



## Trek The Markha Valley & Summit UT Kangri (6070m)



**High Places Tours**  
Journeys Beyond Adventure



### TOUR INFORMATION

**Activity:** Trekking & Walking

**Tour Duration:** 16 Days

**Min Age For Trips:** 16+

### INCLUSIONS

- 5 Nights Hotel, 8 Nights Camping
- 13 Breakfasts, 8 Lunches, 9 Dinners
- 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.*

## Highlights

- Trek through the high-altitude desert landscapes of the Hemis National Park, home to blue sheep, wolves and the elusive snow leopard.
- Pass through remote villages and witness the quiet pastoral life of Ladakhis.
- Ascend a 6070m Himalayan peak, UT Kangri. This is a non-technical peak and an ideal first 6000m peak. The climb is led by expert local mountain guides.
- Fly over the Indian Himalaya from Delhi to Leh. On a clear day this is one of the most spectacular mountain flights on earth.
- Experience the Tibetan Buddhist culture of Ladakh with its spectacularly situated hilltop monasteries.

## 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.

## Overview

Ladakh, often called the Land of High Passes, is located in the Indian Himalayas. It is known for its beautiful landscapes, rich culture, and peaceful atmosphere. Ladakh is a Union Territory of India and one of the last places where Tibetan Buddhism is still widely practiced. It's dramatic scenery with windy valleys, sharp mountain ridges, old monasteries built on cliffs and is one of the best adventure travel destinations on earth. Join us on this wonderful trek through the Hemis National Park with a challenging (entirely optional) ascent of UT Kangri, 6070m.



## 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 and Dinner**.

**This trip is 16 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.

### Day 2 - Fly to Leh 3500m

Early morning transfer to airport for sensational flight over the Himalaya to Leh (3500m). On arrival in Leh, transfer to hotel. The rest of the day is free to relax and acclimatise to the altitude (3,500m). We rest and catch up on some sleep and in the afternoon there will be a gentle orientation walk around Leh and its bazaars.

Overnight Hotel

Meals included: (Breakfast)

### Day 3 - Sightseeing in and around Leh

In the morning, visit Spituk and Phyang monasteries near Leh. Spituk is built on a hill and offers panoramic views of the Indus Valley. It follows the Gelugpa (Yellow Hat) sect of Buddhism. Phyang is about 16 km from Leh, belongs to the Drikung Kagyu sect, and was founded in 1515 CE. It holds old manuscripts and statues. After breakfast we drive along the Indus Valley to Shey where we stop and visit the old Royal Palace and temple with a 2 storey gilded Buddha. From Shey we have a pleasant warm up walk across the fields to Tikse monastery. Set high above the village this is one of the most magnificent monasteries in Ladakh. After a late lunch we drive back to Leh.

Overnight Hotel

Meals included: (Breakfast)



**DAY4: Acclimatisation walk Leh valley**

Today we will take a circular walk of the Leh Valley. We make our way past Leh Palace and up to Tsemo Hill, with great views over Leh. We descend past the large Lamdon School and walk across the valley to the Shanti Stupa, a beautiful white domed stupa with great views of Leh and the peaks across the valley. Built in the 1990's by Japanese monks it was part of a mission to promote world peace. We descend back to Leh for lunch and the afternoon is free to explore Leh. There will be a full trek briefing today. There is also the opportunity to do an early morning jeep drive to the Khardung La, one of the highest motorable road passes on earth at over 5,000m. This is an optional trip which you can book and pay for locally. (If you do the jeep trip in the morning, you can do the walk later in the day).

Overnight Hotel

Meals included: (Breakfast)

**DAY 5: Into the Markha Valley (3750m)**

Time to head for the mountains! We drive to the village of Sara at the head of the Markha Valley. After lunch we follow the Markha River upstream through Chalak to Markha, the largest village in the Hemis National Park. We spend our first 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.

Accommodation: TENTS

Meals included: (Breakfast/ Lunch / Dinner)

Driving: 4 hrs

Hiking: 2-3 hrs / 10km / 200m ↑

**DAY 6: Markha to Thachungtse (4250m)**

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.

Overnight TENTS

Meals included: (Breakfast/ Lunch / Dinner)

Hiking: 6-7hrs · 15km · 500m ↑



**DAY 7: Thachungtse to Nimaling (4854m)**

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 will reach Nimaling by lunchtime and your trek crew will set up the camp. In the afternoon, there is time to explore the Kang Yatse region behind the campsite as further acclimatisation.

Overnight TENTS

Meals included: (Breakfast/ Lunch / Dinner)

Hiking: 4 -5 hours / 8km / 600m ↑

**DAY 8: Nimaling to Chaktsang (4700m)**

A tough day today as we cross our first pass. The trail takes us further up the valley and over the Lalung La (5300m), with jaw-dropping views of the snow-topped peaks of three six-thousanders, Dzo Jongo, Kang Yatse and Regoni Malari, as your reward. Look out for the high-altitude glaciers that are the main water source for the people of the Markha Valley. Descending the other side of the pass we reach our spectacular camp at Chaktsang, surrounded by wonderful rock formations.

Overnight TENTS

Meals included: (Breakfast/ Lunch / Dinner)

Hiking: 5 - 6 hours / 13km / 470m ↑ 620m ↓

**DAY 9: Chaktsang to Lato (4000m)**

Another challenging day of up and down awaits. We start with a steep climb over the Chaktsang La Pass (5200m) and then we contour round the valley before dropping into a side gorge. We now descend all the way to Lato. There will be several river crossings this afternoon so you will need to carry your river crossing shoes. We camp at Lato and the valley from which you will approach UT Kangri.

You have now left the traditional Markha Valley trail and have several days of quieter paths where you'll be joined only by nomadic herders and intrepid mountaineers. Tonight's camp is situated on the Kyamur River on the quiet outskirts of Lato

village. Overnight TENTS

Meals included: (Breakfast/ Lunch / Dinner)

Hiking: 5 - 6 hours / 18km / 500m ↑ 1200m ↓



### **DAY 10: Lato to Rumtse Phu (4854m)**

Having completed the trek through the Markha Valley, and now well-acclimatised to the higher altitudes, it's time to ascend the Lato Valley on the approach to UT Kangri. Your trail follows old nomadic routes between several farming villages, exploring more of the traditional Ladakhi culture on your way to Rumtse Phu. Here, the locals are known for their horse riding and traditional dance of Gya-Pa-Cho. Although still in remote, high mountain terrain, both the villages of Lato and Rumtse Phu are connected by road, so we may have to cross the road several times today.

Overnight TENTS

Meals included: (Breakfast/ Lunch / Dinner)

Hiking: 5 - 6 hours / 17km / 850m ↑

### **DAY 11: Trek up to UT Kangri Base Camp (5300m)**

Tackle the short but steep morning walk up to base camp where you'll spend the next two nights. At over 5000m you'll need to take today slowly as your body acclimatises further. Enjoy views of surrounding unclimbed peaks and the green pasturelands below. After lunch, your mountain guide will deliver a session introducing you to the techniques you will use on the snowy slopes above, including walking roped up and how to use crampons and ice-axes. We will pack our daypacks and get everything ready for tomorrow. We have an early dinner and get to bed for a few hours sleep in preparation for tomorrow.

Overnight TENTS

Meals included: (Breakfast/ Lunch / Dinner)

Hiking: 4 hours / 6km / 450m ↑

### **DAY 12: Rest and acclimatisation day at base camp**

A full day to rest 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 day.

Overnight TENTS

Meals included: (Breakfast/ Lunch / Dinner)



**DAY 13: Summit day!**

We set off very early (usually 1/2am) for our summit bid. A challenging climb awaits as you ascend steep scree and moraine before crossing snow fields on the way to the top. Finally, reach the summit at 6070m to be rewarded with views of Kang Yatse and many other high peaks of Ladakh. Take in the achievement of summitting a huge 6000m mountain before making the descent back to base camp where you can enjoy a well-earned HOT meal.

Overnight TENTS

Meals included: (Breakfast/ Lunch / Dinner)

Hiking: 10 - 12 hours / 800m ↑ 800m ↓

**DAY 14: Hike out and back to Leh**

Enjoy your last morning in the high mountains before hiking back down to Rumtse Phu, where you say goodbye to your trek crew and will be picked up for the return journey to Leh. We will be back in Leh by lunchtime for a welcome hot shower and there is time for last minute exploration of Leh in the afternoon. Overnight in Leh.

Overnight Hotel

Meals included: (Breakfast)

Hiking: 2-3 hours / 6km / 450m ↓

Driving: 80 Kms / 2-3 hours

**DAY 15: Fly to Delhi**

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for flight back to Delhi which is usually in the morning. Depending on the timing of the flight from Leh, it may be possible to do a short sightseeing tour.

OPTIONAL. Guided tours to include the India Gate, Lutyens Delhi, Raj Ghat, the Red Fort. Or a walking tour of Old Delhi to include the Spice Market and Rikshaw ride. Alternatively, you may choose to take it easy at the hotel!

Overnight Hotel  
Meals included: (Breakfast)

**DAY 16: Depart Delhi**

Transfer to Airport

## Getting there

The trip starts and ends in Delhi. Transfers are provided on arrival from Delhi airport to the hotel in Delhi and on departure from the hotel in Delhi to the airport. Please let us know your flight details so we can pass this on to our local partner.

## Accommodation

In Leh, and Delhi we use simple yet comfortable hotels, all with en suite facilities. On trek we use two person tents, with a larger communal tent for meals. In Delhi we stay in a comfortable hotel. A single supplement is available on this trip which includes a single tent whilst on trek.

## Food

On trek all meals are included. In Delhi, 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 Indian, Chinese and western food prepared to a surprisingly high standard. There are always several dishes: dhals, vegetables and sometimes meat if fresh chicken or lamb is tracked down. Breakfasts and lunches are varied and appetizing 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. Acclimatisation is the process by which the body adapts to these conditions. The key to acclimatisation 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 litres a day is advisable above 3000m.

## Transport

We fly from Delhi to Leh and use buses, jeeps or taxis for the sightseeing round Leh and the journey from Leh to the start of the trek and from the end of the trek to Chandigarh. We use an air conditioned carriage on the train from Chandigarh to Delhi.

## 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.

## Money and Tipping

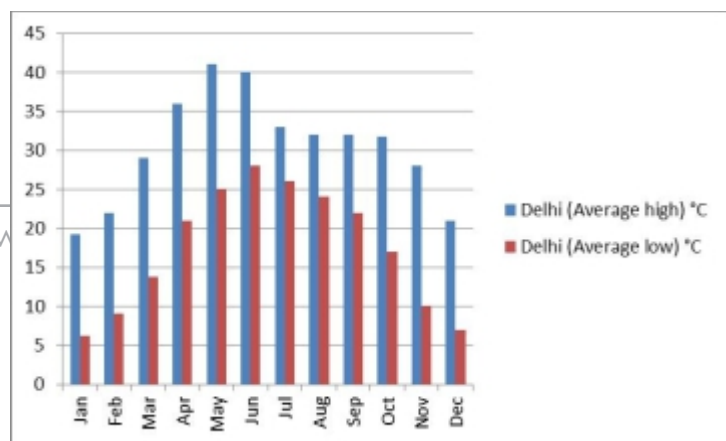
The currency in India is the Indian Rupee (INR). You can change money in Delhi and Leh. There are ATM machines in Delhi and in Leh, but please note that often they do not work, or they are empty. We advise you to bring at least half the money you will need in cash (if not all). You will need money for lunches and dinners in Delhi and Leh, a small amount for entry fees in Leh, incidentals such as drinks and snacks plus tipping. We suggest that you allow £150 for tipping for the whole trip. Your leader will advise on tipping for Delhi and Leh and the trek. All tipping (including the leader) is of course at your discretion.



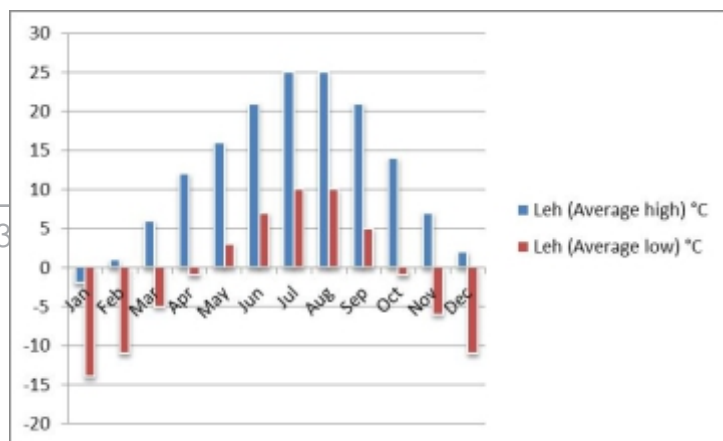
## Climate

During July and August, the temperature in Delhi will be hot (35°C) and humid. In Ladakh the summer is usually hot and dry. Temperatures can get to 25°C-30°C, with nighttime down to about 10°C. At our highest camps it will be cooler and nights can be as low as minus 5°C at base camp. Summit night will be cold as we start around 1am. At high altitude, the sun has a very strong effect. Ladakh is not normally affected by monsoon, and we can usually expect stable weather. However, mountains do generate their own weather systems, and some rain or snowfall cannot be ruled out.

**Temperatures in Delhi**



**Temperatures in Leh**



## 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

