

KAILASH MANASAROVAR YATRA



Pilgrimage to Mount Kailash & Lake Manasarovar, are considered to be the most sacred by Hindus, Buddhists, Jains & Bonpos. Mt. Kailash is known as Ghang Rinpoche (Jewel of Snow) by Tibetans, they consider it as the navel of the world. For Buddhists, Mt. Kailash is the abode of Arhats (those who have attained paradise). Bonpos consider, Shanrab their founder, descended from the heavens on this mountain. The Hindus consider Mt. Kailash as the center of the universe & the abode of Lord Shiva & Parvati. South of Mt. Kailash at the base of Mt. Gurla Mandhata are the two lakes Lake Manasarovar & Rakshas Tal. Rakshas Tal the smaller lake is considered to be inauspicious & Manasarovar is considered to be most sacred & worthy of salvation. Hindus believe that Gods descend down from heaven to take a bath in this holy lake. Buddhists believe that Queen Maya took a bath in this holy lake before giving birth to Lord Buddha. The glaciers of Mt. Kailash & Mt. Gurla Mandhata feed both these lakes. It is also believed that the three major rivers Brahmaputra, Sutlej & Indus are fed from Lake Manasarovar. Lake Manasarovar (4727 m / 15510 ft) is the highest fresh-water body in the world.

Since ages many hermits & pilgrims have been undertaking journeys to this sacred & the holiest of all Mt. Kailash & Lake Manasarovar, because of the religious & mythological importance. Mt. Kailash & Lake Manasarovar is situated in southern Tibet aptly known as the 'roof of the world'. Our journey involves traveling by bus from Kathmandu to Kodari the border town on Nepal side & then by land cruisers to Darchen, a small Tibetan town, at the base of Mt. Kailash. Tibet still remains one of the most interesting, remote & undiscovered regions of the world. This journey is for adventurous minds since the road infrastructure is basic, landslides & delays are always a part of this trip. Also the drives on the Tibetan plateaus are tiring, dusty, bumpy. The altitudes on which we travel are minimum 4500 m for most of the days. The Circumambulation (Parikrama / Kora) around the Mt. Kailash is a 3-days trek, taking us over a high pass of Dolma La (5630 m / 18466 ft) and Gauri Kund. The average walking involved is of 14-15 km, (6-8 hrs minimum) per day.

Banjara Camps and Retreats P. Ltd., 1A, Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi- 110016

Phone/ fax no. (91 11) 26861397 / 26855152 / 26855153

info@banjaracamps.com www.banjaracamps.com

Total Duration: 15 nights / 16 days

Trek Duration: 02 nights / 03 Days

Style of tour:

High Altitude Travel

Grade: Tough

Maximum Altitude: Dolma La 5630m / 18466 ft

Fixed Departures 2008 (Ex Kathmandu):

2nd June, 2nd July, 1st September

Best Season:

June to September

Accommodation: Kathmandu – 3 star hotel; At other places: hotels / guesthouses; camping in small camping tents at Lake Manasarovar and while on the Kailash Parikrama (trek)

Food: All meals included

Travel: Travel in land cruisers (4 pax per vehicle) in Tibet

Comments: This tour involves continuous driving on high altitudes.

Recommendations: People with ailments of the heart, high blood pressure, epilepsy, diabetes etc, it is advisable not to consider this tour. We recommend that our guest to undergo a complete medical checkup from their own physician before signing up for the tour. Basic exercises like, brisk walk or light jogging before the tour is recommended under professional guidance.

ITINERARY:

Day 01: Arrival Kathmandu.

Upon arrival in Kathmandu, meet assist and transfer to the hotel. Afternoon at leisure. Briefing about triple in the evening. Night stay in Kathmandu. **D**

Day 02: Sightseeing tour around Kathmandu valley.

Sightseeing of Pashupatinath Temple and Gujeswari. Overnight at hotel in Kathmandu. **BLD**

Day 03: Kathmandu to Nyalam (3750 m / 12300 ft) via Zhangmu (157 kms)

The drive eastwards is pleasant passing through agricultural lands and descending to Dolalghat. The trail follows the Bhote Kosi River and then heads towards Kodari on gravel roads and landslip areas. At Kodari, we complete Nepal immigration formalities and cross the friendship bridge on foot to meet representatives from Tibet. Drive on for 45 minutes through lush green hillsides and cascading waterfalls to Zhangmu town by land cruisers, where we complete Chinese immigration formalities and then continue our drive for another 2 hours through the lush green landscape to Nyalam. Check into the guesthouse. **BLD**

Note: All of Tibet is on Beijing time. Due to this, the Ngari region of Tibet which is so far west of Beijing, is dark at 8 a.m. and there is sunlight until about 9 p.m.!

Day 04: Acclimatization day at Nyalam (3750 m / 12300 ft)

Rest day for acclimatization. After breakfast, we go for a short hike to a small ridge for a fantastic view of the mountain range. Return to the lodge for lunch. Later, one can stroll through the town bazaar or visit the nearby monastery. Overnight at the Guest House. **BLD**

Day 05: Nyalam - Saga (4300 m / 14100 ft; 291 kms)

Drive from Nyalam to Saga via Laluna-La (5050 m), Lake Paigu - Tso and the Tsang Po (Brahmaputra River). The terrain starts with a rough drive over land slid areas climbing gradually with increasing altitude to arrive at Laluna – La (pass) marked by prayer flags and cairns with skeletal yak heads with horns. From here, leave the main trail to Lhasa and head west descending to the serene and beautiful Lake Paigu - Tso for lunch. Descend further to the crossing on the Tsang Po (Brahmaputra River). Cross the river then drive to the hustle and bustle of the Saga town. Overnight at Hotel / Camping. **BLD**

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Day 06: Saga – Paryang (4360 m / 14300 ft; 160 kms)

Drive from Saga via New Zongba, (4360 m / 14300 ft) - 160 km to Paryang. The guesthouse has dormitory style accommodations. Because of the frequent use of the lodge facilities by pilgrims and lack of water supply, the amenities are basic and not very hygienic. For camping groups, there are beautiful campsites along the Paryang River another 30 minutes beyond the village. Overnight Camp/ Guesthouse. **BLD**

Day 07: Paryang - Lake Manasarovar (4727 m / 15510 ft; 100 kms)

Drive from Paryang to Lake Manasarovar via Mayum La (5151 m / 16890 ft) Driving past Kongyu Tso through the village of Thongchen, we camp near Hor village on the banks of Manasarovar. Lake Manasarovar, Hindus believe, was created by Brahma as a reflection of the depth of his soul - Manas and represents the female energy of Yoni of the Universe, while Mt. Kailash symbolizes the male energy of the Lingum. Lake Manasarovar is the highest body of fresh water in the world. Holy also to Buddhists, it was once surrounded by 8 monasteries. Dinner and overnight in camp at Manasarovar. **BLD**

Day 08: Rest and explore Lake Manasarovar.

Rest day at Lake Manasarovar for acclimatization. Dinner and overnight camp at Manasarovar. **BLD**

Day 09: Manasarovar to Darchen (4560 m / 14950 ft; 1½ -2 hrs drive)

Drive from Manasarovar to Darchen to commence the circumambulation around Mt. Kailash. It is believed to be the physical embodiment of the mythical Mount Meru, said to be the center of the universe or 'navel of the world'. Mt. Meru is often depicted as a mandala and its image occurs throughout Buddhist and Hindu parts of Asia. The

We stay at guesthouse in Darchen & complete all our formalities for the parikrama such as hiring of yaks, porters, etc. Dinner and overnight stay at the guesthouse. **BLD**

Day 10: Darchen to Driraphuk (4890m / 16040ft; 18 kms; 6 hrs)

Drive to Sersang Valley and start the Parikrama of Kailash. In the morning after breakfast, we drive to Chukku Gomba, where we would meet our porters & yak. After organizing the load, we start for the trek. The normal pilgrim's route stays on the east bank of the Lha Chu. But for better views of Kailash and generally better campsites, we cross the west bank trail across a scree slope to arrive at a good camping ground at Daming Donkhang (4890 m / 16040 ft), a grassy spot that offers good views of the West face of Mt. Kailash. It is also known as the Valley of yaks as one can see hundreds of yaks grazing on the meadow. We continue on a rocky path walking along the Belung Chu and Dungleung Chu streams as the North face of Kailash comes in view. On the opposite side of the Lha Chu you can see several groups of nomad tending herd of goats and yaks.

As one reaches the Gomba and a frugal guesthouse at Drira Phuk, we are rewarded with a fine view of the North face of Mt. Kailash. The three lower hills in front of Mt. Kailash from this point are the Manjushree, Avalokitesvara and Vajrapani representing wisdom, kindness and power. Dinner and overnight camp at Drira Phuk. **BLD**

Day 11: Driraphuk to Zutulphuk (5150 m / 16890 ft; 22 kms; 10 hrs)

We start the trek early and cross the Lha Chu on a wooden bridge. If one continues to trek up the Lha Chu, one would reach the true source of the Indus. The Kora route takes a serious climb on to a moraine eventually meeting the trail from the East bank. The trail now climbs more gently to a meadow full of fat marmots at 5212 m / 17095 ft. Climb past piles of clothing at Shiva-tsal (5330 m/ 17490 ft). As a part of their custom, Tibetans leave an article of clothing or a drop of blood here as part of leaving their past life behind them. Continue past thousands of small rock cairns to a large cairn at 5390 m passing the Dikpa Karnak, a sin testing stone. It is said that those without sin can squeeze through the narrow hole between the boulders while a sinner no matter how small cannot pass through! The trail now leads across a boulder field and climbs through large rocks to a tiny stream. Climb onto a ridge and continue gently on to the Dolma La at 5630 m / 18470 ft. A big boulder on the pass representing the goddess Dolma (better known by her Sanskrit name Tara) is festooned with prayer flags and streamers.

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It is traditional to leave and take something as part of the collection of coins, prayer flags, teeth and other offerings attached to the rock. The trail from the west side of the pass is steep and rocky at first and then begins a series of switchbacks as it passes Gauri Kund. Many more switchbacks and steep descents lead to the valley and then further descend for about an hour to arrive alongside the Lham Chhukhir at 5150 m / 16890 ft), the evening's campsite on the banks of a river. Overnight in tents. **BLD**

Day 12: Zutulphuk to Lake Manasarovar (52 kms; 6 hrs)

At Zutul-puk Gompa (4790 m / 15710 ft) there is a cave in which the saint Milarepa is said to have meditated. It is said that he adjusted the height of this cave to make it more comfortable. His footprint still remains on the roof. Trek along the Jhong Chu (River) to a bridge, cross it before descending to 4610 m, the last prostration point (Chaksal Gang) from where we get good views of Manasarovar lake but no views of Mt. Kailash. Actually the vehicles can come up to this point but if one does want to continue on to Darchen to complete the full circle, a trek for about one hour through Mani walls and carved yak skulls will lead you back to Darchen. Upon arrival at Darchen, get on the waiting vehicles & drive to the campsite (2 hrs) flanked by the settlement of Hor to the northeast corner of the Lake Manasarovar. Dinner and overnight camp at Manasarovar. **BLD**

Day 13: Drive from Lake Manasarovar to Saga (400kms; 12 – 13 hrs)

Overnight stay in a guesthouse. **BLD**

Day 14: Drive back to Zhangmu via Nyalam (389 kms; 11- 12 hrs)

Dinner and overnight at hotel in Zhangmu. **BLD**

Day 15: Drive back to Kathmandu via Kodari (135 km; 5 to 6 hrs)

After breakfast, proceed to Chinese immigration office to complete immigration formalities. After the clearance of border formalities, we drive down a very steep section of switchbacks to the Friendship Bridge, which spans the Bhote Kosi River and marks the Chinese - Nepalese border. We say goodbye to our Tibetan guide and driver and walk to Nepalese Immigration Control in Kodari where we will be met by our Nepalese staff. After completing the re-entry formalities we continue the 135 km drive to Kathmandu which, depending on road and weather conditions, should take about 4 to 5 hours. Dinner and overnight at hotel in Kathmandu. **BLD**

Day 16: Departure for Kathmandu airport.

Final Departure. **B**

PER PERSON COST (Ex Kathmandu):

Particulars	Indian National	Foreign National
Per Person	Rs. 89500/-	USD 2100

COST INCLUDES:

1. NEPAL:

- Arrival, departure transfers and sightseeing tour in Kathmandu by small vehicle or coach depending upon group size.
- Accommodation in a 3 /4 star hotel in Kathmandu for 3 nights on full board (vegetarian meals – breakfast, lunch and dinner).
- Food plan start from Day 01 Dinner to Day 16 Breakfast.
- Kathmandu / Kodari / Kathmandu by coach.

2. TIBET:

- All camping / Guesthouse arrangements in Tibet on AP basis (All meals included).

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- All camping gear including tents, mattresses, dining tent, kitchen tent, tables, chairs, dry toilet tents etc.
- Travel in Tibet by 4500 model land cruisers Only 4 guests per land cruiser.

3. OTHERS:

- China visa fees.
- Hire charges of sleeping bags and feather jackets. Sleeping bags & feather jacket are provided on a returnable basis.
- Duffel bag, a small day sack & cap is given complimentary.
- Entrance fees to monasteries and monuments.
- Yaks and Yak-men to carry baggage, food, fuel etc while making Parikrama of Mt. Kailash.
- One tour escort / manager.

COST EXCLUDES:

1. Travel to/from Kathmandu (i.e. international airfares).
2. Visa fees for Foreign Nationals.
3. Airport tax on departure & arrival is approximately Rs. 850.
4. Govt. Service Tax as applicable.
5. Personal insurance and evacuation charges.
6. Hire of yaks/horses or porters for personal use.
7. Photography charge as & where applicable.
8. Expenses of personal nature such as drinks, laundry and tips, etc.
9. Additional expenses incurred on account of land slides or any other situations out of our control.
10. Anything that is not mentioned in the '**Cost Includes**'

SPECIAL NOTES:

1. The prices are subject to change.
2. Delays are expected on account of roadblock & weather conditions. Our effort will be to continue with the trip as per the schedule & make you as comfortable as possible. But in such situations we may have to compromise on the campsite / hotels & adjust to these situations then & there.
3. Additional expenses on account of delays due to landslides, snowfall, political and natural disturbances and/or any other unforeseen conditions & circumstances, will be charged extra at actual approximately per person cost per day would be INR 3000.00. Please note any additional or less stay in Tibet will not be adjusted with your stay in Nepal.
4. The itinerary should be viewed as ideal & we may have to make some spot changes due various reasons.
5. The distances & altitude mentioned in the above itinerary are to the best of our knowledge & information; marginal variance in the actual distances & altitudes is possible.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

(Our effort is to give a clear idea about the various aspects of the trip to avoid any misunderstandings during the tour, so we request you to please read all the information given herewith carefully.)

FITNESS:

This tour involves traveling in jeeps & 3 days of trekking on high altitude. The trek is strenuous & involves walking 6-8 hrs daily (more, on few days). Previous walking experience on high altitude is helpful. The highest altitude that we attain on this tour is 5630 m / 18470 ft. We do not recommend this trip to people with chronic problems like epileps and those related to blood pressure or heart. **Minimum age 18 years.**

Basic exercise like, brisk walk or light jogging before the trip is recommended with professional guidance.

We request you to submit a fitness certificate from the doctor while signing up for this trip after undergoing the following medical tests, a) Blood Pressure; b) Sugar; c) Stress Test (ECG); d) Chest X Ray.

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GROUP SIZE:

Minimum group size of 15 paying pax

TRAVEL**AIR & RAIL TRAVEL:**

Usually the fare, for International / Domestic flights and rail are excluded in our tour cost. 'Banjara Camps' can make these travel arrangements at actual cost plus a nominal service charge for air bookings & rail bookings.

LAND ARRANGEMENT: All the travel in Nepal will be by bus & in Tibet by land cruisers. We have only 4 passengers per land cruiser, making the journey more comfortable.

Please note that the breakdown of jeeps is expected due to bad road conditions. The jeep drivers are good mechanics & generally fix up the problem within few minutes. There may be delays due to such situations.

STAY:

- a) In Kathmandu: 3 nights stay in a 3/4 star hotel on twin sharing on AP basis.
- b) Accommodation at guesthouses /hotels in Tibet, hotels would be on twin sharing & guesthouses will have 4-6 bedded. In guesthouses the linen is fairly clean; the toilets are basic & unhygienic.
- c) Accommodation during camp is in tents on twin sharing basis, in small camping tents. We have dry toilet tents. Separate kitchen & dining tents.

FOOD

Food during your stay in Kathmandu is on AP, all meals included.

Food served during our journey in Tibet is from our camp kitchen. The food is good, simple, sumptuous vegetarian food. We can include eggs in our menu on request. Our Staff is trained more for continental food & North Indian food. But it is difficult to provide typical Maharashtrian / Gujarati / South Indian food.

ON THE TREK

The luggage will go on yaks whereas you can hire porters at extra cost to carry your personal backpacks on the trek. Please do not carry any hand baggage on the trek. Ensure that your rucksack has sturdy straps. One can also hire ride yak or horse at extra cost. The approximate rates per day are as follows:

Personal Porter: 100 Yuan / 570 Rs. /14 USD

Rider Yak: 150 Yuan / 855 Rs. /21 USD

Rider Horse: 180 Yuan / 1100 Rs. /24 USD

Yak Man / Horse Man: 100 Yuan /570 Rs. / 14 USD

Please Note: The Horse or the Yak should be used only as a backup arrangement. The yak men would often request you to alight during difficult sections of the trail for your safety & also during descend from Dolma La pass. The yak & horsemen are nomads; it is very difficult to "communicate" with them. At times it is extremely difficult to manage them, so we do arrange for the extra yaks & horses for our guest but do not take responsibility on their behalf. Note Rates given are subject to change.

EQUIPMENT:

Sleeping bags, feather jackets, mattresses are provided on returnable basis.

LUGGAGE & PORTERS:

We request you to travel light & not to carry more than one duffel bag. Please note that any additional load more than 15 kg may be charged extra.

It is important to note that the personal porters accompanying you will not carry more than 10 kg and would prefer carrying the load in backpacks, please avoid any hand luggage. No hard shell bags/ strolleys please.

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TOUR ESCORT:

Our tour escorts are locals with good experience in leading trekking & other trips. Most of these escorts are good at communicating in English.

TIPS / GRATUITIES:

The local staff and guides work extremely hard all through the tour and at the end of the tour, we suggest that the participants contribute a tip of **INR 2000.00 to INR 2500.00 per person** as a token of thanks and appreciation. This may be collected by either the 'Banjara Camps' representative or one of the group members. These tips can be presented to the staff on the last day.

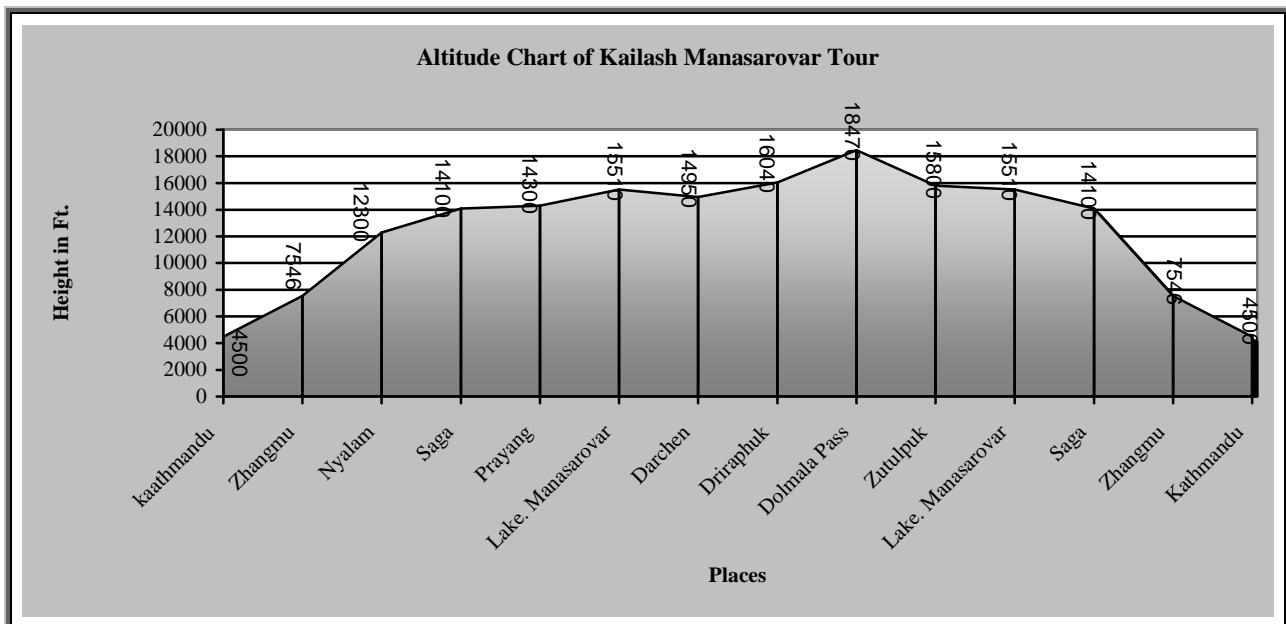
TEMPERATURES:

Daytime temperatures expected during June to September are approximately 15° Celsius and average night temperatures are between 5° to 8° Celsius. The temperatures will go sub zero at higher altitudes.

NOTE:

During this tour there are many uncertainties that we may have to deal with such as weather conditions, overall fitness of the group, breakdowns, non-availability of guesthouse etc. This may cause few changes in the itinerary. In such cases the group leader / escort's / manager's decision will be final.

ALTITUDE CHART:



MEDICAL HELP:

This tour takes us through remote regions where professional medical help may not be available. We carry with us a comprehensive medical first-aid kit advised by doctor and our leaders, though not qualified medically, are all competent to give first-aid if and when required. It would be advisable to speak to your group escort in case of any health problems that you may face on the trek.

We carry with us a Gammow Bag (High altitude portable chamber) to assist the client in case of emergency. We will also have an oxygen cylinder with a regulator.

- Any medical & evacuation expenses incurred for the group member will have to be borne by that member only. **(All the participants have to keep some contingency amount as a backup at home for any kind of emergency).**

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INSURANCE:

Any kind of insurance on luggage, accident, life or other allied matters is not provided for by BANJARA CAMPS AND RETREATS P. LTD. Members coming on our trips will have to make their own arrangements for the same. We advice you to take insurance for international travel, also ensure if your insurance would cover any evacuation needed for medical reasons, such as Acute Mountain Sickness.

BOOKING:

- The tour booking will be confirmed only upon receipt of: Non Refundable amount of 20% of tour cost, in addition to the charges such as air, rail fares, etc along with completed personal information form.
 - 50% of the tour cost to be paid 45 days before date of departure
 - Balance 30% of the tour cost to be paid 15 days prior to the departure.
- (The trip will be considered confirm only if there is no default in the above payment procedure.)

Please enquire for any special discounts & offers, if any

CANCELLATION BY YOU:

In the event of any cancellation by you, the initial deposit amount paid, shall stand forfeited and further cancellation shall be levied as per the following terms:

- 46 days before date of departure: 20% of tour cost + Air / Rail cancellation charges
- 45 to 31 days before date of departure: 50% of tour cost + Air / Rail cancellation charges
- 30 to 15 days before date of departure: 80% of tour cost + Air / Rail cancellation charges
- 15 to 0 days before date of departure: 100% of tour cost + Air / Rail cancellation charges (*Will be considered as no show*)

CANCELLATION BY 'BANJARA CAMPS' & REFUNDS

- 'Banjara Camps' reserves the right to cancel a trip if the minimum numbers of persons as specified, do not book on that trip.
- 'Banjara Camps' reserves the right to refuse or cancel any booking if we consider it necessary. In such cases, we shall refund all the money that you have paid.
- If cancellation or alteration by BANJARA CAMPS AND RETREATS PVT. LTD. is caused by events including war or threat of war, strikes, civil strife, natural disaster, technical or political difficulties affecting air or ground transport, or events amounting to *force majeure*, this will naturally limit our liability. If such events occur before the departure date, we will do our best to make alternative arrangements.

TERMS OF PAYMENT:

- In cash/ By cheque made out to "Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd."
- Outstation payments by draft payable at Delhi.
- Payments can also be made directly in our account through cheque/ cash/ online transfer deposit anywhere in India.

PLEASE NOTE THAT CASH DEPOSIT CAN BE MADE IN STANCHART ACCOUNT ONLY AND NOT AXIS BANK ACCOUNT

A/c name is "Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd". A/c numbers are:

Standard Chartered Bank

Name of A/c: Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd.

A/c No: 525-0-501942-2

IFSC Code SCBL0036001 (for online transfer)

Branch: 10, Sansad Marg, New Delhi - 110001

Axis Bank

Name of A/c: Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd.

A/c No: 015010200017806

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IFSC Code: UTIB0000015 (for online transfer)
Branch: K-12, Green Park Main, New Delhi - 110016

KIT LIST (Recommended)

- Duffel bag
- Small backpack with sturdy straps (*Complimentary from Banjara Camps*)
- Proper trekking shoes with spare laces – please ensure that the shoes are broken-in before the trek.
- Slippers / floaters (Sport sandals)
- Sun cap
- 3 pairs nylon socks, 3 pairs cotton/thicker socks, 3 pairs woolen socks
- For trek- 3 pairs of trousers, 3 T-shirts, 3 full shirts
- Full sleeved thick sweater or fleece wear
- Feather jacket (provided by Banjara Camps only for use)
- Cotton or nylon thermal inner wear
- Wind shirt (wind cheater)
- Monkey cap
- Woolen hand gloves
- Goggles (good quality, 100%-uv-protection sunglasses, not blue shade)
- Cold cream and sun screen lotion
- Torch with 2 sets of cells (no pencil cells torch)
- Light towel
- 1 liter Water bottle (it might be worthwhile to carry an additional bottle)
- Adequate underclothing
- Personal toilet kit, toilet paper
- Pen knife
- Water proofs (poncho or pant & jacket)/ collapsible umbrella
- Air Pillow / small cotton pillow (optional)
- Personal medicines (with written instructions), assorted Band-Aids.
- Easy Breathers or Camphor
- Mask to protect yourself from dust.
- Camera & film rolls (optional)
- Plastic bags to contain all above, plus a few spare ones.

(Please note that the Kit List mentioned is a standard one for all our trips; hence one can make a few changes).

For more details contact us at:

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Important Travel Information for Tibet:

Tibet still remains one of the most remote & unknown regions of the world. It is not featured on the world tourism map because of the inadequate information & lack of proper tourism infrastructure such as hotels / motels restaurants, roads etc. **Journey to Tibet can be best enjoyed if viewed as adventure and not as, well organized sight seeing tour. Tourists may have to deal with a lot of uncertainties on various occasions.** We hope the following information would be useful for your travel in Tibet.

Time:

China has only one time zone; the local time everywhere is the same as Beijing time. Beijing local time is GMT - 08:00 hrs or Indian standard time + 02:30 hrs. We need to adjust our watch as per Beijing time as soon as we enter China to avoid any confusion.

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Altitude Sickness:

We would be traveling at an average altitude of 4500 m, highest altitude attained is 5630 m / 18470 ft at Dolma La during our Parikrama. Minor altitude symptoms are experienced such as, mild headache, nausea, loss of appetite etc. One needs to take precaution to avoid acute mountain sickness. For further details please read note on high altitude attached herewith.

Important Note:

All the tourism activities are strictly regulated & monitored by the Chinese Government authorities. The authorities may alter itineraries as they see fit & substitute hotels other than those mentioned in the itinerary. The Chinese guide is more of a liaison officer & he is the only communication links between the tourist, staff from Nepal, drivers, porters, yak men, other locals & government officials.

Most of the aspects are beyond our control & we cannot be held responsible for any delays, change in the itinerary etc. Any additional expenses on such account should be borne by tour members.

Photography:

There are strict controls on taking photographs in the monasteries. Please check with your Tibetan guide before taking any photographs near a bridge or police / military check post. Also it is advice to take a prior permission of the locals before taking their individual photographs.

Restrictions:

Please do not carry any photographs, books of Dalai Lama or posters, T-shirts of free Tibet, or Tibetan flag, or any political magazine or book. Possessing such things may be considered as an offence by Tibetan / Chinese authorities.

Currency:

Approximate exchange rate are 1 Yuan = 6 Indian Rupees & 1 USD = 8 Yuan.

One can exchange currency at the border town of Zhangmu or Lhasa or Shigatse in China.

Business hours:

10:00 hrs to 18:00 hrs is the normal office hours on all working days. On Saturdays the offices close in the afternoon & on Sundays they are closed.

Customs:

Still cameras, Video cameras, tape recorders and radios are allowed, it needs to be registered with the customs on entry in China. Customs regulations forbid the export of art objects prior to 1959 or souvenirs deemed to be excessive in numbers. Printed matters considered unsuitable by Government are prohibited.

Visa & Documentation:

The passport should be valid for minimum 6 months after the completion of the trip. For issue of visa we need 3 Xerox copies of your passport, with 3-passport size photograph. We request you to give all these details on confirmation of your booking. Indian Passport holders should have ECNR stamp.

Visa formalities are stringent for people having diplomatic passport/ official passport & for journalist, visa may be denied.

Notes on Acute Mountain Sickness:

Key to acclimatization: Is adequate hydration, adequate nutrition & managing personal comfort through adequate layers lead to acclimatization.

Following extracts are taken from "The Wilderness First Responder" by Buck Tilton, director of Wilderness Medicine Institute of NOLS, USA

Dehydration

Without water there would be no life – at least no life, as you know it...

Water puddles inside every one of your cells, and flows through the microscopic spaces between cells. In water, oxygen and nutrients float to all parts of your body, and waste products are carried away. When your kidneys

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remove waste from your body those wastes have to be dissolved in water. Digestion and metabolism are water-based processes, and water is the primary lubricating element in your joints. You even need water to breathe, your lungs requiring moisture to expedite the transfer of oxygen into blood and carbon dioxide out of blood. Sweat, as mentioned, is mostly water. The water in your blood carries heat from warmer body parts to cooler areas of your anatomy when you are exposed to cold. In short, if aren't well hydrated, you won't be able to stay healthy, maximize your performance, or even maintain joy at being outdoors.

The water in your body, the fluid that keeps you alive and active, leaves you at an alarming rate. Estimates vary widely, but an average person at rest on a normal day loses between two and three liters of water. One to one-and-a-half liters rushes out as urine, and another one-tenth liter in defecation. Moisture is lost from act of breathing, more than half a liter per day, and that rate increases in dry winter air.

Then there's sweat. The fluid lost in perspiration can climb to one to two liters per hour during periods of strenuous exercise. Compared to watching TV all day, one hour of exercise may demand approximately a 50 percent increase in the amount of water your body uses.

Your thirst mechanism that feeling of "Gosh, I need a drink of water", doesn't kick in until you're about one to one-and-a-half liters low. Down three to four liters can leave your endurance decreased to 50 percent and your oxygen uptake reduced close to 25 percent...

Acclimatization

The medical problems collectively referred to, as "altitude illnesses" are a result of hypoxia, insufficient oxygen in the blood for normal tissue function, a result of the decreased barometric pressure at higher altitudes. When you go up, the barometric pressure goes down, the concentration of oxygen in the air decreases, and the chance of altitude illness climbs.

Since there is a measurable increase in ventilation and decrease in aerobic exercise performance above 4,000 feet elevation, "high altitude" can be said to start at that point. Complications seldom occur, however, below 8,000 feet. In defining terms, consider 8,000 to 12,000 feet as high altitude, 12,000 to 18,000 as very high altitude, and 18,000 plus as extreme high altitude.

The human body will adjust to dramatic changes in barometric pressure, given enough time. Altitude illnesses - which range from mildly disturbing to completely fatal - are determined, primarily, by three factors:

- How high the patient goes.
- How fast the patient attains a specific altitude, and
- Predisposing factors such as genetics and previous upper respiratory illnesses.

Critical to acclimatization is adequate hydration and nutrition.

Prevention:

As mentioned earlier, most people will adjust to altitude given enough time. Staged ascent is the key to acclimatization and, therefore, the key to preventing altitude illnesses. Adequate hydration is critical to the prevention of altitude illnesses. You should drink enough water to keep your urine output clear and copious. A high calorie diet (carbohydrates) is essential for the energy needed to ascend and acclimatize. Avoid respiratory depressants, such as sleeping pills and alcohol.

...But physical fitness prior to ascent is a bonus in the game of safety and enjoyment. Fitness does not, however, protect against acute mountain sickness.

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