

Tibetan Treasures

9 days – 8 nights

Lhasa, Yamdrok Lake, Karola Glacier, Simila Pass, Pelkor Chode, Shigatse, Shegar, Everest
Nature, Adventure, Discovery, Culture, History

Tour Highlights

Tibet promises mystery and wonderment to all who traverse its land. Let the bewitching smell of incense in the air, the spectacular white walls of the Potala Palace, and the whirring sounds of prayer wheels spinning in the air mesmerize and enchant you as you explore the roof of the world.

Lhasa is rightly one of the most featured and dreamt-about cities in the world. This is not only because of its remoteness, its high altitude at 11,975 feet meaning limited accessibility, but also because of its impressive heritage of over a thousand years of cultural and spiritual history that has helped to create the romantic and mysterious Tibetan religion.

Differing from the inland cities and other places in Tibet, Lhasa is unique with an allure all of its own. In the Tibetan language, Lhasa means the Holy Land or the Buddha Land. It is the center of Tibet's politics, economy and culture. The city has also been appointed as one of the 24 historical and cultural cities of China. The splendor and grandeur of the Potala Palace in Lhasa remains a world-famous symbol of the enigmatic power of politics and religion in this region.

As the beautiful capital city of Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), Lhasa is situated in the South-Central part of the region, on the North bank of the Kyichu River (Lhasa River) in a mountain-fringed valley. This ancient sprawling city, settled 1,300 years ago, covers 7.4 million acres, with a population of 400,000, of which 87 percent are Tibetans. The urban population is 180,000.

Day 1: Arrival in Lhasa

After clearing customs, please proceed to the luggage area to claim your checked bags. You will be greeted by our representative at Lhasa Gongga airport and transferred to the city. On the way to Lhasa you'll enjoy the spectacular scenery and cross typical Tibetan villages. The rest of the day is at leisure to adapt to the high altitude. Dinner at the hotel [D]

The Potala Palace is the central attraction in Lhasa. Its massive white and red walls tower over the city against a mountainous backdrop and crystal blue skies. The palace was built in 637 AD by the Tibetan emperor to greet his new bride, a Chinese princess of the Tang Dynasty. Today it is the religious center of Tibetan Buddhism and the former residence of the Dalai Lama.

Day 2: Lhasa

Visit Jokhang Temple, considered the holiest temple in Tibetan Buddhism and was built around 640 AD by the same emperor responsible for the Potala Palace. Visit all four stories of this impressive building, and then head outside to Lhasa's famous Barkhor street. It circles Jokhang Temple and forms a circuit for Tibetan Buddhist pilgrims to perform their devotional rituals. From dawn to dusk, you will see pilgrims walking or prostrating themselves clockwise all around the Barkhor, all the while spinning their prayer wheels and chanting sutras. The area is bursting with shops and stalls filled with all manner of Tibetan goods, and it is well worth exploring this magical place.

According to official statistics, 30,000 of the 2.5 million inhabitants of the T.A.R are blind or highly visually impaired, which is well above the rest of the world's average ratio. Causes of blindness in Tibet are both climatic and hygienic; dust, wind, high ultra-violet radiation exposure, soot in homes caused by coal and yak dung, and a lack of vitamin A all contribute to this epidemic. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant including one soft drink or non-alcoholic beverage. Prior to the opening of this school, blind children in the Tibetan Autonomous Region did not have access to education. Today, you will have the opportunity to visit this center for rehabilitation and training for the blind population in Tibet. Transfer back to your hotel and dinner on your own. [B/L]

Day 3: Lhasa

Visit Drepung Monastery, the largest in Tibet, that once housed up to 10,000 monks as well as the Dalai Lama (before the restoration of the Potala Palace). It was founded in 1416, and the name literally translates to "Rice Heap". Today, only about 300 monks reside permanently at Drepung, but it maintains its place as one of the most important centers of religious study and training. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant including one soft drink or non-alcoholic beverage. This monastery is named after the wild roses that were in bloom when it was built in 1419 to serve as a training college for monks. It continues to do so to this day. The monastery is one of the best places in Tibet to witness the "Monk Debates," a lively affair in which monks gather to discuss the teachings of the Buddha and debate Buddhist doctrines. They are quite animated during these debates, using expressive hand gestures and body language to get their points across. Transfer to the hotel. [B/L]

Note: *The Monk Debates begin at 3 pm sharp, Mondays through Fridays.*

Day 4: Lhasa, Shigatse

Yamdruk Yumtso is one of the three largest holy lakes in Tibet. Every year, devout pilgrims from all over the region journey to this lake in search of blessings and protection. This would have been quite a feat in times past, as the closest town is over 90 kilometers away across mountainous terrain. Stunning snowcapped mountains and lush pasturelands surround the lake, making for some truly spectacular scenery. Enjoy a picnic lunch en route to this amazing sight. Continue to Pelkor Chose Monastery passing the Karola Glacier and through Simila Pass. Getting to Karola you'll see high desert and high desert valleys. Then you encounter the imposing glacier showing the various layers in the ice stack, a brilliant white sight if the sun is shining. Around the glacier, Tibetans sell local products and souvenirs and pose for pictures for a \$2 fee. Once you cross the pass the scenery turns green again. Continue to visit Pekor Chodee Monastery, whose name means "Auspicious Wheel Joy Monastery" in Tibetan language. Encircled by mountains on 3 sides, the monastery is composed of 4 major parts: Buddhist halls, tower, Zhacang and surrounding wall. The monastery treasures 1,049 sets of ancient Tibetan sutras which are most valuable for studying Tibetan religion and ethnic cultures. The monastery has 17 Zhacangs that belong to the Sakya (the major monastery is Sakya Monastery), Kagyu and Gelug (the major monastery is Ganden Monastery) sects of Tibetan Buddhism. It is really rare among the Tibetan monasteries that several sects could coexist under one roof. Some of the painting in Monastery tell stories in Buddhist scriptures, stories about religious figures and historical figures. The murals in the monastery have gained inspiration from traditional art genres and created its own style known as the Gyangze Style. They are seen as representative works of the mature Buddhist art in the 14th-15th centuries and an important symbol of the peak reached by Tibetan Buddhist art in the 15th century. Your day will end at your hotel in Shigatse with dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 5: Shigatse, Shegar

Visit Tashilunpo Monastery, one of the Six Big Monasteries of Gelugpa (or Yellow Hat Sect) in Tibet. Also called the Heap of Glory, it is located at the foot of Drolmari (Tara's Mountain) in Shigatse. Founded by the First Dailai Lama in 1447, the monastery's structure was expanded by the Fourth and successive Panchen Lamas. Covering an area of nearly 300,000 square meters (3,229,279 sq. ft.), the main structures found here are The Maitreya Chapel, The Panchen Lama's Palace and The Kelsang Temple. Tashilhunpo is the seat of the Panchen Lama since the Fourth Panchen Lama took charge in the monastery, and there are now nearly 800 lamas. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant including one soft drink or non-alcoholic beverage. In the afternoon drive to Shegar for dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 6: Shegar (Everest)

Rongbuk is a small monastery located about 2 miles from the northern base of Mt. Everest in Tibet. At an altitude of 16,340 feet, Rongbuk is the highest monastery in the world offering beautiful mountain views. The stupa in front of the monastery is the perfect location to take very beautiful pictures with Mt. Everest in the background. The monks and nuns who live there are friendly and happy to talk with visitors. Since the closure of Everest Base Camp in December 2018, Rongbuk Monastery is now the

farthest point visitors can reach on their way to Everest. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant including one soft drink or non-alcoholic beverage and. in the afternoon return to Shegar for dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 7: Shegar, Shigatse

After breakfast and some time to admire your surroundings, drive to Shigatse, via Lhatse county, with a break en route to eat your picnic lunch. Dinner and overnight in Shigatse. [B/L/D]

Day 8; Shigatse, Lhasa

Breakfast at the hotel and drive to Lhasa via Chushul county. Stop en route for your picnic lunch and continue to Lhasa for overnight. [B/L]

Day 9: Lhasa (Departure)

Free at time before transferring to Lhasa Airport to board your flight to Chengdu and your next destination. [B]

[B] = Breakfast | [B/L] = Breakfast and Lunch

Your Tour includes:

- Arrival and departure transfers
- 8 nights' accommodation:
 - Lhasa 4 nights
 - Shigatse 2 nights
 - Shegar 2 nights
- Meals:
 - Breakfast daily
 - Lunch daily
 - 4 dinners
- Sightseeing of:
 - Yamdrok Yumtso Lake
 - Karola Glacier
- Visits of:
 - Pelkor Chose Monastery
 - Rongbuk Monastery
- Entrance fees for sites visited
- Tibet permit
- Private English-speaking driver-guide
- Private vehicle in accordance to number in

- party
- Bottled water provided on transfers and tour
- All local taxes

Tour does not include:

- International or Domestic airfares
- Any taxes and surcharges relating to airfares
- Travel insurance
- Entry Visa and visa fees
- Wi-Fi at hotels except as indicated
- All alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks except as indicated
- Other meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Extras and gratuities
- Early check-in, late check-out (Most hotels begin check-in around 2:00pm).
- Expenses of personal nature
- Porterage at airport and hotels
- Optional tours and activities
- Any service not specifically listed under "included"



Hotels in your Tour:

| City | Hotel Name | Tripadvisor |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| First Class | | |
| Lhasa | Snowland Paradise | 3.5 |
| | Xinding | 3.5 |
| Shigatse | Gesar (South wing) | 4 |
| | Tashi Quta | 4 |
| Shegar | Qomolangma | 2.5 |
| | Shijie Wuji | 3 |
| Deluxe | | |
| Lhasa | Shangri-La | 4.5 |
| | St. Regis | 4 |
| Shigatse | Qomo Langzong | 3.5 |
| | Gesar (VIP wing) | 4 |
| Shegar | Qomolangma | 2.5 |
| | Shijie Wuji | 3 |

Hotels will be confirmed at time of booking

Tour Prices:

| Season | 1 Pax* | 2 – 5 Pax | 6 – 9 Pax | Single Suppl. |
|------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| First Class | | | | |
| 2020 Departures | | | | |
| April - June | \$4,165 | \$2,289 | \$1,649 | \$525 |
| July - October | \$4,705 | \$2,975 | \$2,015 | \$555 |
| November - December | \$3,989 | \$2,235 | \$1,519 | \$505 |
| 2021 Departures | | | | |
| January - February | \$3,989 | \$2,235 | \$1,519 | \$505 |
| Deluxe | | | | |
| 2020 Departures | | | | |
| April, May | \$4,309 | \$2,675 | \$2,035 | \$749 |
| June | \$4,605 | \$2,759 | \$2,125 | \$925 |
| July - October | \$5,205 | \$3,495 | \$2,419 | \$965 |
| November, December | \$4,129 | \$2,439 | \$1,715 | \$669 |
| 2021 Departures | | | | |
| January, February | \$4,129 | \$2,439 | \$1,715 | \$669 |

Prices are per person and may change without notice

* Price is for 1 passenger traveling alone

This tour is not recommended during the months of November through March

Tour Code: CN05LXA20TE