undergoing renovation, however, and is not open to the public. Nearby is the chapel commemorating Padmasambhava, the Tantric sage who introduced Buddhism to Tibet. On the upper middle floor is the tomb of the 13th Dalai Lama, while the next floor contains the official Reception Hall and living quarters, some of which are open to the public. We complete our visit to the Potala Palace by leaving through the main gate and continuing on to the Red Fort, before descending the series of steps to the marketplace immediately in front of the palace. The time spent in the Potala will depend on the number of pilgrims and tourists that are visiting while we are there.

suggested extensions

- Kathmandu to Delhi
- Chitwan Safari

country information

Tibet was for centuries a mysterious Buddhist kingdom isolated from the rest of the world by the Himalaya. In the 1950s, however, when Tibet was annexed by the People's Republic of China, everything changed. The Dalai Lama, Tibet's religious and political leader, fled to Dharamsala in northern India in 1959, where he established a Government in Exile; and more than 120,000 Tibetan refugees now live in India, Nepal and Bhutan. Since 1965, Tibet has been administered as the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR). Much of what was once Tibet has been incorporated into the Chinese provinces of Qinghai and Gansu (formerly known as Amdo), and Sichuan and Yunnan (traditionally known as Kham). The first tourists stepped into what was formerly Tibet in the 1980s, only to find many of its legendary monuments and monasteries in ruins. But the essence of Tibet is still there; the heart of the country is still beating. There are still pilgrims reciting mantras and spinning prayer wheels, the faith and goodwill of the people seems unaffected, and

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there's still the country's incredible location amidst the highest and most spectacular mountains in the world. Travelling in Tibet may be a sobering experience these days, but it is still an incredible one.

climate

The climate in Tibet is not as harsh as one would imagine it to be. Lhasa tends to have mild weather from May to November. Expect sudden cold snaps even in spring (April-May), and dramatic temperature ranges, particularly at high altitudes. Nepal, on the other hand, is subject to the defining influence of the Indian monsoon from late May to mid-September. The ideal time to visit this region is either pre-monsoon, from mid-March until the end of May; or post-monsoon, from October to mid-November, when the weather tends to be relatively cool and dry. Temperatures can vary considerably depending on your elevation but as a guideline, temperatures in April/May and October roughly range from 5C-15C.

mountain flights

The flight from Kathmandu to Lhasa takes an hour and is without doubt one of the most spectacular flights in the world. The flight path takes us just east of the Everest massif, with unrivalled views of the remarkable Kangshung face of Everest.

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.

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.

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equipment provided



You will be provided with the use of a World Expeditions trek pack which includes a duffel bag, quality sleeping bag, down or fibre fill jacket and insulated mat (valued at over US\$500). Further, our porters are provided with clothing and boots suitable for the conditions. See more information about our porter initiatives below.

accommodation on the trip

As a general rule the further west you travel through Tibet the more basic the accommodation becomes. While we source the best available accommodation for you, there may be times where it will be necessary to stay in lodges utilising multi-share rooms with shared bathroom facilities. Single supplements are available for this trip however we can only supply single rooms in Kathmandu, Balthali, Lhasa, Gyantse and Shigatse.

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/or yaks carry all group gear.

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
- 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.

journey to mount kailash

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

special visa requirements

The visa for Tibet is to be issued by the Chinese Authorities in Kathmandu. World Expeditions will organise this on your arrival, however you will need to furnish us with a copy of your passport before you depart. Please refer to the detailed information given to you on booking for further details. Please note that you should NOT apply for a Tibet visa in your home country. We enter via Nepal, and not through a Chinese border, hence the visa will not be held valid. Our World Expeditions office in Nepal applies for the group visa for Tibet. On arrival in Kathmandu you will need approx US\$114 (American passport holders currently require US\$198) along with your passport for your visa to enter Tibet. The Chinese authorities in Kathmandu will process this. If you are planning on travelling to China after your visit to Tibet you should be aware that a Tibetan and Chinese visa are two different things. If entering Tibet from Nepal with plans to travel on to China thereafter, you will not be able to apply for a Chinese visa before departure. If you do, this will result in the Tibetan visa that we organise on your behalf, being cancelled. What would need to happen is that you obtain the Tibet visa through our offices and participate on your Tibetan Adventure. You will then need to return to Kathmandu and apply at the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu for your China visa. They will need a minimum of two full working days to process the same. This would mean you would need to remain in Kathmandu while your visa was being processed. If you are travelling in China before arriving into Tibet, you are able to apply for a Chinese visa in your country of origin and once in China, we will need to provide you with a copy of your Tibetan visa before you commence your final journey leg (for example, a train trip from Chengdu to Lhasa). You would not be permitted to board the train from Chengdu to Tibet unless you had the Tibetan visa approval in your physical possession to show to authorities.

high altitude travel by vehicle

Travellers sometimes drive or fly to high altitude (above 2000m) and therefore run a risk of altitude illness. This risk increases the faster one ascends and the higher the final altitude gained. The risk is reduced if the night following the ascent (sleeping altitude) is spent at low altitude, ie. If you are travelling by road, cross a high pass and descend to an altitude not more than 300 m from your starting point, the risk of altitude illness is minimized. Gaining height rapidly and staying high definitely risks developing altitude illness and you should be aware of, and watch for, the symptoms (see "Acute Mountain Sickness"). You should also consider the use of acetazolamide (Diamox) as an aid to acclimatization and discuss this with your doctor or leader before departure. Should altitude illness occur the treatment is to descend and/or visit a hospital or clinic where the appropriate oxygen and medications can be administered.

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

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.

Tibet Visa

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Nepal Visa

All nationalities require a visa for Nepal. You will find visa application forms and detailed instructions in your pre departure information kit and the up to date prices for visas obtained in your home country. Please note that if you are applying in Australia you must fill out the visa form provided and paste or staple your photographs in the top right hand corner. However, please note that THE VISA IS ONLY VALID FOR 6 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF ISSUE, ie. you must enter and depart Nepal within six months of the date of issue of the visa. If you are American or Canadian you will need to obtain application forms for your visa directly from your nearest embassy/consulate.

It is possible to obtain your Nepal visa on arrival at Kathmandu Airport, however this is not ideal as it can cause long delays to your group. At the time of printing the cost is as follows;

15 day tourist visa US\$25

30 day tourist visa US\$40

90 day tourist visa US\$100

(All are multiple entry)

Although the preferred payment is USD, AUD, CAD and GBP will also be accepted very readily.

You can collect the application form required to obtain your visa on arrival, from your reservation consultant or at the Kathmandu Airport on arrival. You should carry two current passport photographs with you, to obtain the visa. These prices are subject to change without notice, however we will do our utmost to keep you informed prior to your departure.

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



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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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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 Morocco. Call your nearest World Expeditions office or travel agent for assistance with your travel arrangements including flights, travel insurance and additional accommodation.