



MARKHA VALLEY & KANG YATSE 2 (6250M)

TOUR INFORMATION

Activity: Trekking & Walking

Tour Duration: 14 Days

Min Age For Trips: 16+



STEADY PLUS

INCLUSIONS

- 6 Nights Hotel, 7 Nights Camping
- All Meals during treks (B, L, D)
- Delhi and Leh Hotel B - Breakfast
- Fully Supported Trekking
- Flight Delhi To Leh Return

This information should answer some of your questions about the trip and give you a better idea of what we do day-to-day. It doesn't hope to answer everything. If you have any questions please get in touch.

Markha Valley offers a delightful route through constantly changing scenery offering an interesting trek as well as ideal preparation and acclimatisation for the ascent of Kang Yatse – 2 (6250m). Led by a qualified mountain guides, this Ladakh trekking experience is supplemented by the most beautiful monasteries of Ladakh, atmospheric landscapes that characterise this unforgettable journey.

A classic and colourful trek from the High Places portfolio. We have combined this trek in the Markha Valley with an unusual finish, crossing a high and rarely used pass at 5349m.

In the warm-up to the trek, we commence from a gardened hotel in a relaxed manner. The walking starts gently from the village of Markha, passing through the small settlements and monasteries of the Markha valley. These are surrounded by scenic barley fields. The valley narrows to a rocky canyon, leading us to the high pastures of Nimaling. Sheep, goats and yaks graze here at over 4800m during the short summer.

From our elevated camp, we follow easy-angled snow slopes and a fine ridge, to reach the summit of Kang Yatse – 2 (6250m), where we are routinely rewarded with views extending as far as K2 and the Karakoram, the Pamirs and Tibet – a justifiably memorable day.

Highlights

- A classic and colourful trek
- Optional climb of Kang Yatse - 2 (6250m) has no technical difficulties
- Remote villages and encounters with locals give a good balance
- Compact itinerary with good acclimatisation
- Stands alone as a quality trek with or without Kang Yatse

India and Ladakh

High Places began in India. 1987 saw our very first trip set off to trek in the Garhwal Himalayas in north India. We have gradually widened our destinations and now also go to Ladakh, Sikkim and to Kerala. If you are looking for an authentic, energetic yet sensitive holiday in India we are the specialists. Moreover we continue to hold India in great respect and have a deep regard for the land and its people. To travel with High Places here will disprove many of the myths you might hold and leave you with a sense of wonder and incredulity. There is a life-force in India, which we may already have lost in the West. Go and see for yourself.

The mountain kingdom of Ladakh is in the far north of India and is a remote region of wild arid valleys, rocky gorges and ridges leading to peaks over 6000m. It lies in the rain shadow north of the Himalayan divide and so avoids the influence of the monsoon. It is subject to extremes in temperature, with hot summers and very cold winters. Little wonder that the Ladakhis are a hardy and self-sufficient people. Through ingenious irrigation systems, the villages in summer are oases of green barley fields; isolated splashes of colour in the desert landscape. Prayer flags, chortens, and mani walls of carved prayer stones are a constant reminder that Buddhism is a way of life, with symbols and spirits from pre Buddhist times incorporated into the present day faith.

Itinerary

This itinerary is flexible and should be seen as a guide only. Local conditions, weather or fitness could lead to changes in our daily plans. All times and distances are approximate. 'B,L,D' refers to meals included in the trip cost, i.e. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

This trip is 14 days ex DELHI. The first and last days refer to the days of arrival in and departure from INDIA, and may not be the days you leave or return home.

DAY 1: Arrival in Delhi

Welcome to Delhi! Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel. Enjoy some time exploring nearby attractions, such as the vibrant Karol Bagh Market or the stunning Sikh temple, Gurudwara Bangla Sahib. **Accommodation: Hotel**

DAY 2: Fly to Leh (3,500m)

Your day starts with a spectacular early morning flight to Leh. The rest of the day is focused on acclimatizing to the altitude. In the afternoon, take a leisurely orientation walk around Leh's markets and streets. **Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: (B)**

DAY 3: Excursion to Thikse Monastery and Stok Palace

Today's sightseeing includes two major monasteries. Starting with a visit to Shey, the former royal palace with its 350-year-old Buddha statue. From Shey we walk to Thikse (1hr 30min) to explore the hilltop monastery. After lunch at Thikse, return to Leh for a trek briefing and gear check.

Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: (B)



DAY 4 : Acclimatisation walk; optional jeep ride to Khardungla Pass

Enjoy an acclimatization walk around Leh Valley, visiting Namgyal Hill, Tsemo Monastery, Sankar, and Shanti Stupa for stunning views of Leh and surrounding villages. Optionally, take a jeep ride to Khardungla Pass (5,602m), one of the world's highest motorable roads, with the trip taking about 4-5 hours. **Accommodation: Hotel, Meals: (B)**

DAY 5: Drive to Markha Valley (3750m)

Time to head for the mountains! We drive to the village of Hamurja at the head of the Markha Valley. After lunch we follow the Markha River upstream through Sara and Chalak to Markha, the largest village in the Hemis National Park. We spend our first night camping and get to know our trekking crew. Mornings and evenings will present you with the most breathtaking views of softly lit mountains towering above, endless panoramic vistas and chance encounters with the local wildlife. Evening walk around the village and visit the monastery.

Driving: 4 hrs

Hiking: 2-3 hrs / 10km **Accommodation: Tent, Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 6: Markha - Tahungtse (4250 m)

We continue following the Markha River, crossing it a couple of times – there might be bridges or we might have to paddle. Rounding a corner, we stop off at the precariously positioned Tache Gompa, another stunning Buddhist monastery perched on a seemingly inaccessible cliff top but reached via a short, steep climb. We can admire the incredible views down the valley before continuing on, to Hankar village for lunch. After lunch a side valley takes us past the ruins of Hankar Fort before descending into the Upper Hankar and further to a stream-side camp. Stunningly remote, the camp here is often shared with the resident Himalayan blue sheep.

Hiking: 6-7 hrs / 15km **Accommodation: Tent, Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 7: Nimaling (4854 m)

Today is a shorter half day walk as we gain altitude. The trail climbs steeply to a plateau where the valley opens out. Ahead we have spectacular views of Kang Yatse (6400m), the highest peak in the valley. People do not live permanently in this region, but during the summer months the shepherds bring their flocks of goats, sheep and dzos (a hybrid of cow and yak) to graze on the pastures. Throughout the summer, the shepherds stay in stone shelters – you can often buy local yogurt from them. We should get to Nimaling by lunchtime and in the afternoon, there is an optional walk up behind camp towards Kang Yangtse. This is well worth doing and highly recommended for the impressive close-up views of Kang Yangste.

Hiking: 4 -5 hrs / 8km **Accommodation: Tent, Meals: (B,L,D)**



DAY 8: Day at Nimaling (4854m)

Today we hike around and allow your body to adjust to the altitude. Use the time to hydrate, relax, and prepare both physically and mentally for the upcoming summit days.

Accommodation: Tent, Meals: (B,L,D)

DAY 9: Kang Yatse - 2 Base Camp (5100m)

We climb up to Kang Yatse base camp approx. 3 hrs, and we use rest of the time to distribute equipment and gears required for the climb and also to practice basic techniques we will require on our summit push tonight. We go to a nearby slope for training and to get comfortable with our equipment - snow boots, ice axes and crampons. We will learn techniques and calls of roping up and ascending and descending on a snowy terrain. We end the day early so that we can get optimum rest before our climb tonight rest and prepare for the summit bid.

3 hours approx. **Accommodation: Tent, Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 10: Climb Kang Yatse-2 (6250m)

Kang Yatse-2 (6250m), we start between around 2 AM climbing the slope to the right of Base Camp until we reach the top of the ridge. Although the trail is well marked, the terrain changes here to loose scree and moraine which gets slippery and needs to be traversed with caution. We keep climbing the ridge until reaching the ablation zone of the glacier from the north face of Kang Yatse II. After a short 100m climb up the moraine ridge, we rope up and enter the glacier. We will traverse the north face toward the northwest ridge while steadily climbing upwards. Once we climb around the northwest ridge, we climb straight above a rocky outcropping and follow the ridge to the summit. After spend some time at summit we return to base camp where hot meals will be ready for us. **Accommodation: Tent Meals: (B,L,D)**



DAY 11: Descend via Kongmaru La (5286 m)

We leave base camp and descend a little towards Nimaling then a rising traverse leads across to the Kongmaru La (5286m) for the final prayer flag strewn pass with great views back towards Dzo Jongo East and West and Regani Malo. The descent is initially steep as we enter a gorge and zigzag down, crossing the river a several times until the angle eases off. We will either camp at Chukdo or continue on to the village of Shang Sumdo. Approx 8 hours to Shang Sumdo.

Accommodation: Tent, Meals: (B,L,D)

DAY 12: Leh via Hemis

We meet our transport for the short drive to Hemis, one of the most important Gompas in the region. There will be time for a look around Hemis Gompa before continuing on to Leh.

Accommodation: Hotel, Meals (B)

DAY 13: Flight to Delhi

A memorable flight across the Himalayas and a dramatic end to our adventures in Ladakh.

Accommodation: Hotel, Meals (B)

DAY 14: Depart Delhi

Depart Delhi or extend your trip. Optional extensions include visiting the Taj Mahal or exploring more of Delhi. International flights should ideally depart after 14:00 for possible flight delays from Leh. **Meals (B)**

What is included in the price?

- Accommodation (2 Nights Delhi, 4 Nights in Leh and 7 Nights Camping)
- Meals (All Meals during treks. Delhi and Leh Hotel B - Breakfast)
- Guide (English speaking local Leader)
- Transfers (All transfers and Sightseeing as per the itinerary)
- Domestic Flights (Delhi - Leh return flights)

What is not included in the price?

- Indian Visa Charges
- Insurances
- Tips for the local staff

The Trek

A delightful route through constantly changing scenery. The Markha Valley is at times wide enough for a village with its irrigated crop of barley, where men and women working in the fields greet us as we pass by. At other times it is little more than a rocky gorge. Some days are short due to the altitude and the need for acclimatization, with the possibility of afternoon forays from camp. We will be supported by a team of horses. Tents, food and baggage accompany us and on trek we only carry what we need for the day ourselves.

Accommodation

In Leh, the hotel is simple, but clean with en suite facilities. On the trek, we use two person tents, with a larger communal tent for meals. In Delhi we stay in a comfortable hotel.

Food

Whilst 'on trek' all meals are included. In Delhi and Leh we provide bed and breakfast only. This allows you the option of choosing where you would like to eat, which is very much part of the adventure. On trek we eat a mix of Indian, Chinese and continental food prepared to a surprisingly high standard. There are always several dishes: dals, vegetables and sometimes meat if fresh chicken or lamb is tracked down. Breakfasts and lunches are varied and appetising.

Vegetarians are well catered for in India. If you have any other dietary restrictions please let us know when booking.

Altitude

Above 3000m, the air is thinner, the pressure is lower and there is less oxygen available in the atmosphere. Acclimatization is the process by which the body adapts to these conditions. The key to acclimatization is a good itinerary with a gradual initial height gain, walking at a slow and steady pace, and increasing fluid intake – drinking at least 4 liters a day is advisable above 3000m. There are lots of tea houses along the way.

Transport

To and from the trek/climb we travel by jeep.

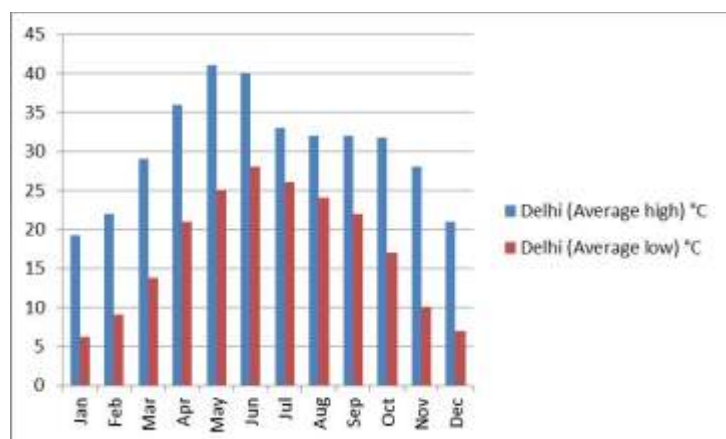
Health and Hygiene

We have an excellent record of staying fit and well in India. The key seems to be our enthusiasm for Indian vegetarian food, (most of India is vegetarian), and care with water, peeling fruit, avoiding salads etc. We would recommend abstinence from meat in Leh before the trek. Laundry facilities in towns are always available in India. Their ability to transform a bag of dirty and crumpled trekking 'rags' into a pile of pristine, folded and ironed 'new' clothes constantly amazes.

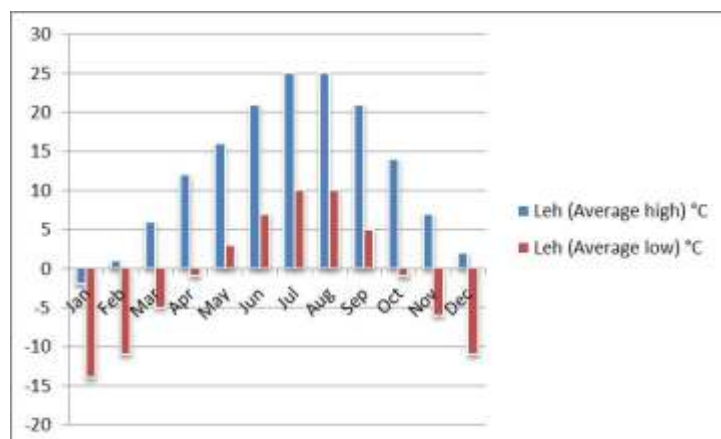
Climate

In Delhi it will be hot around 35°C, and wet. During the monsoon (June to mid-September) it rains almost every day, often in a downpour, but the sun comes out between showers. Beyond the monsoon in Leh and on the trek it should mostly be hot and dry, but rainfall (and snow) are always possible in the mountains. At night on the trek, temperatures could drop well below freezing, especially at the high camps so suitable clothing is required.

Temperatures in Delhi



Temperatures in Leh



Language

There are 14 major languages in India and around 200 minor languages and dialects. Hindi is the most important Indian language and is spoken by about half the population. Both English and Hindi are used administratively throughout the country. In Ladakh, Ladakhi, Hindi and English are used. Many people will speak English, but a willingness to pick up some basic words of Hindi and/or Ladakhi may enrich your trip.

Indian Visas

A full passport is required to apply for the Indian visa, with a validity of at least 6 months beyond the intended duration of stay in the country. It is the client's responsibility to complete all the application procedures and obtain their visas before the intended date of departure. A simplified facility of applying for an eVisa is now available to British passport holders, this will entitle the applicants to a 60 day tourist visa, for more details please log on to the official website of Indian Government <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/> Alternatively UK passport holders can apply themselves for Indian Visa through India High Commissions Visa service VFS by logging on to <http://in.vfsglobal.co.uk/>. Current visa fee for British passport holders

