

Beijing Great Wall Int'l Travel Agency

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Trekking from Gandan Temple to Samye Monastery

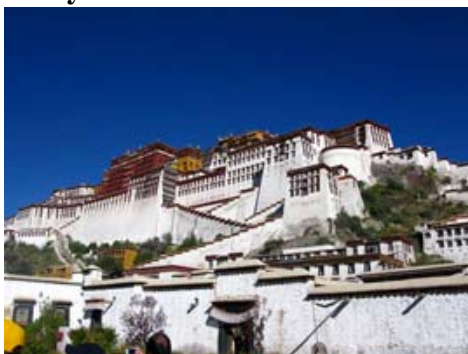
(TT-001) Trekking from Gandan Temple to Samye Monastery (11 days / trekking 5 days)

This trek gives you a real taste of Tibetan highland adventure and an insight into Tibetan Buddhism. Visit the famous palace and monasteries in Lhasa: Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple, Drepung Monastery, Norbulingka Park and Sera Monastery, as well as the famous Barkhor Market. Then, trek 4 days from Ganden Monastery to Samye Temple, the first temple of Tibet, passing through highland pasture and sacred mountain pass. Take a ferry on Yarlung Tsangpo River to Samye Ferry, and proceed to explore the Yarlung Valley in Tsedang, the capital of the ancient Tibetan Kingdom; and the picturesque Shigatse area, passing by the stunning Yamdroktso Lake and Karola Glacier.

Day01 Arrive in Lhasa

Arrive in Lhasa, rightly one of the most featured and dreamt-about cities in the world, not only limited accessibility for its remoteness and its high altitude at 3,650 meters, but also the mysterious Tibetan religion. In Tibetan, Lhasa means the Holy Land or the Buddha Land. The guide will meet you at Konggar Airport, and transfer you to Lhasa city with about 1.5 hours' driving (90km). On the way, you'll be greeted with Nie Tang Buddha – a Buddha image engraved in the mountain face. Upon arrival, rest and acclimatize yourself to the local time and altitude. (D)

Day02 Lhasa



The first day of sightseeing starts from Lhasa's cardinal landmark - **Potala Palace**, an awe-inspiring Tibetan architectural complex. The stone-and-wood-structured Potala Palace consists of the White Palace and Red Palace. The White Palace, comprising halls, temples and courtyards, serves as the living quarters of the Dalai Lama. The Red Palace includes various chambers for worshipping Buddha and chambers housing the eight stupa that contain the remains of fifth through thirteenth

Dalai Lama. All the stupas are covered with gold foil. 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. A golden statue of the young Buddha Sakyamuni at age 12 brought to Tibet by Princess Wen Cheng from Chang'an, capital of the Tang Dynasty, is enshrined in the center of the main hall. The quadrangle of streets surrounding the Jokhang is the **Barkhor Market** -

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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)

Day03 Lhasa

Today's highlight is the sightseeing of Drepung Monastery, Norbulingka and Sera Monastery in Lhasa. **Drepung Monastery**, known as the most important monastery of Gelugpa in Tibetan Buddhism. The monastery was established in 1416 by Tsong Khapa's disciple Jamyang Qoigy, and under the patronage of plutocrats, it developed as the richest monastery of Gelugpa and became the mother temple of Dalai Lamas. **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, where they handle political affairs, practiced religious activities and spent holidays. **Sera Monastery**, located a few miles to the north of Lhasa, is one of three famous monasteries in Lhasa along with the Drepung Monastery and the Ganden Monastery. The debating traditions in the Sera Monastery are unique among the three famous monasteries in Lhasa. Debates are conducted by the lamas in the monastery every day beginning at 3:00pm. In a battle of words, they supplement their efforts by using a variety of gestures including clapping their hands, pushing their partners for an answer, or plucking their prayer beads to win the virtue of the Buddha. (B,L,D)

Day04 Lhasa-Ganden Monastery

Drive to visit **Ganden Monastery** (3800m), 47km from Lhasa city. It is one of the earliest and largest Buddhist monasteries in Tibet, and stands atop of the six famous temples of Gelugpa - a branch of Tibetan Buddhism. Every year, one of the grandest of Buddhist activities - Buddha Painting Unfolding Festival - is conducted in the monastery, attracting thousands of visitors and disciples. After lunch, start trekking to Hebu Valley, taking about 4 hours. Camping. (B,L,D)

Day05 Trekking

Trek over South Base Pass, and camp at Shogar La (5200m), taking 6-7 hours. (B,L,D)

Day06 Trekking

Trek cross the Gamba La and camp by the riverside, taking 6-7 hours. (B,L,D)



Day07 Trekking-Samye Temple

Trek 5 hours trekking to Samye, and camp nearby Samye Temple. Visit **Samye Temple**, situated in the serene Shannan Region, to the north of Yarlung Tsangpo River. It is 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

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of whom travel on foot for weeks to reach it. And the beauty of its construction beckons tourist who comes to Tibet. (B,L,D)

Day08 Samye Temple-Tsedang

Take a boat to Samye Ferry, then, transfer to Tsedang. Pay a visit to **Yonbulakhang** and **Changzhu Temple**. Yonbulakhang is the earliest palace in Tibet, on the Zhaxiciri Mountain. Yonbulakhang complex, positioned dramatically on the crest of a hill, consists of three components: the tower, the chapels and the monks' quarters. Changzhu Temple, located at the south bottom of Gongri Mountain, is famous for its "Pearl Tangka", on which paints the image of Kwan-yin Bodhisattva. Tangka is two meters long, 1.2 meters wide. Totally, cost 26 liang pearl, and it's also embedded with diamonds, coral and other precious jewelry. (B,L,D)

Day09 Tsedang-Yamdrotso Lake-Gyantse-Shigatse



Drive to Gyantse (4040m), and pass by **Yamdrotso Lake** for sightseeing. Yamdroktso Lake 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, Yamdroktso Lake is the transformation of a goddess, showing the intoxicating color of Turquoise. Then, pass by **Karola Glacier** (5560m), 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 statues engraved on the tower; hence the name "One Hundred-Thousand-Buddha Tower". Proceed to Shigatse for overnight. (B,L,D)

Day10 Shigatse-Lhasa

Shigatse, meaning "the fertile land", is the second largest city in Tibet. Pay a visit to **Tashihunpo Monastery**, 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, which is decorated with numerous luxurious jewels. Then, drive back to Lhasa. (B,L,D)

Day11 Depart from Lhasa

Transfer to the airport, and fly out of Lhasa. TOUR ENDS! (B)

Note: B-Breakfast L-Lunch D-Dinner