



## The Nubra Valley and Lasermo La, Ladakh

**£1750 per person**

£ 390 Optional Single Supplement

**22 Aug to 5 Sept 2021 ex-Delhi**

**£1790 per person**

£ 390 Optional Single Supplement

**21 Aug to 4 Sept 2022 ex-Delhi**

### TOUR INFORMATION

**Activity: Trekking and Walking**

**Tour Duration: 15 Days**

**Min Age for trips: 16+**



Steady Plus

#### **INCLUSIONS:**

- 7 Nights Hotel, 7 Nights Camping
- 14 Breakfasts, 9 Dinners, 9 Lunches
- Fully supported trekking

*This information should answer some of your questions about the trip and give you a better idea of what we do day-to-day. It doesn't hope to answer everything. If you have any questions please get in touch.*

## Highlights

- Trek in the remote Nubra Valley region of Ladakh
- Drive over the Khardung La into the beautiful Shyok Valley
- Visit spectacular hilltop monasteries including Tikse and Diskit
- Cross the glaciated Lasermo Pass
- Explore the Snia Valley and enjoy wonderful wild campsites

## Overview

The beautiful Nubra Valley, a little known and remote part of Ladakh, has wonderful wide river valleys with sand dunes, magnificent views of the Himalaya and Karakorum ranges, scenic village life, quiet trails, wonderful campsites and spectacular hilltop monasteries. We fly from Delhi across the Himalaya to Leh (3,500m), where we spend time acclimatising to the altitude visiting some of the important monasteries in the area. We then cross one of the highest motorable road passes on earth, the Khardung La (5,375m) into the Nubra valley. For a couple of nights, we will stay in Hundar, which lies on the banks of Shyok River. We visit Diskit monastery and walk through the sand dunes where there are still the double humped Bactrian Camels. We then trek into the Thanglasso Valley and spend time exploring the Snia Valley, heading finally to the Lasermo La Pass. Crossing the glaciated pass, we trek down to the village of Phyang from where we drive back to Leh.

This is a special group departure run by **Valerie Parkinson, a professional Himalayan trek leader, who has been leading treks in Ladakh for 35 years.** For more details about her visit [www.himalaya.co.uk](http://www.himalaya.co.uk)

## India and Ladakh

The mountain kingdom of Ladakh is in the far north of India and is a remote region of wild arid valleys, rocky gorges and ridges leading to peaks over 6,000m. It lies in the rain shadow north of the Himalayan divide and so avoids the influence of the monsoon. It is subject to extremes in temperature, with hot summers and very cold winters. Little wonder that the Ladakhis are a hardy and self-sufficient people. Through ingenious irrigation systems, the villages in summer are oases of green barley fields; isolated splashes of colour in the desert landscape. Prayer flags, chortens, and mani walls of carved prayer stones are a constant reminder that Buddhism is a way of life, with symbols and spirits from pre-Buddhist times incorporated into the present day faith.

## Itinerary

This itinerary is flexible and should be seen as a guide only. Local conditions, weather or fitness could lead to changes in our daily plans. All times and distances are approximate.

**(B,L,D)** refers to meals included in the trip cost, i.e. **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**.

**This trip is 15 days ex Delhi.**

### Day 1 - Arrival in Delhi

Arrive in Delhi where you will be met at the International airport and transferred to our group hotel, close to the centre of Delhi. Depending on your arrival time there is time to rest or to explore this fascinating city. Our representatives in Delhi can suggest and organize sightseeing should you wish.

### Day 2 - Fly to Leh (3,500m)

Usually, a very early start as we transfer to the domestic airport for the flight to Leh. The flight is spectacular, and we fly over the snow-covered Indian Himalaya onto the Tibetan plateau. On arrival in Leh we will have a short 10-minute transfer to our hotel. Today we need to rest and acclimatise to the altitude. In the afternoon, your leader will take you on a short orientation walk round this interesting town and its bazaars. **(B)**

### Day 3 - Visit monasteries in the Indus Valley

We spend today acclimatizing and soaking in the local atmosphere before we head to the Nubra Valley and will visit some of the most important monasteries in the Indus Valley. A short drive from Leh is Shey palace. Now mostly in ruins, this ancient building was the summer capital of Ladakh in the 17th century. Inside there is a well-kept temple with a two-storied statue of the Buddha. From here we will walk across the well-kept barley fields to Tikse monastery. Set on a hilltop the spectacular monastery resembles the Potala in Lhasa. It is a large working monastery, and we can walk or drive to the temples perched at the top. There are different prayer rooms within the complex, a good - sized courtyard where a masked dance festival takes place every year and also a 15m high statue of Maitreya (future) Buddha. **(B)**



#### Day 4 - Drive over the Khardung La (5,375m) and on to Hundar (3,020m)

Today we leave Leh and set off by jeep over the Khardung Pass, which at 5,375m, is one of the highest motorable roads in the world. The journey to the top of the pass takes us on a winding road high above Leh. From the top we get great views looking back to the Leh Valley and the Ladakh mountains and ahead we can see the Karakorum. The road winds down through North Pollu check post and Khardung village and on to Khalsar (3,264m) and the Shyok River. At Khalsar we turn left and continue down the valley. Passing the monastery at Diskit we drive past an area of incredible sand dunes and finally arrive at Hundar, where we stay in a guest house for two nights. Approx. 6hrs driving. **(B, L, D)**

**Sleeping altitude** 3,020m

#### Day 5 - Acclimatisation walk to Diskit Monastery

We spend the day acclimatising to the altitude with a day hike to Diskit Monastery (3,142m). The area between Hundar and Diskit is filled with sand dunes. An unusual sight sandwiched between magnificent mountains. The walk is fairly flat as we head across the valley bottom to Diskit, now the district headquarters. We end our walk at Diskit Monastery, overlooked by a 32m high Buddha statue. The monastery (Gompa) is the oldest and largest in the Nubra Valley, dating from 1420, and belongs to the Gelugpa (Yellow Hat) sect of Tibetan Buddhism. We can take taxis back to Hundar and in the afternoon, there is the chance to go and see the rare double humped Bactrian camels. These magnificent animals were previously used by traders to carry goods across the high passes. As there is no longer any trade across these borders the animals became endangered. A government breeding programme has now ensured that these animals will not become extinct. **(B, D)**

**Trek Profile:** approx. 4 hrs walking / 10 km



**Day 6 - Drive to Hundar Gompa; trek through a spectacular gorge to Wachan (3,900m)**

We drive for about 3km to Hundar Gompa, from where we start our trek. Leaving the main valley, we turn up into a narrow side valley. The walking today is fairly easy as we follow a wide jeep track into the gorge. The rocks tower above us as we gain height gradually. Look out for grazing Bactrian camels amongst the multi-coloured rocks of this spectacular gorge. After 8km we come to a small droksa (shepherd camp) with a few trees providing welcome shade from the sun. The valley now widens a little and we camp near a couple of houses where the valley splits.

**Full-service Camping (B,L,D)**

**Sleeping altitude** 3,900m

**Trek Profile:** 4.5/5hrs walking / 13km

**Day 7 - Walk past Sernang (the last village until Phyang) and continue ascending the valley to our wild camp at Snia Sumdo (4,200m)**

A shorter day as we begin to gain height. From Wachan we take the left-hand valley and climb steadily to the main part of Wachan. Further up the valley is Sernang, a small collection of houses and fields. This is the last village we will see till Phyang. The trail ascends the valley further and we may have to cross the river several times depending on the water level (we carry a rope for river crossings and we highly recommend you bring river crossing sandals). The Snia Valley is the first large valley to the right. We cross to the right side of the valley and camp somewhere near the valley junction. In the afternoon, there will be time to explore the surrounding hills.

**Full-service Camping (B,L,D)**

**Sleeping altitude** 4,200m

**Trek Profile:** 3.5/4hrs walking / 6km



**Day 8 - Surrounded by unnamed peaks, the trail climbs the Snia Valley which abounds with wildlife including marmots, foxes and wolves. Camp at Pullu (4,600m)**

We turn into the Snia Valley and follow the river. The trail climbs steadily and again, depending on water levels, we may have to cross the river. We are surrounded by unnamed peaks and passes and only shepherds inhabit this valley in the summer. Before there were roads in Ladakh, people used the passes regularly but now, apart from the shepherds in summer the valley is inhabited by wildlife only. Marmots abound in summer and foxes, wolves, and snow leopards use the valley to hunt for prey. We pass several shepherd encampments and camp at the valley junction close to the river. In the afternoon the energetic can explore further up the valley. Continuing gradually up the valley we turn a corner. About 5km from camp there is a glacial lake at 4,800m. We get a sense of the remoteness of where we are as we are surrounded by un-named and unclimbed peaks and passes.

**Full-service Camping (B,L,D)**

**Sleeping altitude** 4,600m

**Trek Profile:** 4/5hrs walking / 8km (plus optional afternoon walk towards the lake)



**Day 9 - Retrace our steps and continue up the main Thanglasso Valley on a rocky trail of glacial moraine until it opens out into a wide grazing area, perfect for camping (4,560m)**

We retrace our steps down the valley to the junction and turn right into the main Thanglasso Valley. Which side of the valley we walk on depends on the water level in the river. The climb up the valley is on a rocky glacial moraine trail. Finally, the valley opens out and we come to a wide grazing area. There are plenty of good campsites in this area.

**Full-service Camping (B,L,D)**

**Sleeping altitude** 4,560m

**Trek Profile:** 5/6hrs walking / 10km

### **Day 10 - A gradual climb up the valley to a large shepherd camp at Thanglasso and on to our camp at the base of the Lasermo La**

Quite a tough day as we walk to 5000m. We continue gradually climbing the valley. It's about 4km to the large shepherd camp at Thanglasso at 4,570m. We are now surrounded by a fantastic landscape of peaks and passes leading off into many unexplored side valleys. We eventually reach our Base Camp at 5,000m where we spend 2 nights.

#### **Full-service Camping (B,L,D)**

**Sleeping altitude** 5,000m

**Trek Profile:** 6-6.5hrs walking / 12km

### **Day 11 - Explore the area around camp; chance to explore isolated side valleys**

We spend the day exploring the area around Base Camp. We can take a packed lunch and ascend the valley across from our camp up to a series of lakes. It takes about 1.5 hours to the first small lake. The energetic can continue further up the valley to second lake. We are now surrounded by unclimbed summits. We can either descend back to camp or those who want to explore further there is a rocky trail which climbs to a third small glacial lake.

#### **Full-service Camping (B,L,D)**

**Sleeping altitude** 5,000m



### **Day 12 - Cross the Lasermo La (5,400m) with views of the Karakorum and Ladakh Range, to Phyang Sumdo (4,510m)**

A tough day as we cross the Lasermo La. We need to carry our yaktrax/microspikes for the top of the pass as it is glaciated. The trail continues up the valley. The trail is rocky and uneven to start with, but the gradient is gradual. After a couple of hours, we come to the glacier, where we need to use our yaktrax. The ascent up the glacier is easy and not steep as we wind our

way to the top of the pass. It will take about 3.5/4hrs to the top, where we are rewarded with magnificent views back to the Karakorum and ahead to the Ladakh Range. We descend into the long Phyang Valley and camp at about 4,510m at Phyang Sumdo.

### **Full-service Camping (B,L,D)**

**Sleeping altitude** 4,510m

**Trek Profile:** Approx. 8-10hrs walking / approx. 13km



### **Day 13 - Descend to Phyang; option to visit the monastery; drive to Leh**

Our last day's walking as we descend the valley all morning. It's about 3-4hrs walk to Phyang, which is a large village close to Leh. We can visit the impressive monastery that towers above the valley. It is then a short 1hr drive back to Leh and the comforts of a hot shower in our hotel. We should get to Leh by mid-afternoon and the rest of the day is free for last minute sightseeing or shopping in the bazaars. Overnight in hotel. **(B,L)**

**Sleeping altitude** 3,500m

**Trek Profile:** Approx. 3-4hrs walking / approx. 11km

### **Day 14 - Flight to Delhi**

The final day of the trip in Ladakh and the time to leave the mountains behind. Another early morning start as we are taken to the Leh airport to board our flight back to Delhi. If all goes to plan we arrive Delhi by noon and will have sufficient time for some last minute sightseeing in Delhi before our flight home tomorrow. **(B)**

### **Day 15 - Depart Delhi**

Transfer to the airport for your flight home. **(B)**

## Accommodation

In Delhi and Leh we use simple yet comfortable hotels, all with en suite facilities. On trek we use two person tents, with a larger communal tent for meals. A single supplement is available on this trip which includes a single room in the hotels and a single tent on trek. If you only want a single tent or a single room please contact us for prices.

## Food

On trek all meals are included. In Delhi and Leh we provide bed and breakfast only. This allows you the option of choosing where you would like to eat, which is very much part of the adventure. Your leader will suggest and take you to restaurants. On trek we provide all food and drinks. For breakfast there is porridge, cereal, eggs, breads, spreads and a selection of hot drinks. Lunches are packed and carried for you and contain various breads, tinned fish, cheese, vegetables, fruit, spreads and soup. Afternoon tea and biscuits is served on arrival at camp. Dinners are a mix of Indian, Chinese and western food prepared to a surprisingly high standard. There will be a 3 course dinner plus a selection of hot drinks. Boiled and safe drinking water is available at camp to fill water bottles. Vegetarians are well catered for in India. If you have any other dietary restrictions, please let us know when booking.

## Altitude

Above 3000m, the air is thinner, the pressure is lower and there is less oxygen available in the atmosphere. Acclimatisation is the process by which the body adapts to these conditions. The key to acclimatisation is a good itinerary with a gradual initial height gain, walking at a slow and steady pace, and increasing fluid intake - drinking at least 4 litres a day is advisable above 3000m. Your leader will brief you on altitude and will monitor you daily.

## Transport

We fly from Delhi to Leh and Leh to Delhi using one of the internal airlines operating in India. We use buses, jeeps or taxis for the airport transfers, sightseeing round Leh and the journey from Leh to the start of the trek and from the end of the trek back to Leh.

## Health and Hygiene

We have an excellent record of staying fit and well in India. The key seems to be our enthusiasm for Indian vegetarian food, (most of India is vegetarian), and care with water, peeling fruit, avoiding salads etc.

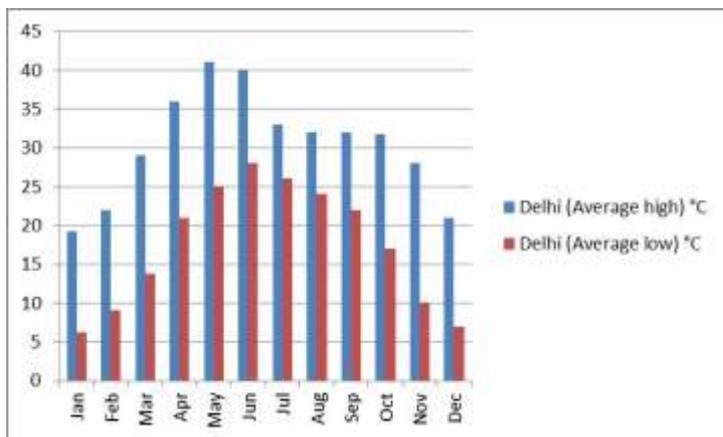
## Indian Visas

A full passport is required to apply for the Indian visa, with a validity of at least 6 months beyond the intended duration of stay in the country. It is the client's responsibility to complete all the application procedures and obtain their visas before the intended date of departure. A simplified facility of applying for an eVisa is now available to British passport holders, this will entitle the applicants to a 60-day tourist visa, for more details please log on to the official website of Indian Government <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/> Alternatively UK passport holders can apply themselves for Indian Visa through India High Commissions Visa service VFS by logging on to <http://in.vfsglobal.co.uk/>. Current visa fee for British passport holders

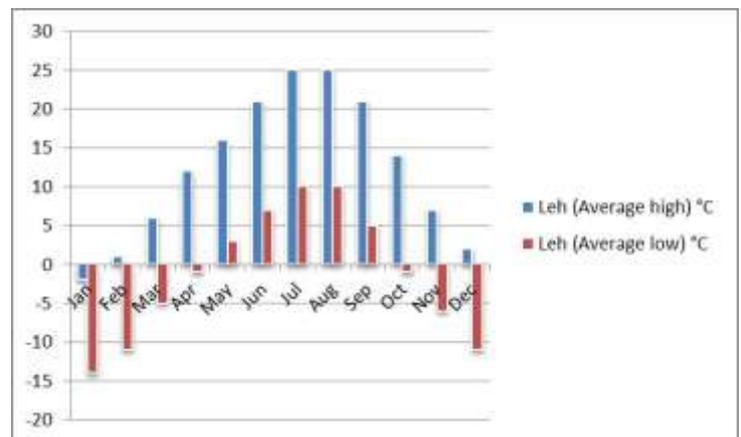
## Climate

In Delhi it will be hot around 35°C, and wet. During the monsoon (June to mid-September) it rains almost every day, often in a downpour, but the sun comes out between showers. Beyond the monsoon in Leh and on the trek it should mostly be hot and dry, but rainfall (and snow) are always possible in the mountains. At night on the trek, temperatures could drop below freezing at the higher camps so suitable clothing is required.

Temperatures in Delhi



Temperatures in Leh



## 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 4 liters per person per day. We strongly encourage you not to buy bottled water as this contributes to the growing problem of plastic pollution in Ladakh. In Leh there is a shop called Dzomsa which sells safe drinking water. Your leader will show you where this is on your first day in Leh.

During the trek and whilst in camp the cooks will collect and boil drinking water from the mountain streams and fill up your water bottles for you, but you may need to collect water during the day and may wish to use your own water purification treatment as well. You can use water purification tablets or you may like to bring a SteriPEN to treat any non-boiled water.

## MONEY MATTERS

### Currency Information

The national currency of India is the Indian Rupee (INR), with an exchange rate at the time of publication of approximately 97 to the UK£ and 73 to the US\$. You are advised to bring most of your money in cash. It makes no difference whether you bring Sterling, Euros 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 £150 for meals, entry fees and tipping for the whole trip.

### ATM availability/Credit Card Acceptance

There are ATMs in Delhi and Leh. Please do not rely wholly on ATMs as often they are broken or run out of cash and there is a maximum amount per day that any one machine will dispense. Credit cards are accepted in larger shops in Delhi and in Leh.

### Tipping (leader and local staff)

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 porters and other hotel staff, local sightseeing guides, trekking staff such as guide, assistants, cooks and pony men. We suggest you allow Rs. 5500 (approx. £65 / \$80) for this trip. Please try to tip in local currency. (Occasionally for very small groups the leader may need to collect a little more than the suggested amount).

Tipping of the leader is not included in the above and is at your discretion. However, we suggest around Rs. 2000 (approx. £25/US \$30) per person for the leader.

Based on the above distributions, you should allow approximately GB£90/US\$110 per person in total for all tips for the tour duration. Please try to give all tips in local currency.

## WHAT TO TAKE

### Essential Equipment and Clothing

Internal flights to Leh are subject to a weight limit of 15kg checked in baggage in one bag. If you check in more than one bag or more than 15kg you will be liable to excess luggage charges. Hand baggage on the internal flight is 7kg. Please note power banks and all electrical charging equipment and batteries need to go in hand baggage.

It is possible to store luggage in the hotels in Delhi and Leh free of charge. You will be restricted to 12 kgs of luggage whilst on trek.

Please note that many Indians are still traditional in the way they dress. Out of respect for the country we ask you to dress conservatively —no sleeveless tops or tight leggings. Although shorts are acceptable on trek they should be modest and reach to just above the knee and for women a skirt (below the knee) or trousers are preferable (shorts are not acceptable in monasteries).

## Essential

- 3/4 season sleeping bag (liner optional but highly recommended if using a 3 season bag)
- Sleeping mattress/thermarest.
- 3 season jacket.
- Walking boots - lightweight and waterproof with ankle support and worn in.
- Waterproof jacket and trousers.
- Trainers/sandals for the evening (and river crossings).
- Warm hat, Warm gloves.
- Several pairs of walking socks (not too thick as it can be very hot in Ladakh in summer).
- A thermal layer.
- Mid layer (fleece).
- T-shirts/shirts/base layers.
- Light weight trousers.
- Shorts (or skirt for women).
- Sunhat, sunglasses, sun screen and lip salve with sun protection.
- Day pack (at least 25 liters).
- Head torch.
- Water Bottles (minimum 2 litres). If using a SteriPEN bring a wide mouthed bottle such as Nalgene.
- Plastic bags (bin liners) to line daypack and for packing clothing in the kitbag.
- Toilet paper.
- Small personal first aid kit.
- Trekking pole(s).
- Yaktrax / Spikeys / Micro spikes or similar (for the Lasermo La).

## Optional items

- SteriPEN / Water purification.
- Hand washing gel.
- Biodegradable soap / shampoo.
- Umbrella (for either sun or rain).

