

Stok Kangri Trek & Peak Climbing | 16 Days



Ladakh might be India's most remote region, located in the northernmost parts of the country. Lapped in the snow-covered fringes of the Himalayas, but its beauty is incomparable. Stark mountains dotted with colourful gompas (monasteries), fluttering prayer flags, rocky ridges, dry plains and tiny settlements. And adding to its beauty is the famous Indus River that seems to have a different shade for every season. During summer it turns grayish, owing to its silt deposits, occasionally turning a shade of violet.

In recent years Ladakh has become one of the popular destinations, which offers everything from adventure tourism to spiritual healing. It has been the center of Tibetan-Buddhist culture since ages. It is not just scenic natural beauty of Leh & Ladakh which attracts tourists. There are valleys sparsely populated with nomadic people and permanent inhabitants and it's a treat to know and learn about their culture and way of life. Besides, it is also a favorite hiking locale and is known for some of the best hikes in India.

Stok Kangri Trek – high above the Indus Valley, this rarely trodden route traverses the magnificent Ladakh mountains and culminates with the chance to ascend Stok Kangri (6153m). We leave the Zaskar River behind and ascend from lush valleys to the top of high passes from which towering rock cathedrals rise. The dramatic, stark scenery of this high altitude desert is softened only by the immense charm of the Ladakhi villages and their hardy inhabitants.

The summit climb itself is tough but entirely optional and there is an alternative glacier trek for anyone not wishing to attempt it. From the summit panoramic

views extend across Ladakh to the Karakorams, the Himalaya and into Tibet.

Trip Highlights

- Conquer a 6,000 m/20,000 ft peak
- Enjoy panoramic vistas over the Indian Himalaya and Karakorum
- Sleep in remote wild camps
- Trek amidst towering rock cathedrals and over high passes
- Easy day hikes with in a unique Himalayan region
- Enjoy panoramic vistas over the Indian Himalaya and Karakorum
- Visit to the most beautiful Buddhist monasteries & villages of the Indus Valley.
- Nubra, the valley of flowers with day walks.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Delhi

Welcome to India! Upon arrival in India a travel-to-nature Asia guide/representative will be at the airport to greet and take us to our hotel. Please look out for your name-card once you exit out of arrival area.

Rest of the day is free to relax and recover from your flight or for individual exploration of Delhi.

Optional

Morning free to recover from jet lag and around noon proceed for sightseeing of Delhi to visit India Gate, Raj Ghat, Jamia Masjid, Chandni Chowk, drive past Government buildings including President's Palace. Start the tour with Raj Ghat followed by visit to Jamia Masjid, Chandni Chowk etc. If time permits also visit a Sikh Temple/Hindu temple. During the days sightseeing stop at some local restaurant for Lunch (optional).

The sightseeing shall be for about 3-4 hours. After Sightseeing is over, we drive back to hotel for overnight stay.

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The Jamia Masjid

This great mosque of Old Delhi is the largest in India, with a courtyard capable of holding 25,000 devotees. It was begun in 1644 and ended up being the final architectural extravagance of Shah Jahan, the Mughal emperor who built the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort. The highly decorative mosque has three great gates, four towers and two 40 m-high minarets constructed of strips of red sandstone and white marble.

The Chandni Chowk

Chandni Chowk, originally meaning moonlit square or market, is one of the oldest and busiest markets in Old Delhi, now in central north Delhi. Built in 17th century by the great Muslim Emperor of India, Shah Jahan and designed by his daughter Jahan Ara, The market was once divided by canals to reflect moonlight, now closed, yet it still remains one of India's largest whole sale markets. Chandni Chowk is the major street in the walled city of Old Delhi, which was originally called Shahjahanabad

Accommodation: Jaypee Sidhartha



Day 2: Fly Delhi - Leh (3,500 m | 1.20 hrs) | Afternoon orientation walk

A very early start today for the flight to Leh. We usually leave the hotel at around 3 am and drive to the airport for the very early morning but highly spectacular flight over the Himalaya to Leh. If the weather is good and the flight goes on time, we should be in Leh for breakfast.

In the morning we rest and catch up on some sleep and in the afternoon, there will be a gentle orientation walk of Leh and its bazaars.

The rest of the day is free to relax and acclimatize to the altitude (3,500 m).

Accommodation: Lharimo Hotel
Meal: Breakfast

Day 3: Acclimatization Day in Leh

Visit Shey and Tikse Monasteries | Leh Palace

Today there is a sightseeing tour to two of the major gompas (monasteries) in the area. We first drive to Shey, a former Royal Palace of the Ladakh kings. Inside is a small temple containing a 350-year-old copper and gold statue of Buddha. From Shey we take a gentle walk (approx. 1 hour) to Tikse, where we visit the large and spectacular monastery - perched on top of a hill - its red and white buildings can be seen for miles. A recently built temple contains a magnificent image of the Future Buddha.

We return to Leh in the afternoon and there is time to explore the bazaar.

Accommodation: Lharimo Hotel
Meal: Breakfast

Day 4: Drive Leh - Nubra Valley over the Khardung La (5,359 m)

Leave Leh after breakfast and drive to Tegar - Summor, 125 km which takes about 5 hours. The days drive is over Khardungla Pass -5602 m (the highest motor-able mountain pass in the world). While at the pass we will take short climb up to one of the ridges to enjoy panoramic vistas over the Leh valley in the south to Stok Kangri, dominating the skyline across the valley. From North Pullu- if time permits we walk downhill along a gushing glacier stream to the Khalidong high alpine valley towards the Nubra Valley.

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In Nubra we check-in at Deluxe Cottages in Tegar (with toilets and hot and cold shower facilities).

In the late afternoon take a short walk through the village and visit one of the local homes where butter tea and chang (local barely beer) shall be served. This is subject to permission being granted by the family.

Accommodation: Lharimo North Cottage
Meal: Breakfast

Day 5: Summor - Diskit - Hunder - Summor

Today we explore the monasteries at Diskit and Hunder and also visit the town of Diskit - the District Headquarters of Nubra Valley.

Diskit and Hunder Monasteries

The Diskit Village is located slightly off the little hamlet of Khalsar. Dotted with apricot plantations, Diskit is amongst the larger villages in the region, and home to the 350-year-old Diskit Gompa - the oldest, and the largest monastery in the Nubra Valley. It belongs to the Gelugpa sect of Tibetan Buddhism. The road between Diskit and the quaint little Hunder Village winds through a gorgeous stretch of sand dunes. Keep your eyes open for the double-humped camels! The Hunder Gompa has some old frescos and a statue of Buddha. The monastery is also the best place in the village for a view of the dipping sun.

Also, there are possibilities to do camel ride in Hunder Sand Dunes. This is the only place in India where double-hump camels are found. Actually, these camels were part of the caravans which passed through Nubra valley and stopped after independence of India.

Accommodation: Lharimo North Cottage
Meal: Breakfast

Day 6: Drive Summer - Leh

Morning visit to Summer Monastery and village around Summer. Afterwards drive back to Leh and upon arrival in Leh stay at hotel. Today we drive approx 125 km which takes about 4.5 hours.



Summer

Summer is home to the Nubra valley's most important monastery, Samstem Ling Gompa, thirty minutes' walk behind the village. Built in 1841, the Gompa is home to over a hundred Gelugpa monks, aged between seven and seventy. Action centers on the large Du-khang, which is hung with Thangkas and dominated by a huge gilded statue of Shakyamuni, accompanied by Maitreya and the protector deity Mahakala. Across the courtyard, the long, low Gon-Khang is guarded by statues of fierce protector deities strung with wide-eyed skulls and figurines of the 84 Mahasiddhas, venerated Tantric saints. Samstem ling is linked to the Gompa of Rhizdong in the Indus valley west of Leh.

The rest of the day in Leh is free to explore the back streets and bazaars of Leh.

Accommodation: Lharimo Hotel
Meal: Breakfast

Day 7: Drive to Choksi

A leisurely start this morning allows time to separate out your climbing gear (ice-axe, crampons, harness, helmet and summit boots if you have a different pair) which we will leave at the hotel - this will rejoin you at Mankarmo or base camp in time for your summit climb.

We leave Leh and drive to the start point of our trek. The road follows the Indus River for a short while

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before turning off into a small dirt track, which winds along following the Zaskar River. The scenery is truly spectacular as the valley narrows into a gorge. Where the track ends, we leave our vehicle and have a short climb to Choksi (3,210 m) where we camp. This pretty village is a model of self-sufficiency. It is inhabited by one large extended family who farm this small valley.

In the afternoon we can have a short acclimatization walk in preparation for tomorrow.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 8: Full day of trekking

A fairly hard first days walking as we climb very steeply out of Choksi, walking on some loose scree and shale, and gain over 1,000 m in altitude before reaching our next camp.

As we ascend the valley narrows and becomes more and more spectacular. Looking back, we can see the magnificent rock formations of the Ladakh mountains. The dramatic mountains in various shades of purples, greens and browns can be seen for miles in every direction. The trail ascends the valley all day and our first night's camp is a small rocky site by a shepherd hut.

In the afternoon we will have an acclimatization walk up the valley which is opposite the camp for views of the surrounding peaks.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9: Short walk to the base of Kang La | Optional acclimatization walk up to the peak

Short walk to the base of Kang La | Optional acclimatization walk up to the Peak.

For acclimatization purposes we have a very short walk today, steadily continuing up the Choksi Valley to the base of the Kang La (4,900 m).

We will have lunch at camp and in the afternoon, we will trek to the top of the small rocky peak behind camp at 5,056 m. From the top the views are magnificent - we can see the Kang La and Palam Peak ahead and the Himalayas are spread out in front of us with the Ladakh range in front. This is one of the most spectacular wild camps with great views across to the Karakorum.

Look out for marmots whistling to one another all around the campsite.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10: Trek to base of Ganda La | Cross the Kang La (5,260 m) & Ganda La (4,970 m)

Today is a hard day as we cross our first two passes. The climb is a long ascent, which is gradual at first with a last steep rocky section to the top of the Kang La (5,260 m). The paths are little used and can be indistinct. From the top of the pass we have the opportunity to walk up Palam Peak (5,380 m) for views second only to the view from the summit of Stok Kangri. Ahead we can now see the summit of Stok Kangri and in the distance is Leh. Behind us the Ladakh Range and Himalaya can be seen for miles. From the top we descend a little and then contour round into the next valley. As the trail contours round the top of the valley we have great views across to Stok Kangri. We contour round the valley and on up to our second pass, the Ganda La (4,970 m). This pass provides access into the Markha Valley and we may well see other trekkers today crossing the pass in the opposite direction. From the pass we can see our route for the next couple of days. We camp at the base of the Ganda La.

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Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11: Trek to base of Stok La

It's an easy descent down the valley and we walk through the one house village of Yurutse to the valley bottom. Crossing the river, we have a short ascent to Rumbak village. Rumbak has round 20 houses and we may well be invited in to a local house to try the traditional Ladakhi butter tea. Our camp is just beyond the village at the base of the Stok La tonight (approx. 4,300 m). Ahead the mountains are truly amazing; fold after fold of multicolored jagged rock tower above us and as the sun sets and the light fades the colors change dramatically. One of the beauties of this short trek is that it is a geologist's paradise; every pass we cross brings us in to another spectacular valley with intriguing rock formations.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12: Trek over the Stok La (4,900 m) to Mankarmo

Today is probably one of the most spectacular walks in Ladakh as we cross the Stok La (4,900m), our last pass of the trek. At first we trek on a beautiful, gently sloping trail, but then the path becomes steeper and steeper as it zigzags up to the top of the pass. Rock flutes rise all around us, home to the elusive snow leopard. From the top the views are even more spectacular; layer upon layer of multicolored rock cathedrals are spread before us in every direction.

The descent is very steep at first and then we contour round two valleys to the junction with the river coming down from Stok Kangri. We follow the river, crossing a few side streams, until we reach a shepherd settlement at Mankarmo (4,380 m). Look out for the herds of Blue Sheep scrambling on the rocks around camp.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 13: Follow Stok Valley to reach Base Camp

The next two days are devoted to our ascent of Stok Kangri. From Mankarmo the trail ascends the valley easily. It is a half day walk to base camp and as we ascend the valley Stok Kangri can clearly be seen ahead of us. There will probably be a couple of river crossings today. We will reach our base camp by lunch time and the afternoon is spent resting and preparing for the climb. Gear will be checked and there will be a full briefing about tomorrow's ascent and a run through of walking in a rope team and with crampons. After an early dinner we retire to bed to rest for a few hours.

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 14: Ascent of Stok Kangri (6,153 m | 12-15 hrs approx.) | Climb is optional

The summit day is long and hard (at least 12-15 hours). We leave at about 1 am and start with a one-hour steep climb out of the base camp to a ridge. The trail then eases for a while as we follow the valley gradually up on a rocky trail for a couple of hours to the glacier. Crossing the glacier, we come to the foot of the climb. The gradient now increases significantly and it is a very steep two hours to the ridge. Usually there is snow at this point and we will have to use our ice axe and crampons. The sun should just be rising as we reach the ridge and we can see almost all the way back to Leh. We will usually rope up for the last two hours up the ridge, which is quite steep and is exposed for some of the time, with some scrambling on loose (sometimes icy) rock. Finally, we spot the

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prayer flags on the top and a final steep section will bring us to the summit. The altitude will be the greatest difficulty, though.

The climb from camp to the summit will take six to eight hours. The final hundred meters needs special care while crossing the slopes just below the summit. From the summit the views are amazing. Miniscule Leh can be seen in the distance, and all around us the snow-capped peaks of the Himalaya, the Karakorum and the Ladakh Range reach far to the horizon. We spend a short while at the top to savor the beauty of it all and regain our breath before descending slowly and carefully back to Base Camp, where the crew will be waiting with welcome hot food.

(Please note the actual climb is entirely optional. For anyone not intending to climb there are wonderful walks from the base camp itself. There will be an optional walk for those not climbing to the glacier at the foot of Stok Kangri for magnificent views).

Accommodation: Camping Tent
Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 15: Descend through Mankarmo to Stok | Drive back to Leh

An easy but particularly spectacular walk down the valley to Stok. As we descend layer upon layer of multicolored rocks surround us. The trail finally emerges from this amazing gorge and the valley widens as we approach Stok village where our transport will meet us for the short drive back to Leh.

We return to Leh by lunch time for a welcome hot shower and a well-deserved celebration.

Accommodation: Lharimo Hotel
Meal: Breakfast

Day 16: Fly Leh - Delhi | Depart Delhi

An early start for the flight back to Delhi.

The rest of the day is free in Delhi for individual shopping or sightseeing.

Evening Farewell dinner in a fine local restaurant followed by transfer to airport to connect flight to onward destination.

Meal: Breakfast, Dinner

Includes

- Airport (pick up/drop off) transfers by private A/C vehicle
- Twin-Sharing accommodation in all hotel/resort/lodge as mentioned
- Daily breakfast throughout the trip, other meals as mentioned in the itinerary
- Transport services by cars/SUVs or mini-bus/large bus depending on group size (for all transfers, long distance drive and sightseeing as per program)
- Entrance Fee at National Park (Hemis National Park).
- Permit fee to climb Stok Peak
- Services of an English-speaking guide
- A professional Trekking/Climbing Guide on trek
- Complete trekking arrangements which shall include all meals during trekking (bed Tea, Breakfast, Lunch, afternoon Tea, Dinner), 2 men Alpine tents with compressed Foam mattress. Kitchen Tent, dining tent, accompanying Kitchen staff, Pack Ponies/Porters/Yaks to carry the baggage/Kitchen utensils/ Camping equipment etc. The arrangements for trekking are of good standard which includes good service, good food and good equipment. However, we suggest that guests bring their own sleeping bags for their comfort failing we shall provide same from our end on advance request
- Ropes for the final section to the summit
- Rooms for wash & change on the last day in Delhi before departure with farewell dinner on last evening

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Excludes

- International & domestic flights tickets
- Visas or vaccinations
- Travel insurance
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Personal clothing & equipment
- Tips for trip leader/guide, driver, hotel staff and porters
- Any expenses of personal nature, such as alcohol and soft drinks, telephone, medicines, laundry etc
- Items/services not listed in "included"
- Extra expenses/payment for 'Optional' activities/programs if opted in

Accommodation

Jaypee Siddharth, New Delhi

With elegant interiors and modern comforts, Jaypee Siddharth Hotel comes across as a delight for first-time visitors and regular customers. Housing a 24-hours resto cafe, extensive conference and banquet spaces, the hotel enhances every aspect of your visit, taking care of each guest personally. Nestled at a prime location, this deluxe edifice attracts innumerable foreigner visitors and seasonal business travelers every year.



Lharimo Hotel, Leh

Lharimo Hotel is an excellent choice for travellers visiting Leh, offering a family-friendly environment alongside many helpful amenities designed to enhance your stay. Lharimo Hotel features room service. In addition, as a valued Lharimo Hotel guest, you can enjoy an on-site restaurant with delicious foods. Guests arriving by vehicle have access to free parking.

Lharimo North Cottage, Nubra

Lharimo North Cottage has 22 rooms that are traditionally made using sundried mud bricks, sandstones and granite stones for walls and poplar logs and willow twigs for the ceiling makes its rooms well insulated. Teak wood laminated floors, individual cottages with large windows with private spacious lawns complemented by spectacular views of surrounding mountains makes this eco-friendly resort a special retreat.

Camping-Tent

Our classic A-frame or ridge tents are sturdy and have plenty of room for two people. We use water and windproof flysheet which help make the tent nice and cozy inside. To complete the setup we provide a high-quality foam mattress together with an insulation pad so that you get a good sleep after a long tiring day.

Group/Individual

On this trip you will be traveling privately with your family & friends. Our representative/tour partner will look after your transfers to and from the airport and will be around to answer other questions you may have about your trip.

Accommodation - Hotel & Lodge

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family-run guesthouse or lodges in a smaller town or a heritage-type hotel. Accommodation in remote areas tend to be basic and may not have western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to

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four-star but please note they may or may not be of international classification system and differences in facilities and quality do exist between Germany and India. While camping we use sturdy A-Frame tents which have enough room for 2 adults and are covered by water and wind proof flysheet

Single Accommodation

Unless you specifically request a single room (with supplement), we offer double room accommodation throughout the trip.

Food & Transport

While camping all meals (Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner) are included and breakfast & dinner only while staying in hotel and/or lodge.

For airport, sightseeing transfers, and long drive we use a private car/vehicle. Flights to/from Leh/Delhi will be usually in a jet-plane.

Drinking Water

Staying hydrated is important when undertaking any physical activity but particularly so at altitude where it is generally recommended to drink at least 3-4 litres per person per day. We strongly encourage you not to buy bottled water on trek as this contributes to the growing problem of plastic pollution in the world. We recommend that you bring a reusable bottle with a wide opening and use a SteriPEN to treat it with. A SteriPEN is a handheld UV water purifier – small, lightweight and battery powered so easy to pack for a trek. It's quick to use, far more effective than purification tablets, and the water is ready immediately.

SteriPENs are widely stocked on Amazon, outdoor shops and other online retailers; look for the latest models but avoid USB charging ones. Better still, a SteriPEN will pay for itself over the course of the trek and you won't leave behind a single plastic bottle – you will end up spending the same or even less than you would on bottled water, plus you can keep it for future trips. If you prefer not to invest in a SteriPEN, your kitchen crew provide you boiled water which should not require treating. This is also perfect for a

bedtime refill as it can double up as a hot water bottle.

Weather

Despite its altitude, Ladakh is a desert setting and can experience surprisingly hot weather during summer in the day times (as detailed below). Generally, the weather is good in Ladakh during the summer time, with warm to very hot sunny days (temperatures can reach up to 35°C or more), and cool to cold nights depending on the altitude (it can be just below freezing at the highest camps in late August and September). There is, however, always the possibility of rain, and snow at higher altitudes, and you should be prepared for this. Please note the sun is very strong at these altitudes and it can be very hot in the daytime. For the climb of Stok Kangri, we will be setting off at midnight and it can be very cold that day before the sun comes up so you will need warm gloves and socks and either down jacket or very good windproof and layers underneath. At least half the summit day is usually on snow. Ladakh, though technically part of the Tibetan plateau and classified as a high-altitude desert, can and does occasionally experience the effects of the Indian monsoon. However, weather, especially in mountainous area, is never wholly predictable and you should be prepared and equipped to deal with any differences in weather beyond the conditions described above.

Delhi in the summer months is very hot and humid.

WHAT TO TAKE

Essential Equipment & Clothing

Please note that all climbing equipment detailed within the kit list (**crampons, ice-axe, harness and one screw lock karabiner and helmet**) is **essential only if you intend to attempt the summit of Stok Kangri**. Ice axes and crampons can be hired cheaply in Leh but please note that we cannot guarantee the availability or quality of locally hired equipment. The crampons that are hired in Leh are very old and we recommend you bring your own. (Please note it is dangerous to attach crampons to

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soft trekking boots and we do not recommend you do this). Harnesses and helmets cannot be hired in Leh. **Please remember previous experience using ice axe and crampons and walking in a rope team is necessary for this climb.** In addition, it is imperative that you have the correct footwear and appropriate crampons if attempting the climb. Sturdy stiff soled waterproof 4 season boots with ankle support (B1 or B2 boots), which are suitable for crampons are recommended for the climb. Soft trekking boots are not suitable for the climb. Please also test that your crampons fit your boots prior to travelling. Please note that, if you have them, you may like to take a separate pair of heavier boots for the climb. These will be carried separately together with the rest of the climbing equipment, thus allowing you to walk in normal lightweight walking boots during the trekking section. The climbing gear will stay in Leh during the trek and will be brought to meet us in Mankarmo on day 13 by our climbing guide. We believe in reducing our negative environmental impacts wherever possible, this goes for when you need to spend a penny in the great outdoors! If no facilities are available there may come a time when you need to go to the loo behind a tree/bush/rock. To avoid leaving toilet paper behind we recommend taking biodegradable dog poo/sandwich bags with you. Once you have done your business you can pop the used toilet roll in here and take it off the mountain or trail at the end of the day and dispose of it when there are appropriate facilities available.

Optional Equipment

1. Water treatment: SteriPEN / water purification tablets
2. Trekking pole(s)
3. Hand washing gel
4. Biodegradable soap/shampoo
5. Sleeping bag liner
6. Solar charger/spare batteries/power bank

Baggage Allowance

At time of writing the standard weight limit is one checked baggage on Qatar Airways is 25kg (55lb). We recommend packing only one piece of checked baggage. **Internal flights (Delhi-Leh-Delhi) in the destination country are subject to a weight limit of 15kg.** As advice about luggage allowances for both hand and hold luggage is subject to change, we suggest you check the airline's website for the latest information prior to your departure.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Passport & Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information below is primarily for EU passport holders, and other nationalities should check with the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visas are required if you are German and for most other nationalities. Visa information changes regularly for India; for the latest information on applying for a visa please follow these links for more information.

<https://indianembassyberlin.gov.in/pages?id=Mg,,&su bid=MTQ,>

If your flight arrives into Delhi Airport and you have an e-visa, please follow the overhead signs to the e-visa booth at the back of the immigration hall. You will need to fill out an additional form at the booth. Please make sure that you have the details of your start hotel ready. Visa regulations can change without notice: please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa.

Please note: Visa regulations can change without notice, therefore please check the current regulations or contact us.

Vaccination & Health

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Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements for this trip. Recommended vaccinations for this trip are: Polio, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Typhoid, Hepatitis A. The risk of malaria on this trip is slight, but you may wish to consult your GP/Family Doctor or travel health clinic for further advice. Dengue fever and/or Chikungunya are known risks in places visited on this trip. Both are tropical viral diseases spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available for either, and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites. The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic prior to departure for up-to date information.

Local Time

GMT + 5 hours and 30 minutes

Electricity

230/240 volts AC, 50 Hz. There are recharging facilities at most of the hotels, the electricity supply is not 100% reliable but it is usually only off for short periods of time.

Money

The national currency of India is the Indian Rupee (INR), with an exchange rate at the time of publication of approximately 89 to the Euro and 82 to the US\$. It is illegal to import or export rupees. Do not accept torn or (very) dirty Indian banknotes from banks or in change as they will almost certainly not be accepted as legal tender in India. Please ask for low denomination notes of 100, 200 or 500 Rupees as 2000 Rupee notes can sometimes be difficult to use out of Delhi. You can change money back from Rupees into Euro or Dollars at Delhi airport (before going through security), but

you must produce an exchange receipt showing that you changed money in India. You are advised to bring most of your money in cash as you may have difficulty changing travellers cheques outside Delhi. It makes no difference whether you bring Euro or US Dollars. You should change your money on arrival at Delhi either at the hotel or airport (please note that the hotel often gives a better rate than the airport). It is possible to change cash in Ladakh. You will need approximately €200-€250 for extra meals and tipping for the whole trip.

ATM | Credit Cards

There are ATMs in Delhi. There are a few ATMs in Leh but please do not rely on these. We recommend you change most of the money you need for the trip before leaving Delhi. Please do not rely wholly on ATM machines as often they are broken or run out of cash. Credit cards are accepted in larger shops in Delhi and in Leh.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

Apart from the extra food you should allow approximately €5 (approx. US\$5.50) a day for drinks and incidentals (when not on trek), more if you enjoy a few beers, as these are comparatively expensive in India. Whilst on trek there is not much to spend your money on, but in Leh and Delhi there is a wealth of souvenirs, trinkets etc. India has very good opportunities for shopping, especially for locally made goods, and in Delhi local guides may well offer to take you to emporiums as well as workshops where these goods are made. Many people find this a great opportunity to buy local handicrafts, silk, jewellery and carpets. Guides will often assume that visitors will want to go shopping, it is very much part of the culture, however if you do not wish to go please make this clear to your local guide at the time

Tipping

Tipping is of course entirely at your discretion, but it is customary in India. Tipping can be an awkward affair especially when you are not familiar with the country. Your leader will help with tipping and will provide a list of suggested tips. This will include tips for drivers, hotel

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porters and other hotel staff, local sightseeing guides, and if trekking will include camp staff such as guide, assistants, cooks and pony men. Sometimes your leader will collect a kitty during the trip and sometimes they will collect the tips towards the end of the trip (occasionally for very small groups the leader may need to collect a little more than the suggested amount). We suggest you allow Rs 6,000 (approx. €60 -70 / \$65-75) for this trip. Please try to tip in local currency.

Tipping of the local leader is not included in the above and is at your discretion. However, we suggest around Rs1000-2000 (approx.€11-25 /US \$12-25) per person for the leader depend upon the group size.

Important Information

On all guided trips although our leaders/guides are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorize them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.