

## FESTIVE LADAKH (DRIVE-IN): KALACHAKRA & HEMIS

JUL 03-15, 2014;

12 NIGHTS 13 DAYS



This stunning journey begins in Manali and continues for nearly 500 km through the high Himalayas & over majestic passes to reach Leh. The suggested route ensures gradual acclimatization, so that you reach Leh in fine fettle to enjoy exploring the rest of Ladakh and seeing not only must-see places like the ethereal turquoise hued Pangong Tso & the surprisingly verdant valley of Nubra, but also lesser explored gems like Turtuk. The visual delights would be aptly complemented by some firsthand experiences of the local lifestyle & traditions like a Traditional Balti meal in Turtuk. This is combined with festivities going on in Ladakh during this time. Participating in Kalachakra is a once-in a lifetime experience. One gets to experience the festive spirit that envelops Leh during the Kalachakra & Hemis festival and see the flamboyant, vibrant and varied tribes from across the region, all dressed in their traditional best, as they perform at Hemis Monastery, participate in festival events and break into spontaneous dances whenever they want.

Trip dates:	Jul 03-15, 2014
Start from:	Manali
End at:	Leh
Meals:	Dinner on day 1 to Dinner on day 12
Total distance covered:	1150 kms
Maximum altitude reached:	5602M (Khardung La)
Min/ Max group size:	8-18
Best time to visit:	Mid- May- Mid- September
Permits required	yes and will be taken care of by us.
Document required:	Photocopies of valid nationality proof Photo-IDs (Passport, Driving License, Voters ID, PAN card
Booking deadline:	April 03, 2014

### ITINERARY

#### Day 01: Jul 03 - Arrive Manali

Reach Manali by any of these modes:

- Board a morning flight from Delhi to reach Kulu Airport around 8AM.
- On the previous evening board a HPTDC Volvo Coach from Delhi & reach Manali Bus Stand at about 0730 hrs. Rest of the day at leisure in Manali...Shop/Sightseeing in Manali.
- On the previous night board Himachal Express travel overnight by 2/3 AC to reach Kiratpur Sahib at 0600 hrs. Drive 245 km / 7 hrs to reach Manali in the afternoon. Rest of the day at leisure in Manali or Shopping / Sightseeing in Manali.
- Board the morning Kalka Shatabdi to Chandigarh or take a morning flight from Mumbai. Reach Chandigarh around noon. Drive 330 km / 9 hrs to reach Manali at night.
- Leave at dawn from Delhi and drive 570 km / 13 hrs to reach.

Everyone meets at dinner, for familiarization with each other and your escort. Stay overnight at a hotel.

#### Day 02: Jul 04 - Manali – Jispa (3150 M / 10300 ft) 160 km / 7 hrs

Leave around 0630- 0700 hrs after an early breakfast to avoid traffic en route Rohtang. We drive across the pass into the starkly barren landscape of Lahaul and at Tandi we stop for lunch at a Dhaba in Tandi – also the confluence point of the Chandra &

Bhaga Rivers to form Chenab. Reach Jispa by late afternoon. Avoid strenuous activity but go for a short acclimatization walk. Stay overnight in a campsite & lodge besides the Bhaga River

**Day 03: Jul 05 – Jispa - day hike to Darcha trekking point / relaxation & short walks**

For gentler, copy book acclimatization it's best that you spend this day (& night) too in Jispa and do some walking/hiking. This way you also avoid the daunting combination of inclement weather & rudimentary campsites that staying in Serchu entails. Those interested can do a beautiful guided hike across the river to the Darcha Trekking Point - about 4 hrs totally. Others may just relax in the campsite, enjoying the serene, peaceful ambience and strolling around a bit to enhance acclimatization.

**Day 04: Jul 06 - Jispa – Leh 339 km / 11 - 12 hrs (3505 M/11500 ft.)**

Start at about 0530 hrs carrying packed breakfast. Drive over Baralacha La and then via Serchu, negotiate the hair- rising Gata Loops - 21 back-to-back switchbacks. Cross Naki La (4740 M) & Lachalung La (5060 M); drive through the vast, amazingly stark Moray Plains. Cross Tanglang La (5328 M) and finally reach Leh by evening. Overnight stay in rooms at a small, cozy & comfortable guesthouse.

**Day 05: Jul 07 - Leh – Hemis Festival**

Post early breakfast, drive to Hemis to witness the Hemis festival – commemorates the birth of Guru Padamasambhava. Drive back to the hotel in the evening

**Hemis Festival** – The highlight of the Hemis festival is the mystic mask dances (Chams) and sacred plays by lamas, performing around the central flagpole that illustrates good prevailing over evil. Dressed in colourful bright brocades with vibrantly decorated and richly adorned paper-mache masks, the dancers simulate combat between good spirits and evil demons to the cacophony of drums, cymbals and long horns.

**Day 06: Jul 08 - Leh – Choglamsar (attend Kalachakra) - Leh**

Post early breakfast, drive to Choglamsar, "Buddha Garden" to attend HHDL Teachings along with the monks of Namgyal Monastery and senior lamas. Drive back to Leh in the evening and spend sunset at Shanti Stupa for unforgettable views of Leh Valley & town

**Optional:** In the afternoon drive back and before Leh take a detour over the Indus to reach Stok Village. Enjoy a traditional Ladakhi meal in a village home later see Stok Palace & Museum. Enjoy the rest of the day in Leh seeing the Palace & Bazaar.

**Photo ops:** the gompas & the monuments, the Stok & Rimo range of mountains from various vantage points, at Stok Village, in Leh Palace and at the Bazaar.

**Day 07: Jul 09 - Leh – Choglamsar (attend the Kalachakra Ritual Dance) - Leh**

Post early breakfast, drive to Choglamsar, to attend the Kalachakra Ritual Dance performance by the monks of Namgyal Monastery. Drive back to Leh in the evening. Rest a while and leave for the bazaar to shop for Thangkas, Chunky antique Silver Jewelry with Turquoise embellishments, mementos, Apricots & apricot based beauty products. Bid your adieus as you enjoy a grand farewell dinner at Summer Harvest restaurant and reach you guesthouse in time to turn in for the night.

**Day 08: Jul 10 - Leh – Nubra Valley at Turtuk (avg. alt. of Nubra Valley is 3048 M) 225 km / 8 hrs)**

Post breakfast, leave on a stunning drive over the mighty Khardung La (5602 M) into the verdant Nubra Valley. Reach the base of the valley at Khalsar. Here the road forks & the broad valley get divided into two distinct parts by the Shyok & Nubra Rivers. Of course, the road forks too; the RHS branch goes all the way to Siachen Glacier. Move on the other branch, via Deskit & Hunder, past the Thoise Airfield. The wide open Nubra Valley starts closing in dramatically with the rocky mountain face getting darker & darker, finally bursting out into the verdant & vibrant Turtuk area at the north western end of the valley. Check into safari tents at a verdant campsite amidst fields & orchards, sprinkled with clumps of wild & vibrantly colored blooms. Relax for a while, have evening cuppa, and go for a short stroll to enjoy the sunset.

**Day 09: Jul 11 - In Turtuk – short walks / hikes & traditional Balti meal**

Post breakfast spend 2- 3 hrs walking in & around the villages, interacting with the warm & hospitable locals sporting European looks. The cherubic kids are especially adorable. Get back to the campsite & enjoy a traditional Balti meal – so tasteful, nutritious and salubrious a diet that even 80- 90 yr olds in the villages are active & full of life. Later go for a hike & explore the fantastic, totally pristine natural beauty all around.

**Day 10: Jul 12 - Turtuk – Deskit 92 kms / 3 hrs**

Post leisurely breakfast, leave Turtuk for Deskit. On the drive back stop at the dunes of Hunder, here those interested can enjoy a ride on the Double Humped Camels. Reach Deskit by late afternoon. After freshening up, relaxing for a while & evening cuppa, go to a vantage point with a huge outdoor statue of the Sakhyamuni Buddha near Deskit Gompa to enjoy great sunset views. Stay overnight in a hotel at Deskit.

**Day 11: Jul 13 - Deskit – Wari La - Pangong Tso (4260 M / 14000 ft) 230 km / 9 hrs)**

Leave post an early breakfast, on an uncommon drive over a very offbeat route that takes you over a little known pass – Wari La, into the Sakti Valley. A short while later, stop for a quick look into the cave gompa of Chemrey, and move on to meet the route from Leh, a short distance before the imposing Chang-La (5,475 M / 17950 ft). Go over the pass and carry on via Tangse and finally reach the grand Pangong Lake by evening, in time to catch the sunset views. Stay overnight in tents at a campsite bang on the lake shore.

**Day 12: Jul 14 - Pangong Tso – Leh 150 km / 5 hrs**

Enjoy early morning cuppa & a spectacular sunrise by the lake shore. Post breakfast, drive back to Leh. Reach Leh by afternoon. Rest a while and leave for the bazaar to shop for Thangkas, Chunky antique Silver Jewelry with Turquoise embellishments, mementos, Apricots & apricot based beauty products... Spend sunset at Shanti Stupa for unforgettable views of Leh Valley & town. Bid your adieus as you enjoy a grand farewell dinner at Summer Harvest restaurant and reach you guesthouse in time to turn in for the night.

**Day 13: Jul 15 - Depart Leh**

Morning transfer to the airport in time for your return flight to Delhi.

**Cost per person on twin share: INR 65000/-**

**Cost includes:**

1. Accommodation for 01 night in a room at a hotel in Manali

2. Accommodation for 02 nights in a safari tent at a campsite by the river in Jispa
3. Accommodation for 05 nights in a room at a guesthouse in Leh
4. Accommodation for 01 night in a room at a hotel in Deskit, Nubra Valley
5. Accommodation for 02 night in a safari tent at a campsite in Turtuk, Nubra Valley
6. Accommodation for 01 night in a safari tent at a campsite on the lakeshore at Pangong Tso
7. All meals from Dinner in Manali on Day 01 to Dinner in Leh on Day 12, includes 01 lunch at a Dhaba in Tandi, 01 traditional lunch in Stok, 01 Balti Meal in Turtuk and 01 celebratory dinner in Summer Harvest – Leh.
8. 02 bottle of mineral water during the road travel OR sightseeing tour
9. Road transportation, including sightseeing in a dedicated & exclusive Innova / Xylo
10. Services of a guide –cum- escort
11. Monument entries
12. Inner Line Permits for Pangong Tso
13. Green Tax Levied by the Ladakh Tourism Council
14. All applicable taxes.

**Cost does not include:**

1. Any air fares.
2. Beverages at any place of stay except those served on buffet table.
3. Any En route/ personal expenses.
4. Any expenses incurred due to factors beyond our control like a natural calamity/ man-made calamity.
5. Expenses on account of factors beyond our control like flight / train cancellations, landslides...

## TOUR NOTE

**Accommodation:**

Manali:	Negis Mayflower Hotel/similar
Jispa:	Padma Lodge & Campsite/similar
Leh:	Oriental Guest House/similar
Turtuk:	Turtuk Holiday Camp/similar
Deskit:	Hotel Stendel/similar
Pangong Tso:	Pangong Delight Camp/similar

**Food & Hygiene:**

Food is a mix range from vegetarian/ non- vegetarian meals to good food with a choice of Indian, Continental & Chinese food. All meals are buffet meals. There is no room service at most places.

**Fitness:**

You should be in decent health if you wish to hike. We advise jogging and breathing exercise. The trip is best avoided by you if you are a heart patient, infant, asthmatic, pregnant, or suffer from epilepsy.

**Altitude Sickness:**

Acute mountain sickness is a frequent problem in the Himalayan region. The altitude of the peaks and trails between them are among highest on earth. Acclimatization to altitude above 3000 meters takes time. The body undergoes a number of physiological changes some of which are immediate like increased pulse rate & respiratory rate. Others appear more slowly over a period of weeks like the change in acid base balance and production of extra red blood cells. These changes plus the effect of intense sunlight, walking & dehydration may cause a number of mild vague symptoms such as Loss of appetite, fatigue, headache, nausea, dizziness, palpitations, sleeplessness, mild shortness of breath with exercise.

The best treatment is prevention! Avoid rapid ascents; take acclimatization symptoms seriously using rest days / Diamox tablets. If symptoms are severe and the patient is ill DESCEND IMMEDIATELY, 300 meters of descent or more should be sought. This usually gives rapid improvement. To minimize altitude sickness, never rush into things, walk slowly and firmly. Do not combine walking and sightseeing together. Inspect your track in front and trek slowly.

**Tipping:**

Tipping amount is at your discretion and experience.

**Photography:**

Please ask your guide before taking photographs inside any monastery and if you plan to photograph any locals, please take their permission before doing so. You could charge your camera at the hotel.

**Medicine:**

We keep a first aid kit. It would be anyway a good idea to bring your own basic first aid kit with medicines for motion sickness, nausea, some painkillers etc. Please carry sun block and chapstick. Keep your face, feet and hands well protected. Request your doctor to prescribe effective medicines to cover the following: Fever, Body and joint pains, Cold, Cough, Sore throat, Headache, Acidity, Stomach cramps, Vomiting, Dysentery, Loose motion, Constipation, Diarrhea, Swelling, Muscle Pulls & Sore eyes. We do carry a first aid box though. In case you have any illness of any sort, please do inform us in advance so that we can take necessary precaution. You could also carry vaseline, Band Aid, Cotton, Badge roll, Dettol, Mouth freshener, Nose inhaler, Cough drops, Lip balm, Vicks, Elastoplasts, Adhesive tape, 4" crepe bandage.

**List of things to bring:**

1. Duffel bag (avoid suitcases if you can)
2. A small day backpack to carry water, food, jacket and camera
3. Hiking shoes- you need good traction in shoes and these should be at least water resistant. Forclaz 500 is a good. Your shoes should be well broken-in and not new. Otherwise, your regular sports shoes will also do.
4. 2 pairs of lowers.
5. 4-5 full sleeves T-shirts
6. A fleece jacket
7. A full sleeve thick jacket
8. Underclothing
9. At least 1 pair of thermal inners
10. 2-3 pairs of sports socks. 2-3 pairs of woolen socks

11. Woolen cap/ balaclava that covers the ears
12. Gloves
13. Sun glasses
14. Lip balm
15. Cold cream and sun screen lotion (SPF 40+).
16. Water bottle.
17. Flash light
18. Personal toilet kit.
19. Personal medicine
20. Small repair kit consisting of safety pins, needle, thread and string.
21. Camera, memory-cards, batteries etc (carry enough spare batteries. Electricity is not available on the slopes.

## BOOKING, PAYMENT AND CANCELLATION POLICY

### CONFIRMATION:

100% advance to confirm booking.

### CANCELLATION CHARGE:

Minimum : 20% of full amount.  
 Less than two weeks of arrival date (or tour start date) : 50% of full amount.  
 Less than one week of arrival date (or tour start date) : Full amount.

### PAYMENT MODES & METHODS:

1. ONLINE TRANSFER into our **current** accounts in Axis Bank or Standard Chartered Bank
2. DIRECT CHEQUE DEPOSIT into our **current** accounts in Axis Bank or Standard Chartered Bank at any branch/ ATM in India
3. DIRECT CASH DEPOSIT, into our **current** account at any branch in India
4. By CASH or CHEQUE handed over personally (or by your rep) AT OUR DELHI OFFICE
5. OUTSTATION CHEQUE payments are acceptable **only if** they are delivered (or we get a scan of the bank deposit slip) at least 4 working days before the payment due date.
6. OUTSTATION PAYMENTS by a **Payable at Delhi** DD sent to our Delhi Office by courier/post.

**IMP:** CHEQUE / DD to be made in **favour of "Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd."**

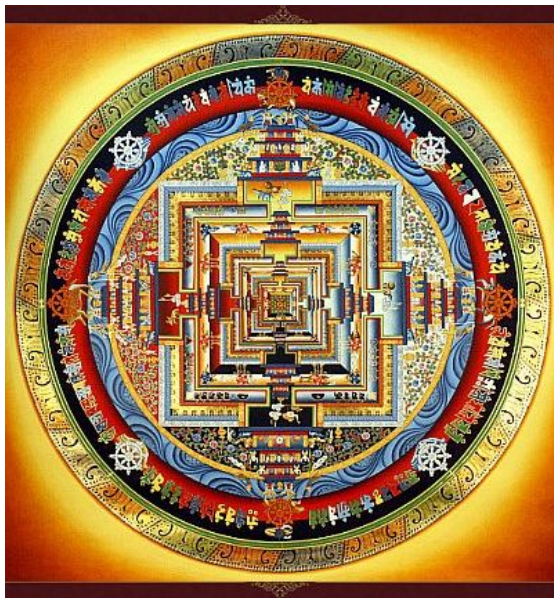
#### AXIS BANK:

- A/c name : Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd.
- A/c no. : 015010200017806
- Branch address : K-12; Green Park Main; New Delhi – 110016
- Branch Code : UTIB0000015 (for direct cheque deposit)
- IFSC Code : UTIB0000015 (for online transfer)

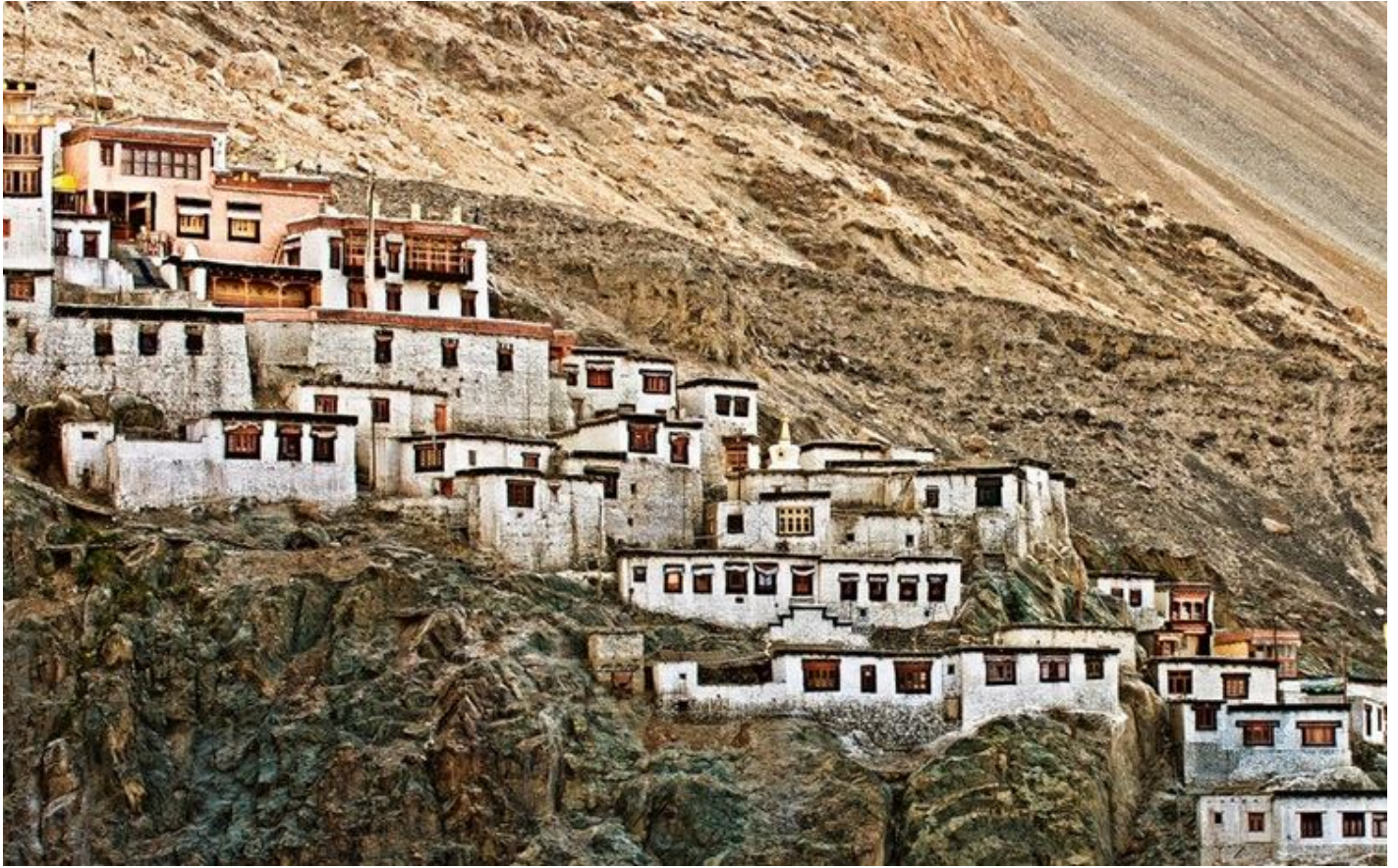
#### STANDARD CHARTERED BANK:

- A/c name : Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd.
- A/c no. : 525-0-509-319-3
- Branch address : 10 Sansad Marg; New Delhi – 110 001
- Branch Code : SCBL0036027 ( for direct cash/ cheque deposit)
- IFSC Code: : SCBL0036027 (for online transfer)









Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd.  
A26, Nangal Devat, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi- 110070  
Phone no: +91 11 65152334/5/6  
Email: [info@banjaracamps.com](mailto:info@banjaracamps.com) / [www.banjaracamps.com](http://www.banjaracamps.com)

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