

11-23 Aug 2012 (13-days) India Leh-Kashmir - Trip 1

Trip Cost Rm4480 (8 pax), Rm4380 (10 pax) , RM4330 (12 pax) RM4230 (14 pax) & RM4180 (16 pax and above) (EXCLUDED MH KL-DELHI-KL)

Update 14 Jan 12 - Trip 2 is FULL with one group of members. We will arrange flight MH KL-Delhi-KL. Trip response is good, as such organize 2nd trip for other Yongo members whom registered earlier on. Kindly confirm asap as air fare expected high if we purchase late.

Update 9 June 11- June till September is the best time of the year to visit Ladakh-Srinagar. Therefore don't miss the 'right' timing to experience the best view of these places. Trip cost will cover two way domestic flight, Delhi-Leh and Srinagar (Kashmir) to Delhi. Kindly email rachelheng123@gmail.com for registration

Departure

11 Aug Sat MH172 KL(KUL) to New Delhi (DEL) 0840 1140

Arrival

22 Aug Wed MH191 New Delhi (DEL) to KL (KUL) 2300 0655 (+1 Day) (NOTE : Arrived 23 Aug)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is meant to be a "free and easy" trip. Participants should be with a good sense of humour, and above all, have the right attitude for close travel with others through possibly some trying times. Most definitely, this is not a trip for prudes, whiners, fuss-pots, and other similiarly assorted types! We had a couple of those before and it wasn't pleasant for us or them. Although every effort will be made to stick to the given itinerary, ground conditions may change and cause some disruption and/or deviation from the norm. Otherwise, have fun!



Leh Monastery/Along the way/Leh Local lady

Ladakh: “More Tibetan than Tibet”, “Moonland”, “the Last Shangrila” are all romantic names given to Ladakh. With its stunning barren rugged terrain and untouched Tibetan culture, it is certainly a beautiful place – befitting all the above & much more. The height of these ranges of the Western Himalayas prevents rain clouds from crossing into Ladakh and as a result, Ladakh receives only about 2 inches (5cm) of rain per year. The aridity of the area is immediately apparent to the visitor, with long vistas of stark mountains and valleys with only a few oases of green.

Partially opened to visitors in 1974, Ladakh still retains its air of mystery which unerringly draws all those in search of the unknown, be it the serious scholar or the lover of adventure. A high, arid plateau with some of its mountain peaks rising to over 7000m, the wild grandeur of the land contrasts dramatically with its cheerful and warm-hearted people, the two combining to create a unique geographical, historical and cultural entity which fascinates the most casual visitor. It is ideal country, with its intricate network of trails threading through the mountains. Ladakh was at the center of the great trade routes across Central Asia, when journeys lasting up to two or three years were not uncommon.

Kashmir : Set like a jewelled crown on the map of India, Kashmir is a multi-faceted diamond, changing its hues with the seasons - always extravagantly beautiful. Two major Himalayan ranges, the Great Himalayan Range and the Pir Panjal, surround the landscape from the north and south respectively. They are the source of great rivers, which flow down into the valleys, forested with orchards and decorated by lily-laden lakes.

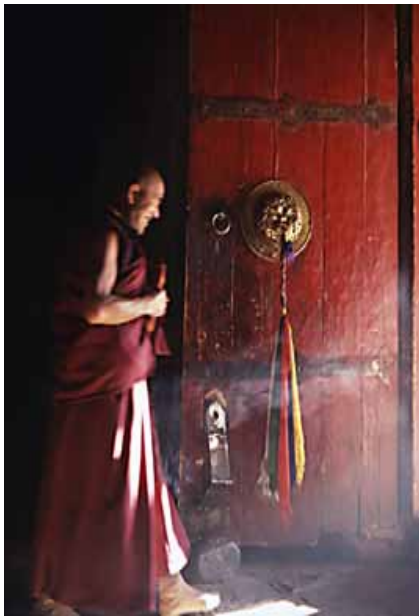
Day 1 Aug 11 Sat Fly to Delhi: Meet in KLIA MH172 flight departing 0840AM arriving 1140PM in Delhi. Spent half day in Delhi. Overnight (ON) Delhi.

Day 2 Aug 12 Delhi-Leh On arrival transfer to domestic airport to board on your scheduled flight to Leh. On arrival transfer to Hotel. Free morning to relax and explore the Leh town based on your acclimatization and feeling. This day is more to rest and acclimatize. O/N Leh

Day 3 Aug 13 Leh : After breakfast visit various monasteries around Leh, like Shanker Gompa, it is a monastery of yellow sect of the Buddhism, it houses the image of Chanaric and various tankas also visit Leh palace and Leh Bazaar, the palace is worth a visit over looking the Leh town.

In the afternoon walk to visit Women Alliance Centre of leh to view short video movie known as Ancient Futures, Learning from Ladakh, by Helena Norberg-Hodge. Helena Norberg-Hodge is an American woman working as Director of Ladakh Project and she shared the 1986 Right Livelihood Award, otherwise known as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize' due to her project in Ladakh. Overnight hotel. Dinner and overnight stay in Leh.





Hemis Monastery

Hemis Monastery/Monks at

Day 4 Aug 14 Leh-Hemis Excursion: After breakfast a day trip to Hemis. A visit to Ladakh is not complete without seeing Hemis monastery. Hemis Monastery holds the distinction of being the biggest as well as the wealthiest monastery of Ladakh. It dates back to the year 1630 and was founded by the first incarnation of Stagsang Raspa Nawang Gyatso. We would visit Shey and Thiksey monasteries on our way back to Leh. Thiksey Monastery is one of the most beautiful monasteries of Ladakh, it belongs to the Gelukpa Order of Buddhism. Shey monastery, located on a hilltop. The monastery was erected on the instructions of King Deldon Namgyal, in the memory of his late father, Singay Namgyal. The main image inside the Shey Monastery is that of Buddha Shakyamuni. It is a huge image of the seated Buddha and is considered to be the biggest metal statue and the second largest Buddha statue in the Ladakh region. Copper sheets, gilded with gold, make up this amazing Buddha statue. On completion drive back to Leh. In the evening visit Shanti Stupa, which was built by Japanese in 1985. Later trek to Leh Palace through old Leh town. It is not worth to go inside the Palace as there is nothing inside. But view of Leh town is excellent from the Palace. O/N Leh.

Day 5 Aug 15 Nubra Valley (130KM): Today after sufficient acclimatization, be prepared for a spectacular journey Khardungla Pass (5604 mts) the highest motorable pass in the World, to the valley of Nubra in the Far North by the Tibetan border. The view from the top of the pass is amazing. One can see all the way South over the Indus Valley to the seemingly peaks and ridges of Zanaskar range. Nubra was once a busy stop on the Caravan route used by Ancient traders for Silk, tea and Spices. The valley is predominately Buddhist. This was a busy centre in old times, the last major settlement before the caravans plunged in to the mountains of Karakoram into Central Asia. Enroute visit to the 150 yrs old Samtangling Gompa at Sumur, a large complex with 7 temples and was inaugurated by the Dalai Lama in year 1962, the prayer rooms that are open to the public houses an impressive collection of Thankas and excellently restored frescoes. Also enjoy the Double Hump Camel ride (Bacterian Camel) in the High altitude deserts



Nubra Valley with double hump camel

Day 6 Aug 16 Nubra Valley: After breakfast at camp, Visit the main village which is Deskit which has a regular bazaar and Gompa. From Deskit the town proceeds down the Shayok to small village of Hunder (3,048 mts). Afternoon return back to Leh over Khardungla savouring the spectacular scenery once again. On arrival check in hotel later you may want to visit Tibetan market and the Leh bazaar for last minute souvenirs.



Pangong Lake

Day 7 Aug 17 Pangong Lake: After early breakfast depart at 5 30 am for Pangong Lake 140 kms one way, situated at 4267m through Changla Pass 5490 meters above sea level. After crossing the pass halt for picnic lunch at Tsoltak, the summer pastureland of the YAKS, Arrive DURBUK and from there a short drive takes you to the western shore of the lake. Enjoy the land scape in the back drop of the lake. A long narrow basin of inland drainage, hardly six to seven kilometer at its widest point and over 130km long, it is bisected by the international border between India and China. The first view of the lake is breath taking because of striking colors of its water especially towards evening, when it is deep blue. Return to Leh and afternoon and enjoy some shopping in the bazaar for Tibetan artifacts at Tibetan Market.

Day 8 Aug 18 Alchi-Kargil (234km):-In the morning after breakfast drive to Kargil. En route visit Alchi. This monastery was founded in 11th century by the great Translator, Rinchen Zangpo. He even made a reference about the monastery in his biographies. It is written that he brought thirty-two sculptors and wood carvers from Kashmir, for the construction of the Alchi Monastery of Leh Ladakh. On completion drive to Lamayuru. Lamayuru is one of the most significant gompa set amidst majestic scenery. The monastery, the finest in Ladakh, is about 900 years old and houses the image of Chanaric – The God of Compassion and Mercy – of which Dalai Lama is considered to be reincarnated. We will stop at Mulbek. Mulbeck where a 1400 years old image of Maitry - the future Buddha, built atop a huge rock, can be seen. The image commemorates the victory of Buddhism over Bonism, and in turn, the end of sacrificing of human and animal lives on completion drive to Kargil. Kargil is a wonderful valley with its amazing apricots. Though today Kargil is the second largest urban center of Ladakh, it was the gateway for caravans of silk, brocade, carpets, felts, tea, poppy, ivory etc to China, Tibet, Yarkand and Kashmir in the past. O/N Kargil.

Day 9 Aug 19 Kargil-Sonamarg-Srinagar(Kashmir)(210km) : Early morning, drive to Srinagar via Sonmarg (Meadow of Gold) at a height of 8900 feet above sea level. We will drive over Zojila Pass (3529 m). Zojila Pass marks dramatically the boundary line between Kashmir and Ladakh. Dense green forest clad slopes give way to bare multi-coloured mountains of stark beauty. Once you reach Sonamarg you will feel like you are in the Swiss Alps. Now here we will either walk or ride on ponies (Optional) towards Thajiwas Glacier to enjoy spectacular views of the Glaciers and Himalayas around the Glacier and return back to Sonamarg for lunch.

After lunch drive 3 hours to Srinagar along the Sindh River. It is also known as the Sindh Valley. The drive is very spectacular with beautiful sceneries along the way. On arrival transfer to houseboats. Dinner and overnight stay at house boat.

Early morning walk to the bus station again to board on your scheduled bus to Srinagar. On arrival transfer to the houseboat. O/N Srinagar



Kashmiri boy/Lotus around the lake

Day 10 Aug 20 Srinagar: . After breakfast proceed with tour of world famous Mughal Gardens visiting the Nishat Bagh (The garden of pleasure) and Shalimar Bagh (Abode of love) and visiting handicrafts center. Return back to houseboat for lunch. Afternoon, enjoy your ride on a Kashmiri gondola known locally as Shikara. This interesting ride takes you through the lake where you can find natives engaged in farming on water and carrying their produce on their sikara to market or their houses. The ride also offers spectacular Himalayan mountains mirrored in the lakes. In the evening return to Houseboat.



Morning floating market & comfortable bed at Nagen Lake/Nice houseboat

Day 11 Aug 21 Gulmarg Excursion: After breakfast at Houseboat, depart by surface for Gulmarg. Arrive at

Tanmarg, base of mountain and board jeeps to climb 12 Kms to Gulmarg- one of the most beautiful summer resort in the valley. It is also popular for its golf course during summer season and as a ski resort during the winter season. Enjoy the splendor of nature and the snowy mountains. Optional one can enjoy Gondola ride (Cable car) from Gulmarg to Khalinmarg on extra cost (optional). In the late afternoon return back to Srinagar and transfer to your houseboat. Dinner and Overnight at Houseboat.

Day 12 Aug 22 Srinagar-Delhi-Home :In time transfer to airport to board on scheduled flight. On arrival, drive around Delhi providing deeper understanding of Indian ancient and contemporary history. Drive around the India's major administration and legislature assembly house known as Sansal Bhawan (Parliament House), Presidential House and North and South Block where all the important Ministries of India including Defence, Foreign, Finance, Home Affairs Ministries are located finally stopping at India Gate. After spending some time shopping on Janpath, transfer to airport to board on your scheduled flight to Kuala Lumpur. Take Flight MH191 2300PM to Kuala Lumpur.

Day 13 Aug 23 KL Home : Reached Home in morning 0655AM.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Cost cover Two way domestic flight (Delhi-Leh & Srinagar-Delhi), accommodation, meals at Srinagar Houseboat and transport.
2. Not covered are Indian visa fees Rm 168, MH KL-Delhi-KL, Domestic airport taxes, entrances, activities and meals. Allocate about Rm350 for 10 days meals. Guides accompanying group do expect tips. Yongo encourages group members to be generous but should commensurate with services rendered.
3. A deposit of Rm 1020 is payable to confirm your place.
4. Cost is subject to change if there's a significant changes in foreign exchange rates and/or airfares.

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