

Itinerary: Lhasa-Tsedang-Gyantse-Shigatse-Lhasa

with the new train from Shigatse to Lhasa

Day01 Arrive in Lhasa

You will be greeted by your Tibetan guide once you arrive in Lhasa Gonggar airport or train station. It is 68km from airport to Lhasa city, around one hour and half drive; it is only 15km and takes 20 minutes' drive from the train station. You will have a good rest to acclimatize the high altitude in Lhasa. Overnight at Lhasa.

Accommodation: 3-star Standard Hotel Meal:None

Day02 Lhasa

Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple, Barkhor Streets & Lhasa old Town – Walking tour is arranged today

Today is your first day of sightseeing on the high plateau; you will visit Jokhang temple and Potala Palace. Potala Palace is the worldwide known cardinal landmark of Tibet. The massive structure itself contains a small world within it. Mostly it is renowned as residence of the Dalai Lama lineages (Avalokiteshvara). Jokhang Temple is the most sacred shrine in Tibet which was built in 7th century and located at the heart of old town in Lhasa, the circuit around it called Barkhor Street, which is a good place to purchase souvenirs. Both of them are the focal points of pilgrims from entire Tibetan world, multitudinous pilgrims are circumambulating and prostrating in their strong faith. Afterwards stroll on the narrow streets of Lhasa old town to meet local people and visit their markets. Overnight at Lhasa.

Accommodation: 3-star Standard Hotel Meal: B

Day03 Lhasa-Samye Temple-Tsedang

Drive to Tsedang, located by Yarlung Valley, it is the capital of Shannan Prefecture. En route, you will take 1-hour ferry on Yarlung Tsangpo River to visit Samye Temple, the first Temple in entire Tibet to be built comprising with the three Buddhist idols, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Samye Temple is a popular pilgrimage destination for Tibetan Buddhists, some of whom travel on foot for weeks to reach it. And the beauty of its construction beckons tourist who comes to Tibet. Then, take boat back to Samye Ferry, proceed driving to Tsedang. Pay a visit to Yumbulakhang Palace, the earliest palace in Tibet, on the Zhaxiciri Mountain, looking like a blockhouse. Yumbulakhang complex, positioned dramatically on the crest of a hill, consists of three components: the tower, the chapels and the monks' quarters. Overnight at Tsedang.

Accommodation: 3-star Standard Hotel Meal: B

Day04 Tsedang-Gyantse-Shigatse

Drive to Gyantse (4040m), and cross over the summit of Kamba La (4794 m), you will see the tranquil turquoise waters of Lake Yamdrok below, which is one of the three holy lakes of Tibet, surrounded by many snow-capped mountains and is fed by numerous small streams. According to the mythology, Yamdrokso Lake is the transformation of a goddess, showing the intoxicating color of Turquoise. Far in the distance you'll spot the towering massif Mt. Nojin Kangsang (7191 m). Then, pass by Karola Glacier (5045m), quite close to the road, a breathtaking view of the Karola Glacier is an unforgettable experience. In Gyantse, visit Palkor Monastery, the symbolic architecture of Gyantse. On the side of the Palkor Monastery stands a white tower - Kumbum Stupa. It is said that there are altogether more than 100,000 Buddha

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statues engraved on the tower; hence the name "One Hundred-Thousand-Buddha Tower". Proceed to Shigatse for overnight. Overnight at Shigatse.

Accommodation: 3-star Standard Hotel Meal: B

Day05 Shigatse(Xigaze)-Lhasa Train K9822(17.30-20.27)

Shigatse, meaning "the fertile land", is the second largest city in Tibet. Pay a visit to Tashihunpo Monastery, built in 1447 by the first Dalai Lama, the traditional seat of the Panchen Lama to perform their political and religious tasks. Tashihunpo's magnificent outside may make you exclaim in admiration, its inside just offers you more religious tranquility and sincerity. This monastery houses the world's largest copper-cast Future Buddha figure with seated position (26.8m high), which is decorated with numerous luxurious jewels. Later afternoon, take train to Lhasa. Since Aug 2014, a new rail line links Lhasa and Shigatse, which offers the opportunity for the Tibet-traveler to reduce their journey between Lhasa and Shigatse from 6 hours bus/car drive to 3 hours train. Overnight at Lhasa

Accommodation: 3-star Standard Hotel Meal: B

Day06 Lhasa City sightseeing

Sightsee the Drepung Monastery, Sera Monastery and Norbulingka in Lhasa. Drepung Monastery, the largest and richest monastery in Tibet, was founded in 1416 by a disciple of Tsong Khapa under the patronage of a noble family and later enlarged by the Fifth Dalai Lama. Nowadays it stands as Tibet's most important and largest monastic university in Tibet. Norbulingka Park (Treasure Garden) was built in the 1740s during the reign of the Seventh Dalai Lama. Later it was renovated and enlarged and became the Dalai Lama's Summer Palace. Sera Monastery is located a few miles to the north of Lhasa, and is one of the three largest monasteries. Overnight at Lhasa.

Accommodation: 3-star Standard Hotel Meal: B

Day 7: Departure from Lhasa

In the morning, we will drive you to Lhasa airport or train station. It is the time to say farewells to your guide and driver. The trip ends.

Accommodation: None Meal: B

Train Schedule & useful info about the train Lhasa-Shigatse (since 2014 Aug)

Lhasa-Shigatse daily 1 train, K9821(09:00—11:59)

Shigatse-Lhasa daily 1 train, K9822(17:30—20:27)

Ticketprice:

Softsleeper CNY 176,-- pp + CNY 30(Service Charge)

Hardsleeper CNY 117,--pp + CNY 30(Service Charge)

Seatplace CNY 41,--pp + CNY30(Service Charge) – we don't suggest them to book the seatplace, if they have big luggage.

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Useful info about the train Lhasa-Shigatse(Xigaze)

- **About route:** From Shigatse to Lhasa, if with normal vehicle, it takes about 280km, 6 hours. We plan it normally for 1 day drive. If the route needs back to Lhasa such as Lhasa-(Tsedang)-Gyantse-Shigatse-Lhasa, take the new train from Shigatse to Lhasa, the route could be 1 day shorter in Tibet.
But for the tour route Lhasa-Shigatse-Dingri-Mount Everrest-Zhangmu(Nepal border), we don't suggest the clients to take the new train Lhasa-Shigatse, as the clients miss the sightseeing at Yamdroktso See, Karola Glacier and Palkor Monastery, which are on the way Lhasa-Shigatse and only available if the traveler take bus/car.
- **About tour expenses:** For FIT group with route Lhasa-(Tsedang)-Gyantse-Shigatse-Lhasa, they can save 1 day in Tibet if they use train instead of use vehicle, even they need pay the train ticket Shigatse-Lhasa extra, the tour could be a little bit cheaper for the small group.
- **Health Notice/Health Registration Card:** The thin air at the high altitude made construction difficult. The passenger carriages used on Lhasa trains are specially built and have an oxygen supply for each passenger. Every passenger train has a doctor.
Before embarking, a passenger "Health Registration Card" must be filled in – requiring travelers to read and sign a high-altitude travel disclaimer. Passengers must read the health notice for high-elevation travel and sign the agreement on the card to take the train.
- **Brief introduction of the new rail way Lhasa-Shigatse**
The Lhasa–Shigatse(Xigaze)Railway, or Lari Railway, is a high-elevation railway that connects Lhasa to Shigatse(Xigatze), in Tibet AR.
The length of the railway is 253 km (157 mi). The construction started in September 2010 and was completed in July 2014. The line was formally opened in August 2014. The line includes 14 stations. The project has a budget of 13.3 billion yuan (about \$2.14 billion).
The completion of this project opened up possible extensions of the network further west and south into Nepal and to Yadong County, close to the border with Sikkim, India.

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