



PROJECT DOSSIER

NORTH INDIA & LADAKH

DELHI to LEH to DELHI

18 Days

1150 kms by road
85 kms on foot

INDIA (LADAKH)

Delhi – Chandigarh – Kullu – Leh - Delhi

Itinerary Guideline

- Day 1:** Spend day in Delhi, India's capital city, visiting sites including Chandri Chowk, the Red Fort and India Gate.
- Day 2:** Drive north to the Punjab & Chandigar.
- Day 3:** Full days driving in Himachal Pradesh via Mandi. From here climb the narrow and spectacular gorge and emerge into the Kullu Valley to Manali.
- Day 4:** Day spent in Manali, the main town in the valley, with the opportunity to visit Naggar Castle, a nearby Tibetan monastery or relax in the local hot springs.
- Days 5 to 8:** Drive north to Ladakh through dramatic scenery, ascending higher and passing over the 4000 metre Rohtang Pass, Baralachulu at 4900 metres and finally Tang Lang La at 5,400. Visit the Hemis and Tikse Monasteries en route, both strong symbols of Ladakhi Buddhism.
- Day 9:** Spend the day in Leh, the sleepy capital of Ladakh, exploring the winding back streets and visiting the Stok Palace, a miniature version of Tibet's Potala Palace.



- Day 10:** Drive part of the Leh/Srinagar road to Lamayuru where we visit the monastery and prepare for the trek.
- Days 11 to 15:** Trek supported by local porters & guide through the arid but dramatic Zaskar mountain range to Alchi, crossing 3 passes, the highest being Stapski La at 5200m.
- Day 16:** Return to Leh – free day to rest.
- Day 17:** Fly back to Delhi.
- Day 18:** Arrangements end after breakfast.

July and September or late August departures travel in reverse direction by flying into Leh from Delhi.

Delhi – Leh – Kullu – Chandigarh – Delhi

- Day 1:** Spend day in Delhi, India's capital city, visiting sites including Chandri Chowk, the Red Fort and India Gate.
- Day 2:** Fly from Delhi to Leh. Time to acclimatise.
- Day 3:** Spend the day in Leh, the sleepy capital of Ladakh, exploring the winding back streets and visiting the Stok Palace, a miniature version of Tibet's Potala Palace.

Day 4: Drive part of the Leh/Srinagar road to Lamayuru where we visit the monastery and prepare for the trek.

Days 5 to 9: Trek supported by local porters & guide through the arid but dramatic Zaskar mountain range to Alchi, crossing 3 passes, the highest being Stapski La at 5200m.

Day 10: Return to Leh – free day to rest.

Days 11 to 14: Drive south through dramatic scenery, passing over Tang Lang La at 5,400, Baralachulu at 4900 metres and finally the 4000 metre Rohtang Pass, before descending to the Kullu Valley and Manali. Visit the Hemis and Tikse Monasteries en route, both strong symbols of Ladakhi Buddhism.

Day 15: Day spent in Manali, the main town in the valley, with the opportunity to visit Naggar Castle, a nearby Tibetan monastery or relax in the local hot springs.

Day 16: Full days driving in Himachal Pradesh, along the Kullu Valley and through the narrow and spectacular gorge at the end.

Day 17: Drive south to Chandigarh and the fertile plains of the Punjab.

Day 18: Return to Delhi and end arrangements.

PLEASE NOTE

This is intended as a guide only and to indicate a typical itinerary and its highlights. While our intention is to adhere to this, it should be understood that group interests and wishes together with the constraints of weather, road conditions and local restrictions can alter our exact route, its activities and timings.

Highlights and Route

New Delhi is the capital of India and its third largest city. It consists of two parts with 'Old Delhi' being the capital of the Muslim India between the 12th and 19th centuries. Here you find many mosques, monuments and forts relating to India's Muslim history. The other Delhi is New Delhi, the imperial city created as the capital of India by the British. It is a spacious, open city and contains many embassies and government buildings. In addition to its historic interest and role as the government centre, New Delhi is a major travel gateway and it is from here that we begin our journey travelling north, through the plains of the Punjab into Himachal Pradesh and the Kullu Valley. This fertile valley rises northward from Mandi at 760 metres to the Rohtang Pass at 33978 metres, the gateway to

Lahaul and Spiti. It starts as a narrow, precipitous gorge, with the River Beas running sometimes a sheer 300 metres below the narrow road. Further up it widens and the scenery is stunning, with fruit orchards, rice paddies and wheat fields along the valley floor and lower slopes, deodar forests higher up, and snow-covered rocky peaks towering above. We visit Naggar Castle, high on the east bank of the river, at one time the capital of the Kullu Valley. The main centre in the valley is now Manali, a bustling town with many shops and hotels, plus natural sulphur springs, and a good place to rest before beginning the journey along the spectacular road to Leh in Ladakh. This road was opened to foreigners only in 1989 and is the world's second highest motorable road, reaching an elevation of 5328 metres at Tang Lang La. The scenery is quite unlike the fertile Kullu Valley, and high on the Tibetan plateau it is dry and barren, the air sharp and clear. The predominant religion in this area is Buddhism and en route we visit two monasteries. Tikse Gompa is 500 years old, perched on a hill high above the Indus and Hemis Gompa, the largest and most important monastery in Ladakh, founded 360 years ago. It plays host to a summer festival, featuring mask dancing and draws pilgrims, dressed in their finest costumes, from all over Ladakh. Hemis also has many interesting thankas, as well as an excellent library, some particularly well preserved wall paintings and buddha figures. On towards Leh, the capital of Ladakh and once the main stopping point on the Asian silk route and a commercial capital in its own right. Wandering the back streets of the town is still fascinating as are the surrounding villages and monasteries. One can visit the Leh Palace. This looks like a miniature version of the Potala in Lhasa, Tibet and was built in the 16th century. The views from the palace are superb. The Zaskar Mountains, across the Indus, look close enough to touch.

The Lamayuru Monastery is our point of departure for the trek along the mountain paths of the Zaskar range to Alchi. Zaskar is surrounded by the main Himalaya on one side and the Zaskar Range on the other, and is the most remote area of Ladakh. Few inhabited valleys in the world are so isolated and life has changed very little. Yak trains still plod their way over the wild and remote passes to Lahaul, Kullu and the Indus Valley. Through the valley flows the Zaskar River, across the plains from Padum to Zangla, where it penetrates the huge Zaskar Range en route to the Indus, creating some of the most spectacular gorges in the Himalaya. Through this dramatic scenery we trek for five days supported

by local porters and guide before returning to Leh for a well earned rest and then our flight back to Delhi.

GROUP SIZE

18-21 including staff plus the trek crew – cooks, porters & the trek guide.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

This project travels into a high altitude region up to 5400 metres, conditions can be basic and you should be in an above level of fitness for the trek. The hiking consists of repeated ascents & descents between the valleys and ranges and is harsher than mountain walking in Europe/North America etc. Within reason you are able to set your own daily pace on the trek. Turning back mid-way through the trek is not feasible.

THE LOCAL PAYMENT (as in the brochure)

This is the payment made to the Project Leader at the point of departure. This payment must be made paid in US\$ dollars, either in cash notes or recognised Travellers Cheques. This payment completes the total inclusive price of the project. This amount will be utilised by the Project Leader to cover a proportion but not all of the 'on the ground' running costs of this project. There are no hidden extra payments.

INCLUDED IN PROJECT COST

All transport, including domestic flight Leh/Delhi or Delhi/Leh, food - 3 meals a day, except in Delhi and Leh (5 days), accommodation & activities as detailed from Day 1 until morning of Day 18. Local guides and porters for the trek. There are no kitties or en route payments.

PROJECT COST DOES NOT COVER

Local Payment. International flights between home & Delhi, transfers to/from Delhi airport and airport taxes. Vaccinations, visas, personal insurance, malaria prophylaxis, laundry, snacks, drinks, tips to porters, personal clothing/equipment & items of a personal nature. Some individual entry fees to museums/sights (minimal cost).

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED

Lightweight, customised 2 person tents, domestic & cooking equipment on trek.

WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING

A warm minimum 4 seasons sleeping bag, cold weather clothing for trek, medium/large size day-pack, a soft sided bag or backpack, strong trekking boots (worn in), water bottle, personal

clothing, medicines & toiletries. A complete suggested clothing list is included in our pre-departure information.

TRANSPORT

Encounter expedition truck, domestic flight Leh/Delhi or Delhi/Leh, by foot on trek.

ACCOMMODATION

60% camping, guesthouse in Manali and Leh, hotel in Delhi. Reservations in Delhi hotel before Day 1 may be made through Encounter, with payment by you directly to hotel on arrival.

MEALS, COOKING & FOOD

Camp cooked breakfasts, evening meals & picnic lunches on travelling days prepared by the group on a rota basis. Meals on trek prepared by local cooks. Meals in Delhi and Leh (5 days) are NOT included.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

You will need a passport that is valid for not less than **6 months** after the end of the project, and which contains not less than **2 blank pages**. All nationalities require visas for India which must be obtained before you leave home. The cost vary according to your nationality. Encounter or your agent can advise you of up to date visa details & their costs applicable to you. We can also help you in obtaining one.

INSURANCE

You must have personal Travel Insurance to cover Adventure Travel and it must cover all the aspects described on p60 of the brochure. Please bring a copy of your policy with you to the pre-departure meeting. If your policy does not cover this minimum level then Encounter will not accept responsibly for the consequences.

MEDICAL & VACCINATIONS

All vaccination requirements and medical recommendations are detailed in the pre-departure information pack at the time of booking.

PERSONAL SPENDING MONEY

To cover personal day to day expenditure throughout-drinks, snacks, meals in Delhi & Leh, occasional small souvenirs, individual museum entry fees etc.-US\$300 would be quite adequate. US\$100 would be quite adequate for day to day expenditure-including a customary, though not obligatory, small tip to the porters). Souvenirs are inexpensive - Good buys can include woodcarvings, Hindu deity bronzes & statues, Buddhist prayer wheels, religious items &

thankha paintings, jewellery, Tibetan carpets made by refugee villages.

Other than the above, Encounter has no hidden expenses, funds or kitties to surprise your spending money.

ARRIVING AT START OF THE PROJECT

There will be a pre-departure meeting at our Delhi hotel at 08.00 hrs on the morning of Day 1. If you are arriving earlier there is still a lot to see & do in Delhi: shopping & city bazaars – Chandri Chowk; the Red Fort, India Gate etc.

LEAVING AT END OF THE PROJECT

Arrangements end on the morning of Day 18 and any flight out of Delhi could be arranged for this day. International flights are often overbooked, and late or un-reconfirmed check-ins will be denied boarding with little prospect of another flight out for several days.

OTHER COSTS/EXPENSES

- Return International flights.....
- Local Payment.....
- Visas.....
- Vaccinations.....
- Insurance.....
- Personal spending money.....

Total _____

The information in this dossier has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However, it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and Encounter Overland Ltd.