



STOK KANGRI AND THE KINGDOM OF LADAKH

A wonderful opportunity to explore the Buddhist Ladakh region of North India and attempt a 6000m trekking peak.

Culturally Ladakh is part of the former Guge kingdom of Western Tibet and still has strong affinities with Buddhist culture – monasteries, chortens and prayer flags fill the stark and startling landscape. The mountain scenery is equally dominant, this region being known as the Trans –Himalaya, with innumerable 6000m peaks sandwiched between the Great Himalayan Range and the Tibetan Plateau. This is high altitude desert, beyond the influence of the Indian monsoon. The winters are long and cold with temperatures reaching -40 deg C; the summers hot and rainless, save for the occasional storm bringing snow to the mountains. The region was virtually self –sufficient until about 25 years ago when new air and road connections brought in tourists and money. Leh, the ancient capital, has naturally changed the most although the legacy of its isolated past is still very apparent. In many of the outlying villages and settlements little has changed and the barley crop is still the fulcrum around which life revolves.

To the south of Leh and high above the Indus Valley stands the 6000m peak of Stok Kangri. This short but adventurous trek takes us into the heart the Trans –Himalaya for an attempt on this non-technical trekking peak. Our route is challenging but not difficult and there is plenty of time to acclimatise in and around Leh and on the walk

in. The peak is entirely optional and there are many excellent walks from the base camp with equally rewarding views. In our view, this is the perfect first 6000m peak for the enthusiastic walker with experience at higher altitude.

Day 1 Arrive New Delhi. Hotel

Day 2 Spectacular early morning flight to Leh; afternoon at leisure to acclimatise and to explore this ancient capital of Ladakh. Hotel

Days 3/4 Two fascinating days exploring the cultural history and landscape in and around Leh. We visit nearby monasteries and include some short walks to continue acclimatisation. We include Tikse and Shey Gompas, Hemis and Leh Palace in our travels. Hotel

Day 5 By road to Martselang (3414m) above the Indus River for the start of our trek. The trail takes us through a gorge then climbs steadily. We camp near the traditional village of Shang. Camping.

Day 6 A good day of walking through traditional the Ladakhi landscapes of the upper Shang valley. Camping.

Day 7 A tougher days as we ascend the pass of Shang La (4968m) with views of Stok and Matho peaks in front and Parcha Kangri behind. We camp near Gyang Poche (4145m). Camping.

Day 8 A shorter day, crossing small streams to the base of Matho La (4297m) with an optional afternoon hike along the slopes of the Kangri massif to altitudes of 5800m. Views of the Karakoram and distant Tibetan plateau. Camping.

Day 9 Another tougher day crossing the Matho La at 4907m. Stok Kangri peak looms ahead. We camp in a basin with views of Gulep Kangri. Camping.

Day 10 We establish a base camp in preparation for the summit tomorrow. The more energetic can attempt some of the nearby ridges or you can simple relax at the campsite. Camping.

Day 11 Summit Day. This is a long day (at least 12 hours and we begin before dawn. The ascent is non-technical but does involve an exposed ridge and some snow. From the summit of Stok Kangri (6114m) a panorama of Himalaya extends in every direction – the Great Himalaya, the Ladakhi range, the Karakoram and the distant Tibetan Plateau. For those not wishing to attempt the peak there are plenty of good walks with excellent views around the base camp. Camping.

Day 12 A wonderfully easy day returning down the Stok Valley to Stok and our return transport to Leh. Hotel.

Day 13 A day relaxing in and around Leh. Optional jeep trip to Khardong La (5602m) the highest motorable road in the world. (Note: this day may on rare occasions be needed during the trek if weather conditions delay the ascent). Hotel.

Day 14 Early morning flight for Delhi. If the flight is delayed for weather reasons we have a day in hand. Sightseeing or at leisure in Delhi in the afternoon. Hotel

Day 15 At leisure in Delhi. Late afternoon departure for the airport.

Day 16 Arrive London

8 days walking. Max Alt 5240m or 6114m with climb. Average c. 4000m

Important: Before you travel please check your **Tour Voucher** and **Arrival Information** for the latest joining instructions. This will be sent to you upon receipt of final payment.

All itineraries are subject to change without prior notice.