

Highlights of Lhasa - 8 days

go guide

don't leave home without it



A World Of Discovery



Take in the highlights of two wonderfully diverse cities in one week! Kathmandu and Lhasa are steeped in history, rich in natural beauty and home to some of the world's most sacred pilgrimage sites.



HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Kathmandu and the Kathmandu Valley - Patan Durbar Square, Swayambhunath Pagoda, Bodhnath Buddhist stupa Buddhist stupa and various other temples and shrines
- Views of the Himalayan Mountains including Everest and Kanchenjunga on the scenic flight to Tibet.
- Lhasa - Sera Monastery, Barkhor Bazaar, Potala Palace, Drepung Monastery.

What's Included

- 7 breakfasts
- 1 dinner at a Nepali cultural evening
- 7 nights - basic 3 star hotels
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on day 1 and day 8

- Return economy flight from Kathmandu to Lhasa
- Entrance fees to all included sites
- Touring of Kathmandu Valley & Lhasa
- English speaking local guides in Kathmandu and Lhasa
- All relevant transfers and transportation
- Tibet visa assistance (excludes cost)
- Please Note: Flights from Kathmandu - Lhasa and return are based on the lowest fare class available booked in advance. Should all seats be taken in this fare class a flight supplement will apply.

What's Not Included

- International flights, departure tax and visas. on the go will make all the necessary arrangements for your Tibet visa in advance of your travel. Upon arrival to Kathmandu, Tibet visa costs (approximately USD\$175 for US passport holders, USD\$85 for all other nationalities) will need to be paid by you directly to our representative.
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Kathmandu

Thursday. Welcome to Nepal and the start of your holiday! Pick up and complete a landing card on the plane or in the airport before you go through customs. Upon arrival you will be met by an On The Go/Sherpa Society representative and transferred to your hotel where you will receive a welcome drink and a briefing about your trip. **Overnight - Kathmandu**

Day 2 : The Kathmandu Valley



Kathmandu is Nepal's biggest and most cosmopolitan city and a very important point on the caravan routes between Tibet and India. Today we explore this amazing city and the surrounding area.

Discover the highlights of the Kathmandu Valley! After breakfast take a short drive out of Kathmandu to Swayambhunath Pagoda and Bodhnath. Ancient 5th century Bodhnath, is a beautiful Buddhist worship site where the spinning of prayer wheels, prostrating pilgrims and collective chants are just some of the practises that can be witnessed. We continue on to Patan Durbar Square, which has unique Newari architecture and is full of Buddhist and Hindu monuments, with fine bronze gateways, guardian deities and wonderful carvings. We explore Patan's courtyards (known locally as chowks), temples and beautiful pagodas. This evening enjoy dinner whilst watching a traditional Nepali dance performance. The restaurant is a 10 - 15 minute walk, your guide will give you details on how to reach the restaurant. **Overnight - Kathmandu (B, D)**

Day 3 : Lhasa

Kathmandu - Lhasa. This morning fly to Tibet; this is one of the most scenic flights in the world, crossing over the great mountains of Kanchenjunga and Everest. More than 4500 metres above sea level, Tibet is known as the 'Roof of the World' and the towering mountain ranges that surround the plateau, ensure it's complete isolation. Upon arrival you will be met at the airport before we drive to the fabled city of Lhasa - 'Ground of the Gods,'

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www.onthegotours.com
uk 020 7371 1113 info@onthegotours.com
aus 1300 855 684 aus-info@onthegotours.com
nz 0800 44 77 69 can 1 866 890 7038
usa 1 866 377 6147 sa 0800 982 686

This Go Guide has been compiled with care and good faith. It gives an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. This document does not form part of a contract between the traveller and on the go and their affiliates. Any costs shown are subject to change though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of on the go



where we receive a short briefing and then the rest of the day is free to relax and acclimatise. Only take part in light activity today to give your body time to acclimatise properly and to avoid altitude sickness.
Overnight - Lhasa (B)

Day 4 : Jokhang temple



Begin exploration of this mythical city by visiting the Sera monastery, which is still a working retreat 600 years after its foundation as a main teaching monastery. It is one of the great Gelukpa 'Universities', once housing more than 5500 monks. Here we see young novices learning scriptures in the Debating Garden and being rewarded for a correct answer with a resounding hand-clap from their master.

The highlight of the day is a visit to the holiest shrine in Tibet, the 7th Century Jokhang Temple; located in the Barkhor district, it houses a solid gold shrine of the enlightened Buddha. The temple is not the most attractive sight but it is certainly the most fascinating. A continuous flow of pilgrims, travel around the complex in an anti clockwise direction, prostrating themselves with varying degrees of exertion and frequency, and spinning hand-held prayer wheels. The temple is a veritable hive of activity and a wonderful place to witness the practises of Buddhism. From the flat roof of the temple there are fabulous views of the city.

Our final stop today is Barkhor Bazaar, which is worlds apart from the rest of Lhasa; a maze of picturesque old streets which are lined with stalls selling all sorts of random goods and a great place to watch the everyday hustle and bustle of Tibetan life.
Overnight - Lhasa (B)

Day 5 : The Potala Palace

Exploration of Lhasa continues today with a visit to the city's most enduring image - the Potala Palace. Potala is the poignantly empty winter home of the Dalai Lama, is the dominant landmark of Lhasa. Towering 117 metres above the city, it's a masterpiece in design; 13 stories high, containing thousands of rooms. It was the heart of Tibet, its (exiled) government and people. The palace is a UNESCO World Heritage Site containing an incredible 10,000 shrines and 200,000 statues. Perched on the side of Marco Ri - the main buildings are the White Palace, the living quarters of the Dalai Lama; the Red Palace, which is purely for Buddhist prayer and the Tomb of the 13th Dalai Lama, with its giant stupa containing one ton of gold and jewels!

After exploring Potala Palace take a short journey to the 15th century Drepung Monastery. Formerly one of the largest monasteries of Tibet, housing 10,000 monks, it was torn asunder during the Cultural Revolution and its walls and statues continue to be rebuilt today.
Overnight - Lhasa (B)

Day 6 : Lhasa to Kathmandu



Lhasa - Kathmandu. Bidding farewell to Tibet, we take the beautifully scenic flight back to Kathmandu today. Kathmandu is the meeting places for dozens of ethnic groups, filling the streets with life and colour. We enjoy free time in this wonderful city; with plenty of time to explore the myriad of medieval alleyways, courtyards, temples and bazaars. You will be met upon arrival at Kathmandu airport and transferred to your hotel, the rest of the day is at leisure.
Overnight - Kathmandu (B)

Day 7 : Free day

The day is free to spend at leisure. Durbar Square in the heart of Kathmandu is a hive of activity and a fabulous place to people watch or perhaps indulge in a little last minute souvenir shopping.
Overnight - Kathmandu (B)

Day 8 : Kathmandu

Thursday. Hotel check-out and included onward transfer to the airport.(B)

Travelling to Tibet

Travelling to Tibet is guaranteed to be a memorable experience, fly over the breathtaking Himalayas, meet nomadic Tibetan pilgrims and walk amidst the burning butter lamps and the chanting monks of Tibet's ancient and legendary Buddhist monasteries. However, if you are not up for a bit of adventure, or for accommodations and amenities that may be far from perfect, perhaps this trip is not for you. Tibet was opened to tourism in 1985. Before this it avoided influence from the western world and developed its unique culture and religion independently. The infrastructure of the tourist industry is still very basic in this remote country. Please do not expect the standard you are accustomed to in the West. Nevertheless, every effort will be made under the circumstances to ensure a smooth & pleasant trip.

Please be aware that all the programs in Tibet are conducted strictly under the rules and regulation of Tibet Tourism Bureau. Therefore, on the go tours and our local representatives, shall not be held responsible for any change and alterations to the itinerary due to unavoidable circumstances

such as landslide, road blockage, flood, snow, political unrest, cancellation of flight, delay arrival, sickness or accidents. Any applicable extra costs incurred for these reasons will be payable by the passenger. It is therefore essential that you have are fully insured and have a comprehensive policy that covers medical, personal accidents and cancellation insurance.

Visas

Visa requirements - Tibet

All nationalities require a Chinese visa and a Tibet permit to enter Tibet. It is only possible to enter Tibet from Nepal with a visa issued by the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu, this will be arranged for you by on the go. You will require 3 passport photos in order to obtain your Tibet permit and Nepal visa and it's a good idea to have a spare one.

Upon booking you will need to advise us of your international flight details and you will also need to provide us with the following:

- a coloured scanned copy of your passport information and photo page.
- a completed China Visa form - we will provide you with the form which you will need to print it out, fill in by hand and attach a passport photo. Then create a colour scanned copy of the completed visa form with photograph and email it back to us in PDF format.

The cost of the Tibet visa/permit is not included in the price of the tour and is to be paid directly by you to our representative in Kathmandu upon arrival on day 1. The current cost of a Tibet visa/permit on a one day visa service is:

- USA passport holders: USD \$175
- All other nationalities: USD \$85

Please note: Visa fees are subject to change.

If arriving into Kathmandu earlier and booking pre tour accommodation, it may be possible for us to use a 3 or 5 working day embassy visa service in Kathmandu, at a lower cost. Contact us for further details.

Visa requirements - Nepal

All nationalities must obtain a visa for Nepal. On the Highlights of Lhasa, Nepal to Tibet and Nepal & Bhutan tours you will need a multiple entry visa. It is possible for UK, EEC, Australia, Canada and USA passport holders to obtain a visa upon arrival. However in the event of visa refusal at port of entry on the go will not be held responsible.

- To obtain your visa upon arrival will need a passport with at least 6 months validity,
- 2 passport photos
- Visa fee of approx USD \$25 - \$100 in CASH (dependent on length of stay)

Please refer the the Royal Nepalese Embassy website for the current exact Nepal visa costs.

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Please note there is a departure tax from Nepal Kathmandu airport of approx USD\$22 (payable by you in Nepal Rupees).

Please note that some tours eg Highlights of Lhasa, leave Nepal on two occasions so the total to pay will be approx USD\$44.

NOTE: Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller.

Please complete and return your booking form as soon as possible after booking, as we will need passport numbers, date of birth etc for permits and internal flights.

What to Pack

Casual wear and comfortable walking shoes are the rule for Tibet. Be sure to bring warm clothing as nights and early mornings can range from quite chilly to down right cold in winter. Waterproof clothing is essential if travelling in the rainy season and throughout the year pack clothing which can be layered, since temperatures fluctuate.

travelling november to april

- Down Jacket
- Thermal Underwear
- Warm/thick trousers
- Sweaters
- Warm Sweaters
- Woolen Shirts
- Gloves
- Warm hat & Scarves
- Light Leather Boots in case of snow

travelling may to october

- Raincoat or Windbreakers
- Jackets
- Trousers
- Sweaters
- Sun Hat
- Shirts (cotton/woollen)
- Comfortable Shoes

Group Size

The number of passengers joining our Himalayan tours and treks varies from week to week. On average our groups are small, typically between 1 - 6 travellers.

Tippling

Tippling is a very important part of local incomes. We recommend you allocate the following amount per person to cover tips paid directly by you to - bellhops, luggage handlers, your driver, porters and local guides Approx: USD\$40-50

Keep a supply of small notes for local transactions and tipping.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Style of Trip

Our Nepal and Tibet trips are semi independent in style. Local guides provide sightseeing and

assistance at each port of call, the tours are not escorted throughout by a tour leader. On bus journeys and flights you will therefore travel without a guide and will be met upon arrival at your destination and transferred to your hotel. In Chitwan National Park guiding will be provided by the lodges own expert jungle guides. The number of passengers joining our Himalayan tours and treks varies from week to week. On average our groups are small, typically between 1 - 6 travellers. Transportation is a combination of public tourist buses, internal flights and private vehicles.

What to Expect

Please note that Nepal and Tibet are still poor, underdeveloped regions and their infrastructure and weather patterns can sometimes lead to delays or cancellations. This may take the form of flight delays due to low cloud in the mountains or foggy conditions in Kathmandu and Lhasa. The road network is quite congested in the cities and suffers from poor maintenance on some routes again causing delays and a rough ride from time to time.

Whilst Kathmandu has a good choice of high quality hotels, in other areas hotels and facilities are not as high as Western standards. Power shortages, water supply issues and fuel scarcity are common problems throughout Nepal. We will always try to offset any unforeseen problems but patience and understanding should be included when packing. Bear in mind that tourism is still relatively new to these beautiful Himalayan regions, things do not always run smoothly and a sense of adventure is a must!

Health Requirements

It is recommended that you be vaccinated for Tetanus and Polio, if you haven't had a booster in the last ten years. Food and waterborne diseases are more common, so we recommend vaccinations for Typhoid (valid 3 years) and Hepatitis A (validity varies). You are also advised to take anti-Malarial medication. This information is intended as a guide only as recommendations can change, so please contact your local healthcare provider, several weeks before travel.

Climate

Nepal

June to September is monsoon season, during these months it is very hot and rains almost every day. October to November is much drier with pleasant temperatures in the daytime and good visibility - perfect for trekking. Winter - December to February tends to be mild in the daytime but can become very cold at night especially in the mountains. January is the coldest month of the year. March to May is very warm, with occasional showers. The annual temperatures peak in May just before the monsoons begin.

Tibet

Weather conditions vary greatly in different regions of Tibet. Central Tibet is generally mild from April to November, making it the best time to visit. Due to the high altitude it is rarely scorching, but the suns rays are very strong. From December to February/ March it becomes very cold and temperatures

regularly drop below freezing, travel during these months is not advisable. Tibet does not have a typical monsoon season, but May to September are the months with the highest rainfall (which mostly occurs in the evenings).

Time

- Kathmandu (Nepal) is 5 hours 45 mins ahead of GMT and does not observe daylight savings time.
- Lhasa (Tibet) is 8 hours ahead of GMT and does not observe daylight savings time.
- Thimphu (Bhutan) is 6 hours ahead of GMT and does not observe daylight savings time.

Currency

Nepal: GBP £1.00 = NPR 107 USD \$1.00 = NPR 75
Tibet: GBP £1.00 = CNY 10 USD \$1.00 = CNY 7
Exchange rates are subject to fluctuation. There are plenty of money exchanges in Kathmandu. However in case of problems with ATMs and banks, as sometimes occurs, we recommend you bring a reserve fund, preferably in US dollars. In Tibet, money can be exchanged at the Bank of China in Zhangmu, Shigatse and Lhasa. The hotels also have exchange facilities. Credit cards may be accepted in some places.

Essential Packing

Bring all the film, medicine, cosmetics, feminine hygiene products and toiletries, etc. that you will need from home as these are difficult, if not impossible to obtain in Tibet.

- Food – Snacks along the way
- Water bottle (use iodised or boiled water)
- Personal medical kit
- Sunglasses
- Sun screen lotion
- Toilet paper
- Flash light batteries
- Day pack
- Camera Bandanna / Scarf or mask – to protect your lungs from dust
- A guide book on Nepal and Tibet

Altitude Sickness

An altitude of over 3,000 meters is defined as high altitude and seeing as most of Tibet and parts of Nepal are higher than this level, it is possible to experience differing degrees of symptoms which include headaches, nausea, dizziness, fatigue and shortness of breath. These symptoms will usually decrease in severity during acclimatization and mild cases of altitude sickness should not interfere with light activity. It is important not to over exert yourself if travelling to altitude and drink plenty of fluids and eat carbohydrate food to keep the body properly hydrated. Please report any symptoms of Altitude Sickness immediately to your tour leader.

Voltage

Standard voltage is 220V. Pack a worldwide/ international travel adaptor to cover all destinations, that will allow you to use a hairdryer, electric shaver,

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charge a mobile phone or Ipod etc in Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan.

Temple Etiquette

Please take particular care when visiting religious places, such as temples and monasteries. Dress and behave appropriately - don't wear shorts or sleeveless tops and do not smoke or hold hands. Shoes and hats should be removed. Within temples no carvings, statues or deities should be touched. Photography is prohibited in certain sections of most sacred sites and please do not attempt to be photographed with Buddhist monks. If in doubt ask your local guide for further information.

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www.onthegotours.com
uk 020 7371 1113 info@onthegotours.com
aus 1300 855 684 aus-info@onthegotours.com
nz 0800 44 77 69 can 1 866 890 7038
usa 1 866 377 6147 sa 0800 982 686

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