

JOURNEY TO MT. KAILASH & LAKE MANASAROVAR 2014

12 NIGHTS 13 DAYS



Mt. Kailash

Mt Kailash, 6714m high, is also called Kang Rinpoche or 'The precious Jewel of the Snow'. Four major religions revere this mountain. Hindus consider it as the abode of Lord Shiva. Buddhists consider it as the manifestation of Sakyamuni, the Buddha. For the Jainis, this is the place of their first saint Adinath's emancipation. For Bons, the followers of pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet, their founder saint Shenrab is said to have descended on its peak. Mt. Kailash also known as Mt. Meru, is referred to as the navel of the earth. Four great rivers flow within a radius of 50 kms in four different directions. To the South is the sapphire face from where flows the Karnali, from the West flows the Sutlej, from the gold face on the North flows the Indus and eastwards flows the Brahmaputra, locally known as Yarlang Sangpo.

Mansarovar

Mansarovar is what remains of the Lake Tethys, considered the source of all creation. As the legend goes, Brahma created this lake for his meditation. Literally speaking it is manas+sarovar. 'Manas' refers to the mind of the God Brahma, the lake being its outward manifestation. The lake is at a height of 4560m with a circumference of 80 km, which can be trekked in about three days. It has a depth of 300 feet and covers an area of 320 sq kms. It is amongst the highest fresh water bodies in the world. It is believed that Sapta rishis come to bathe every morning in this lake between 3 to 5 am and this time is called 'Brahmamuhurta'. According to a legend, Queen Maya was given a bath by the Gods in its waters before she gave birth to Buddha. Holy also to Buddhists, it was once surrounded by 8 monasteries. Lake Manasarovar represents the female energy of Yoni of the Universe, while Mt. Kailash symbolizes the male energy of the Lingum.

To the west of Lake Manasarovar is Lake Rakshas Tal. It is connected to Lake Rakshas Tal by the Ganga Chhu channel. In Buddhism, Lake Manasarovar, which is round like the sun, and Lake Rakshas Tal, shaped as a crescent are respectively regarded as 'brightness' and 'darkness'. Rakshas Tal's salty water, a stark contrast to the fresh water of Lake Manasarovar.

The importance of doing the yatra

The region of Mt. Kailash and Manasarovar is steeped in religion and mythology and every year hundreds of pilgrims traverse some of the remotest and toughest regions of the Himalayas to pay their obeisance to the Lord. It is a land where Lord Shiva lives with his consort Parvati. According to religious texts, the abode of creator Brahma is called Brahmaloaka, the abode of Lord Vishnu is called Vaikuntha and the abode of Lord Shiva is called Kailash. Of the three, one can go bodily and return in this life having experienced divinity only from Kailash. It is believed that a single set of parikrama around Mount Kailash washes away sins of a lifetime while 108 parikramas will help achieve salvation or Nirvana. The parikrama or kora of Kailash is a three-day trek, 53 kms long and is performed in a clockwise direction. The Dolma pass is the highest point at 5630m. Gouri Kund (5608m), just ahead of the pass, is a group of five small kunds of different shapes containing emerald green water. It is also called the lake of compassion where Parvati bathed. The parikrama starts from Darchen and can be completed comfortably in three days. The locals do it in one long day! Hindus believe that Goddess Parvati has taken the form of the Manasarovar Lake and that deliverance is assured for people taking a bath in Manasarovar. Even drinking the waters of the lake frees a human being from sins committed in a hundred lives. It is believed that Parashuram's ashram too is situated on a hill on the banks of the Manasarovar.

Important Travel Information for Tibet

Tibet was opened to tourism in 1985. Earlier it avoided influence from the western world and developed its unique culture and religion. The tourism infrastructure is still very basic. So, do not expect the standards you are accustomed to in other tourist destinations. If you are not up for an adventure or for accommodations and amenities that are far from perfect, then this trip is not for you. The trip to Tibet is tough but the successful completion of the trip far outweighs the discomforts faced en route. Traveling to Mansarovar Lake is an incredible journey. It is undoubtedly one of the most rewarding of all such journeys known to man. En route you can see the world's highest mountains, travel on the world's highest plain and drive along some magnificent lakes. Rivers and streams are crossed and re-crossed, passes are climbed and conquered. Now-a-days this journey is easier as we do the trip in (relative) comfort in Japanese 4-wheel drive Land cruisers. On our tour, trekking is required only during the 3-day Kailash parikrama, when one has to cross the 19,500ft. high Dolma La.

FACT FILE:

Total Duration:	12 nights / 13 days
Dates	Banjara exclusive Trip 1: June 30- Jul 12, 2014 Banjara exclusive Trip 2: Sep 3- 15, 2014
Style of Tour:	Bus in Nepal and 4x4 Overland tour in Tibet
Grade:	Tough
Maximum Altitude:	5630m / 18466ft
Best Season:	May -Sept
Stay (nights):	Kathmandu-3 Star hotel; at other places: hotels/guesthouses.
Meal:	All meals including dinner on day 01 to breakfast on day 13
Travel:	Transfers & Sightseeing in bus & travel in Tibet is Toyota land cruisers.



Advantages of travelling with us:

- We work with Nepalese tour operator which is the only one to have its associated guest houses / hotels / fixed camps.
- Services of an accompanying experienced escort throughout Kailash Mansarovar Yatra by Land Cruiser.
- Pure vegetarian meals prepared by our expert cooks - ample variety during meals (except during actual parikrama).
- Gamow bag / medical oxygen cylinders / first aid kit taken during Mount Kailash Mansarovar Yatra by Land Cruiser.
- Down jacket on returnable basis to all pilgrims.

EXCLUSIVE BANJARA GROUP DATES:

GROUP SIZE: 25- 30

Group 1: Jun 30- Jul 12, 2014

Group 2: Sep 3- Sep 15, 2014

TO JOIN A GROUP: GROUP SIZE 80:

TOUR	Arrival in Kathmandu FIRST VISIT	Departure for Kailash	Arrival in Kathmandu SECOND VISIT	Final departure from Kathmandu	Days	Remarks
1	01 st May (Thursday)	03 rd May (Saturday)	12 th May (Monday)	13 th May (Tuesday)	13	
2	08 th May (Thursday)	10 th May (Saturday)	19 th May (Monday)	20 th May (Tuesday)	13	*Full Moon
3	15 th May (Thursday)	17 th May (Saturday)	26 th May (Monday)	27 th May (Tuesday)	13	
4	20 th May (Tuesday)	22 nd May (Thursday)	31 st May (Saturday)	01 st June (Sunday)	13	
5	02 nd June (Monday)	04 th June (Wednesday)	13 th June (Friday)	14 th June (Saturday)	13	
6	08 th June (Sunday)	10 th June (Tuesday)	19 th June (Tuesdays)	20 th June (Friday)	13	*Full Moon
7	14 th June (Saturday)	16 th June (Monday)	25 th June (Wednesday)	26 th June (Tuesday)	13	
8	30 th June (Monday)	02 nd July (Wednesday)	11 th July (Friday)	12 th July Saturday)	13	
9	06 th July (Sunday)	08 th July (Tuesday)	17 th July (Thursday)	18 th July (Friday)	13	*Full Moon
10	13 th July (Sunday)	15 th July (Tuesday)	24 th July (Thursday)	25 th July (Friday)	13	
11	20 th July (Sunday)	22 nd July (Tuesday)	31 st July (Thursday)	01 st (August) (Friday)	13	
12	27 th July (Sunday)	29 th July (Tuesday)	07 th August (Thursday)	08 th August (Friday)	13	
13	05 th August (Tuesday)	07 th August (Thursday))	16 th August (Saturday)	17 th August (Sunday)	13	*Full Moon
14	11 th August (Monday)	13 th August (Wednesday)	22 nd August (Friday)	23 rd August (Sat)	13	
15	15 th August (Friday)	17 th August (Sunday)	26 th August (Tuesday)	27 th August (Wed)	13	
16	29 th August (Friday)	31 st August (Sunday)	09 th Sept. (Tuesday)	10 th Sept. Wed	13	
17	03 rd Sept. (Wednesday)	05 th Sept. (Friday)	14 th Sept. (Sunday)	15 th Sept. (Monday)	13	*Full Moon
18	10 th Sept. (Wednesday)	12 th Sept. (Friday)	21 st Sept. (Sunday)	22 nd Sept. (Monday)	13	
19	19 th Sept. (Friday)	21 st Sept. (Sunday)	30 th Sept. (Tuesday)	01 st Oct (Wednesday)	13	

ITINERARY**Day 01: Arrive Kathmandu (1400m / 4600 ft)**

Upon arrival in Kathmandu we are met at the airport and we transfer to our hotel. The afternoon is at leisure and we walk around Kathmandu maybe walk through Thamel and enjoy the sights and sounds of the city. In the evening, we meet for a trip briefing and then proceed for dinner. Overnight at a hotel in Kathmandu.

Day 02: Sightseeing Tour around Kathmandu.

After breakfast, we leave for a sightseeing trip. We go the famous Pashupatinath Temple and Budhaneelkantha for a darshan. Evening at leisure as we prepare for the trip. Night stay in hotel.

Day 03: Kathmandu – Nyalam via Zhangmu (3750 m / 12300 ft) - 7-8 hrs

The drive eastwards is pleasant passing through agricultural countryside and descending to Dolalghat. The trail follows the Bhote Kosi River and then heads towards Kodari on gravel roads and landslip areas. At Kodari, we complete Nepal immigration formalities and cross the friendship bridge on foot to meet representatives from Tibet. Then, we drive for 45 minutes through lush green hillsides and cascading waterfalls to Zhangmu town by land cruisers, where we complete Chinese immigration formalities and then continue our drive for another 2 hours through the lush green landscape to Nyalam. Check into the guesthouse. Note: All of Tibet is on Beijing time. Due to this, the Ngari region of Tibet, which is so far west of Beijing, is dark at 8 a.m. and there is sunlight until about 9 p.m.!

Day 04: Acclimatization day at Nyalam (3750 m / 12300 ft)

Rest day at Nyalam for acclimatization. After breakfast, we set out to the edge of the town to climb a small ridge for a fantastic view of the mountain range. Return to the lodge for lunch. Later, one can stroll through the town bazaar or visit the nearby monastery. Overnight at the Guest House.

Day 05: Nyalam – Saga (4300 m / 14100 ft; 240 kms/ 4-5 hrs)

Drive from Nyalam to Saga via Laluna-La (pass) (5050 m / 16564 ft), Lake Paigu – Tso and the Tsang Po (Brahmaputra River). The terrain starts with a rough drive over land slide areas climbing gradually with increasing altitude to arrive at Laluna – La (pass) marked by prayer flags and cairns with skeletal yak heads with horns. You will be able to see Gaurishanker, Shishpangma and Langtang Himal peaks on this day. From here, leave the main trail to Lhasa and head west descending to the serene and beautiful Lake Paigu – Tso. Descend further to the crossing on the Tsang Po (Brahmaputra River). Cross the river then drive to the hustle and bustle of the Saga town. Overnight at Hotel / Camping.

Day 06: Saga – Manasarovar (4500 m / 14300 ft; 450 kms/ 7-8 hrs)

This day is a long day we leave early morning from Manasarovar. After breakfast, drive via. Drive through the windswept territory passing many villages and camps of Yak herders with distance view of snow capped mountains. On this day the road is quite flat, hence the drive will be comfortable compared to other days. We shall have lunch en route. Thereafter drive to Hor Quo (4560 m). We continue driving crossing Mayum La pass (5200 m) and arrive at Hor Quo. Today is the day of lifetime, as we will have the first sight of Mt. Kailash and Lake Manasarovar. Stay in a guest house on the bank of Holy Mansarover Lake. Overnight at local guest house.

Day 07: Rest & explore Lake Manasarovar

Rest day at Lake Manasarovar for acclimatization. We make the most of this and do short walks around giving our body a chance to get used to this altitude. This is especially important because if we intend to do the Parikrama then we will be walking higher. Dinner and overnight camp at Manasarovar.

Day 08 Drive to Darchen (4620 m) - 1 hr

After breakfast, drive to Darchen (4620 m). Darchen is located beneath the majestic holy Mount Kailash, a small village with couple of guesthouses. During the auspicious pilgrimage time, this place will be flooded with Pilgrims with hundreds of tents all around. Darchen is the beginning and end point of the Kora. Overnight at guest house.

Day 09 Drive to Sershong / Tarboche (13 km) and trek to Driraphuk (4860 m) 7 km/ 5 - 6 hrs.

After breakfast, drive approx. 13 Kms. to Sershong also known as Tarboche, the trek starting point of Kailash Parikrama. Tarboche is also referred as the outer "Asthapath". The first day of our Kora is a gradual walk with multitudes of other local pilgrims chanting and praying. The trail leads us to few ups and downs till we reach our camp/guest house at Driraphuk. From your guest-house you get excellent view of North Face of Mt. Kailash. Overnight at guesthouse.

Day 10: Drira Phuk to Zutul Phuk (5150 m / 16890 ft; 22 km; 8-10 hrs)

After an early breakfast, we start trek from Drira phuk and cross the Lha Chu on a wooden bridge. If one continues to trek up the Lha Chu, one would reach the true source of the Indus. The Kora route takes a serious climb on to a moraine eventually meeting the trail from the East bank. The trail now climbs more gently to a meadow full of fat marmots (Phiya) at 5212 m / 17095 ft. Climb past piles of clothing at Shiva-tsal (5330 m / 17490 ft). As a part of their custom, Tibetans leave an article of clothing or a drop of blood here as part of leaving their past life behind them. Continue past thousands of small rock cairns to a large cairn at 5390 m passing the Dikpa Karnak, a sin testing stone. It is said that those without sin can squeeze through the narrow hole between the boulders while a sinner no matter how small cannot pass through! The trail now leads across a boulder field and climbs through large rocks to a tiny stream. Climb onto a ridge and continue gently on to the Dolma La at 5630 m / 18470 ft. A big boulder on the pass representing the goddess Dolma (better known by her Sanskrit name Tara) is festooned with prayer flags and streamers. It is traditional to leave and take something as part of the collection of coins, prayer flags, teeth and other offerings attached to the rock. The trail from the west side of the pass is steep and rocky at first and then begins a series of switchbacks as it passes Gauri Kund. Many more switchbacks and steep descents leads to the valley and then further descent for about an hour to arrive alongside the Lham Chhukhir at 5150 m / 16890 ft), the evening's campsite on the banks of a river. Overnight in tents.

Day 11: Zutulphuk to Darchen- Saga (2-3 hrs walk; drive of 7-8 hrs)

At Zutul-phuk Gompa (4790 m / 15710 ft), there is a cave in which the saint Milarepa is said to have meditated. It is said that he adjusted the height of this cave to make it more comfortable. His footprint still remains on the roof. Trek along the Jhong Chu (River) to a bridge, cross it before descending to 4610 m, the last prostration point (Chaksal Gang) from where we get good views of Manasarovar lake but no views of Mt. Kailash. We meet the vehicles here and carry onto back to Saga. Night stay in hotel in Saga.

Day 12: Saga – Kathmandu- 9-12 hrs

We leave for Kathmandu very early in the morning. At Zhangmu border where we complete immigration formalities at the Chinese immigration office. After the clearance of border formalities we cross the Friendship Bridge, which spans the Bhoté Kosi River and marks the Chinese – Nepalese border. We say goodbye to our Tibetan guide and driver, and walk up to Nepalese Immigration office in Kodari where we will be met by our Nepalese staff. We drive to Kathmandu and stay the night in hotel.

Day 13: Fly out

Post breakfast, transfer to airport to fly back.

COSTS: Indian Passport Holders:-

EXCLUSIVE BANJARA GROUP:

US\$ 1150 + INR 45000- per person on twin sharing basis*

US\$ 1150 + INR 53000 per person on single occupancy basis*

*(*Twin sharing / single occupancy will only be applicable in Kathmandu and Camping whereas at all other places, dormitory / twin / triple sharing accommodation would be provided)*

IF YOU WISH TO JOIN A LARGE GROUP:

US\$ 1150 + INR 40000- per person on twin sharing basis*

US\$ 1150 + INR 48000 per person on single occupancy basis*

*(*Twin sharing / single occupancy will only be applicable in Kathmandu and Camping whereas at all other places, dormitory / twin / triple sharing accommodation would be provided)*

The above cost for Mount Kailash Mansarovar Yatra by jeep/Luxury Bus via Nepal for 2014 includes:

- Airport / Hotel / Airport transfers in Kathmandu.
- One half day sightseeing tour of Kathmandu valley covering Pashupatinath Temple and Budhaneelkantha – the temple of sleeping Vishnu.
- Transportation Kathmandu / Tibet Border / Kathmandu by Non A/c Coach.
- Three nights' accommodation on twin sharing basis at 4* Hotel in Kathmandu (Shanker / Vaishali or equivalent) with daily breakfast, lunch and dinner (pure vegetarian).
- Two nights' accommodation on sharing basis in Nyalam in PILGRIMS INN /Similer Lodge with common toilet facility.
- Two nights' accommodation in New Hotel Saga or equivalent on sharing basis in Saga with attached toilet facility.
- One night accommodation in basic guest house in Darchen without toilet / shower facility.
- Two nights' accommodation at Chui Gompa Guest house (basic guest house) at Mansarovar without toilet / shower facility.
- One night accommodation at Dirapuk Hotel (best available hotel / guest house) at Dirapuk without toilet / shower facility.
- One night accommodation at Zuthulpuk Guest House / Camps without toilet / shower facility.
- Camping arrangement backed by Nepalese Sherpa crew on full board basis – except inside Nepal, all the meals in Tibet side shall be cooked and provided by our Sherpa staff.
- Services of an English speaking Nepalese team leader from Kathmandu and an English speaking Tibetan guide from Kodari Border onwards.
- Transportation inside Tibet by Luxury Bus / 4WD jeeps (4 pax per jeep basis).
- A support truck to carry food / camping equipments etc.
- Necessary Yak & Yak men to carry your luggage (one piece per person only) for Kailash Kora.
- Applicable entrance fees to visit Monasteries.
- Normal China / Tibet Single Entry Visa fee.
- One duffel bag per person on complimentary basis.
- One down jacket per person on returnable basis.
- Yatra completion certificate to each pilgrim upon successful completion of yatra.
- Insurance for our sherpa team / team leader.
- First aid-kit with medical oxygen cylinder and Gamow Bag.
- Pulse Oxy meter.
- 1 Roaming Phone with the Team Leader for communication in case of emergency.

The above cost for Mount Kailash Mansarovar Yatra via Nepal for 2014 excludes:

- Travel & medical insurance – we strongly recommend that one should take insurance coverage to cope up with any eventuality.
- **3.09% govt. service tax.**
- Rescue evacuation cost in case of emergency.
- Airfare to Kathmandu and back.
- Extra cost in the event of landslide for hiring additional transportation or portage on The Arniko Highway (INR 500 - 700) per person.
- Expenses of personal nature viz. soft / hard beverages including mineral water, photography charges, portage at the airports / hotels, laundry, tips, telephone calls etc.
- Yak / Pony hiring charges for riding during Kailash Parikarma.
- Anything not specifically mentioned in the clause, "**The above cost includes**".

Booking Conditions for Mount Kailash Mansarovar Yatra by jeeps via Nepal for 2013:

- Booking shall be accepted with a non-refundable deposit of INR 25,000 per person. Balance payment should be paid at least 45 days before the trip departure. Payment should be made by bank transfer to our INR or Foreign Currency Account or should be made by INR draft favoring "**Banjara Camps and Retreats P. Ltd.**" payable at Delhi.
- Passport copy with minimum 6 months validity.
- Letter from a doctor certifying that you fit to undertake this pilgrimage.
- Booking MUST be made minimum 2 months prior to each departure date.
- Booking Form duly filled up.

Cancellation Policy for Mount Kailash Mansarovar Yatra by jeeps via Nepal for 2013:

- Once a booking is made, the deposit fee is non-refundable, irrespective of circumstances.
- Cancellation made 45 days before the departure date – 25 % of total package cost.
- Cancellation made 30 days before the departure date – 50 % total package cost.
- No refunds for any cancellation made within 30 days from date of travel.
- Cancellations must be sent by e-mail, verbal cancellations shall not be entertained.
- In case **Banjara Camps and Retreats P. Ltd.** cancels the group/departure due to political unrest / VISA / Permits denial / factors beyond our control, our liability shall be limited to advance payment received by us. We shall not be responsible for any kind of flight cancellation cost etc.
- Disputes, if any, shall be subject to Delhi jurisdiction.

Special Notes for Mount Kailash Mansarovar Yatra by jeeps via Nepal for 2013:

- We strongly advise to keep a provision of 2 – 3 extra days to overcome any delays.
- Due to the nature of travel, there is always the possibility of change in the schedule. The Tour Operator or its associates shall not be liable for any such delays.
- We or our associate agents have the right to change the Itinerary in the event of adverse weather condition or any unforeseen circumstances beyond our control.
- The Group will be required to follow the itinerary strictly. The entire group will enter & exit together as per schedule.
- In case of adverse weather conditions or technical snags with the helicopter, there could be a possibility of helicopter being un-operation for a couple of days, under such circumstances, every effort shall be made to provide them lodging / boarding etc. and the best available efforts shall be made to make alternate arrangements if possible however under such circumstances, all additional charges (if any) shall be borne by the guests.
- Visit to Asthaphath and Nandi Parbat shall be strictly subject to permission being granted.

TRAVEL TIPS FOR MOUNT KAILASH MANSAROVAR YATRA

Visa & Documentation:-

All foreign nationals willing to undertake Kailash Mansarovar Yatra including Indians require a VISA to enter Tibet. One must be in possession of a valid passport for another six months to obtain Chinese VISA. We will require a scanned copy of your passport at the time of booking the trip which should be at least 45 days

in advance). In case of Indian passport holders, **we shall require original passport in New Delhi approx. 15-20 days prior to group's arrival date in Kathmandu so as to apply for the group VISA in India** however passports of Foreign nationals shall be required in Kathmandu itself as their VISA shall be applied in Kathmandu – Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu issues VISA only on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Please note that Chinese Embassy in New Delhi accepts VISA applications between 1030 - 1130 hrs. from Monday to Friday (excluding holidays). Kindly be informed that **the VISA is not stamped on your passport rather it will be on a separate piece of paper issued by Chinese Embassy because it shall be a Group VISA.**

Accommodation:-

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra falls probably in the world's most remote part. Most of the times, you would be away from modern civilization. One must be well equipped and self contained. You shall overnight in guest house / hotels except for one night in Zuthulpuk you would be staying in fixed tents on dormitory basis. Use of candles inside the tents is strictly prohibited as tents and sleeping bags / quilts might catch fire due to any negligence. If your tents / sleeping bags are damaged due to misuse by candles or other incendiary articles, we will expect replacement/ reimbursement of the loss from you. Therefore we suggest you to use torch light inside the tents.

Guest house accommodation wherever available will be in simple, cozy room (dormitory at most of the places) with common bathrooms and toilets. Hot water will be provided in every room for refreshing and for drinking by our Sherpa team.

- Nyalam Hotel has common toilet facility.
- New Hotel Saga or equivalent in Saga have attached toilet facility however hot water is available by buckets only between 2000 – 2100 hrs.
- Guest house in Darchen does not have toilet / shower facility – one will have to use either our toilet tent or shall use the open space to answer the call of nature.
- Chui Gompa Guest house at Mansarovar is without toilet / shower facility – one will have to use either our toilet tent or shall use the open space to answer the call of nature.
- Dirapuk Hotel has no toilet facility – one will have to use open space.
- Zuthulpuk Guest House and Camping Facility is without toilet / shower facility – one will have to use common toilet tent or shall use the open space to answer the call of nature.

Food:-

We take care of meals including breakfast, lunch & dinner with occasional tea break. While camping or while in guest houses, meals would be served to you in dining tent. This tent also serves as our meeting place & living hall. Toilet tents will be put up near the campsite, wherever feasible. Pressurized Lamp shall be used to illuminate the camp area. Hot breakfast will be set in dining tent. When Sherpas start packing, please get one thermos flask filled with hot water for en route journey. A light packed lunch will be served on the way. The food is simple and vegetarian. Water given comes from local rivers and is boiled and filtered. If you need mineral water, you will have to buy it en route at the border and keep it in your jeeps.

Transportation:-

From Kathmandu till Kodari Border, the transportation will be provided by Non A/c tourist bus or van. In the event of any landslide, the best available mode of transport will be used for which guests will have to pay additional charges as applicable. **From Friendship Bridge onwards, you will be carried by jeeps (4-WD vehicles like Toyota land cruiser).** If the road between Friendship Bridge and Zhangmu gets washed away, we may have to trek for about 2 hrs. There will be a separate support truck to carry the camping equipments and Sherpa staff members. During the Kailash Parikrama, we will provide Yaks to carry the camping equipments & your personal heavy gears (one small bag per person only). A Yak or Pony can be hired for you to ride on direct payment basis. (Yaks are not well domesticated and trained to ride on it).

Guide/ Escort:-

An English speaking Tibetan guide will escort the group throughout the trip from Kodari Border till Kodari Border. There will be a team of Sherpas taking care of all other needs including cooking food.

Clothing & Accessories:-

Tibet is a dry cold country. As such weather may change unexpectedly at any time. Plan your clothing in a way that you can wear layers of clothes. Depending upon the season, during June, July, August till September, day time will be pleasant and quite warm with about 15-20 degree Celsius, Afternoon get windy and evenings chilly between minus 2 to 0 degree Celsius.

Photography:-

As Tibet gets very bright sunlight due to thin air so there is a lot of glare. Carry photography gear accordingly. Taking photographs inside monastery will be charged as per monastery rule. Please ask your guide before taking photographs inside the monastery. Taking photographs at Army Camps/Check-points is strictly prohibited. Charging your equipment can be done at Saga, Darchen and Mansarovar guest houses but they may charge a certain amount for this.

Equipment on Trip:-

We carry Dining Tent, Kitchen Tent, Toilet Tents, Dining Tables, Folding Chairs and full kitchen utensils. We will provide quilts and Foam Mattress for bed. Duffel bag and down jackets are also provided however if you wish, you may carry your own too. You could also carry your own sleeping bag if you wish. Do carry a thin sheet or 2 though. It may come in handy.

Medicine:-

We suggest you to bring your own first aid kit with adequate medication regarding altitude sickness, nausea, dehydration and some painkillers. Be careful not to catch a cold. It is better to be over-clothed than under protected. En route avoid taking bath or drinking water from lakes, streams or rivers as your body is not conditioned for this. Since the dry cold winds tend to make the nose dry, keep your nose smooth by applying Vaseline. Keep your feet dry. For cold weather and while walking, wearing cotton and wool socks in combination serves very well. Keep your face, feet and hands well protected. Request your doctor to prescribe effective medicines to cover the following: **Fever, Body and joint pains, Cold, Cough, Sore throat, Headache, Acidity, Stomach cramps, Vomiting, Dysentery, Loose motion, Constipation, Diarrhea, Swelling, Muscle Pulls & Sore eyes.** We do carry a first aid box though.

In addition to the medicines for above, your first aid kit should include following:

Vaseline, Band Aid, Cotton, Badge roll, Dettol, Mouth freshener, Nose inhaler, Toilet paper, Rubber bands, Dust cover (face mask), Cough drops, Lip balm, Vicks, Elastoplasts, Adhesive tape, 4" crepe bandage & ORS powder - useful for adding to your water bottle and for fluid replacing purposes.

Make a separate pouch for the first aid kit with a list of medicines and their appropriate usage. It is advised to carry glucose and glucose based items (mints, toffees, mini chocolates bars for periodical consumption at high altitude for energy. Multi-vitamin and vitamin C tablets are required for daily consumption as a routine.

Altitude Sickness:

Acute mountain sickness is a frequent problem in the Himalayan region. The altitude of the peaks and trails between them are among highest on earth. Acclimatization to altitude above 3000 meters takes time. The body undergoes a number of physiological changes some of which are immediate like increased pulse rate & respiratory rate. Others appear more slowly over a period of weeks like the change in acid base balance and production of extra red blood cells. These changes plus the effect of intense sunlight, walking hard & dehydration may cause a number of mild vague symptoms such as Loss of appetite, fatigue, headache, nausea, dizziness, palpitations, sleeplessness, mild shortness of breath with exercise.

The best treatment is prevention! Avoid rapid ascents; take acclimatization symptoms seriously using rest days or Diamox tablets. If symptoms are severe and the patient is ill **DESCEND IMMEDIATELY**, 300 meters of descent or more should be sought. This usually gives rapid improvement.

To minimize altitude sickness, never rush into things, walk slowly and firmly. The uneven ground, steep slopes and slushy banks are full of potholes. Do not combine walking and sightseeing together. Inspect your track in front and trek slowly.

Physical Fitness:

Before booking for this Kailash Mansarovar Yatra trip with us, you should be in sound good health preparation for this trip. We advise bit of exercise like morning or evening walk or jogging. Each pilgrim should ensure that he/she is medically fit and is not suffering from high-blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, heart disease or epilepsy since such conditions might prove fatal at high altitudes. **Medical fitness is of utmost importance.** Pilgrims should complete the medical tests and seek expert medical opinion regarding their fitness to undertake the pilgrimage at high altitude from their respective doctor.

We would require a medical certificate from every individual stating that the person traveling is not suffering from any such disease as mentioned above and is fit to travel at high altitudes.

Insurance & Emergency Expenses:

We highly recommend you to be insured against medical illness, accidents & necessary emergency evacuation. Please ensure that your insurance covers evacuation at high altitudes. Also be informed that air evacuation (evacuation by helicopter) is not possible in Tibet as such guest requiring emergency evacuation will be transferred by surface to nearest evacuation point in Nepal side after giving the necessary first aid. Any Emergency arrangement other than regular tour itinerary service would be borne by the clients themselves.

Please note that our Mount Kailash Mansarovar Yatra Tour does not include any rescue or evacuation expenses in emergencies hence it is advised to be properly insured against any kind of risk.

General Considerations while packing for Mount Kailash Mansarovar Yatra Pilgrimage Tour

Keep the luggage weight and bulk down to a minimum. Baggage allowance on most international flights is 20 Kg's/44 lbs. You will only need two changes of clothes for Kathmandu. In Tibet, it is important to dress in layers. When it is hot you will only be wearing a base layer, when it gets colder you can add to this until you are wearing most of your clothes! During Kailash Parikarma, one bag per person would be carried on Yak. It is advisable to carry your stuff in a duffel bag rather than suitcase or other normal bags. Following points must be kept in mind while preparing for & during the Holy Mount Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.

List of things to carry:

1. Duffel bag or big backpack (**NO HARDSHELL SUITCASES PLEASE**)
2. Small day backpack with sturdy straps
3. Proper trekking shoes with spare laces – **please ensure that the shoes are broken-in before the trek. Do not walk in brand new shoes. You might be walking in snow for a short distance so your shoes should have good tread and preferably water resistant if not water proof.**
4. Slippers / Sports sandals / Floaters [For walking around at campsites]
5. Sun cap
6. 3 pairs nylon socks, 3 pairs cotton/thicker socks, 3 pairs woolen socks [Two pairs of socks while walking are suggested to avoid blisters]
7. Personal Clothing [track suits are great, AVOID jeans or any other tight fitting pants]
8. Full sleeved thick sweater or fleece wear
9. Feather jacket (Will be provided by us on returnable basis)
10. Cotton or nylon thermal inner wear
11. Woolen monkey cap / Balaclava
12. Woolen hand gloves
13. Wind shirt (wind breaker)
14. Water proofs (poncho or pant & jacket)/ collapsible umbrella
15. Goggles [good quality, 100%-UV-protection sunglasses, not blue shade]
16. Cold cream / Hand lotion, sun screen lotion
17. Chap stick or Lip Balm
18. Torch with 2 extra sets of cells [No pencil cell torch, Head lamp is best]
19. Light towel [Should be a thin quick-drying towel]
20. 2-3 Water bottle (1 liter each) [AVOID simple plastic bottles. one hard plastic bottle or thermos flask- not the heavy duty one- is recommended for boiled water at higher camps]
21. Adequate underclothing
22. Personal toiletries
23. Toilet paper roll
24. Pen knife
25. Walking Stick [A must have]
26. Easy Breathers or Camphor

27. Mask/ scarf to protect yourself from dust and cold (cotton scarf for dust and woolen for cold)
28. Camera
29. Note book and pen
30. Personal toilet kit
31. **4 passport size photographs**
32. **A copy of your insurance policy**
33. Reading material
34. iPod or similar
35. Personal medical kit.
36. Air Pillow / small cotton pillow (optional)
37. Personal medicines (with written instructions), assorted Band-Aids.
38. Plastic bags to contain all above including your duffel bag, plus a few spare ones.

Please note:

- + If you are asthmatic or have any kind of breathing problem, you should not travel.
- + Take advise of your doctor before undertaking this high altitude pilgrimage & always keep your usual/prescribed medicines (if any) along with beside basic medicines for fever, nausea, dehydration, vomiting body ache and headache.
- + Use very strong and rough bags to pack your belongings & don't keep the fragile items in your bag which has to be carried on the Yak. A duffel bag is advisable. ***No hard shell suitcases please.***
- + Don't forget to carry some eatables like sweets, chocolates, glucose, candies, mints, khakra, laddu / pinni etc.
- + Engage yourself in fitness exercise like aerobics every morning. Two things would help. 1. Breathing exercises (to increase your lung capacity. Pranayam would help) 2. Running/ fast walking. It would be good if you can do this on treadmill on incline. Like they say, "the more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war. Though this is certainly not war, working out will help you enjoy your trip a lot more."
- + Please do not expect luxury on this tour however as far as possible, our Sherpa team will ensure you the best journey/stay with us in this tough terrain.
- + It is always advisable to insure yourself against personal loss, injury/accident, death and emergency evacuation. Make sure that your policy covers Emergency Evacuation by Helicopter at high altitude treks.
- + As there is no Hindu Temple at Holy Lake and Mt. Kailash, as such no priest is available. If you want some spiritual activity to be performed, please make sure that your personal priest accompany you either from your own country or from Nepal. Do carry essential Havan Samagri, Havan Kunds etc. if you are willing to engage yourself in some spiritual ceremony like Havan (Yagna).
- + If possible, arrange your Chinese Yuans (which you might require to buy some souvenir or to pay for pony etc.) in your own country or in Nepal as on the borders, exchange rate might differ. Alternately, you can carry US\$ with you which can be easily converted but Indian Currency notes are not acceptable in Tibet. ***PLEASE DO NOT CARRY INDIAN CURRENCY OF 500 AND 1000 DENOMINATION. These are not considered legal.***
- + ***Upon arrival at immigration desk at Tribhuvan International Airport, please request the immigration officer to put an entry stamp in your passport otherwise you'll have to unnecessarily pay INR 500-1000 at Tibet immigration.***
- + Don't carry too many clothes.
- + Always carry your passport, visa and insurance with you & keep the passport handy while traveling. Leave a copy of passport with us and another one at home.
- + Please always carry your sweater / fleece, windcheater, waterproofs & water bottle.
- + Please carry your water bottle to the dinner table for a refill.
- + Warm clothing & few other things can be bought in Nepal, they are of good quality.
- + We advice all our guests to read the notes on acute mountain sickness carefully. Please note that this trip will take you to very high altitudes & one should take all the precautions seriously.

Prior to Mount Kailash Parikarma:

- + Start taking DIAMOX at least 2 days before starting your journey to high altitude- once every morning after the breakfast. It should be taken for 3-6 days. This is to minimize altitude sickness.
- + Drink at least 3 liters of mineral water everyday till you complete the Holy Yatra.
- + Avoid riding Yak during Kailash Parikarma. A pony is preferred over Yak.
- + Advise your requirements for Pony Hiring (available at an additional cost) to your tour guide at least a day before the beginning of Parikarma.

During Mount Kailash Parikarma:

- + Walk slowly, don't compete with any one and never lose your temper. This probably is going to be the toughest journey you have ever made so far.
- + In case you feel any kind of breathlessness during parikrama, immediately inform our tour guide or Sherpa staff & follow their advice.
- + On the second day of parikrama, you will reach a height at Dolmala Pass where Oxygen level is very low. Do not stop/wait here for more than 5 minutes.
- + During parikrama, you'll come across rivers and streams; you can wash your face occasionally with cold water. Avoid drinking water from streams or rivers en route.
- + As far as possible, try to walk. But, if you are riding a pony during parikrama, make sure that you hold it properly.
- + On the second day of parikrama, you will see several clothes lying on the rocks, please don't touch the same.
- + Walk carefully and guard yourself from slipping or falling to prevent fractures, sprains and muscle pulls.
- + Do not combine walking and sightseeing together lest you fall or get hurt. Inspect the track in front of you and walk slowly.
- + Travel in the group and do not leave any one behind unless escorted.

While on the Holy Mansarovar Lake:

- + Don't take a Holy dip in Holy Mansarovar Lake when it is windy.
- + Never take a dip in Rakshas Tal (Lake) as it is inauspicious.
- + If you face altitude sickness, do not proceed for parikrama because once you leave Mansarovar or Darchen and wish to come back from Parikarma due to any reason, there are no facilities available like stretcher etc.
- + Even for Helicopter evacuation, you will have to drive to Nepal border, before evacuation can be organized and that too will depend on weather conditions.
- + Don't forget to collect some white ringed stones from The Holy Lake as each stone is treated as "Shivlinga".

General during Kailash Yatra:

- + If you smoke or consume alcohol, avoid it throughout the journey.
- + Satellite phone being provided by us on use and pay basis is primarily to facilitate you during any emergency. As such avoid making calls to your well wishers because charging facilities for satellite batteries are very limited and in case of excess usage, the satellite phone might be useless at the time of any actual emergency.
- + While in tents, make sure that it is properly zipped and your luggage (which is kept inside the tent) is not touching the tent's outer surface otherwise in case of rain you might find water inside your tent.
- + Try and stay indoors while it is too windy or sunny.
- + While staying in the guest house, avoid using public toilets (if available) as these are very dirty. **It is advisable to use open area or our own toilet tents for toilet purpose.**
- + Travel during Kailash Yatra with the TEAM SPIRIT and help your group members in case of any need or emergency.
- + Please do not expect excellent vehicles in Tibet. The terrain being rough, vehicles are bound to break down but do not panic, the drivers are expert enough to repair it. Repairs may take few minutes to a couple of hours but please maintain patience as we cannot leave group members behind.
- + As tents and other camping equipments move in trucks, it will take about 2 hours for our Sherpa team to pitch-in tents once they reach camp site. Please have patience as truck speed cannot be matched with your land cruiser's speed.

