

# Cultural Ladakh Tour



Days:	14
Price:	1265 USD International flight not included
Comfort:	★★★★★
Difficult:	★★★☆☆
	📌 Culture 📌 Off the beaten track

## MAGNIFICENT MONASTERIES, MAJESTIC MOUNTAINS

Situated in the far north, on the ancient silk route, Ladakh is famous for its Tibetan Buddhist culture and traditions that have remain unchanged and hidden for centuries. Age-old monasteries and villages lie nestled in its unique lunar landscape of arid mountains, high passes, plateaus and deep valleys making for unexpected and striking encounters.

We begin with a spectacular flight over the Himalayas to Leh, the capital of Ladakh. We spend the first two days acclimatizing to the high altitude (3,500m above sea level), with gentle sightseeing in and around Leh before heading out to the spectacular 11th century Alchi monastery. Next is an exhilarating hike to Mangyu Monastery through the stunningly scenic Western Tibetan Plateau before travelling to feast on the ethereal beauty of Pangong Tso, a sapphire lake with a surreal palette of vivid blues. On the way back, we visit Hemis Monastery, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The tour involves extensive driving and some hiking, including trips into the remote and sublimely beautiful Nubra Valley after crossing Khardung La (5,359m), the highest motorable pass in the world with fabulous panoramic views of the Himalayas. A visit to Agra to see the magnificent Taj Mahal provides a fitting finale to this tour.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The dramatic Ladakh landscape
- Alchi monastery the oldest in the region
- Nubra valley - the valley of flowers
- Stunning Pangong Lake
- Khardung La, the world's highest motorable pass
- Tibetan culture in and around Leh
- Magnificent Taj Mahal in its full glory

## Day 1. Traditional Welcome and transfer to Hotel



Delhi 📍

- Arrive at the **International airport** of Delhi. After the traditional welcome, transfer to hotel for overnight stay.

🏠 Accommodation

Ashok Country Resort

## Day 2-3. Fly to Leh



### 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



Delhi   
 ✈ 610km - ⌚ 1h 30m  
 Leh 

might be 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 grandeur has been likened to a mini version of the Potala Palace in Lhasa.

### Day 3

- 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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Ashok Country Resort</li> <li>3 Hotel Kanishka</li> </ol>
 Dinner	Hotel Kanishka
 Accommodation	Hotel Kanishka

## Day 4-5. Visit of monasteries



Leh   
 🚗 60km - ⌚ 2h 10m  
 Alchi 

### Day 4

- After the breakfast, we leave Leh behind and drive to Alchi, en-route we visit famous monastery of Rizong and Alchi. Founded by **Lama Tsultim Nima** in 1831. Rizong is a Yellow Hat sect Gompa and is spectacularly situated on a Cliffside overlooking the Indus Valley. The monastery holds special significance for Tibetan Buddhists as it belongs to Gelugpa sect of Tibetan Buddhism. We drive back towards **Alchi Gompa**, which is the largest and most famous of all of them, and is noted for its massive Buddha statues and lavish woodcarvings and artwork. The foundation of the monastery was laid by Tibetan translator Rinchen Zangpo in the middle of 12th century. It has three main structures known as **Du-khang, Sum-tsek and the temple of Manjushri**.

### Day 5

- This morning hike to Mangyu Monastery, built in the village of Mangyu, begins our day. It is one of the earliest monasteries in Ladakh region and believed to be contemporaneous to Alchi Monastery and Sumda Chun. The earliest structures are supposed to be dating to the late 12th to early 13th century CE, but as per the oral history and local belief the monasteries were established by **Lotsava Rinchen Zangpo**. Later we return to Alchi.

 Breakfast	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 Hotel Kanishka</li> <li>5 Alchi Resort</li> </ol>
 Dinner	Alchi Resort
 Accommodation	Alchi Resort

## Day 6. Drive back to Leh and visit of Likir Village

- Driving back to Leh today we visit Likir Village first. Located in Indus Valley it is believed to be



Alchi   
🚗 60km - ⌚ 2h 10m  
Leh

Driving back to Leh today we visit Likir village first. Located in Indus valley it is believed to be among the oldest villages of India. The monastery of Likir is believed to have been in existence since 11th century. It belongs to the Yellow Hat Sect & is also known for the 75-foot statue of Buddha. From Likir we drive past Basgo Monastery where a visit to the monastery gives us further insight into Buddhist religion. Also known as **Basgo or Bazgo Gompa**, this place is approximately 40 km from Leh. Although the monastery was built for the Namgyal rulers in 1680, Bazgo itself was embedded in the early days of Ladakh and is frequently mentioned in The Ladakh Chronicles when it was a political and cultural center. The monastery is situated on top of the hill towering over the ruins of the ancient town and is noted for its Buddha statue and murals. In the 15th century, a palace was built in Basgo.

🍳 Breakfast	Alchi Resort
🍷 Dinner	Hotel Kanishka
🏠 Accommodation	Hotel Kanishka

## Day 7-8. Local Exploration:



Leh   
🚗 170km - ⌚ 6h  
Pangong Tso Lake   
🚗 170km - ⌚ 6h  
Leh

### Day 7

- Today we drive to Pangong Tso Lake. On our way to the lake we visit **Tak Tak and Sakti villages** to get some insight into the lives of the locals who inhabit this sequestered land.
- Today we explore **Pangong Tso**, a crystal clear lake, surely one of the most beautiful of all the lakes of altitude. Because of its saline water, micro-vegetation is almost non-existent, as are fish and other aquatic species. This lake is a small paradise for tourists, but also a favorite place for geologists to study the region. After exploring Pangong Tso Lake, we return to Leh. and check - in into the hotel.

### Day 8

- The day is free for your personal exploration at Leh.

🍳 Breakfast	7 Hotel Kanishka 8 Wonderland Tourist camp
🍷 Dinner	Wonderland Tourist camp
🏠 Accommodation	Wonderland Tourist camp

## Day 9. Back to Leh en route visiting Thiksey and Hemis



Leh

- Today, after breakfast, we visit two major gompas or monasteries, Hemis and Thikse. While Thikse Monastery belongs to **Gelukpa order (Yellow hat)**, Hemis Monastery belongs to **Drukpa order (Red hat)**. We first visit Thikse. Perched on top of a hill, Thiksey's red and white buildings can be seen from miles. A recently built temple within this complex contains a magnificent image of the Future Buddha. Next we visit Hemis Gompa that holds the distinction not only of being the biggest and the wealthiest monastery of Ladakh but also for very rich collection of ancient relics, the rare 17th century murals and the painted stone reliefs adorning the courtyard gallery, making it a true **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

🍳 Breakfast	Wonderland Tourist camp
🍷 Dinner	Hotel Kanishka
🏠 Accommodation	Hotel Kanishka

## Day 10. Gateway to Nubra Valley



Leh   
 160km -  6h  
Hundar (3300m) 

### Leh - Hundar (3300m)

- Today we drive to **Nubra Valley**, also known as **Ldumra (the valley of flowers)** that is situated in the north of Leh. The average altitude of the valley is about 10,000 ft. above the sea level. The main attraction in this area is the Bactarian Camels (Shaggy double hump Camel) around Sand Dunes, Diskit and Samstanling monasteries. To reach this wonder on earth we have to wind our way over Khardung La pass (5,602 meters), the highest motorable road in the world. On arrival, we make ourself comfortable in the camp at Hunder.

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 Breakfast	Hotel Kanishka
 Dinner	Apple Nubra Cottage - Camping
 Accommodation	Apple Nubra Cottage - Camping

## Day 11. Another day in the laps of Nubra Valley



Hundar (3300m)   
 40km -  1h 30m  
Sumur 

### Hundar (3300m) - Sumur

- Today, we head for Sumur enroute visiting Diskit monastery. It is a 14th century monastery, the largest and oldest monastery in **Nubra valley**. After the visit, we resume our journey to Sumur. On arrival, installation in Camp.
- Visit of Samstanling monasteries, founded by Lama Tsultim Nima, only around 140 years ago and located in Sumur village. We can also enjoy an optional camel ride across the sand dunes.

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 Breakfast	Apple Nubra Cottage - Camping
 Dinner	Sasar Camp
 Accommodation	Sasar Camp

## Day 12. Return to Leh



Sumur   
 150km -  4h 20m  
Leh 

### Sumur - Leh

- Today we make a return journey to Leh and enjoy the afternoon the way we want as the rest of the day is free.

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 Breakfast	Sasar Camp
 Dinner	Hotel Kanishka
 Accommodation	Hotel Kanishka

## Day 13. Fly to Delhi and drive to Agra



Leh - Delhi



- This morning we have an early **morning flight to Delhi**.
- 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 Kanishka
🏠 Accommodation	Hotel Pushp Villa

## Day 14. Visit of Agra and drive back to Delhi



Agra   
 🚗 250km - ⌚ 5h 30m  
 Delhi 

### Agra - 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	Hotel Pushp Villa
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## Itinerary map





## Individual price per person

2-3	4-5	6-8	9-12
2280 USD	1715 USD	1340 USD	1265 USD

### Included

- Accommodation for 11 nights on Half board in a double room in the Hotels/Guest House/ Fixed Camp mentioned or equivalent
- (Fixed Tented accommodation at Hunder and Sumur )
- 02 nights in a double room in the Hotel mentioned or equivalent in Delhi and Agra on breakfast basis
- All ground transportation included in the program using private air -conditioned vehicle with English speaking driver
- Entrance fees to the monuments and monasteries as described in the program
- Professional English-speaking tour leader throughout the trip
- Govt. Taxes

### Not included

- International flight tickets
- Domestic flight tickets for the two sectors: (Delhi - Leh & Leh - 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 driver and other local staff
- Charges for Camera in the monuments and monasteries
- Miscellaneous Expenses - drinks, souvenir, personal expenses etc.
- The cancellation and baggage insurance, assistance and repatriation
- Indian Visa
- All services not mentioned in "Inclusion"