

MARKHA VALLEY



COUNTRIES VISITED: INDIA

TRIP TYPE: Trekking
TRIP GRADE: Moderate
TRIP STYLE: Camping
NAN Based On 0 Reviews
KG Carbon Footprint

TRIP LEADER: Local Leader
GROUP SIZE: 2 - 10 people
NEXT DEPARTURE: 01 Jul 2024
4 Trees Planted for each Booking

Markha Valley is a trek in Ladakh crossing two high passes with spectacular views of Karakoram and Zaskar mountain ranges.

After the spectacular flight over the Himalaya to Leh we spend several days for essential acclimatization with sightseeing at Buddhist monasteries. The trek starts at the village of Spituk and after crossing the Ganda La we descend into the Markha Valley. We continue to the beautiful Nimaling plains dominated by the impressive Kang Yatze peak. From here we cross the Kongmaru La with superb views south to Zaskar and north to the Karakoram range. We descend from the pass through a steep canyon with wonderful coloured rock and then drive back to Leh.

Ladakh, also known as little Tibet, is one of the most remarkable regions of India. Although politically part of India, Ladakh is geographically and culturally an extension of western Tibet. Ladakh is a high and arid landscape with lush irrigated valleys surrounded by snow capped peaks. Leh the capital of Ladakh has long been a remote and fascinating outpost and important cross-roads for pilgrims and traders in the upper Indus Valley.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All transfers including airport collections.
- Twin share room at Hotel Pangong, Hotel Lotus or Hotel Omasila (or equivalent) in Leh.
- Breakfast only at hotels in Leh, all meals included while on trek.
- Twin share tents while on trek.
- All trekking arrangements including permits and fees, tents, guide, ponies and cook.
- UK-registered charity, Pipal Tree, will plant 4 trees for you in the Gurkha Memorial Forest in southern Nepal.
- Full financial protection for all monies paid to us through our membership of Association of Bonded Travel Operators Trust (our ABTOT membership number is 5365) and having an Air Travel Organiser's Licence (our ATOL number is 10921).

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- International flight to/from Delhi.
- Internal flight to/from Leh and Delhi.
- Travel & trekking insurance.
- India visa up to 6 month.
- Lunch and evening meals in Leh.
- Delhi hotel and airport transfers.
- Personal clothing & equipment please see the Appendix for suggested kit list.
- Tips.
- Other items not listed in "What is included".

ITINERARY

DAY 1: ARRIVE IN LEH (3,505M)

Arrive in Leh

No meals

Hotel Lotus in Leh

You will be met on arrival at Leh airport and driven back to the hotel. Please provide travel plans on booking and we will arrange the pick-up and transfer. A full briefing will be given in the afternoon. For the rest of the day it is best to rest and keep hydrated in order to help your body's adjustment to the high altitude.

DAY 2: SIGHTSEEING AROUND LEH (3,505M)

Sightseeing around Leh

Breakfast

Hotel Lotus in Leh

Leh is the ancient capital of Ladakh and has many hilltop forts and palaces to visit including the Royal Palace which overlooks the town. The town is situated on the old Silk Route and still has a trading tradition- it is well worth wandering around the colourful bazaar.

DAY 3: SIGHTSEEING AROUND LEH (3,505M)

Sightseeing around Leh

Breakfast

Hotel Lotus in Leh

DAY 4: DRIVE TO SPITUK, AND TREK TO JINGCHEN (3,380M)

Drive to Spituk (1/2 hour)

Walking 12km (5 hours)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Camping

After breakfast, we drive to Spituk and start trekking. On leaving Spituk we enter a flat plain at the foot of the Stok mountains, for the rest of the day the trail follows the Indus river, often with rafts floating past, before leaving the Indus to head into the mountains along the pretty Jingchen gorge.

DAY 5: TREK TO YURUTSE (4,120M)

Walking 8.5km (4 hours)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Camping

The route follows the Jingchen Nala upstream in an increasingly narrow valley- look out for the blue sheep high above on the steep sides of the valley. Before entering Rumbak the valley widens and the snow-topped Stok mountains come into sight. The trail continues upstream, crosses the bridge and then takes the right fork to Yurutse.

DAY 6: TREK TO SHINGO (4,150M) OVER THE GANDA LA (4,850M)

9.5km (5 hours)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Camping

On leaving Yurutse the trail passes a beautiful purple band of rock and continues to Ganda la base camp where you take the path west towards the Ganda la. Once at the pass there is a great view of Stok Kangri and the Zaskar range to the west, and from there descend to Shingo.

DAY 7: TREK TO SKIU (3,400M)

Walking 8km (4 hours)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Camping

Today we pass through a spectacular gorge with beautifully coloured and eroded rocks following the Shingri Nala river to Skiu- above Skiu is an attractive gompa and the remains of a royal residence.

DAY 8: TREK TO MARKHA (3,700M)

Walking 20km (7 to 8 hours)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Camping

The trail passes through Chalak and Tunespa and on approaching Markha you get the first glimpses of Kang Yatse (6,400m).

DAY 9: TREK TO TCHATCHUTSE (4,150M)

Walking 15km (5 to 6 hours)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Camping

The route goes up the main valley on the right bank, passes the monastery of Humlung and continues to Hankar. The valley narrows and the trail crosses to the left bank to reach the pastures of Tchatchutse.

DAY 10: TREK TO NIMALING (4,720M)

Walking 5.5km (3 hours)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Camping

The trail passes a small lake and then across pastures to Nimaling which is one of the most beautiful high valleys in Ladakh with grassy plains surrounded by high peaks and passes. To the south the view is dominated by Kang Yatze and to the north the Kong Maru La- the high pass we must cross in order to return back to Leh.

DAY 11: TREK TO SHANG (3,660M) OVER THE KONG MARU LA (5,100M)

Walking 17km (7 hours)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Camping

Today is a long day as the trail climbs to the Kong Maru La- at the top of the pass there are colourful prayer flags framing the 360-degree Himalayan panorama. To the north we look out towards Tibet, the Eastern Karakorams and China and to the south lies Kang Yatze whilst in the west there are the dry mountains of Zaskar.

The descent from the pass is fairly steep but soon eases before entering a narrow gorge with colourful rock formations. We descend into the Indus Valley and to the village of Shang.

DAY 12: TREK TO HEMIS (3,600M) AND DRIVE TO LEH

Walking 5km (3 hours)

Drive to Leh (45 minutes)

Breakfast

Hotel Lotus in Leh

We walk along the riverbed on the left bank passing a series of chortens and follow a gently rising trail through rugged scenery to Hemis. After visiting Hemis monastery we drive back to Leh.

DAY 13: FLY TO DELHI

Fly to Delhi

Breakfast

Transfer to Leh airport for you flight to Delhi.

DATES & PRICES

2024

Dates	Trip Leader	Price	Single Supplement: Room/ Tent	Availability
01 Jul 2024 to 13 Jul 2024	Local Leader	US\$1,895pp	US\$200pp / NA	2 Left to Guarantee
15 Jul 2024 to 27 Jul 2025	Local Leader	US\$1,895pp	US\$200pp / NA	2 Left to Guarantee
05 Aug 2024 to 17 Aug	Local	US\$1,895pp	US\$200pp / NA	2 Left to

Dates	Trip Leader	Price	Single Supplement: Room/Tent	Availability
2024	Leader			Guarantee

2025

Dates	Trip Leader	Price	Single Supplement: Room/Tent	Availability
07 Jul 2025 to 19 Jul 2025	Local Leader	US\$1,950pp	US\$200pp / NA	2 Left to Guarantee
21 Jul 2025 to 02 Aug 2025	Local Leader	US\$1,950pp	US\$200pp / NA	2 Left to Guarantee
04 Aug 2025 to 16 Aug 2025	Local Leader	US\$1,950pp	US\$200pp / NA	2 Left to Guarantee

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

A Typical Day On Trek

TYPICAL DAY ON CAMPING TREK IN NEPAL

We provide a comfortable experience on our camping style treks. Our team works hard to support you so that you can relax and enjoy [trekking in Nepal](#). We provide personal tents, mess tent, kitchen tent and toilet tent(s). The camp will be set up and dismantled by the trek crew. We bring along a cook and kitchen helpers to provide the meals.

The day starts with an early morning mug of tea brought to your tent by one of the trek crew. Before heading for breakfast you pack your overnight gear into your duffel bag. During breakfast the trek crew pack away the tents. The porters arrange their loads and set off on the trail in the cool of the morning. After breakfast, between 7am and 8am, we start walking.

The pace of the trek is moderate as there is plenty of time in the itinerary to reach the camp for tonight. There will be plenty of time to enjoy the scenery, take photos and explore the local villages. Lunch will be around midday at a spot by the side of the trail. Our cooks prepare lunch for us and the food is usually ready by the time the group arrives.

After lunch we continue the walk and on most days we arrive to camp by mid afternoon. Some of the trek crew would have gone ahead of the group to set up camp and to put up the tents. On arrival to camp you will get a hot drink and biscuits. In the evening our cook will provide a three course meal in the mess tent around 6pm.

After supper the leaders will discuss the plan for the next day. Afterwards people might stay in the mess tent chatting about the day's events or playing cards. After a tiring day most people head to their tent quite early for the night. Tomorrow is likely to be very similar as today! The only difference is that if we are crossing a high pass or climbing to a summit we leave camp earlier in the morning.

You can read more about our [Camping Treks in Nepal](#) on our Blog. This article explains the advantages of camping versus teahouse lodge treks. It also describes what the campsite set up is like and more about the food provided by our cooks.

Food provided on Camping Trek

FOOD PROVIDED ON CAMPING TREK IN NEPAL

While on a camping style trek in Nepal we provide tasty and nutritional food. We make sure there is more than enough quantity to go around as trekkers will be hungry after a long day on the trail. Over the years we have worked on increasing the variety of the menus. We have expanded the list of ingredients provided to the cooks so they have more to work with. Also in 2015 we purchased two food dehydrators with a vacuum sealing machine. We dehydrate a large number of different vegetables in Kathmandu before departure. This has transformed the quality of food especially on longer treks to remote areas.

For breakfast we provide porridge or cereal, toast or chapatis and eggs. There will be hot drinks including tea, herbal teas, hot chocolate and coffee. We provide fresh coffee from our Bialetti Moka coffee machine.

For lunch we stop at a convenient spot with water at the side of the trail. The cook and kitchen walk ahead of the group in the morning and lunch should be ready shortly after our arrival. After lunch we have time to relax before starting to walk again in the afternoon.

On arrival at camp in the afternoon you have biscuits and a hot drink such as tea or coffee. Around 6pm we serve a three course meal in the mess tent. The starter is often soup with popcorn or poppadoms. We have a range of main dishes and carbohydrates including rice, potatoes or pasta.

We cater for a variety of dietary requirements. Our meals are suitable for vegetarians. If there is a meat dish then we also provide vegetarian options as standard. During booking we find out if you have any dietary needs and agree upon meal plans before departure. If you have any questions about the food provided please get in touch with us to discuss further.

Kit List

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT LIST FOR MARKHA VALLEY

For the safety of everyone in the group and to help ensure a successful trek, you are required to have the following items in our clothing and equipment list tailored for Markha Valley trek. Your gear will be checked by the group leader in Leh prior to departure for the trek.

As a reminder, the weather on this trek will vary season to season and day to day as you ascend to higher elevations. During the first couple of days on this trek you may experience quite hot conditions with temperatures around 25 to 30°C. You will experience the coldest temperatures in Nimaling at an altitude of 4,720m where overnight lows might be down to around -10°C.

Each trekker should bring one backpack for gear required during the day. Your day backpack will contain items such as warm clothes, jacket, camera, water bottles, personal first aid kit and snacks. **The maximum weight allowance for back pack is 5kg.** The rest of your personal equipment packed in a duffel or kit bag will be carried by a pony. **The maximum weight allowance for your duffel bag is 15kg.** Please ensure that your bag is marked clearly on the outside for easy identification.

We suggest you print the kit list and tick items off as you pack them then weigh your kit bag before you come on trek.

Footwear:

- Walking boots. A pair of water repellent boots with ankle support.
- A pair used to keep boots dry if walking through deep snow or on wet ground.
- Wool and liner socks.
- Trainers/sneakers or sandals. Can be used in camp/lodge in the evenings.

Clothing:

- Waterproof jacket and trousers (goretex or similar). For use if it rains or snows during the trek.
- Trekking trousers. Minimum two pairs of trousers.
- Long sleeve shirts (not cotton). Minimum two shirts.
- Micro fleece.
- Mid to heavyweight fleece.
- Sleeveless/ gilet or body warmer type fleece. This will help keep your core warm while not bulking

when layering up. Gilet fleece can be used in combination with base layers, other fleeces and down jacket to provide maximum warmth and insulation.

- Thermals or baselayer for top & bottom (merino wool or synthetic).
- Fleece pants. To be worn around camp or added as an additional layer when the temperatures start to drop higher up.
- Medium weight down jacket. (eg Nuptse jacket by The North Face).

Handwear:

- Fleece gloves.
- Warm mittens and/or gloves.

Headwear:

- Wool or fleece hat.
- Sun hat.
- Bandana or scarf.
- Headtorch. Bring extra batteries.
- The lenses need to be Category 4 rated and should have side protection or wraparound design to prevent light getting through to your eyes that could cause sun blindness.

Personal Equipment:

- Sleeping bag. Maximum overnight lows in Nimaling likely to be around -10 Celsius.
- Fleece or silk liner for your sleeping bag. A liner protects your sleeping bag from getting dirty and helps by adding extra insulation to keep you warm at night.
- Recommended size is 30 to 40 litres as you need to have enough space to carry water bottles, camera, snacks and extra clothing such as down jacket etc. It is also a good idea to bring a rain cover to keep the contents dry.
- Stuff sacks for keeping your gear dry and organised. Or even better are fold- drybags such as from Exped.
- Two water bottles (Nalgene wide mouth bottles are the best).
- Sunscreen and lipsalve with a high SPF.
- Insect repellent.
- Water purification tablets (Pristine, Biox Acqua or Acqa Mira).
- Favourite snack food.
- Books, ipod and cards etc.
- Trekking poles. (Black Diamond with "Flick Lock" are best). Having two poles is mandatory as required for your safety on steep and loose sections of the trail and for walking through deep snow higher up.
- Camera with spare batteries and memory cards.
- Insurance certificate.
- Earplugs (optional).
- Baby wipes (optional).
- Hand sanitizer (optional). We suggest you keep this in your day pack for use after a toilet break during the trek or before eating any snacks.

Travelling:

- Duffle bag or large backpack for your personal gear on the trek (carried by a porter). Bring a small combination padlock to secure the bag.
- Travel clothes. You will need casual clothing for air travel days.
- Toiletry bag include toilet paper, soap, towel, toothbrush, etc.

Personal first aid kit:

Note: we provide a comprehensive group first aid kit but please bring personal medications and other items you might use regularly such as:

- Any personal medications.
- Blister treatment- Compeed patches are the best.
- Rehydration powder eg Dioralyte.
- Analgesic (paracetamol, ibuprofen and aspirin).

- Plasters and zinc oxide tape.
- Throat lozenges.
- Diamox (optional), helps with acclimatisation.

Threat and risk assessment

THREAT AND RISK ASSESSMENT FOR MARKHA VALLEY

Participants should be aware trekking, mountaineering and travelling in a developing country are activities that involve a risk of personal injury or death. As a condition of booking you must accept these risks and be responsible for your own actions and involvement.

Adventure travel requires an open and flexible attitude. You may experience extreme conditions, unpredictable weather and last minute changes to the itinerary beyond our control. The ability to work in team is an important aspect of all of our trips.

As a part of our planning process we have performed a detailed threat and risk assessment for our Markha Valley trek. It is worth pointing out all of our trips have a certain degree of risk, this is of course part of the attraction of adventure travel and why so many people choose to join this type of holiday. However by identifying the potential hazards on Markha Valley we can assess the level of risk and implement control measures to reduce this happening.

Our full threat and risk assessment for Markha Valley is available on request. For your information we have listed below a summary of the significant risks and hazards identified by us:

- Falls and trips resulting in physical injury eg. slipping on ice or falling off the path.
- Altitude illness including but not limited to AMS, HACE and HAPE.
- Climatic injuries (dehydration, sun burn, heat exhaustion, hypothermia or heat stroke).
- Lightning strike.
- Wildlife, pack animals (eg. donkeys or horses) or stray dogs. Pack animals have been known to knock people off the path. Dogs can attack and bite, we advise you discuss rabies vaccination with your doctor.
- Earthquake.
- Risk of fire in the hotel or lodge.
- Endemic local diseases. We advise you discuss vaccinations with your doctor before departure.
- Physiological injury such as heart attack, appendicitis, hernia, toothache etc. in a remote area.
- Road traffic or flight accident.
- Contaminated food and/ or water.

This trip visits a remote area where you are away from normal emergency services and medical facilities. In case of a serious injury requiring hospitalisation evacuation could take up to several days and may impede your ensuing recovery. Helicopters are the most usual means of evacuation, however they are not always available or they may be hindered by poor weather and flying conditions.

ACCOMMODATION

HOTEL LOTUS IN LEH

Hotel Lotus is above the main town of Leh and in a grove of evergreen trees. The hotel has seventeen rooms, restaurant and lobby.

Notes downloaded on: 04-05-2024

