

Qinghai-Tibet Highway ITINERARY

(THQ-002)Beijing-Lanzhou+Bingling Temple-Xiahe-Tongren-Xiaqiong-Xining-Chaka-Dulan-Golmud-Tuotuo River-Amdo-Nagqu-Damxung-Lhasa (16 Days)



Qinghai-Tibet Highway is the easiest highways to Tibet, and also is the busiest one, the traffic is smooth all the year around.

The Qinghai-Tibet Highway is starting from Xining actually, pre and post travel is also tailor-made according to your requests.

Day 1/Beijing-Lanzhou

Fly to Lanzhou, used to be a key point connecting the central China and the western region as well as a vital city on the Silk Road. Transfer to the hotel on arrival. (D)

Day 2/Lanzhou

Lanzhou is the only provincial capital city with the **Yellow River** flowing through. Visit the **Zhongshan Bridge**, the First Bridge over the Yellow River. Then, pay a visit to **Waterwheel Park**, the unique-shaped Water Wheel has a long history and the first reference to it appeared in the Ming Dynasty. Move on to **Gansu Provincial Museum**, housed collections of various color-painted potteries of Neolithic Age and treasures of ancient grottoes. Climb up the **White Pagoda Hill**, built to commemorate a Tibetan lama of the Sa-skyapa Sect of Tibetan Buddhism who died in Lanzhou on his way to Mongolia for an audience with Genghis Khan. (B,L,D)

Day 3/ Lanzhou (Bingling Temple)

Today's highlight is an excursion to visit **Bingling Temple**, a series of grottoes filled with Buddhist sculpture carved into natural caves and caverns in a canyon along the Yellow River. Bingling is a transliteration from Tibetan meaning "Ten Thousand Buddhas". The sculptures, carvings, and frescoes that remain are outstanding examples of Buddhist artwork. (B,L,D)

Day 4/Lanzhou-Xiahe

After breakfast, drive to Xiahe, a county in Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, where is highly rural and pastoral and is the home to the famed Labrang Monastery. Take sightseeing of **Sangke Prairie**, reputed for its excellent pasture and frequent magnificent Buddhist ceremonies. The prairie is named for the summer-blooming sangke flowers that form a natural carpet extending to the far horizons. Reflecting sky and mountains, the

Daxia River twists through grass and earth like an undulating silk belt. Countless sheep, yaks, and tents are visible over the prairie. (B,L,D)

Day 5/Xiahe-Tongren

In the morning, visit the **Labrang Monastery**, located at the foot of the Phoenix Mountain northwest of Xiahe County. It is one of the largest Tibetan Buddhist monasteries outside of the Tibet Autonomous Region. The architectural layout of the Labrang Monastery belongs to the Tibetan style and the construction patterns are mostly Tibetan, Han's mode and a compound style of both Han's and Tibetan. The symbols of the whole construction are the White Towers both in the northeast and in the northwest. The grand sutra and Buddha halls are located in the northwestern part centered around the Grand Sutra Hall. Other halls spread in a shape similar to a crescent moon. Then, drive to Tongren, been familiarized as the Home of Tibetan Culture and Art. "Regong Art", originated in this place, mainly reflect Tibetan Buddhist culture. (B,L,D)

Day 6/Tongren

Regong Art, this unique Tibetan culture legacy include painting, frescoes, thangkas, sculpture and architecture. Handing down from generation to generation, almost every man here inherits the occupation as an artisan. Today's highlight is the visit to **Longwu Monastery**, a good example of the influence by Regong Art. Longwu Monastery was initially built by the Sakya Sect in 1301 of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) as a monastery of Sakya-sect. The architecture of the Scripture Hall and other halls in the monastery is majestic with gorgeous decorations, boasting rich historical relics. Every inch of its interior -- pillars, door lintels, beams and walls -- is bursting with vibrant color, design, images and stone-carvings. Then, visit **Wutun Village**, regarded as home of the thangka. Such is Wutun's thangka fame that the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple and Tar'er Lamasery all order their thangkas from Wutun. (B,L,D)

Day 7/Tongren-Xiaqiong-Xining

In the morning, drive to visit **Xiaqiong Lamasery**, also one of the oldest lamaseries in Qinghai, was founded in 1349 by qujiedunzhurenqin, the first teacher of Tsongkhapa .At the height of the lamasery's glory, the number of monks peaked at over 4130. Then, proceed to Xining, the capital of Qinghai Province, where is mainly inhabited with Tibetan but also a home of Uygur, Kazak and Hui minorities. (B,L,D)

Day 8/Xining-Qinghai Lake

Begin today's sightseeing with the visit to **Ta'er Monastery** (Kumbum Monastery), one of the six biggest monasteries of the Yellow Hat Sect (Gelugpa Sect) of Tibetan Buddhism, and it holds plenty of precious relics and good editions of Tibetan scriptures. The famous butter sculptures, the barbolas, and the murals are considered to be the three most unique arts of superb craftsmanship. Then, head for Qinghai Lake and view of **Sun-and-Moon Mountain** on the way. Legend that Princess Wencheng left for Tubo for her marriage, she took out the Sun-and-Moon Treasure Mirror to see her homeland Chang'an (Today's Xi'an) when she past the mountain. Arrive at Qinghai Lake in late afternoon. (B,L,D)

Day 9/Qinghai Lake-Chaka-Dulan

After breakfast, visit **Qinghai Lake**, a salt lake situated in the province of Qinghai, about 100km west of Xining. Qinghai is the largest lake in China, located at the crossroads of several bird migration routes across Asia. Many species use Qinghai as an intermediate stop during migration, so it is also known as "Bird Islands" (Cormorant Island and Egg Island), which have been bird sanctuaries of the Qinghai Lake Natural Protection Zone since 1997. Then, drive to **Kaka Salt Lake**, whose bottom is covered with a layer of rock salt that is generally 5m thick, with a maximum thickness of 9.68m. The salt is naturally crystallized with big crystal, high purity and excellent taste. And it contains mineral materials, so looks dark green and hence it is called "green salt". Stay overnight in Dulan. (B,L,D)

Day10/Dulan-Golmud

After breakfast, traverses through Tsaidam Basin to Golmud. You will enjoy the geographic landscape included Gobi desert, Yadan Landscape, maybe Mirage is possible to be seen on the way. Arrive in Golmud in late afternoon, a Mongolian word meaning "a place concentrated with rivers". (B,L,D)

Day11/Golmud-Tuotuo River (530km)

Leave Golmud behind, and head for Kunlun Mountains regarded as the "Forefather of all Mountains", passing through Kunlun Bridge (3,400m), Budong Spring (3,776m) on Nachi Terrace, and the mighty Kunlun Mountain Pass (4,767m) where overlook Kunlun Mountains' Peak Yuzhu, 6,178m above sea level, featured modern glacier landforms on both its northern and southern slopes. Drive through Qingshuihe River Superlarge Bridge which stretches 11.7km, and enter into Keke Xili (Hoh Xil) Nature Reserve, [a paradise for wildlife and](#) inhabited by a number of valuable and rare species wild animals, such as Tibetan antelope, wild yak, wild ass and Tibetan gazelle. Pass through Wudaoliang (5,100m) known as the "Forbidden Area for Life" where the climate is extremely cold and harsh, perennial in cruel winter, finally arrive at Tuotuo River Bridge. Tuotuo River is the headstream of Yangtze River originated from the Ge La Dan Dong Snow Mountain in Tangula Mountain. (B,L,D)

Day12/Tuotuo River-Amdo-Nagqu (420km)

Watch the sunrise on Tuotuo River Bridge. Then, cross over Tangula Mountain Pass (5,231m), meaning that mountains over which great eagles can not fly in Mongolian. Overlook Ge La Dan Dong Mountain at 6,621 meter above the sea level, the highest peak standing at the Yangtze River headwaters. Go ahead Amdo which means "Road Fork in the Rear", pass through the beautiful Qiangtang Pasture and reach Nagqu, sandwiched by the Kunlun-Tangula-Gangdise-Nyainqentanglha mountain ranges. (B,L,D)

Day13/Nagqu-Damxung-Namtso Lake-Yangbajing-Lhasa (330km)

After breakfast, drive to Dumxung, famed as the "A Chosen-Out Wonderful Place", and in the heart of Qiangtang Grassland. Continue to head for **Namtse Lake**, lying at the foot of Nyainqentanglha Mountain, is the highest lake in the world, considered as the holy lake in

Tibet. Then, visit **Yabajing Thermal Spring**, enjoying the **hot spring** and greeting with the beautiful scenery of Tibetan northern grassland. then, drive to Lhasa for overnight. (B,L,D)

Day14/Lhasa

The first day of sightseeing starts from Lhasa's cardinal landmark- **Potala Palace**, a structure of massive portions. Its towering image has already appeared on various occasions, but your first sight of the Potala will still be an awe-inspiring moment. It takes at least a good 2-hour to visit those rooms, halls and chapels. Some 2km to the east of the Potala is the most revered religious structure and the holiest temple in Tibet - **Jokhang Temple**. Bustling with worshippers and redolent with mystery, the Jokhang is an unrivalled experience. The quadrangle of streets surrounding the Jokhang is the **Barkhor Market** - Lhasa's most interesting pilgrimage circuit. This area of the Old Town is both the spiritual heart of Lhasa and the main commercial district for Tibetans. The rest of day is free. (B,L,D)

Day15/Lhasa

Sightsee of 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, is one of the three largest monasteries. (B,L,D)

Day16/Lhasa-Beijing

Transfer to the airport and leave from Lhasa. TOUR ENDS! (B)