

Markha Valley Trek



| | |
|------------|---|
| Days: | 14 |
| Price: | 1505 USD International flight not included |
| Comfort: | ★★★★★ |
| Difficult: | ★★★☆☆ |
| 📌 Trekking | |

INSPIRATIONAL HEIGHTS, CAPTIVATING CLOSE-UPS

One of the most popular trekking routes in Ladakh region follows the Markha River as it meanders through the picturesque Markha Valley surrounded by lofty peaks, remote villages, and ancient Buddhist monasteries and high meadows inhabited by hardy nomads and high-altitude wildlife including yaks, ibex, marmots, vultures and the elusive snow leopard.

We begin to Leh, visiting local sights including ancient monasteries for an insight into the local culture, an interesting way of acclimatizing for the trek ahead. We set out from picturesque Spituk village on the banks of the Indus.

Our trek up to the top of Ganda La (4,970m) is rewarded with breathtaking views of the Zaskar and Stok ranges and snowcapped Karakoram before we descend into a willow and wild rose-filled gorge enter the Markha Valley. The head of the valley is dominated by the glaciated Kang Yatse peak (6,400m) rising high above the pastures of Nimaling – an idyllic campsite for the night. Kongmaru La (5,265m) marks the highest point of our trek with excellent views of Kang Yatse, the distant Nun-Kun peaks and the shimmering northern peaks that mark the Tibetan border. After a day's descent, we return by road to Leh for some much-deserved down time before flying back to Delhi.

HIGHLIGHTS * Remote villages and ancient Buddhist monasteries * Stunning Kang Yatse peak (6,400m) from Kongmaru La (5,265m) the highest point on the trail * Hemis Monastery – the richest and the most famous monastery in Ladakh * Nimaling – a scenic valley dominated by impressive Kang Yatse peak (6,400m) * Markha River – a treat to walk along

Day 1. Traditional welcome on arrival and assistance in boarding the flight to Leh



Delhi 📍

- We arrive at the **International airport** of Delhi at night. We get professional assistance in boarding our early morning flight to Leh after the traditional welcome by **company's representative** at Delhi airport.

🏠 Accommodation

Ashok Country Resort

Day 2. Fly over the Himalayan mountains



Delhi 📍

✈ 610km - ⌚ 1h 30m

Delhi - Leh

- In the early morning flight from Delhi, the plane flies over the **Himalayan Range** providing amazing overhead view of the whole mountain range with gigantic glaciers and glaring peaks before it brings us to Leh, a fertile valley just to the north of the mighty **Indus River** (this flight is subject to appropriate weather and perfect flying conditions). Upon arrival, we transfer to the hotel.
- The rest of the day is free to relax and **acclimatize to the altitude (3,500m)**. Late afternoon, there is a gentle orientation walk in Leh and its bazaars. In the olden days Leh was an important trading center along the old Silk Route from China. The town is dominated by the nine-story Namgyal Palace whose faded

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Ashok Country Resort |
| 🍴 Dinner | Hotel Mansarovar |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Hotel Mansarovar |

Day 3. Visit of Monastery - Thiksey , Hemis and Matho



Leh

- Today, in the sightseeing tour to three of the major gompas (monasteries) around Leh. We first drive to Shey Palace, this palace, mostly in ruins now, was built first in 1655, near Shey village, by the king of Ladakh, Deldan Namgyal, also known as Lhachen Palgyigon. It was used as a summer retreat by the kings of Ladakh. Thereafter, we proceed to Thikse Monastery that belongs to **Gelukpa order (Yellow hat)**. Perched on top of a hill its red and white buildings can be seen from miles. A recently built temple within this complex contains a magnificent image of the Future Buddha. We continue our excursion and visit Matho monastery situated right across Thikse on the other side of Indus River. This monastery was founded in 16th century and it's an only monastery that belongs to Sakya order of Tibetan Monastery.

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Hotel Mansarovar |
| 🍴 Dinner | Hotel Mansarovar |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Hotel Mansarovar |

Day 4. Shankar Gompa - Shanti Stupa - Leh Palace



Leh

- Today we start our day with a visit of Sankar Gompa, an affiliate of the Spituk Gompa. From Sankar Gompa, we drive to a recently built Shanti Stupa. It was constructed by a Japanese Buddhist organization and inaugurated by His Holiness, The Dalai Lama. The magnificent white domed structure, the Shanti Stupa, offers spectacular views over Leh bazaar and Stok Kangri Range. We finish today's excursion with a visit of Leh Palace situated above Leh on the Namgyal Hill. The palace was built by King Sengge Namgyal in 17th century but was later abandoned when Dogra forces took control of Ladakh in the mid-19th century. The majestic palace overlooks the **Namgyal Hill**.

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Hotel Mansarovar |
| 🍴 Dinner | Hotel Mansarovar |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Hotel Mansarovar |

Day 5. Drive till starting point of trek- Zingchen



Leh

🚗 25km
Zingchen
8km - ⌚ 4h

Leh - Zingchen

- We take a short drive from Leh to Spituk, the first **Gelugpa Monastery** in Ladakh. After visiting the monastery, we drive along a new road that takes us across the Indus towards Zingchen, **the starting point of our trek**.

Zingchen - Rumbak

- While our ponies are being loaded up we start our walk into the **Zingchen Gorge** at the foot of the Stok Mountains. The trail is straightforward as we follow the Zingchen Nala upstream. An ever-changing panorama of fantastic colored mountains surrounds us as we ascend the valley. We may have to cross the stream as it forces its path closer to the side of the valley. Suddenly the valley widens and reveals the snow-topped peaks of the Stok Mountains. **Prayer flags** on a wide pasture mark the junction where the trail leads to **Rumbak**

Rumbak 📍

Village, our campsite that provides stunning views all around.

Duration of Trek: 4 Hrs

Distance: 8 Kms

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Hotel Mansarovar |
| 🍴 Lunch | Made by your team |
| 🍷 Dinner | Made by your team |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Camping |

Day 6. Trek to Ganda La Base via Yurutse



Rumbak 📍

8km - ⌚ 4h

Ganda La Base (3900m) 📍

Rumbak - Ganda La Base (3900m)

- Today is a short day for further acclimatization. We head up the main valley to a watermill and a bridge that we cross. The trail ascends the valley gradually and where the valley splits we take the right hand fork up past the queer one-house **village of Yurutse**. Leaving the fields behind we ascend towards the **Ganda La base** and camp overnight by a small stream below the pass.

Duration of Trek: 4 Hrs

Distance: 8 Kms

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Made by your team |
| 🍴 Lunch | Made by your team |
| 🍷 Dinner | Made by your team |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Camping |

Day 7. On the way to Skiu



Ganda La Base (3900m) 📍

15km - ⌚ 7h

Skiu 📍

Ganda La Base (3900m) - Skiu

- We follow the path up the mountain side to the top of **Ganda La (4970m)**. The trail is clear and serpentine towards the pass. As we climb the views become more and more spectacular. We reach the top of Ganda la decked with colorful prayer flags and the views are worth all the effort. Ahead is the **Zanskar Range** and behind are the **Stok Mountains**. A long but easy descent takes us to Shingo. Beyond the hamlet of Shingo the trail passes through a wonderful gorge with quite luxuriant strands of willow on the stream-bed before we reach **Markha River** at the **village of Skiu**.

Duration of Trek: 7 Hrs

Distance: 15 Kms

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Made by your team |
| 🍴 Lunch | Made by your team |
| 🍷 Dinner | Made by your team |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Camping |

Day 8. Trek along the valley of Markha



Skiu 📍
18km - ⌚ 6h
Markha Valley 📍

Skiu - Markha Valley

- A fairly long but easy walk today as we trek along the **valley to Markha**. The terrain along the valley is not so demanding, thereby providing us plenty of opportunity to admire the magnificent scenery around. The colors of the barren mountains of Ladakh are truly spectacular. Pastel pink, brazen blue and turquoise green mountains shine in the brilliant sun and change color dramatically as the sun rises and sets. We not only follow the river all day today but cross the same a few times. We have lunch in Sara where there is usually some welcome shade in a tea tent. Beyond the settlement of Chalak there is an impressive line of chortens and a huge mound of goat horns which are placed on these chortens to ward off any evil spirits trying to enter the valley. After climbing up to a small pass, we descend again to the river. A **Mediaeval Fort**, silhouetted on the hillside, gives us an indication of having almost reached Markha. Markha is a small village and here is the time to explore the small monastery in the afternoon. Our camp is on the grazing flats near the village.

Duration of Trek: 6 Hrs

Distance: 18 Kms

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Made by your team |
| 🍴 Lunch | Made by your team |
| 🍷 Dinner | Made by your team |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Camping |

Day 9. Trek to Thachungtse via Hankar



Markha Valley 📍
17km - ⌚ 7h
Thachungtse (4300m) 📍

Markha Valley - Thachungtse (4300m)

- Just beyond Markha the trail meets the **Chacham Valley** where we see the Umlung Gompa set way above us on the cliff face. We visit the monastery which is the most important in the valley and is affiliated to Hemis. Continuing up the valley we walk through Umlung Village to **Hankar** where there are more **impressive fort ruins and a small gompa**. From Hankar the trail turns off from the main valley and follows the Nimaling stream to **Thachungtse**, our **overnight camping spot**. We may be lucky and see wild sheep high up on the grazing areas.

Duration of Trek: 7 Hrs

Distance: 17 Kms

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Made by your team |
| 🍴 Lunch | Made by your team |
| 🍷 Dinner | Made by your team |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Camping |

Day 10. Short trek to Nimaling



Thachungtse (4300m) 📍
7km - ⌚ 4h
Nimaling 📍

Thachungtse (4300m) - Nimaling

- Today is a short walk to Nimaling. The trail climbs steeply to the plateau where the valley opens out. Ahead are the spectacular views of **Kang Yangtse at 6,400m** - the highest peak in the valley. In this area, there is no permanent habitation but during the summer months the shepherds bring their flocks of sheep, goats and dzos (a hybrid between yak and cow) to graze on the high altitude pasture. The shepherds stay in stone shelters close to the grazing area for the whole summer. We can buy yogurt or local cheese from them. In the evening, after the animals are brought down from the hills it is quite usual to have hundreds of them wandering through the campsite. We are at Nimaling by around lunch time. In the afternoon, **an optional walk** behind the camp towards Kang Yangtse is preferred by most of the trekkers to enjoy and capture impressive close-up views of Kang Yangtse, the highest peak in the Markha Valley at 6,400m.

Duration of Trek: 4 Hrs

Distance: 7 Kms

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Made by your team |
| 🍴 Lunch | Made by your team |
| 🍷 Dinner | Made by your team |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Camping |

Day 11. Zigzag trail leading to Shang Sumdo



Nimaling 📍
18km - ⌚ 8h
Shang Sumdo (3810m) 📍

Nimaling - Shang Sumdo (3810m)

- Our walk today begins by climbing to **Kongmaru La**. It is a fairly long and steep ascent through a zigzag trail winding across to the top of the **pass at 5,265m**, but the views from the top are worth the effort. Looking back we see **Kang Yangtse, Dzo Jongo and Regoni Malari**. Ahead, there are views across the Stok Range and down to the Indus valley. The descent is steep all the way upto the point where we enter a spectacular gorge and descend more gradually. High up on the barren cliffs we might spot the Elusive Blue Sheep which inhabit this area. Passing through **Chuskurmo and Chokdo** we continue our long descent to the village of **Shang Sumdo**. Crossing the high pass followed by a long descent to the camp today makes this day a bit harder than the previous days.

Duration of Trek: 8 Hrs
Distance: 18 Kms

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Made by your team |
| 🍴 Lunch | Made by your team |
| 🍷 Dinner | Made by your team |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Camping |

Day 12. Drive back to Leh via Hemis



Shang Sumdo (3810m) 📍
🚗 45km - ⌚ 1h 10m
Leh 📍

Shang Sumdo (3810m) - Leh

- We meet our transport to take us to Hemis Monastery. (Occasionally the road gets blocked, in which case we walk down the jeep track to Hemis). Hemis is the largest and richest of all the Ladakhi Monasteries. A walk round the dimly lit temples containing grotesque yet beautiful masks and statues takes us back hundreds of years in time. From here, we drive back to Leh and check-in to our hotel. We are normally in Leh before lunch after which we are free for last minute sightseeing or shopping in the bazaars.

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| ☕ Breakfast | Made by your team |
| 🍷 Dinner | Hotel Mansarovar |
| 🏠 Accommodation | Hotel Mansarovar |

Day 13. Fly back to Delhi and drive to Agra



Leh - Delhi

- Early morning transfer to the Leh airport to board the flight to Delhi.

Delhi - Agra

- Upon arrival in Delhi, we drive straight to Agra, where after check-in, we have a free evening to explore some beautiful bazaars.

Leh 📍
✈️ 610km - ⌚ 1h 30m
Delhi 📍
🚗 250km - ⌚ 5h 30m
Agra 📍

🍳 Breakfast

Hotel Mansarovar

🏠 Accommodation

Howard Plaza

Day 14. Visit of Taj Mahal and Drive to Delhi



Delhi 📍

- Today is the day to strike off the Taj from our bucket list. We rise early to visit this astonishing wonder in white marble. Taj Mahal, a symbol of eternal love, stands on the southern bank of River Yamuna. It was built by the 5th **Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan**, in memory of his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died in the 16th century CE. The charisma of the amazing Taj Mahal never fails to leave a first time visitor spellbound.
- visit the Agra Red Fort, a historical fort in the city of Agra and its walls are richly adorned with red sandstone. Till 1638, this fort was main residence of the emperors of the Mughal Dynasty. Thereafter the capital of Mughal was shifted from Agra to Red Fort in Delhi.
- Later we leave by **surface to Delhi**. In Delhi our evening is free to do some more shopping. Late in the evening, we are transferred to the International airport to catch our flights to our respective destinations.

🍳 Breakfast

Howard Plaza

Itinerary map



Individual price per person

| 2-3 | 4-5 | 6-8 |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 2575 USD | 1865 USD | 1505 USD |

Included

- Accommodation for 07 nights on Full board in camp/tent on double sharing basis
- 04 nights on Half Board in hotel in Leh
- 01 night on breakfast basis in hotel in Agra
- All ground transportation included in the program using private air-conditioned vehicle with English speaking driver
- Trekking equipment and materials including food (excluding personal equipment)
- Trekking guide for 07 days during trekking (D:05 till D:11)
- Entrances for monuments and monastery as mentioned in the programme
- Professional English speaking tour leader throughout the trip
- A hyperbaric chamber
- First aid kit
- Govt. Taxes

Not included

- International flights tickets
- Domestic flights tickets for the sectors: (Delhi - Leh and Leh - Delhi)
- Dinner and Lunch in Agra & Delhi
- These rates will not be valid for peak season from 20 December 2019 to 10 January 2020 , Christmas and New Year's extra supplement cost will be charged during this period
- Travel insurance
- Tips for Local guide, trek guide and other trek staff
- Rescue and evacuation services
- Miscellaneous Expenses - drinks, souvenir, personal expenses etc.
- The cancellation and baggage insurance, assistance and repatriation
- Indian Visa
- Other services not mentioned in 'Inclusion'