



# Tibetan Guide

M I M A D H O N D U P

## Mt Kailash Pilgrimage Kora SAGA DAWA FESTIVAL 2021

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Tashi delek! Tibetan Guide Travel Tours is a small travel agency based in Lhasa. We always work hard and take responsible for our clients by using local services as much as possible. Of course we use Tibetan drivers and tour guides. Who are experienced, have rich knowledge about Tibetan culture and also excellent attitude. We are confident that you would not be disappointed if you choose our services letting us show you our mother land.

### Proposed itinerary

#### **May 16th, 2021. Day 1: Lhasa arrival [3650m]**

Upon arrival in Lhasa you will be welcomed by your English-speaking Tibetan Guide and Tibetan Driver who will bring you to your hotel. Acclimatization to high altitude: please, drink lots of water and take plenty of rest in order to minimize altitude sickness.

*Overnight at Shambhala Palace or House of Shambhala Hotel, which are a Tibetan style hotel located in Lhasa city center (Barkhor)*

#### **May 17th, 2021. Day 2: Lhasa sightseeing**

We begin visiting Ramoche Temple, built in honor of the image of Jowo Rinpoche that Chinese princess Wencheng brought by marrying Songtsen Gampo, the first king of Buddhist doctrine and who unified the Tibetan empire in the 7th century. Thereafter, we continue with Jokhang Temple, the most sacred monastery in Tibet. It was also founded in the 7th century by Songtsen Gampo. Later you can explore the surrounding Barkhor old quarter and spend time walking around Jokhang Temple following pilgrims from all over the Tibetan plateau. In the afternoon we go to Sera Monastery, one of three great universities of Gelugpa Sect. We will attend the debating session of the monks.

*Overnight at Shambhala Palace or House of Shambhala Heritage Hotel*

#### **May 18th, 2021. Day 3: Lhasa sightseeing**

Today we visit the beautiful Potala and Norbulingka Palaces. Potala winter palace was built in the 17th century by the fifth Dalai Lama. Provides amazing views of the entire city and houses the private quarters of the Dalai Lama, numerous grand state rooms and chapels. Norbulingka Palace is the summer palace of the Dalai Lama, built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the seventh Dalai Lama. It's tradition to do picnic in its beautiful garden and perform opera dances during Shoton Festival (August-September).

*Overnight at Shambhala Palace or House of Shambhala Heritage Hotel*



**May 19th, 2021. Day 4: Ganden Monastery & warm-up hike day trip [100Km]**

In the morning we visit Ganden Monastery, 50 km from Lhasa. It is the main seat of the Gelug Sect and was founded by Tsongkhapa in 1409. It's placed in the top of a hill in the Kyichu valley. We hike for some hours in the surroundings to improve our acclimatization to high altitude.

*Overnight at Shambhala Palace or House of Shambhala Heritage Hotel*

**May 20th, 2021. Day 5: Lhasa – Samye – Tsedang [180km, 3575m]**

Adventure starts: We will we drive South-East to reach the Yarlung Valley - in the heart of Tibet and the cradle of Tibetan civilization. Today we will visit the region where the ancient Tibetan kings unified Tibet in the 7th century. Our first stop along the way will be Tsedang - the fourth city in importance of Tibet - to visit the Yumbulagang Palace which dominates the valley from the top of a hill. It is considered as the first construction of Tibet and resembles a medieval fortress. Then we will go to Samye Monastery (8th century), the first Buddhist monastery in Tibet, and with its particular architecture forms a gigantic mandala following the structure of the universe according to Buddhist cosmology. If the time available allows, we will also visit the Temple of Traduk today.

*Overnight at Tsedang Hotel*

**May 21th, 2021. Day 6: Tsedang – Gyantse [310Km, 3980m]**

Early breakfast and drive West to Tsang region: First we cross Kampa-la Pass [4797m] and then Karo-la Pass [5050m], where Mt. Noijin Kangsang [7206m] glacier lies near the road. In the middle, we enjoy the unreal turquoise waters of holy lake Yamdrok-Tso. Then we stop in Gyantse town, where we visit the considered best tibetan art paintings in Kumbum Stupa inside Pelkor Chode Monastery. Also from here, we admire the majestic Gyantse Dzong (fortress) overlooking the valley.

*Overnight at Yeti Hotel or similar*

**May 22nd, 2021. Day 7: Gyantse – Shigatse – Sakya [240Km, 4300m]**

In the morning we drive North-West to reach second largest city in Tibet. We visit Tashilhunpo Monastery, built in the 15th century by the first Dalai Lama. Nowadays seat of the Panchen Lama, the second highest figure in the Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy. We recommend to do Kora around Tashilhunpo Monastery. We have incredible panorama view of the valley and impressive Dzong (fortress). Also, you can walk around local market. Back to the Friendship Highway, we continue to Sakya Monastery; the principal seat of Sakyapa Sect founded in 1073 and one of four major Schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Its powerful abbots governed Tibet during the whole of the 13th century until they were eclipsed by the rise of the Gelukpa Sect. Its Mongolian architecture is different from that of temples we seen before.

*Overnight at Yuan Mansion Hotel*

**May 23rd, 2021. Day 8: Sakya – Mt. Everest North Face [235Km, 5000m]**

Exciting day today: we reach one of the major highlights of our trip, near Mt. Everest North Base Camp [5200m]. The journey involves crossing the high pass of Gyatso La [5220m] and the opportunity to view Mt. Everest and the Himalayas for the first time. From New Tingri we continue driving towards Rongbuk Monastery, located at the foot of the Everest and the highest monastery in the world. During the journey we enjoy amazing views of several peaks like Makalu, Lhotse, Cho Oyu, and Mount Everest from the top of the Pang-la pass [5150m]. Overnight at tourist camp site located in Rongbuk; a few Kilometer from the real EBC and from where we have direct views of Mt. Everest (Qomolangma). Since 2018 tourist are not allowed to visit EBC used by climbing expeditions.

*Overnight at guesthouse tent (dorm bed without bathroom). Sleeping bag is recommended.*



**May 24th, 2021. Day 9: Rongbuk – Saga [300Km, 4490m]**

If you would like start early your day, enjoy sunrise with Everest peak views in the horizon [8848m]. After breakfast we visit Rongbuk Monastery where we will take last look at Mt. Everest North Face and then we drive North West crossing high passes with enchanting views of the surrounding Himalayan peaks like Cho Oyu and Shishapangma and wild Peikutso lake.

*Overnight at MuLinSen hotel or similar*

**May 25th, 2021. Day 10: Saga – Darchen [490Km, 4670m]**

Today early morning we enter in the semi-nomadic regions of Tibet's far west. We will enjoy the authentic Tibetan landscapes during this long drive journey through the biggest and highest plateau in the world. We follow Yarlung Tsampo river West (also called Brahmaputra in India) until the little city of Darchen, at the foot Mount Kailash, where we will get ready for the trek.

*Overnight at Himalaya Kailash Hotel*

**May 26-28th, 2021. Days 11-13: Mt. Kailash Kora during Full Moon / New Moon [52Km, max. altitude 5630m]**

We begin the Pilgrimage Kora of Mount Kailash, most sacred mountain in Asia. Tibetans and Hindu people from all over the World come here for religious reasons. First we go to an important pilgrimage area called Tarpoche where Saga Dawa Festival takes place every 15th day of the 4th month in the tibetan calendar to celebrate the day Lord Buddha Sakyamuni was born, achieved enlightenment and passed away. Saga Dawa is the most important festival in Tibet and for this reason we all tibetans are willing to visit Mt. Kailash and complete its kora during this time. Today, full moon, a giant pole is raised with thousands of prayer flags (lungta) that are hunged by crowds of pilgrims. Monks from the near Monastery perform a special ritual during the celebration. Once the pole is rised, around midday, we start trekking around the mountain:

Trek to Dira-Puk Monastery [20Km, 5-6h, 5050m].

Trek to Zutul Puk Monastery, [18Km, 6-8h, 4820m].

Trek to Darchen [14Km, 3-4h, 4670m]

*Overnight at guesthouse dorm bed without bathroom during trekking (2 nights). Sleeping bag is recommended. In Darchen, overnight at Himalaya Kailash Hotel*

**May 29th, 2021. Day 14: Darchen – Guge Kingdom [250Km, 3740m]**

We have a long day drive along rough road where we will enjoy beautiful views of the unique landscapes until we finally reach the oasis town of Zanda. We explore Tholing monastery and Tsaparang citadelle. Tholing, which was once the most important monastic complex in western Tibet, is a awesome sight. Below stands the first capital of Guge whilst the skyline comprises a vast sweep of the Ladakh Himalaya. Guge's later capital at Tsaparang is of even greater significance in the history of Buddhist art, its fantastic wall murals displaying evidence of close links with Ladakh and Kashmir. We will rediscover the cave dwellings, secret twisting paths tunnels linking the palaces.

*Overnight at Gu Ge Hotel or similar.*

**May 30th, 2021. Day 15: Tholing – Mapam Yumtso lake [275Km, 4600m]**

Today begins the end of your tibetan journey through the most sacred Buddhist monasteries and greatest mountains on earth. After breakfast we drive back until lake Manasarovar (Mapam Yumtso in tibetan language), one of the three most sacred lakes in Tibet. Hindus believe that whoever bathes in it will clean all their sins and provide good karma. Before, we make a short detour to Tirthapuri, place where pilgrims traditionally come to bathe in their hot springs after completing the kora of Mt. Kailash.

*Overnight at guesthouse (dorm bed without bathroom). Sleeping bag is recommended.*



**May 31st - June 1st, 2021. Day 16-17: Mapam Yumtso lake – Saga – Shigatse [935Km]**

In the morning we enjoy sunrise at the beautiful holy waters of Lake Manasarovar. After visiting Chiu monastery we continue driving East to Shigatse; today stopping at Saga for one night. We travel through arid landscapes of sand dunes and wonderful views of the Himalaya Range and the Tibetan Plateau.

*Day 16: Overnight at MuLinSen hotel or similar.*

*Day 17: Overnight at Gesar Hotel 5\* newly built building.*

**June 2nd, 2021. Day 18: Shigatse – Lhasa [272Km, 3650m]**

Our last day of our tibetan traverse goes along the Yarlung Tsampo (Brahmaputra) River. This is the most direct route to Lhasa and part of the Friendship Highway. Free time in Lhasa.

*Overnight at Shambhala Palace or House of Shambhala Heritage Hotel.*

**June 3rd, 2021. Day 19: Tibet departure**

Enjoy your last hours in Tibet exploring Lhasa by your own until your guide and driver meet you at the hotel to transfer you to the airport. ***End of our services.***

*Consider extending your trip visiting holy Namtso lake in North Lhasa (250Km, 4-5 hours drive, one way). Or even take a relaxing day in Lhasa on your own!*

*Please, contact us for further information about any available extension of your trip.*



**PRICE :** Contact us for the latest available rates.

– Single room occupancy available at additional cost (hotels only).

**TOUR :** Lhasa visits order might change depending on your travelling dates.  
The max group size is 12 people.

- Day 1** Lhasa arrival [3650m].
  - Day 2** Lhasa sightseeing: Jokhang & Ramoche Temples, Sera Monastery.
  - Day 3** Lhasa sightseeing: Potala & Norbulingka Palaces.
  - Day 4** Ganden Monastery hike day trip [100Km, 3650m].
  - Day 5** Lhasa – Tsedang [180km, 3575m]: Traduk Temple, Yumbulagang Palace, Samye Monastery.
  - Day 6** Tsedang – Gyantse [310Km, 3980m]: Yamdrok-tso lake, Karo-la glacier, Palcho Monastery.
  - Day 7** Gyantse – Shigatse – Sakya [240Km, 4300m]: Tashilhunpo & Sakya Monasteries.
  - Day 8** Sakya – Mt. Everest North Face [235Km, 5000m]: Eco-bus service to Rongbuk Monastery, Everest Base Camp (when access allowed again)
  - Day 9** Rongbuk – Saga [300Km, 4490m]
  - Day 10** Saga – Darchen [490Km, 4670m]
  - Days 11-13** Mt. Kailash Kora [52Km, max. altitude 5630m]
  - Day 14** Darchen – Guge Kingdom [250Km, 3740m]
  - Day 15** Zanda – Manasarovar Lake [275Km, 4600m]
  - Days 16-17** Manasarovar lake – Saga – Shigatse [935Km]
  - Day 18** Shigatse – Lhasa [272Km, 3650m]
  - Day 19** Tibet departure.
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**INCLUDED :**

All necessary travel permits in Tibet.

All entrance fees as described in the itinerary above.

Accommodation in shared room basis with breakfast described in the itinerary above.

Experienced Tibetan guide in Tibet (English language).

Transportation in Tibet (Airport / train station group pick up & drop off).

Driver and guide's food and accommodation.

Vehicle fuel, tools and vehicle repairs (if necessary).

Porters / yaks to carry baggage during Mt. Kailash Kora (horse riding available for additional cost)

Oxygen tank & bottled mineral water available in the group vehicle.

Welcome dinner.

**NOT INCLUDED :**

China VISA

Plane or train tickets in / out of Tibet.

Breakfast at Saga and Zanda hotels.

Meals, drinks and any other personal expenses.

Horse for personal use during Kailash Kora (must be used by 1 person only).

Extra expenses incurred due to unexpected natural events (delays, road washouts, snowfall...)

Tips to guides and driver, but this totally depends on you.

**By joining this tour, you agree to our booking conditions, terms and policies**



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## VISA & Tibet travel permits

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Due to the current regulation, you need a special permit to visit Tibet Autonomous Region. The only thing you need to worry about is sending us clear scan of your travel documents **25-30 days in advance**. We will do the rest.

Application process depends on your entry point:

### From mainland CHINA

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We need clear scan copy of your passport and visa. If you do not hold a tourist visa (L), additional documents are required. Please, contact us for further information.

If you are entering Tibet by plane from mainland China, you will need the original permit. We will send it to any address in China that you wish, be it your hotel, a friend's house or any International Airport where you connect with your Lhasa flight (additional fee apply for airport delivery). If you are arriving by train, you will only need a photocopy of the permit. We will send it by email so you can print it.

### From NEPAL

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We need clear scan copy of your passport.

If you want to enter Tibet from Nepal, chinese visa must be applied in Nepal. You must be sure about your itinerary as your visa will only permit you to stay for this set number of days. It cannot be extended later on when you are in Tibet. The visa that you will get is a group visa for all the people on the tour and it cannot be separated.

When we have a photocopy of your passport and itinerary, we will send a visa application to the chinese embassy in Nepal. Once you arrive to Kathmandu, our partner travel agency at Nepal will go to the chinese embassy to get the visa with your original passport.

Bear in mind that the we need at least three working days to be able to get you visa and it costs around 110 USD for most passport holders (little more for USA, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Romania & some other countries).

We can help with any services you might need in Nepal & Bhutan. Please, contact us.

**Please, confirm the latest requirements with us before your booking confirmation.**