



Amritsar to the Land of the Monasteries (Dharamshala & Leh) - 17 Days

Day	Destination
3 Nights	Amritsar
2 Nights	Dharamsala
2 Nights	Manali
1 Night	Keylong
1 Night	Sarchu
2 Nights	Leh
1 Night	Uleytokpo
2 Nights	Nubra
1 Night	Leh
	Delhi

Day 1: Day 01: Arrive Amritsar

Amritsar is the spiritual capital of the Sikhs and gained its name, meaning 'Holy Pool of Nectar', from the body of water around Harmandir Sahib, the Golden Temple. The temple itself is a must see, receiving well over 100 000 people every day, who come to worship at the holy shrine. It is located just 28 kilometres from the Pakistani border post, and a highlight of the area is the Wagah border ceremony

that occurs every evening at sunset. Full of pomp and flair, soldiers from both sides parade and lower the two nation's flags in a ceremony punctuated with theatrics.

Upon arrival in Amritsar airport, transferred to hotel for check in.

Day 2: Day 02: In Amritsar

Morning proceed for city tour of Amritsar covering the Golden temple, volunteer at the langaar "open kitchen" and Jallianwala Bagh.

Afternoon excursion to Wagah Border.

The Golden Temple

The temple here is not only a central religious place of the Sikhs, but also a symbol of human brotherhood and equality. Everybody, irrespective of cast, creed or race can seek spiritual solace and religious fulfilment without any hindrance. It also represents the distinct identity, glory and heritage of the Sikhs. To pen-down the philosophy, ideology, the inner and outer beauty, as well as the historical legacy of Sri Harimandir Sahib is a momentous task. It is a matter of experience rather than of description.

(Langar Hall): Community Kitchen

The tradition of serving langar Initiated by Guru Nanak Dev and then established by the third Guru Sri Guru Amar Dass at Goindwal. Even the Mughal King Akbar came and sat among the ordinary people to share langar. The institution of Guru ka Langar has served the community in many ways. It has ensured the participation of women and children in a task of service for mankind. Women play an important role in the preparation of meals, and the children help in serving food to the pangat. Langar also teaches the etiquette of sitting and eating in a community situation, which has played a great part in upholding the virtue of sameness of all human beings; providing a welcome, secure and protected sanctuary.

An average 75,000 devotees or tourists take langar in the Community Kitchen daily; but the number becomes almost double on special occasions. On average 100 Quintal Wheat Flour, 25 Quintal Cereals, 10 Quintal Rice, 5000 Litre Milk, 10 Quintal Sugar, 5 Quintal Pure Ghee is used a day. Nearly 100 LPG Gas Cylinders are used to prepare the meals. 100's of employees and devotees render their services to the kitchen.

The Jallianwala Bagh Garden

This public garden is home to a national memorial, which serves as a lasting tribute to an innocent crowd of peaceful celebrators who lost their lives during a massacre by the British army. Today, the garden is mostly visited by tourists to learn about the killings and to admire the vast greenery or simply for relaxation and meditation.

Wagah Border

The Wagah Border links the towns of Amritsar and Punjab in Pakistan. The border serves as a transit point for goods and commuters between India and Pakistan and plays host to the daily lowering of the flag ceremony performed by the Border Security Force of India and the Pakistan Rangers in Pakistan. This ceremony commemorates the unity and cooperation between the two nations who were once rivals.

Day 3: Day 03: In Amritsar

Day at leisure for own activities.

Day 4: Day 04: Amritsar –Dharamsala

Situated in the upper reaches of the Kangra Valley, Dharamsala is famous as the home of the exiled Dalai Lama. This small market town is the centre of the Tibetan world in India. Most travellers head 10 kilometres uphill to the suburb of McLeod Ganj, also known as Upper Dharamsala. Surrounded by dense coniferous forest, this beautiful hill station attracts Buddhists, pilgrims, students and bohemian travellers seeking spiritual enlightenment and a possible encounter with this holy man. A worthwhile one-day trek, about nine kilometres from McLeod Ganj, is Triund Hill, described as heaven on earth for nature lovers.

Drive to Dharamshala, upon arrival check-in at hotel. (approx. 220 kms/5-6 hrs).

Day 5: Day 05: In Dharamsala

A day to visit the highlights.

Norbulingka Institute (Closed on Second Saturdays & every Sundays)

Norbulingka Institute is a unique institute dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan arts and culture. The institute is a self-sustaining community, dedicated to ensuring that the integrity of Tibetan artistic traditions is maintained for future generations. The studios produce museum quality artwork using methods that have been practiced and passed down for many centuries.

Tsug la Khang, The Dalai Lama's temple, is the life-blood of the village. It houses the Namgyal Monastery and shrine rooms. The largest shrine contains a huge gilded statue of the Buddha, along with two smaller statues of Chenresig and Guru Rinpoche. Parts of these statues were brought at great sacrifice from Tibet. The Dalai Lama's residence and administrative offices are adjacent to the

monastery.

Bhagsunag Temple is one of the popular ancient temples, which is located at about 3 km east of the main city of Mcleod Ganj and around 11 km from Dharamshala. It is surrounded by the famous Bhagsu Falls and is considered to be a popular place of Hindu pilgrimage. An annual fair is conducted in the month of September at this temple which attracts tourist from across the globe.

Immerse in the composure of nature and a church amidst its greenest foliage! **St. John's Church** is the most ancient structure of the town and it is a gothic stone shrine amidst the forest in between Mcleod Ganj and Forsyth Ganj. It is an Anglican structure that is a tribute to John the Baptist. 'St. John in the Wilderness' is no more a hidden entity.

Day 6: Day 06: Dharamsala –Manali

Surrounded by the majestic peaks of the Dhauladhar and Pir Panjal Ranges, at the head of the Kullu Valley, Manali is one of Himachal Pradesh's main tourist attractions. Luring intrepid travellers since the 1970's, this quaint hill station makes the ideal base to chill, and enjoy the many eccentric cafes, hippy shops and markets before lacing up your hiking boots and trekking into the surrounding mountains. For those less adventurous, follow the many footpaths into the Kullu Valley where Thermal Mountain springs await. Old Manali, a short walk up the hill from the bustle of Central Manali, is dotted with many accommodation options, all boasting expansive views over the surrounding apple orchards, and pine forests.

Drive to Manali, upon arrival check-in at hotel. (**approx. 240 kms/7-8 hrs**).

Day 7: Day 07: In Manali

Tour of Manali visiting the temples and monasteries. **The** chief centre of interest, historically and archeologically, is the Hadimba temple dedicated to goddess Hadimba.

Day 8: Day 08: Manali–Keylong

Keylong stretches along the north side of the green Bhaga Valley just below the Manali–Leh road, and it's an overnight stop for many travellers on that route. Many people only see Keylong briefly and in the dark, but a longer stay reveals grand mountain views, a laid-back, small-town lifestyle, some scenic walks and historic Buddhist monasteries.

Drive to Keylong enroute visiting Rohtang Pass. (approx. 150 kms/4-5 hrs).

You commence your journey on the trans-Himalayan route. Leaving Manali you ascend the Rohtang Pass (3978 M / 13,050 Ft). On your way up you will be traveling through thickly forested mountainside over which are a number of picturesque waterfalls. On crossing the pass you enter Lahoul district. Descending from Rohtang Pass you reach Gramphu, the bifurcation point on the road to Spiti, from where you get superb views of the glaciated valley of the Chandra River. You next reach Keylong, the District Headquarters of Lahaul-Spiti, located on the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers. It has the distinction of having a small satellite exchange from which you can dial anywhere in the world with sparkling clarity.

Day 9: Day 09: Keylong–Sarchu

Sarchu, also known as Sir Bhum Chun, closely resembles Ladakh with its barren splendor and is a beehive of activity between May and September when the snow melts and the Leh-Manali highway is open for traffic. An important trading point in the ancient Silk Route, Sarchu is still a hot favorite with traders, nomadic tribes and adventure seekers.

Continue the drive from Keylong to Sarchu (**approx. 120 kms/4-5 hrs**) through **Darcha, Patsao, and Zingzing Bar and over Baralacha-La (4892m.)** pass, which is one of the most dangerous pass among other, passes on the way to Leh. And one can see one of the most excellent panoramic views of the high rising/sky touching mountains is likely C.B., K.R. (range) and Mulkilla mushrooming mountains massif. And also just on the top of Baralacha- La is having a lake Suraj Tal a source of river Bhaga surrounded by C.B. Mountain ranges and gradual descent down through Kalung sarai to Sarchu.

Day 10: Day 10: Sarchu – Leh

Topographically, the whole of the district is mountainous with three parallel ranges of the Himalayas, the Zaskar, the Ladakh and the Karakoram. Between these ranges, the Shayok, Indus and Zaskar rivers flow and most of the population lives in valleys of these rivers.

Drive to Leh (**approx. 260 kms/7-8 hrs**) gives you a feeling of being in the high Tibetan Plateau. One climbs a series of Galta loops consisting of 32 hairpin bends on the way up from Sarchu and come out in Pang valley. It is here that one can divert to the right and visit the huge high altitude lakes of Tsokar and Tsomoriri.

Cross to the other side of the Pang, Tzanspo River to continue drive up to yet another plateau for a long traverse on the legendary Moore plains. The highest of the Tibetan Plateau at 4200 Mts. Continue driving Tanglang La (5360 Mts.) the second highest motorable pass in the world that commands breath taking views of the Zaskar range. A pleasant drive about 20 Kms brings you to the Ladakhi hamlet,

Gya, heralded by prayer flags. After crossing few more villages one reaches the great Indus River. Further drive to Leh town.

Day 11: Day 11: In Leh

Explore Leh city.

Samker Gompa – Located 3 Kms from Leh Town, which is open to visitors in the morning and evening only. The Gompa belongs to Yellow Sect & was founded in 18th Century. The Gompa is the seat of the Head Lama of Ladakh & founder of yellow sect, Tson-Kha-Pa. The temple walls have recent painted of figures including Sakyamuni, Avalokiteswara, Padmasambhava, TsonKhapa and green Tara.

Shanti Stupa is a Buddhist white-domed stupa on a hilltop in Chanspa. It was built in 1991 by Japanese Buddhist Bhikshu, Gyomo Nakamura and part of the Peace Pagoda mission.

Leh Palace is a former royal palace overlooking the Ladakhi Himalayan town of Leh. Modelled on the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet, the palace was built by King Sengge Namgyal in the 17th century.

Day 12: Day 12: Leh – Uleytokpo

Uletokpo is an enchanting village located 70 kms west to Leh on the Leh – Srinagar Highway. The altitude of Uletokpo is 10, 000ft (3040m).

Drive towards Uleytokpo, enroute visit **Likir & Alchi Monastery & Rizong**. Visit the village of Nimo and stop for photo session at confluence of river Zaskar & Indus and then proceed further to visit Likir.

Likir belongs to Ge-Lung-Pa sect; the monastery also maintains and runs a school for young Lamas.

Alchi Monastery, it was founded in the 11th century by Rinchen Zangpo the Great Translator; it was richly decorated by artist from Kashmir and Tibet. Paintings of the Mandala's which have deep Tantric significances are particularly fine; some decorations are reminiscent of Byzantine art. The monastery is maintained by monks from Likir and is no longer a place for active worship.

On the way visit Rizong Gompa. It involves 7 Kms of driving to reach the main Gompa. Rizong is among few monasteries in Ladakh which houses women monks called "Chomos". Its small Gompa situated deep inside a narrow valley.

Day 13: Day 13: Uleytokpo – Leh

Morning visit Lamayuru at a distance of 55 Kms from Uleytokpo and later drive back to Leh. (165 kms/ 5 hrs).

Day 14: Day 14: Leh–Nubra

Morning drive for Nubra Valley (6 hrs) passing thru Horzey & Gangles Village. The road then rises to reach **Khardungla** (5602 Mts.) the world's highest Motorable road. Enjoy the landscape & the beautiful bird's eye view of the Leh town. Another 35 Kms drive takes to Khalsar at Shyok Valley, where the scenery is all around. The road after crossing Khalsar Bridge at Shyok River enters to the Nubra Valley & then proceeds along with the Nubra River also you can stop at Sumur to visit **Samastaling Monastery**, Next to the road at Sumur, which is 265 years old.

On arrival in Nubra Valley, check-in at the Camp at Nubra.

Day 15: Day 15: In Nubra

After breakfast at Camp drive to **Hunder** to visit **Diskit**, the HQ town of Nubra Valley. Driving for 30 Kms takes to Khalsar Bridge. Deskit can be approached by driving parallel to Shyok River for 20 Kms. From the Historical & Tourist point of view, Deskit is famous for 515 years old Deskit Buddhist Monastery, lying magnificently situated on a hilltop, facing the entire Valley. Further drive from Deskit to Hunder, another 8 – 10 Kms drive. At Hunder, you may see a few Double Humped, Hairy and Bactrian Camels. Enjoy an Optional Ride on Camels around the Sand Dunes of Hunder.

Day 16: Day 16: Nubra – Leh

Return to Leh (approx. 6 hrs). Rest of the day at leisure in Leh

Day 17: Day 17: Leh–Delhi– International departure

Take the morning flight to Delhi and connect your international flight back home.

About Tour

A journey through the mountains to Leh – the last Shangri-la.

Highlights

- Visit Golden Temple in Amritsar.
- Visit Wagah Border to witness the lowering the flag ceremony between India & Pakistan.
- Enjoy a culinary tour in Hoshiarpur.
- Visit His Holiness Dalai Lama's temple in Dharamshala.
- Lifetime driving experience of the trans-Himalayan route.
- Go back in time visiting the beautiful monasteries and the unique landscapes.
- Experience the culture of the last Shangri-la.