

# CHADAR TREK

Winter Lifeline of Zanskari People



Chadar trek in Ladakh

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Qayoom will lead our 2013 Chadar Trek in Zaskar Region of Ladakh.
- Chadar Trek lies to the south - west of Leh, surrounded by the Himalaya and Zaskar ranges.
- This trek walking on the frozen river of Zaskar where the temperature will be subzero.

## REASONS TO CHOOSE THE LADAKH TOURS

- **THE LADAKH TOURS** based in LEH, LADAKH is one of the most established and highly regarded companies. We have own vehicles to support client transfers. Highly experience Qayoom lead this expedition.
- We use comfortable twin share tents. A dining tent and toilet tents are also provided.
- We give first aid kit, plus high altitude medicine, antibiotics and other medicines.

## CHADAR TREK

Total number of days - 13 Days

Accommodation - 4 nights hotel , 9 nights Tent

2013 price from Leh to Leh = INR 32,000

Minimum group size – 6-10

Dates – 23<sup>rd</sup> January to 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013

## THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- All transfers including airport collections.
- One day sightseeing in Leh.
- Morning acclimatisation walk in Leh followed by visits to key sights in the city.
- Twin share room at Hotel Panaroma (or equivalent) in Leh.
- Breakfast only in Leh, all meals included while on trek.
- Twin share tents while on trek, dining tent and toilet tents.
- All trekking arrangements including permits and fees, Ladakhi guides, porters and cook.
- Pre departure support and advice from **THE LADAKH TOURS** by email and phone.

## THE FOLLOWING IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- Internal flight to/from Leh and Delhi. We can book Leh flights for you however we will invoice this as an extra cost.
- Travel & trekking insurance.
- Lunch and evening meals in Leh Hotel .
- Personal clothing & equipment, please see Appendix for suggested kit list.
- Tips.
- Other items not listed in “What is included”.

## PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Participants should be aware trekking, mountaineering and travelling in a developing country are activities that involve a risk of personal injury or death. As a condition of booking you must accept these risks and be responsible for your own actions and involvement.

Adventure travel requires an open and flexible attitude. You may experience extreme conditions, unpredictable weather and last minute changes to the itinerary beyond our control. Lack of acclimatisation to high altitudes could also be a risk factor. Our itineraries allow optimum time for acclimatising although it is possible that some individuals might be slow acclimatisers.

The majority of our trip visit remote areas where you are away from normal emergency services and medical facilities. In case of any serious injury requiring hospitalisation, it has to be accepted by you, evacuation could take up to several days and may impede your ensuing recovery. Helicopters are the most usual means of evacuation, however they are not always available or they may be hindered by poor weather and flying conditions.

## INTRODUCTION

Come and have a life time experience walking on the frozen river **Zanskar** in the high lands & the Buddhist Kingdom of Ladakh, where the temperature will be sub zero. This route has been used from Centuries as a trade link by Zanskaris. On the way you will also have chance to stay with the local Zanskaris and visit some of the ancient monasteries behind the Ice walls, wedged between the mighty Karakoram & the Great Himalayan range.

Best Time : Mid January to Mid February.  
Duration : 14 days.  
Focus : Ice trek, Ladakh's winter life, culture, monks and monasteries.  
Physical Challenge: Some long trekking days & Harsh Cold, Tough Expeditions.  
Climate : Usually sunny days but dry chilly winds, temperature can drop up to minus 25 Centigrade (- 25°C)  
Highest Point : Leh 3,505 Mts. and Lingshed 4,000 Mts.

## Ladakh.

Popularly known as, the land of numerous passes, mystic lamas, the broken moon & the last Shangri-La. Ladakh is bounded by two of the world's highest Mountain ranges, the Karakoram and the great Himalaya. The Ladakh region varies between 9,000 ft. / 2743 mts. to 25,170 ft. / 7672 m. above the sea level. Ladakh is a Land of medieval monasteries, fluttering prayer flags, high deserts, peaks and passes.

Based in the town of Leh (11,500 ft./ 3505 m), the journey include many fascinating excursions to nearby gompas (monasteries), villages and surrounding countryside.

## Zaskar.

Zaskar valley lies to the south - west of Leh, surrounded by the Himalaya and Zaskar ranges, which is the most isolated of all the trans - Himalayan Valleys.

Zaskar comprises of two main valleys the Stod(Doda Chu) and the Lanak (Tsarap Chu) which coverage below at Padum. The valley has an area of about 5,000 sq. kms. and an elevation of 13,154 feet/ 4010 mts. The area remains inaccessible for nearly 7 months in the year. All passes close in the winter and the river freeze on the surface. Zaskaris walk along it to reach the Indus River in Nimoo (Chilling village), which is known as the Chadar (frozen blanket) Trek.

The geographical isolation has resulted in the preservation of the Buddhist heritage and identity. Many ancient monastic establishments are still actively involved in religious activities. Some remote caves are believed to have been used by the successive Buddhist saints to sustain meditation in pursuit of knowledge and enlightenment.

explore the **DETAILED ITINERARY** of silence

It is our intention to keep to the day by day itinerary detailed below, although there might be some flexibility due to local conditions or other factors beyond our control.

If this is the case the trek leader will do everything possible to work out the changes to the itinerary in order to minimise your inconvenience.

## Day 1 – Leh (3500 m)

Early morning transfer to domestic airport to Board flight for Leh which is an hour flight. From Leh airport, transfer to hotel. Day free at Leh. There are plenty of things to be seen in and out of Leh town but we do not recommend any major exercise immediately. Allow the time for acclimatization. However a walk around the old town and perhaps up to the old palace would not be out of the question.

### **Day 02: In Leh**

Today you can go around Leh for sightseeing. Evening we take you a local family house to show you the Ladakhi tradition and culture. Overnight at the hotel.

Leh : The largest town in Ladakh is Leh. Dominated by the now ruined Leh Palace, former mansion of the royal family of Ladakh, built in the same style and about the same time as the Potala Palace. Leh is at an altitude of 3524 metres (11,562 ft).

### **Day 03: In Leh**

Sightseeing around Leh. Visiting Shey & Thiksey Monastries & in evening visit Shanti Stupa.

Shey Monastery : It is located in Shey on hillock, 15 kms away from Leh in south. A 7.5 meter high copper statue of Buddha, plated with gold and the largest of its kind is installed here.

Thiksey Monastery: Spectacularly sighted, Thiksey is one of the largest and architecturally most impressive gompa. There are several temples in this gompa, containing images stupas and wall painting of Buddhas which are exquisite. In evening visit Shanti Stupa in Leh. Overnight at hotel in Leh.

### **Day 04: Drive Leh – Sumdha (Chilling - 3180mtrs) - Trek Tilit Sumdo (3750 mtrs.) (3hrs)**

Get set and go, to start the most exciting trip on the Zanskar River. We Drive from Leh to Chilling to begin with. The road follows the Indus River for an hour to the confluence of Indus and Zanskar River, then follow The Zanskar River

till Sumdha-Do. We then trek for an hour on and off the frozen river to the village of Chilling. We camp near the village or stay in a family house.

**Day 05: Trek Tilit Sumdo (3750 mtrs.) – Markhala (6 hrs)**

For the next five days we trek up on the frozen river through gorges and deep valleys. There are number of choices for camping, and there for we can make our itinerary during this time as flexible as we like. There are also many caves (locals call it Bawo) which can be used for the night Shelter. The names of the stopping places are listed below. Tonight we camp at Markhala.

**Day 06: Trek Markhala to Dip Yokma (6 hours walk)**

Today we start our trek from Markhala & will be walking on ice. During the trek at times we need to give up walking on chadar depending on the condition of chadar and start walking on rock. Dinner and overnight stay in cave / camp.

Zanskari People depend entirely on perpetual snows in the mountains as a water source for their farm fields.

**Day 07: Trek Dip Yokma to Nirik Pullo (6 – 7 hours walk).**

In morning, we start our trek from Dip Yokma. We can view of canyons while passing through frozen icefalls. We'll find human traces after Nirik Pullo. Dinner and overnight stay in camp.

There are more than ten caves on the bank of the Frozen Zanskar River. Travellers prepare their tea and meals on open fire and sleep in the cave and so cave is covered with black soot inside.

**Day 08: Trek Nirik Pullo to Lingshed (3700mtrs) (5-6 hours walk).**

In morning, we start our the trek from Nirik Pullo. We steep walk till Lingshed village and leave behind chadar. Visit Lingshed village & villagers hospitality. Dinner and overnight stay in camp.

**Day 09: Trek Lingshed**

Lingshed : It is 4000mtrs above sea level and can only be reached by trek. It is one of the most remote parts of Ladakh. It can be accessed only by Chadar Trek in winter for 2 months. During summer it can be accessed by 4 days trek whether from Lamayuru or Padum. For around 6 months this village remains completely isolated.

Visiting the Lingshed monastery in the morning & exploring around. Lingshed Monastery : Lingshed Monastery or Lingshed Gompa is a Gelugpa Buddhist monastery in the Zaskar region in the state of Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir in northern India. The monastery in Lingshed is an important spiritual centre of Tibetan Buddhism. The Jangchub Tensung Dorje Center was founded in Lingshed by Kyabje Dagom Rinpoche. The monastery houses about 60 monks and is on the route between Zaskar and Lamayuru. It serves the surrounding villages including the one with the same name.

**10 to 13 back to Leh from same way.**

**14<sup>th</sup> Leh Delhi ...**

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### ALTITUDE AND ACCLIMATISATION

There are ways of helping the acclimatisation process, as described below:

- Walk slowly: there is plenty of time included in the itinerary so there is no need to rush, go at your own pace and enjoy the incredible views!
- Drinks lots of water: it is easier for your body to acclimatise when hydrated so drink water and avoid coffee, tea and alcohol.
- Consider taking diamox (acetazolamide): before using this drug we recommend consulting a doctor and thoroughly researching the pros and cons.

### ACCOMMODATION IN LEH



In Leh we use the Panaroma Hotel or equivalent which is one of the centrally heated hotels in the city. The hotel is well known for providing great hospitality towards the guests.

## A TYPICAL DAY ON TREK

The day starts with an early morning mug of tea brought to your tent by one of the cook's helpers and this is followed by a bowl of warm washing water. Before heading over to the mess tent for breakfast it is best to pack your overnight gear into your kitbag. During breakfast the tents will be packed away and, after the pack pony have been loaded, they will set off on the trail in the cool of the morning.

After breakfast, probably between 7am and 8am, we start walking. The pace of the trek is leisurely with plenty of time to enjoy the scenery, take photos and explore the local villages.

A packed lunch is collected after breakfast. There is more walking after lunch and normally you will get into camp by mid afternoon with the tents already put up by the local staff. In the evening a three course meal is served in the mess tent around 7pm.

After that the group leader will discuss the plan for the next day with the group. People might stay in the mess tent chatting about the day's events for a while before retiring to their tent for the night.

## FOOD

While on the trek, the cook will provide good quality food in sufficient quantities. For breakfast you are likely to get porridge or cereal, toast or chapattis, omelettes and a range of hot drinks. On arrival to camp in the afternoon you will be given tea and biscuits and a three course meal will follow later in the evening.

## CLIMATE

Usually sunny days but dry chilly winds, temperature can drop up to minus 25 Centigrade (- 25°C).

## CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

A list of suggested clothing and equipment for the Chadar Trek has been included in the Appendix below. This is a comprehensive list and experienced trekkers will often take only a selection of these items based on what has worked in the past. It is worth pointing out that you will need a sleeping bag for this trip.

Each trekker should bring one backpack for items required during the day. Your day backpack will contain items such as warm clothes, jacket, camera, water bottles, personal first aid kit and snacks.

The rest of your personal equipment packed in a kitbag or backpack will be carried by a porter. **The maximum weight allowance is 15kgs.** Please ensure that your bag is marked clearly on the outside for easy identification.

## VISA REQUIREMENTS

All foreigners require a visa for entry into India. It is your responsibility to obtain the entry visa and without this visa, airlines will refuse to accept you for your flight to Delhi.

## APPENDIX 1

*explore the adventure of silence*

### SUGGESTED CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT LIST

#### Footwear:

- Walking boots. A pair of waterproof boots with good ankle support.
- Wool and liner socks.
- Trainers/sneakers or sandals. Can be used around camp in the evenings. Sandals are particularly useful if we have to cross any rivers.

**Clothing:**

- Waterproof jacket and trousers.
- Trekking trousers.
- Long sleeve expedition shirts (not cotton).
- Micro fleece.
- Mid to heavyweight fleece.
- Sleeveless or body warmer type fleece.
- Thermals or baselayer for top & bottom (merino wool or synthetic).
- Fleece pants.
- Medium weight down jacket (eg. Nuptse jacket by The North Face).

**Handwear:**

- Fleece gloves.
- Warms mittens and/or gloves.

**Headwear:**

- Wool or fleece hat.
- Sun hat.
- Bandana or scarf.
- Headtorch. Bring extra batteries.

- Sunglasses.

**Personal Equipment:**

- Sleeping bag.
- Sleeping mat (eg. Thermarest). On trek we provide everyone with one foam mat however some clients prefer two layers for maximum insulation and comfort.
- Backpack large enough to carry water bottles, camera, lunch and extra clothing.
- Stuff sacks for keeping your gear dry and organised.

- Two water bottles (Nalgene wide mouth bottles are the best).
- Sunscreen and lip-salve with a high SPF.
- Favourite snack food.
- Trekking poles.
- Camera with spare batteries and memory cards.
- Insurance certificate.
- Earplugs (optional).
- Wet wipes (optional).
- Hand sanitizer (optional).

#### **Travelling:**

- A large waterproof kitbag (100 Litre size) for your personal gear on the trek (carried by a pack animal). Bring a small combination padlock to secure the bag.
- Travel clothes. You will need casual clothing for air travel days and time spent in Delhi and Leh.
- Toiletry bag include toilet paper, soap, towel, toothbrush, etc.

#### **Personal first aid kit:**

Note: we provide a comprehensive group first aid kit but please bring personal medications and other items you might use regularly such as:

- Any personal medications.
- Analgesics (paracetamol, ibuprofen and aspirin).
- Plasters and zinc oxide tape.
- Diamox (helps with acclimatisation).