

Central Tibet Tour

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Tibet in-depth tour covers the highlights of Central Tibet. In Lhasa, you will visit the World Heritage Sites of the Potala and Jokhang Temples. You will tour the Barkhor Pilgrimage circuit, the monastic institution of Drepung and Sera Monasteries.

In Tsedang, you will visit Yumbulagang Palace, Tibet's first palace, and Samye Monastery, Tibet's first monastery. On the way to Gyantse, you will visit Tibet's Holiest Lake – Yamdrok Lake. In Gyantse, you will tour the famous Gyantse Kumbum Stupa. In Shigatse, you will visit the seat of the Panchen Lama – Tashilhunpo Monastery.

Itinerary

Day 01: Arrival at Lhasa & transfer to Hotel [3,658m]

Upon arriving at the Lhasa airport or train station, you will be greeted by your Tibetan tour guide and driver. Your guide will drive you to your hotel or hostel. It is 68 km from the airport to Lhasa and is an hour and a half drive. From the train station it is just 15 km to Lhasa and only takes 20 minutes. Be sure to rest during the afternoon in order to acclimatize to high altitude. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 02: Lhasa City sightseeing, visit Potola Palace & Jokhang Temple - Walking tour is arranged today

Today is your first day of sightseeing on the high plateau and we have arranged to visit Jokhang Temple and Potala Palace. Jokhang Temple is the most sacred shrine in Tibet. Built in the 7th century and located in the heart of Lhasa's old town, Jokhang temple is truly a sight to behold. Many souvenir shops and gift shops can be found on nearby Barkhor Street, which circles the temple. Famous worldwide, Potala Palace has come to symbolize Tibet. This massive structure contains a small world within its walls. The palace is world renowned as the residence of the Dalai Lama lineages (Avalokiteshvara). Both Jokhang Temple and Potala Palace are focal points for pilgrims from all over Tibet and the world. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 03: Lhasa City sightseeing, visit Drepung monastery and Sera monastery

Today you will visit Drepung Monastery in the morning and Sera Monastery in the afternoon. Both Drepung and Sera monasteries are Gelugpa (yellow hat) sect monastic colleges. Drepung Monastery was the seat of the Government prior to Potala. It was once the world's largest monastery with 10,000 monks hailing from monasteries all over Tibet. Sera monastery is famous for its practice of debating Buddhism and philosophy, the clapping sound and the aggressive expression of the monks -all are well worth seeing. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 04: Lhasa / Samye / Tsedang, 290KM, 5hours

In the morning, you will drive to Tsedang city. The city is located in the Yarlung Valley, which is reputed to be the cradle of Tibetan civilization. Here you will be arranged to visit the first monastery Samye and first palace Yumbulakang in Tibet. After a 2 hour drive along the Yarlung Tsangpo river you will reach Tsedang town. Here your guide will process your PSB permit. Afterwards, you will visit Yumbulagang Palace. Next drive to Samye monastery. Samye is the first monastery built in Tibet, boasting over 1200 years of history. Nestled in a scenic valley, Samye is an important pilgrimage location. Later in the afternoon, your guide will drive you back to Tsedang overnight.

Day 05: Tsedang / Yamdrok Lake / Gyantse, 300KM, 6-7hours

After breakfast, you will drive along Yarlung Tsangpo River back to Chushul, where you will cross the Kambala Pass. The Kambala Pass is 4,794 meters high and will provide you your first sight of Yamdrok Tso, which is one of three holy lakes in Tibet. Later you will descend to the bank of Yamdrok Tso Lake. A half an hour of driving along the beautiful lake brings you to the nearest town – Nangartse. Normally groups eat lunch here. After lunch, you will continue west on the Southern Friendship Highway, enjoying spectacular views of snow capped mountains, valleys and grasslands dotted with groups of nomads. Arriving at Gyantse in the afternoon, you will be arranged to visit Tibet's most famous stupa – Gyantse Kumbum, the most stunning architectural wonder in Tibet. Overnight at Gyantse.

Day 06: Gyantse / Shigatse, 90KM, 1.5 hours

In the morning you will visit Gyantse Dzong, where you will have a great view of the whole Gyantse city. Afterwards, drive to Shigatse. About 90km away from Gyantse, the drive to Shigatse takes about 1.5 hours. On the way you will stop at Tsampa factory – a traditional factory where locals make Tsampa powder. Upon arriving at Shigatse, you will check into your hotel. In the afternoon visit Tashilhunpo Monastery where you can view the spectacular tombs of Panchen Lamas from Shigatse, and do its kora which provide a great view of the whole Shigatse city. Overnight at Shigatse.

Day 07: Shigatse / Lhasa, 280KM, 5hours

In the morning you will visit the lively free market in the old area of Shigatse, where you can buy local handicrafts and also other local Tibetan stuff. Later that morning, you will start driving back to Lhasa along the northern friendship way, once again enjoying marvelous landscapes and sceneries along the Brahmaputra River, which will accompany you all the way back to Lhasa. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 08: Transfer to Lhasa airport /train station .

Your guide and driver will see you off at the airport or train station. End of the trip.