

Mt. Kailash & Guge Kingdom with Roger – Special Tour

Holy Mount Kailash

The most sacred mountain in the Tibetan Buddhist world is also considered by many to be the centre of the universe. Uncannily symmetrical, this remote and remarkable peak is located in the far west of Tibet, 1200 km from Lhasa. Mt. Kailash (6714m) is not only geographically one of the most important mountains in Asia, it is also the source of four major rivers, namely, the Indus, Sutlej, Karnali and Tsang Po which nourish Asia with water. In Sanskrit Kailash means 'luminous crystal'. Hindus believe Mt. Kailash to be the abode of Lord Shiva and his wife Parvati. Tibetan Buddhists call the mountain Kang Rinpoche, the 'Jewel of Snow', and regard it as the body mandala of Korlo Demchog and his consort, Dorje Phagmo (Chakrasambhava and Vajravahni). A pilgrimage to this great sacred and magical landscape is the most precious of pilgrimages for both Tibetan and Indian people, a journey they hope to experience at least once in a lifetime.



Mt. Kailash & Guge Kingdom with Roger

From Kathmandu (or main land China) we fly to Lhasa and then drive through the West of Tibet to Guge. The mysterious old Kingdom of Guge was founded and flourished in the 10th century. It is famous for its wonderful frescos on the walls and its spectacular location in an impressive landscape. After that, the core of this journey follows: an unhurried four-day circuit trek (kora) among Tibetan pilgrims around holy Mt. Kailash followed by a visit of beautiful Lake Manasarovar. We enjoy silence and nature, spectacular panoramic views, as well as interaction within the group.

Expedition or Inner Purification

All trips to Mt. Kailash have expedition character. Long drives and simple accommodations require a lot of patience, tolerance and little expectations. In return we will see some of the most untouched and beautiful landscapes and we are likely to meet genuinely nice people.

A pilgrimage through vast open spaces may cause deep personal inner experiences. Therefore, this journey is generally quite the opposite of a usual holiday or trek, where one seeks to forget about home and past. The journey gives us the chance to have a conscious look at whatever comes up at that moment.

Tour Leader & Tour Operator:

Roger Pfister, Swiss, born in 1960



has been based in Boudhanath, Kathmandu in Nepal since 1995. During this time he has owned and operated Snow Jewel, leading expeditions to remote locations in Nepal and Tibet. In addition, he has worked for over five years as a volunteer for the British operated not-for-profit ROKPA Nepal. Roger has practiced extensively in both the Tibetan and Theravada traditions, completing annual Vipassana retreats in Thailand at Wat Ram Poeng and in India at Bodgaya and Sarnath with Christopher Titmuss. During his time in Nepal, he spent two years in intensive

study at Ka-Nying Shedrup Ling, the official seat of very venerable Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche, as well as Pullahari Monastery under the guidance of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyatso Rinpoche. His inaugural trip to Mt. Kailash was during the spring of 1996 and since then he has made over 100 circuits of the mountain and 14 of Lake Manasarovar.

Special Tours; Special Tours are designed for people who want to leave the effort of making arrangements to others. We plan to see the most important sights along the way. It meets a full service standard and gives you the time you need to experience and enjoy your journey. Throughout the tour, you will be taken care of by professionals: your tour leader, a Tibetan guide and drivers, part of the tour with Sherpas and cook.

Small Group Size: Minimum 7, maximum 12 people.

Duration: 18 days trip + 3 days stay (including arrival day) in Kathmandu for visa procedure. Entry from Main land China is possible. (Alternative entry from Chengdu main land China is possible as for more details)

Price: 22'300 CNY approximately US\$ 3'250 / €uro 2'970 plus flight approx. 300-350 €uro KTM- LXA or CTU. (Booking fee is 500\$).

Single room mark up: 430\$ / 390 Euro

Included: Flight from Kathmandu to Lhasa and then drive in a private vehicle to Mt. Kailash, Lake Manasarovar and back to Lhasa with private transport and support truck (see itinerary); all permits and road tolls in Tibet; local guide, drivers and cook; two vegetarian meals daily (breakfast and dinner) and picnic lunch during the time from Saga and back to KTM; all fees for sightseeing, Kailash circuit, grassland fee, yak and yak driver for your luggage; camping gear; Hotel double with bath in Lhasa x 4, Sakya, Sang Sang & upper Kyirong, Resuwa; all other overnight stays in basic accommodation (pilgrim guesthouses) or tents.

Excluded: visa fee for Tibet 114\$ / USA 198\$; visa for Nepal; Food up to Saga; horse and horse driver for personal ride; cost for visa split from the group visa in case of an emergency; alcohol and soft drinks when eating in restaurants; cost for public shower or bath in hot springs; airport transfer and hotel in Kathmandu; personal expenses; insurances; tip.

Note: We would be pleased to organise airport pick-up and hotel reservation in Kathmandu.

Dates 2017

01 Sept.: Arrival in Kathmandu; hand over of passport and filled in visa form.
 02 Sept.: Group meeting and briefing for the tour 11 AM. / Tibet visa process
 03 Sept.: Free day/ Tibet visa process

04 Sept.: Free day/ Tibet visa process finished 16:00

05 Sept.: Departure from Kathmandu to Lhasa by flight.

Itinerary – Short:

Day 1: Kathmandu – Lhasa by Flight / H.

Day 2: Lhasa; Barkhor, acclimatization /H.

Day 3-4: Lhasa; Visit Potala, Lhukang + Jokhang /H

Day 5: Lhasa - Sakya

Day 6: Sakya – Sang Sang

Day 7: Sang Sang – Paryang **Meet the Sherpas for Dinner**

Day 8: Paryang - Menshi

Day 9: Thirthapurry – Thoeling / G.H.

Day 10: Thöling – Tsaparang / Guge – Darchen/ G.H.

Day 11-13: Kailash Kora / trekking / camp

Day 14: Kailash Kora / drive to Langbona Gumpa, Lake Manasarovar / Camp

Day 15: Manasarovar – ½ rest day – Drive to Paryang.

Day 16: Paryang – Upper Kyirong

Day 17: Upper Kyirong – Milarepa cave – Reuwa Nepal **goodbye Tibetan crew**

Day 18: Resuwa – Kathamandu end of service.

Day 19: Rest day or fly back home

Itinerary - Detailed

- Day 1:** Early morning transfer to airport, flight to Lhasa with beautiful Everest view. In Lhasa the Tibetan guide will pick you up from Gongar airport and bring you to the Yak hotel. Right in the middle of the Tibetan old part of the city, just 5 minutes' walk from Potala and Jokhang.
- Day 2:** This is primary a acclimatisation and rest day who feels good with the altitude can go for walks in the Barkohr others can rest and get acquainted.
- Days 3-4:** Lhasa -Sightseeing: by foot we will explore Lhasa and visit the heart of Tibet - the Jokhang Temple and the Potala Palace of the Dalai Lamas. And other less famous places but more important temples.
- Day 5:** From Lhasa we drive via Friendship highway to Shigaste (4-5h. 273km) where we have lunch while the guide makes another permit. We continue to Sakya 152km 2-3h drive. Hotel
- Day 6:** Morning we will visit the Sakya monastery, afterwards travel on to Sang Sang. We drive through a magnificent hill landscape. (3h drive 168 Km). Overnight in simple pilgrim's guesthouse. (Public bath).
- Day 7:** Drive on to western Tibet high desert (412km around 6-7h) via Saga, we cross several high passes and enter the high desert of Western Tibet - through the most beautiful landscape near Paryang Overnight in simple pilgrim's guesthouse. (Public bath). Here we meet the Sherpas and the support truck with the camping equipment coming from Nepal and have vegetarian food cooed by the lovely Sherpas all the way till we are back in Saga.
- Day 8:** 5h drive (318km) from Paryang via Drachen to Monsier (4560m). We cross several high passes and enter the high dessert of Western Tibet - through beautiful landscape from Paryang to Darchen. After crossing the Mayumla pass (5216m),

we drive along the shores of Gung Gyu lake, before getting the first glimpse of the holy Mt. Kailash. Now only 1 hour drive till we reach Monsier. We stay overnight basic pilgrim guesthouse (public bath).

- Day 9:** From Monsier it is only 10 Minutes to Thirthapury where we make a visit the monastery and make the Kora before we continue the drive 3-4 hours. Ride (190km) to Thöling / Zanda (3'650m), site of the legendary kingdom of Guge in the midst of a bizarre landscape and visit the monastery Thöling, world famous for the magnificent murals. We stay at the Guest House or Camp. (Public bath)
- Day 10:** Today we visit the famous citadel Tsaparang and world famous for the magnificent murals and the spectacular setting. After lunch we drive to Darchen Mt. Kailash 253km 4-5h, overnight in at Guesthouse. (Public bath)
- Day 11:** Begin of the Kailash kora. This is a medium trek (20km, 6-8h), slightly uphill. From the south, we reach Tarpoche, the so-called centre of the universe. Then, we pass Chuku monastery (those who have lots of energy can go for a short visit) and the west face of Kailash. Our camp is right below Dirapuk monastery at 4900m with awesome views of Mt. Kailash's north face.
- Day 12:** Rest day at Mt. Kailash's north face for acclimatisation. Those who like, can visit the Dirapuk monastery (famous yogi Gyalwa Gotsangpa meditated there in a cave for long time), make an excursion to the north face (2h), stroll into a side valley (1-2h) or simply enjoy Mt Kailash's power in the camp right below Dirapuk monastery at 4900m.
- Day 13:** This day is the core of the kora. This is a difficult trek (15km, 8-10h), where we need the energy reserves built up the day before. For the first 2-5h, we slowly ascend towards the Tara-Pass/Drölma-La (5630m). After a break we steeply descend to the valley (1-2h). From here it is another 2-3h slightly downhill to the camp, just 3km before Zutulpuk monastery (4790m).
- Day 14:** This day is fairly easy (11km, 3-4h). We pass Zutulpuk monastery and hike slightly downhill back to Darchen where we have lunch in a simple restaurant. Afterwards, we will drive (35km, 1h) to Langbona monastery at Lake Manasarovar (4560m). Here, we have an amazing view of Lake Manasarovar, Gurla Mandata (7728m) and Mt. Kailash. We camp near the lake.
- Day 15:** ½ Rest day on the shores of Lake Manasarovar. Here you can relax, enjoy the stunning panorama, stroll along the lake shore, collecting shells / stones, take a ritual bath. Drive from Langbona back to Paryang 318km 4h drive. We stay at the same places as on the way in
- Day 16:** Paryang to Upper Kyirong 6-7h 334 km. We cross over a 5000m high pass and if the weather is good we can see big parts of the Langtang mountain range and also Ganshe Himal... Overnight in Hotel
- Day 17:** From Upper Kyirong to the border about 1,5 h drive slowly we descend from High desert into the lush low lands along the way we visit Drakartasso the cave complex where the yogi Milarepa achieved enlightenment. After crossing the border it is just a 2km walk or drive to the G.H. in Rasuwa.
- Day 18:** From Rasuwa we drive 7-8h/ 160km to Kathmandu where the trip ends.

Day 19: Good to have a rest day after the trip or else you can also fly back home:
Earliest departure back home after 10 AM.

General Information

Please Note

- We will not be responsible for extra cost incurred by landslides, road blockages and other weather-related or political problems.
- You are responsible for your own health. Our arrangements are designed to allow sufficient time for acclimatisation.
- Accommodation will occasionally be in shared rooms (small dormitories). During the Kailash kora we stay in tents for two people each. We assume your preparedness to share rooms/tents with others, regardless of gender.
- We reserve the right to increase the tour price should the Euro in relation to the Chinese Yuan (RMB) depreciate significantly.

Visa and Passport Information

Visa Nepal

Is best applied upon arrival in Nepal. You will need a passport photo. At arrival you get a 30 day or 90 day multiple-entry visa valid from the date of entry. The visa costs US\$ 40 or US\$ 100, respectively.

Tibet Group Visa

Will be obtained in Kathmandu. For this, we need one passport photo and a filled out visa form. Please download, print and fill out: <http://snowjewel.com/visalinks.html>. The visa costs US\$ 114 in cash, payable upon arrival when handing over the passport. (US citizens must pay US\$ 198.)

Passport Validity Minimum 6 months from date of entry.

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May all beings be happy!