

Markha Valley Trek 2008



The Markha Valley Trek is certainly one of the most varied and beautiful treks in the world. It ventures high into the Himalayas crossing two passes over 15,000 ft (4575 m) as it circles from the edges of the Indus Valley, down into parts of Zaskar, and passes through terrain that changes from incredibly narrow valleys to wide-open vast expanses! It is made all the more interesting by the ancient form of Buddhism that flourishes in the many monasteries that dot the landscape perched high atop hills.

The trails are decorated by elaborate "chortens"(shrines) and "Mani"(prayer) walls that further exemplify the region's total immersion in Buddhist culture. As we trek to the upper end of the Markha Valley we are rewarded with spectacular views of jagged snow capped peaks before crossing the 5150m Kongmaru La (Pass) and descending to the famous Hemis Monastery, where we end our trek. There are also a few days to explore the fascinating town of Leh and raft the Indus River.

July 11: Delhi – Leh (Complete Rest in Leh for acclimatisation)

Take the morning flight for Leh. Check into the guest house and relax the whole day. This is necessary for getting acclimatised. Overnight at the guesthouse.

July 12: Leh – Shey – Thiksey - Hemis

On this day you will go a sightseeing trip to some ancient monasteries in this area.

Shey Gompa is about 15 kms from Leh. It used to be the summer palace of the kings of Ladakh. There are lots of Stupas and Gompas built around the palace. Shey palace was built by Deldan Namgyal in the beginning of 17th century AD. Main attraction in Shey is the 12m Shakyamuni Buddha statue inside the Dresthang Gompa.



Thiksey Gompa, close to Shey is about 17 kms from Leh. The monastery is considered to be one of the most beautiful in Ladakh and belongs to the Gelukspa order.

Hemis, about 45 kms south of Leh it is one of the most famous and largest monastery in Ladakh. It belongs to the Drukpa order and was founded in the early 17th century. The setting is perfect with the monastery cradled in a lovely valley, surrounded by streams and fronted by long Mani walls. Overnight stay at the guest house.



July 13: Leh - Spitok (drive) – Trek to Zingchan (3200 mts/10496 ft)

Leave Leh early morning by Jeeps and reach Spitok (1 hr). Visit the Spitok Gompa, built about 500 years ago. Start the trek from here by crossing a bridge and walking south-west of the river Indus. The gorge section leads to the confluence of Indus and Zingchan. Camp near the village of Zingchan. Overnight in Tents.

July 14: Zingchan - Yurutse (3900 mts/12792 ft) via Rumbak

It's a gradual climb from Zingchan to Rumbak. From here one gets fabulous views of the snow capped Stok Mountains. From here we move along the Rumbak Nala towards Yurutse. At Yurutse village you will find fields of barley and potatoes. Overnight in Tents.

July 15: Yurutse - Skiu (3100 mts/10168 ft) via Ganda La

A gradual ascent followed by a steep climb gets one to the Ganda la (4900 M). From here views extend south to the Zaskar range and distant summits of the Himalayan range. This is followed by a long descent to Shingo village. From Shingo the trail heads into a narrow gorge leading towards Skiu. At Skiu there is a confluence of the rivers coming from Markha valley and Shingo. Overnight in Tents.



July 16: Skiu - Markha (3800 mts/12464 ft)

It's a very pleasant hike, up the Markha valley today with the trail crossing numerous streams. Markha is a quaint village with a deserted fort and a small village Overnight in Tents.

July 17: Markha – Thochuntse

From Markha the country changes and the warm, relatively heavily wooded sections of the lower Markha is left behind. One will be required to cross the river several times as there are no bridges here. Hankar, enroute, is the highest village in the Markha valley. Overnight in Tents. .

July 18: Thochuntse - Nimaling (4700 mts/15416 ft)

Trek starts on a good path with several small inclines and a series of grassy ridges. There are a series of Mani walls (walls carved with Buddhist prayers) and chortens en route. This is one of the most beautiful high valleys in Ladakh and is dominated by the Kangyaze peak. Overnight in Tents



July 19: Nimaling – Kongmaru La (5150 mts/16892 ft) – SUMDO

Today one will cross to the north of the Markha, climbing to the top of the highest of the three passes, the 5,306 M Kongmaru La, with its wonderful views from the top. There are snow peaks in every direction and on a clear day the giants of Karakoram, including K2, can be seen on the north-western horizon. The trail descends to the Martselang valley, following the Martselang stream to the village of Sumdo. Overnight in tents.

July 20: Sumdo - Hemis (4 hrs trek) – Leh

Today make an easy descent along the Martselang to where it broadens into the valley of the Indus at Martselang village. Board the awaiting jeeps. Visit Hemis monastery and after that drive to Leh via Shey and Thiksey monastery. Overnight in a hotel.



July 21: Leh – Delhi

Transfer to the airport for the spectacular flight across the main chain of the Himalaya to Delhi. **Trip & services end.**

COST OF THE TRIP

USD 635 per person*

*4.9 % service tax extra

COST INCLUDES

- **Accommodation: Leh:** Guest House on bed and breakfast basis. While on trek we will use dome/alpine tents
- **Transport:** Arrival, departure transfer at Delhi and Leh. Also all sight seeing, drop and pick up for the trek in Leh by Toyota Qualis/Tavera.
- **Meals: Leh:** Only breakfast will serve.

Trek: All meals will be provided. The meals will be a mix of Indian, Chinese, Continental & Ladakhi.

- **Mules/Porters:** For carrying camping equipment, rations, vegetables and some amount of personal gear of the clients (one bag not weighing more than 15 kgs).
- **Professional local trekking guide & cook** would accompany the group.

COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Air fare
- Any charges for carrying still/video cameras etc.
- Alcohol, soft drinks, bottled water, beverages, etc.
- Entrée fee if any
- Personal expenses like tips, telephone calls, laundry, etc.
- Any meals/services not mentioned above
- Any costs arising out of unforeseen circumstances like landslides, road blocks, bad weather, etc.
- Travel insurance

Trip Dates: 11 July & 13 August

**Please Note: This is our guaranteed fix departure for Markha Valley Trek.
The trip will run for a minimum of 2 people.**