

The Soul of Tibet

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Explore the 'roof of the world' where earth meets sky. Discover the beauty of the Himalayas and its hidden mysteries from the magnificent Potala Palace to the beautiful Yamato Yumco Lake.

Itinerary

Day 01: Arrival in Chengdu

Arrival in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province, pick up and transfer to hotel and then free time. O/N in a 3 star hotel.

Day 02: Flight Chengdu - Tsedang

In the early morning transfer to the airport and fly to Tsedang (3600 m), and after arrival at the Gonggar airport drive directly to Tsedang on the Yarlung-Tsangpo river junction. In the afternoon a rest at a hotel to acclimatize to the new environment is essential because of the sudden ascent from 500m above sea level to an altitude of over 3,700 meters (12,139 ft). O/N in a 3 star hotel. (B)

Day 03: Tsedang - Samye - Tsedang

In the morning, drive along and then cross over the Yarlung Tsangpo River by small ferry to visit the magnificent Samye monastery built in the late 8th century. It is the first monastery in Tibet that possessed the three essences of a Buddhist monastery: Buddha, Scripture and Monk. The original building is no longer intact due to destruction caused by wars and natural disasters, but the monastery has been rebuilt each time and still remains the symbol of Tibet's national identity. The grand building complex was structured in the model of the boundless universe regulated by Buddhist scripture. Its main building is a three-story tower with an interior influenced by Tibetan, Han and Indian styles. In the afternoon you drive to Yarlung valley to visit Yumbulagang, a reconstruction of Tibet's oldest palace originally established on this site by the founder of the Yarlung dynasty – Nyatri Tsenpo during the 1st century BC. O/N in 3 star hotel(B/D)

Day 04: Tsedang - Yamdrok Tso Lake- Gyantse

In the morning leave Tsedang for Gyantse. Travelling by jeep along the Friendship Highway, on the way, we cross the Khamba La (4794 m) and then pass the Karo La (5045 m). We will also see the holy lake of Yamdrok Tso (4441 m), one of the three holy lakes in Tibet and the largest habitat of water fowls in south Tibet. There enjoy the unforgettable vista of its spear-shaped expanse of turquoise water, with the mysterious Mt. Donang Sangwari (5,340m) on

the peninsula beyond, and the snow peaks of Nojin Gangzang (7,191m) in the distance. The lake and the Yarlung-Tsangpo River (3570) is separated by a mountain and the shortest distance between them is only 6 kilometers. The 800m height difference contributes a rich water resource to this region. Many Tibetans believe that the life of Tibet will no longer continue when the lake dries up. In Gyantse you will visit Pelkor Chode Monastery as well as the splendid Kumbum Stupa (100-Thousand-Buddha Pagoda) nearby, both of them built in the 15th century and situated in the northwestern edge of Gyantse. This typical Tibetan Buddhist monastery is the only one large building complex in Tibet where old monasteries and stupas are completely preserved and characterized as symbols of a monument. 14,000 kilograms of bronze was used to make the 8-meter-high sitting statue of Sykamoni Buddha housed in the grand hall of the temple. The 8 story Stupa is 42m high and 62m in diameter contains a total of 76 chapels with wonderful murals revered by art scholars around the world. In the afternoon, we will reach Shigatse (3800 m), the second largest town with 40,000 inhabitants in Tibet and the traditional capital of the Tsang. O/N in a 3 star hotel. (B/D)

Day 05: Gyantse to Shigatse

Drive to Shigatse, there you will visit Tashilhunpo monastery of Gelugpa sect, the seat of the Panchen Lama built in 1447 and one of the six grand monasteries in Tibet. The monastery houses a giant statue of the Maitreya Buddha, the biggest gilded statue of Maitreya (Bouddha of the future) in China, and a tomb of the 4th Panchen Lama containing masses of jewels and gold. In Tibet Buddhism, the Panchen Lama is just the embodiment of Maitreya Buddha. Supposed to get up early, have a chance to listen to the morning prayers in the Grand Hall of Tashilhunpo Monastery, and see lamas rushing around pouring yak butter tea into endless rows of cups. O/N in 3 star hotel.(B/L)

Day 06: Shigatse to Lhasa

After breakfast take a 6-hour drive along the Brahmaputra River to Lhasa(3650 m). O/N in a 3 star hotel. (B)

Day 07: Lhasa

In the morning visit Potala, which was originally constructed in 637 by Songtsen Gampo, the first king of the united Tibet, and later expanded and served as the winter residence of the Dalai Lamas as well as the religious-political nexus of traditional Tibet. The crowds of pilgrims, innumerable magnificent murals, Buddhist statues, scriptures and rare treasures altogether create a dense religious and art atmosphere that impresses every visitor. In the afternoon visit Jokhang monastery, the center of Tibetan Buddhism and the sacred land of Buddhist followers where innumerable pilgrims come for worship everyday. The temple, built in 647, is the earliest wood-and-masonry structure still existing in Tibet. Walk on the Barkhor street surrounding Jokhang, a big free market with its prolific stalls for selling local specialties. O/N in a 3 star hotel. (B/L)

Day 08: Lhasa

In the morning visit Drepung monastery the sacred land of Gelugpa sect., which was created in 1416 and the second, third and fourth Dalai Lama once resided in. In the afternoon visit Sera monastery, which was created in 1419 and has always been an important Buddhist seminary. As roses are planted everywhere in the monastery, it is also called "the court of wild rose". Today still 200 lamas live there. O/N in a 3 star hotel. (B/L)

Day 09: Flight Lhasa-Chengdu

In the early morning transfer to the airport and fly back to Chengdu. Then connecting flights.
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