

Trekking in Ladakh

Information and itinerary

Ladakh's trekking is stunning.

Remote and high, it is an absolute joy to walk in virtual isolation.



Contents

Introduction	03
Important information	04
Trip inclusions and exclusions	05
Itinerary	06 - 09
Travel insurance	10



Introduction

Ladakh is a wonderful place to trek; a hidden gem.

This document covers 3 treks:

- The Markha Valley Trek - 9 days on trek
- Lamayuru to Spituk Trek - 9 days on trek
- Lamayuru to Chilling Trek - 6 days on trek

Ladakh is high, remote and is the least populated region of India. It is also wedged between two massive mountain ranges: the Karakoram and the mighty Himalayas.

Suffice to say, the scenery is stunning.

Shut off by snow for 8 months of the year, the trekking window is quite small. It is not a classic tourist destination (no beaches!), which probably accounts for the general lack of numbers who come here.

These are all fully supported camping treks.

Ladakh is a strong Buddhist region and has some dramatic geology as well as plenty of interesting flora and fauna.

Regardless of what trek you choose, your itinerary into and out of Leh will be the same.

Flight departures into Leh are early morning (usually around 0600hrs) due to weather conditions so it makes sense to try and choose an international flight that arrives in Delhi in the very early hours of the same morning. You can then transfer straight across without the need for overnight stops.

Leh sits at an altitude of over 3000m and therefore you need to acclimatise for at least two nights before you begin trekking. The more susceptible to altitude sickness may have problems within hours of arrival; it is perfectly normal. We also utilise this downtime to show you the local sights in and around this wonderful region.

On your return from the trek, you will have one full day (two nights) to rest and relax, perhaps have a massage or scour the shops for those hidden gems. There are plenty of artefacts to be had here.

On your return to Delhi, you are free to connect to your international flight or extend your stay as you wish. Travel and Trek can assist you with any extensions you may consider from hotels to excursions. See our notes on Delhi and beyond.

Details

Duration (UK - UK):
 Markha Valley - 15 days
 Lamayuru to Spituk Trek - 16 days
 Lamayuru to Chilling Trek - 13 days

Min/Max pers: 2/12

Max altitude:
 Markha Valley - 5400m
 Lamayuru to Spituk Trek - 4950m
 Lamayuru to Chilling Trek - 4950m

Accommodation on trek:
 Camping

Dates: See website

Cost:
 Markha Valley - £820 pp
 Lamayuru to Spituk Trek - £850 pp
 Lamayuru to Chilling Trek - £710 pp

Our trips formally begin and end in Leh unless you book an extension in Delhi

The 3 treks:

The Markha Valley Trek
 9 days on trek, page 6
 The main trek and the one you should do if you have never been to Ladakh.

Lamayuru to Spituk Trek
 9 days on trek, page 7
 This trek covers the shorter trek below (to Chilling) and then continues on to do 4 days of the Markha Valley trek in reverse. With 3 Passes over 4800m, it is the most demanding of the three treks.

Lamayuru to Chilling Trek - 6 days on trek, page 9
 This is the Hidden Valley.
 The advantage of this trek is the shorter trek length. The altitude is still significant so don't think that it is a stroll in the park!

When to go

In general terms:

Jul - mid Sep

Extend to Agra?

Why not extend your time in India to include the amazing Taj Mahal, the Golden Triangle or a longer trip in Rajasthan?

Call us to discuss your plans.

Travel and Trek is a truly independent company specializing in adventure trekking and touring. We pride ourselves on the personal touch and whether you are travelling solo or in a big group, we can adjust itineraries to suit you.

Important information

Costs

Costs are based on 2 people sharing and are per person (singles see below)

Fully Bonded

Your money is safe. We are protected by Insurance Passenger Protection (IPP), which protects YOU against OUR insolvency.



Trek Dossier

On booking, you will receive a comprehensive Trek Dossier, which includes:

- Clothing and equipment list
- Medical notes (including vaccination requirements)
- Notes on trekking at high altitude
- Notes on safe drinking water
- Food, money and much more...

Airport arrivals

We pick you up on arrival and transfer you back on departure.

Passports

Passports should be valid for a minimum period of 190 days on the date of entry into India.

Tourist Visa

A tourist visa is required for UK Nationals. The visa must be obtained prior to travelling. Advice will be given.

Itineraries

Day 1 of your itinerary is deemed to be your departure day from the UK.

Hotel Accommodation

Our hotels are of 3* standard with very friendly staff to attend to your every need. Our costs are based on a B&B basis, twin share. All rooms are en suite.

Accommodation on trek is camping.

Singles

Travel and Trek does not believe in penalising single travellers unnecessarily. If you are a single traveller and do not request sole occupancy of a room, you will be accommodated with another member of the group of the same sex. If there is an odd number travelling and you happen to be the odd one out then you will be allocated sole occupancy at no extra cost. If you do request sole occupancy throughout all or part of the trip, then you will be charged a supplement (see costs).

Extended Stays

Why not extend your stay in India with a visit to the Taj Mahal (Agra)! You are free to extend your stay in India with extra days before or after the trek. We can assist you with your hotel requirements in Delhi

or a full blown trip in Rajasthan to see Agra, Jaipur, Jodhpur and a whole lot more!

Our Guides

Our Guides are all qualified, licenced, English speaking Guides with a wealth of experience and knowledgeable.

Fitness

The perception that you have to be super fit to trek here is not true. A reasonable level of fitness based on the ability to walk at your own comfortable pace for 6 - 7 hrs a day (with rest stops), for several consecutive days carrying a day sack weighing approx 6kg is all that is required. If you are in any doubt about whether you are fit enough, please consult Travel and Trek prior to booking.

Clothing and equipment

This information is part of the Trek Dossier and is provided on booking.

Medical/Vaccinations

You are advised to consult your GP if you are in any doubt about your physical condition to undertake your chosen trek. Whilst we do provide information on vaccinations, you should also seek professional advice on what vaccinations you require for India and other locations should you have an extended trip.

For planning purposes you should need:

Hep A, Typhoid, Tetanus, Polio and Meningitis. Anti-malarials may also be needed for Delhi.

Altitude Sickness

Formally known as Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), Travel and Trek has produced a 'Guide to Trekking at High Altitude', which can be downloaded from the website. If you wish to discuss it personally, please call the Travel and Trek office; our experienced staff will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Local Payments

Travel and Trek does not charge any local payments.

Travel Insurance

It is absolutely vital that you have adequate travel insurance. See separate page.

How To Book

- Complete the booking form (downloadable from the website) and return it with a deposit of £150 pp.
- Booking forms can be completed electronically and returned as an attachment to an e-mail.
- Details of payment options are on the booking form.
- Balance payments are due 10 weeks prior to departure.



Expert Help

If you have any queries in the planning stage of your trip, call our experts on 01476 562763 or 07725 943108

Trip inclusions and exclusions



Inclusions

- Return international airport transfers
- Hotel accommodation in Leh and Delhi as appropriate to your booking on a twin share, B&B basis
- Trekking support throughout the trek including sleeping tents, dining tent, kitchen tent, toilet tent.
- All food on trek
- Road transport as required, including sightseeing in Leh
- Services of an English speaking Indian Guide throughout the trek
- Porterage (mules)
- Comprehensive Trip dossier and other associated documentation

Exclusions

- International flights
- Domestic flights Delhi - Leh return
- Domestic airport departure taxes
- India Visa
- Personal spending
- Staff gratuities, advice will be given if required
- Personal travel insurance
- Food not specified

Itinerary - Markha Valley

The Markha Valley trek is probably the most well known and highly recommended. The 'parachute cafe's' are a joy to see and the river is beautiful.

1 Depart UK

Our trips formally begin and end in Leh unless you your trip includes additional services in Dehli.

2 Arrive Delhi, transfer to Leh

You will be collected at the airport and transferred to your hotel.

You are strongly advised to rest after your arrival due to the high altitude of Leh airport (3500m).

3 Free Day

This is an acclimatisation day with some sightseeing.

4 Drive to Spituk, trek to Zinchen (3200m)

The trek begins at Spituk by crossing a bridge and walking west of the River Indus. We follow the trail for 3 hours until the Indus enters a narrow gorge and joins the Zinchen river.

From here it's a gradual ascent through the Zinchen Valley, before we reach the small village of Zinchen.

5 Trek to Yurutse (4150m)

The trail from Zinchen ascends gradually all the way along the Rumbak Nala until you reach Rumbak, the largest village in the Zingchen Valley.

You then follow a trail passing cultivated fields and scattered houses until you reach the village of Yurutse.

6 Trek to Skiu (3018m)

A gradual ascent followed by a steep climb gets you to the Ganda La (4971m).

From the Pass we are treated to fine views of snow capped mountains merging into the distant ranges of the Karakoram.

The trail descends steadily to Shingo, the head of the Skiu Valley and continues down into Skiu village. You enter the village confronted by towering rock faces.

7 Trek to Markha village (3793m)

This is a very pleasant walk along one of the loveliest sections of the Markha valley. It follows the Markha river.

En-route you will pass several monasteries perched high on the hillsides above us and the path is dotted with Chortens and prayer walls.

8 Trek to Hankar (3986m)

From Markha the country changes and the warm, relatively heavily wooded section of the lower Markha is left behind. The camp below the twin villages of Lower and Upper Hankar is distinctly cooler than at Markha Village.

9 Trek to Nimaling (4840m)

From Hankar the trail climbs steadily up the narrow valley. The Nimaling plain is a broad meadow, reaching upwards to the base of the ice-clad Kang Yatse (6553m).

The Nimaling meadows provide pastures in the summer for yaks, sheep, goats and horses from villages further down the valley. It is not unusual to see the occasional wild sheep or wolf.

10 Rest day and to explore the base camp of Kangytse

A time to relax at Nimaling and enjoy the wonderful scenery.

For the more energetic, we would recommend a walk to the base camp of Kang Yatze, the highest peak in the Zanskar range.

11 Trek to Chogdo (4000m, via the Kongma La

Today you cross to the north of the Markha, on a well marked trail, climbing to the top of the highest Pass in the area; the 5400m Konmaru La.

To the north there are spectacular views of the eastern Karakoram. The trail descends steeply to the head of the Martselang valley past the sulphur springs of Chyushkarmo before reaching our campsite at Chogdo.

12

Trek to Martselang

After an easy decent along the left bank of the Martselang river, we reach Martselang village where transport will be waiting to take us back to Leh.

Overnight Hotel.

13

Rest day in Leh

Simply relax, explore Leh or enjoy a fabulous massage in this very chilled out town.

14

Flight to Delhi

You can either connect directly to your international flight or take the opportunity to explore Delhi (or further) for a few days.

15

Arrive UK

Itinerary - Lamayura - Spituk

This is a combination of the Chilling trek (3rd trek listed in this document) and some of the Markha Valley in reverse. It is the most demanding of the 3.

1

Depart UK

Our trips formally begin and end in Leh unless you your trip includes additional services in Dehli.

2

Arrive Delhi, transfer to Leh

You will be collected at the airport and transferred to your hotel.

You are strongly advised to rest after your arrival due to the high altitude of Leh airport (3500m).

3

Free Day

This is an acclimatisation day with some sightseeing.

4

Drive to Lamayuru (3420m)

There are some wonderful Monasteries to visit en route. Establish camp and prepare for the trek.

5

Trek Lamayuru to Wanla (3150m)

Gradual ascent to Prinkiti-la (3650m). After a easy walk through a dry narrow mud gorge, you reach Wanla.

6

Trek Wanla to Hinju (3720m)

Follow a dusty road to Phenjila (3410m) and the scattered village to Uri.

A walk thru narrow gorge until you reach a traditional Rangtak (flour mill) at Hinju. Camp at the herder's encampment after the village.

7

Rest/acclimatisation day

Hinju is a wonderful area to explore. There are two big Passes coming up so it also time to acclimatise.

8

Trek Hinju to Sumda Doksa (4430m)

A easy ascent to Kongskil-la (4950m). A beautiful view of Karakoram and Stok range.

The walk down from the Pass is steep and through through a moraine. Camp close to the Yak herders camp.

9

Trek Sumda Doksa to Dung Dung Chan base (4430m)

A short walk and a few stream crossings you reach the village of Sumda Chenmo. Take the left valley out of the village to the camp at Dung Dung Chan base.

10

Trek Dung Dung Chan base to Chilling (3550m)

A straight climb from the camp to Dung Dung Chan La (4820m). Great views from the top. A gradual descend to the village of Chilling.

11

Trek Chilling to Skiu (3000m)

Begin this day by crossing the Zanskar River in a cable trolley located upstream a short distance from Chilling.

Follow the well worn path to the village of Skaya. From here it is a short walk to the lush green campsite at Skiu. You are now on the Markha Valley trekking route also.

The village of Skiu (3000m) is lower than your recent altitudes and in a narrow valley; the temperatures can soar. At dusk it is worth climbing back up the valley to where the Skiu Nala meets the Markha river. Here there is a small monastery cared for by an old nun who comes every evening to light the candles at the altar of 'Chamba', the future Buddha.

12

Trek Shingo to Rumbak (3750m)

A stiff climb with a series of zig zags out of Skiu up to the Ganda La (4920m). At the pass, colourful prayer flags flap in the wind, with the Zanskari range in the background.

Afterwards, we descend steadily along the Jingchan river. We get great views towards the Stock summit and the Stock Kangri (6121m).

13

Trek Rumbak to Zinchen (3200m)

Descend all the way to Zinchen village from where you drive to Leh in 2 hours.

Overnight hotel.

14

Rest Day in Leh

Simply relax, explore Leh or enjoy a fabulous massage in this very chilled out town.

15

Flight to Delhi

You can either connect directly to your international flight or take the opportunity to explore Delhi (or futher) for a few days.

16

Arrive UK

Itinerary - Lamayura - Chilling

The shortest trek of the 3 but equally worthwhile. Excellent for those with a limited holiday of two weeks.

1 Depart UK

Our trips formally begin and end in Leh unless you your trip includes additional services in Dehli.

2 Arrive Delhi, transfer to Leh

You will be collected at the airport and transferred to your hotel.

You are strongly advised to rest after your arrival due to the high altitude of Leh airport (3500m).

3 Free Day

This is an acclimatisation day with some sightseeing.

4 Drive to Lamayuru (3420m)

There are some wonderful Monasteries to visit en route. Establish camp and prepare for the trek.

5 Trek Lamayuru to Wanla (3150m)

Gradual ascent to Prinkiti-la (3650m). After a easy walk through a dry narrow mud gorge, you reach Wanla.

6 Trek Wanla to Hinju (3720m)

Follow a dusty road to Phenjila (3410m) and the scattered village to Uri.

A walk thru narrow gorge until you reach a traditional Rangtak (flour mill) at Hinju. Camp at the herder's encampment after the village.

7 Rest/acclimatisation day

Hinju is a wonderful area to explore. There are two big Passes coming up so it also time to acclimatise.

8 Trek Hinju to Sumda Doksa (4430m)

A easy ascent to Kongskil-la (4950m). A beautiful view of Karakoram and Stok range.

The walk down from the Pass is steep and through through a moraine. Camp close to the Yak herders camp.

9 Trek Sumda Doksa to Dung Dung Chan base (4430m)

A short walk and a few stream crossings you reach the village of Sumda Chenmo. Take the left valley out of the village to the camp at Dung Dung Chen base.

10 Trek Dung Dung Chen base to Chilling (3550m)

A straight climb from the camp to Dung Dung Chen La (4820m). Great views from the top. A gradual descend to the village of Chilling.

You will be picked up here and transferred back to Leh.

Overnight hotel.

11 Rest Day in Leh

Simply relax, explore Leh or enjoy a fabulous massage in this very chilled out town.

12 Flight to Delhi

You can either connect directly to your international flight or take the opportunity to explore Delhi (or futher) for a few days.

13 Arrive UK

Travel Insurance

It is absolutely essential that you have adequate travel insurance. Be truthful to your insurance company about precisely what activities you are undertaking and to what altitude (max). Failure to do that may invalidate your policy.

To fly a patient back to the UK under any form of medical supervision (ie on a stretcher) is estimated to cost well in excess of £10,000.

In terms of activities for insurance purposes, you are trekking not climbing. Unless your trek specifically states that it does, your trek does not involve any form of specialist safety or climbing equipment.

This Foreign & Commonwealth Office link is a useful reference and recommended read:
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/staying-safe/travel-insurance/>

So What Happens If I Have An Accident?

The trekking region in Ladakh is remote. There are no professional medical facilities in the hills.

Minor medical problems can often be dealt with by your Guide and his staff or your fellow trekkers.

If you have an accident that requires professional medical help, your Guide and his staff will get you to a medical station as quickly as they can provided that you can be moved. Bearing in mind the nearest medical station maybe several days away, your travel insurance company may need to be involved at the earliest opportunity.

Assuming that they are called, they should do the rest.

A Little Preparation May Save Your Life

Some insurance companies provide a very handy credit card sized card with all of their contact details on it. If your company does not, then try using this very handy website www.ucardit.co.uk. Travel and Trek clients get a 10% discount.

For about £5 (including P&P), you get a virtually indestructible credit card sized card with all of your important information on it. You can either use one of three pre-designed Travel and Trek cards or design your own. An example is shown below. You can literally put whatever you want on it from flight details, mobile numbers, addresses, insurance details, etc...

To try it, go to the Home page, click 'Travel'. Then scroll down, bottom left, click on the 'Travel and Trek' banner and either use a branded template or design your own. These are example cards from the website (not full size).

