

PAKISTAN

History Lesson

Since the Iranian revolution and the invasion of Afghanistan Pakistan has been right out on a limb. Yet if you pause to give it a little time Pakistan can show you some real surprises. The north - places like Swat and Chitral Valley, Gilgit or Hunza - include some of the most beautiful and unspoiled spots on earth. In the south is Moenjodaro, the ruined city of the ancient Indus civilisation. Even on the old route across the north there is Peshawar, capital of the swashbuckling Pathans, and Lahore, once one of the most beautiful cities of the mighty Moghul empire.

History

Pakistan only came into existence in 1947, prior to that it was a part of the Indian sub-continent. About 4000 years ago Pakistan was the centre for the Indus civilisation which flourished from 2500 to 1500 BC. You can see the remains of ancient cities at Harappa and, more particularly, Moenjodaro, in the south of Pakistan. The Indus civilisation is still the subject of considerable study and its script has not yet been deciphered.

After this early civilisation abruptly collapsed Pakistan became just another part of Asia to be conquered or fought over by whoever was conquering things. The Greeks, the Persians, the Turks, all had a go but the rise of the Moghul Empire from Ghazni in Afghanistan once more put Pakistan on top. As its power grew the Moghul empire gradually moved its centre eastward and for a long time Lahore was the capital of an empire that eventually spread from Afghanistan right across Pakistan and northern India.

The decline of the Moghuls coincided with the arrival of the British but when, after WWII, the British decided the time had come to cut India loose they were faced with a difficult problem. India was a predominantly Hindu country which had been ruled by Moslems for centuries before the British took over. What would happen when they pulled out? The solution was to carve it up into a central, predominantly Hindu, India, and two flanking, Moslem Pakistans. Hardly surprisingly this plan did not work exactly to schedule.

The major problem centred on the Punjab, the region encompassing Lahore and Amritsar. When the Sikhs on the Pakistan side of the border upped and shifted across to the Indian side serious rioting broke out and eventually six to seven million Moslems who found themselves in Hindu India moved west and a similar number of Hindus headed east. Much bloodshed accompanied this wholesale exchange of population.

Nor was a simple swap of people the only problem for Pakistan ended up short of many of the commercial skills the Hindus had supplied. Worse the borders were a subject of dispute and to this day both sides claim the predominantly Moslem region of Kashmir although it is the Indians who physically control most of it. Each time India and Pakista find themselves at each other's throats, which over the last 30 years has been quite often, the Kashmir question is inevitably a central issue. Long term, Pakistan's most serious problem was simply the fact that there were two Pakistans - east and west. The western half was always the dominant partner despite the fact that it was the Bengalis in East Pakistan who supplied the majority of the country's export earnings. It is probably indicative that even the name Pakistan - P-Punjab, A-Afghan, K-Kashmir, I-Indus, STAN-Baluchistan - covered all the major regions of West Pakistan but never mentioned the Bengalis of the eastern half. The only real connection between the two halves was that they were both Moslem. Over a thousand km of hostile India was stretched between them.

After independence Pakistan had 11 years of inefficient and corrupt 'democratic' government before General Ayub Khan set up the first military government in 1958.

He produced a number of excellent reforms, particularly with the perennial third-world land holding problem, but in 1969 he handed over to another General - Yahya Khan. All this time discontent had been growing in the eastern half. Their standard of living was lower, their representation in the government, civil service and military was far smaller and their share of overseas aid and development projects was also disproportionately small.

In 1970 two events shook the country apart. A disastrous cyclone wreaked havoc on the eastern half and the assistance the Bengalis received from West Pakistan was shamefully indifferent. Then in December, 1970 elections took place to return the country to civilian government. For the first time the elections were held on a

one-man one-vote franchise. In West Pakistan Zulfikar Bhutto took 88 of the 144 seats but in East Pakistan Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took 167 of the 169 seats and was therefore entitled to govern both halves. The West Pakistanis were not going to stand for this and the Sheikh soon found himself imprisoned. Tension and incidents escalated and when the Pakistan Army stepped in during 1971 a full scale civil war erupted. The army's cruelty prompted a bitter guerilla opposition and finally India, flooded with Bengali refugees, stepped in by declaring war against Pakistan. The Pakistan army was soon defeated in the east and East Pakistan became the independent state of Bangladesh

Back in the west, Yahya Khan was now nobody's favourite soldier and Bhutto came to power. He held that position until in 1977 the results of his re-election were violently debated. While the arguments on whether or not he had rigged the votes and whether or not there should be a re-run raged on the military once more took over and Bhutto found himself at the receiving end of the military boot and eventually the military noose. The government followed the general eastern swing to more fundamental Islamic rule with strict and conservative application of Moslem law. Prohibition of alcohol is one result.

Pakistan does, at least, appear to be reconciled to the loss of its eastern wing and relations with Bangladesh, while far from amicable, have been restored. The situation with India, however, continues to swing from hot to cold and Kashmir remains a constant friction point. The instability in Iran and Afghanistan have also caused great difficulties for the Pakistanis. It has been estimated that well over three million refugees have fled from Afghanistan into Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, causing an immense problem for a country as poor as Pakistan.

Facts

Population

Pakistan is the ninth largest country in the world by population, which is currently estimated to be about 80 million. It is far from evenly distributed as the north of the country is mountainous and rugged and the far south dry and barren. Much of the population is concentrated in the central part or along the Indus and other rivers that run down from the northern mountains. The north, including Pakistan's part of Kashmir, known as Gilgit, is inhabited by the Hunzas and in the Chitral Valley are the Kafirs. Around Peshawar are the Pathans who have much in common with their brothers across the border in Afghanistan. The Punjabis predominate around Rawalpindi, Lahore and Islamabad - the most heavily populated part of the country. Karachi (3 million plus) is the largest city, Lahore (2 million) the second largest.

Economy

Pakistan is still predominantly agricultural and its industries are very much in their infancy. Prior to the Bangladesh split the majority of the country's exports were jute, all from the eastern half. Pakistan has made a remarkable recovery from the loss of this important export but the economic situation is still precarious. Pakistan was probably worse affected by the 1947 partition than India since its population loss included a large part of the country's skilled workers, civil servants, and businessmen while the population gain was to a large extent peasants most of whom had no knowledge of the irrigated agriculture upon which Pakistan is dependent.

Geography

The area of Pakistan is 790,000 square km. In the north the country is very mountainous as the Hindu Kush, western extremity of the Himalayas, extends across Pakistan and into Afghanistan. Here are some of the world's highest mountains including K2, at 8611 metres the second highest in the world. Further south the fertile central region deteriorates into the dry south - virtually uninhabited and searingly hot Baluchistan in the west and the equally unpleasant Thar Desert in the east.

Religion

Islamic religion has a central importance to Pakistan. It was the reason for the country's creation in the partition from India and it remains an important influence on the country's government and politics. It is a 'heavy' Moslem country where western women can expect to be hassled and annoyed by men unless they are properly dressed. There are still a number of Hindus in the country mainly in the southern Sind; their number (less than a million) is far smaller than the proportion of Moslems remaining in India (more than 50 million). Pakistan

also has a Christian minority and an influential group of followers of the Zoroaster in Karachi. They form an important channel of communication with India via their fellow fire worshippers in Bombay.

Climate

Pakistan has some real climatic extremes from the broiling heat of the southern deserts to the freezing cold of the northern mountains. Mid-April to mid-July is the hottest period and the southern route to Iran should not be considered at that time. The monsoons come from mid-July to mid-September but are not as severe as in India or South-East Asia. From December through February it ranges from cool to cold.

Punjab

The fertile northern area of the Indus plain is the core of Pakistan. Since the distant past this has been the traditional route to the sub-continent from central Asia and it is still the main route across the region today. Strung along what the British knew as the Grand Trunk Road and what is today the Asian Highway are the important towns of Rawalpindi and Lahore with the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad, just north of Rawalpindi. This has long been a centre for great kingdoms, as the ruins of Taxila indicate. The Moghuls also made Lahore their capital for some time.

Multan

One of Pakistan's most 'undiscovered' cities Multan is noted for its beautiful mausoleums in the old fort but it is situated in one of the hottest and driest parts of the country.

Lahore

Lahore is the second largest city in Pakistan and probably the most visited by foreigners. Back in the heady days of the Moghul Empire this was one of the most important places in their region. On the old overland route from Europe this was often the first place where you felt that incredible Indian crush - the almost impossibly tightly packed, jostling crowds of humanity that seem to characterise city life on the sub-continent. It is a very hassling feeling at first. At its Moghul peak under Shah Jahan (of Taj fame) and Aurangzeb, Lahore acquired some beautiful buildings. Later they were neglected during a period of Sikh dominance and more or less forgotten while the British ruled but since independence they have been restored.

Information

There are Tourist Information centres at the airport and at Transport House on Egerton Road. PIA, Amex and the GPO are all close to the Mall.

The Mall

Your first view of Lahore will probably be the decidedly British Mall. At the bottom end of the Mall, where it ends on Lower Mall, is a huge cannon known as Kim's Gun since it featured in Kipling's book Kim. It is also known as the Zamzama Gun (or loud roar). Rudyard Kipling's father was for many years the curator of the Lahore museum which is across the road from the gun. It is a fine museum with exhibits connected with many of the cultures of the sub-continent particularly the Indus Valley. Alongside the Upper Mall are the pleasant Jinnah Gardens and the rather poor Lahore zoo.

Lahore Fort

The fort was built, destroyed, damaged, demolished, rebuilt and restored several times before being built in its current form by Akbar in 1566. It was later modified by his successors and considerably damaged by the British although it has now been partially restored. Highpoint of the fort is the magnificent 'decorated wall' covered in mosaic tiles in a Moghul interpretation of the Persian style. There are also gardens, palaces and halls in the fort and the fine view across the Badshahi Mosque. There are son et lumiere performances here at night.

Badshahi Mosque

Completed in 1676 under Aurangzeb, this is the largest mosque in the world and said to be the final architectural fling of the Moghuls. It is supposed to hold 60,000 people on major occasions. Although it was somewhat damaged by the British, they later restored it. It is possible to climb to the top of one of the minarets - 204 steps up to a magnificent view.

Other

Also in the old walled city you can find the cenotaph of Ranjit Singh, one of Lahore's Sikh rulers, which looks out onto the same Hazuri Bagh square as the Badshahi Mosque and the Fort. Behind the fort is the tiled Mosque of Wazir Khan. The Shalimar Gardens 10 km outside the city were one of the three gardens of that name built by Shah Jahan. The Shalimar Gardens in Delhi have now completely disappeared but you can still see the ones in Srinagar, Kashmir. The gardens in Lahore are beautiful and peaceful - a strange contrast to the hustle and hassle of life in Pakistan.

Rawalpindi & Islamabad

The two cities, old and new, are less than 20 km apart and situated approximately midway between Lahore and Peshawar. They are not of sufficient interest to require a special visit but if you are branching off from Rawalpindi to the northern mountains or to see Taxila you might as well have a glance.

When Pakistan became independent in 1947 it faced the usual problem of nominating a capital. If either of the two major cities, Karachi or Lahore, were made the capital there would be the inevitable city to city rivalry and additionally Karachi was far from the centre of the country while Lahore was uncomfortably close to the Indian border and too heavily influenced by its religious nature. Karachi eventually got the nod temporarily but in 1959 the capital was transferred to Rawalpindi.

Taxila

The ruins of the ancient city of Taxila are only 30 km from Rawalpindi and on the railway line to Peshawar. Unfortunately when you get there the ruins are very scattered so if you want to visit parts of the site remote from the museum you will have to hire a rickshaw or tonga. The city was once under the control of the Persian Achaemenia empire which built Persepolis. The remains of this earliest period can be seen at Bhir Mound, easy walking distance. It is also possible to walk to the later remains at Sirkap which date from the 2nd century BC when Taxila was in its Greek period following the arrival of Alexander the Great. The museum is noted for its collection of Gandharan art - that fascinating cross between Greek and Buddhist styles.

Murree

One of Pakistan's most popular hill resorts, Murree is 59 km north-east of Islamabad in the foothills of the Kashmiri Himalaya. Murree is small and still has a distinctly British atmosphere, particularly in the upper town area. It is a good place for bracing walks in the cooler mountain air.

North-west Frontier Province

Composed of a number of autonomous tribal areas and political agencies it is only along the Khyber valley that the central government has real control in the NWFP. This is the land of the Pathans who still treat the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, also inhabited by Pathans, with traditional disdain. Neither the Moghuls nor the British were able to control the Pathans and the Pakistanis have simply continued the British system of allowing them local autonomy. There are many refugees from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan who have fled into the province.

Peshawar

Only 160 km north-west of Rawalpindi, Peshawar has long marked the dividing line between the sub-continent and central Asia. It is still a fascinating city today and the capital of the swaggering Pathans. This tribal link to Afghanistan has caused considerable friction since there have been occasional moves to push for an independent 'Pushtanistan'. The word Pathan is a recent term invented by Rudyard Kipling; they refer to themselves as Pushtus. Because of its strategic location, just 15 km from the eastern end of the Khyber Pass, every conqueror passing through has had to pause to take the town. The British built their own separate Peshawar so today it is still in two parts - the spacious cantonment and the narrow, winding old town.

Information

There are Tourist Information Centres at the airport and at Dean's Hotel on Shahrah-e-Reza Pelhvi. The Afghan Consulate is on Sahibzada A Qayyum Road.

Old Town

This is the most interesting area of course. The old city walls have 20 gates and the Kabul Gate leads to the Qissa Khwani or 'street of story-tellers'. Unhappily the story-tellers have long gone but it is still a fascinating bazaar to wander around. Everywhere you will see the tall, proud Pathans - usually armed to the teeth. Other bazaars are the Bater Bazen or 'street of partridge lovers' which was once a bird market and the Mochilara or 'shoe-makers street'.

Bala Hissar Fort

Overlooking the city from a rise to the north-west the fort was built by Babar and later reconstructed by the Sikhs.

Other

The museum has an interesting if haphazard collection. The mosque of Mahabat Khan is the finest in the city. There are a number of Buddhist sites around Peshawar. If you head south from Peshawar towards Kohat you will come to Darra, 40 km out, where blacksmiths manufacture by hand perfect replicas of military rifles.

Khyber Pass

The fort at Jamrud marks the start of the pass - it is a jumble of towers and turrets and at this point you will see signs warning you that you are entering tribal territory. In other words the government has not got too much control over what goes down from here on. The actual border is at Torkham but shortly before the border is Landi Kotal, a market town where the bazaar is packed with all those western items impossible to obtain in Pakistan or if they are obtainable only at a great price. The Pathans smuggle them in and sell them here, the government realises that if they tried to stop them they would have an armed (heavily armed!) insurrection on their hands so in this one small location they get away with it. Over the Khyber Pass a separate trail parallels the main road - signs clearly indicate that it is for camels only.

Elsewhere in the region

The town of Darra, with its weapons manufacturing business, can be a day trip from Peshawar or simply a pause on your way south. Although you can continue south through Kohat and Bannu all the way to Dera Ismail Khan you need special permission to take the direct route to Quetta from there. This trip, through the barren and jagged Salt Range, crosses desolate and bleak country for great distances. Heading north from Peshawar there are interesting archaeological sites from the Gandhara period at Charsada, Shahbaz Ghari near Mardan and Chanaka Dheri. Routes continue north to the Swat Valley or to Chitral via Dir. You can also loop north of the Grand Trunk Road through some other interesting sites and finally rejoin the road at Nowshera, about a third of the way to Rawalpindi.

Baluchistan

Baluchistan is the remote, desolate south-west region of Pakistan, bounded by Afghanistan to the north, Iran to the west, the Arabian Sea to the south. It is a dry, dusty, barren area with the lowest population density in the country. The inhabitants are mainly nomadic shepherds and since they don't get on too well with the Pakistan government the security situation is often a little fraught. Few people used to travel through this region unless they were taking the southern route into Iran but now, with Afghanistan shut off, this is the main overland route.

Quetta

The principal town in Baluchistan, Quetta, is a fertile oasis in the dry mountains of the province. It was virtually wiped out by a huge earthquake in 1935 and is of no particular interest today although it does have a pleasant bazaar and is a reasonably relaxing place to pause on your travels. The summers here are relatively cool, due to the 1700 metre altitude, but the road west to Zahedan can be very hot and heavy going. In the winter it gets extremely cold in Quetta and it is often snowed in.

The Northern Territory

North of the Grand Trunk Road is some of the most interesting country in Pakistan. It is still relatively untouristed and offers magnificent scenery, interesting people and fine trekking. The main routes north into this Himalayan region are from Rawalpindi in the east and Peshawar in the west but there are cross-connections between the various valleys and centres so you can for example, head north from Peshawar to Swat and Chitral then loop east and return south to Rawalpindi through Gilgit-Hunza and the Kaghan Valley.

The northern region can be roughly divided into the lower north and the upper north. In the east you head north through the Hazara and Kaghan Valley to Dardistan and then the Gilgit region and the Hunza Valley. To the east is the remote trans-Himalayan region of Baltistan, closely related to Ladakh in India. This towering Himalayan region includes some of the highest mountains on earth. The alternative route north from Peshawar takes you through the lower and upper Swat Valleys or to Chitral.

Gilgit & Hunza

The upper northern region is barren and dry, much of it climatically and culturally similar to the Tibetan regions of India and China. The main towns of the northern region are Chitral in the west, Gilgit in the centre and Skardu, in Baltistan, in the east. The year round life-line to Gilgit and Hunza is the Chinese constructed Karakoram Highway. This winds its way north from Rawalpindi, following the Indus River through Beshum and Chilas to Gilgit. The Kaghan Valley route joins the highway at Chilas. From Gilgit the highway continues north to Hunza and eventually crosses the Khunjerab Pass into China.

Two other roads lead from Gilgit, one heading west to the Chitral region while the other goes south-east to Skardu in Baltistan.

Gilgit is the centre of the whole upper northern region including Hunza and Dardistan. The town has a beautiful garden, the Chinar Bagh, on the banks of the Gilgit River, while eight km south you can visit the 700 year old Taj Mughal victory monument. On the Punial road in the Kargah Valley a similar distance west, a Tibetan Buddha is carved into a rock face. Gilgit is also a good base for trekking trips in the surrounding area. There are some interesting trekking routes from Gilgit to Hunza or you can take the Karakoram Highway - this stretch was the most difficult and costly to construct of the entire highway. The 600 year old Baltit Fort rises above the village of Hunza and a km long aqueduct connects it to Altit where there is another smaller fort. The people of Hunza are chiefly Ismailis, followers of the Aga Khan, and are reputed to live to a very venerable age due to their excellent diet.

Baltistan

The most isolated region of Pakistan's Northern Territory, Baltistan is the area where the Indus River enters Pakistan. It is similar to Ladakh in climate and land form although the people here are predominantly Shi'ite Moslems, like the people of nearby Kargil in India. The major town in Baltistan is Skardu and it is reached via Gilgit. There is a more direct route from Muzaffarabad but this runs through the tense border region with Indian held Kashmir and is closed to foreigners. Skardu is a dusty little town on the banks of the Indus, overlooked by an aqueduct and the Askandria Fort high above on the 'Rock of Skardu'. One-day trekking trips can be made to a number of places around Skardu. They include the trip to Shigar, gateway to mighty K2, the second highest mountain on earth at 8613 metres. A number of other great Himalayan peaks and glaciers can also be reached via this route. Other places around Skardu include Khapulu (102 km to the east), the Satpara Lake (a day trip from Skardu) and the Deosai Plains.

Swat & Upper Swat Valley

The scenically beautiful Swat Valley was also a major centre of the Buddhist Gandhara culture of over 2000 years ago. Lower Swat extends from Mardan to Bahrain and the archaeological ruins of the Gandhara period are chiefly found around Mingora in this region. Mingora and neighbouring Saidu Sharif is the main centre of Lower Swat. Further up the valley the scenery becomes wilder but more scenic through the small towns of Madyan and Bahrain. The valley then widens out into the region known as Kohistan but the road terminates at Kalem and to continue further to Chitral or Gilgit is possible only by trekking. The Swat Valley is a relaxed and easy-going area, some travellers say it is even more pleasant than Kashmir.

Chitral

The region bordering Afghanistan in the north-west of Pakistan is the home of the 'Kafirs' or non-believers. They resisted the advance of Islam longer than any other people in the region and indeed it is only since WWII that they have finally abandoned their colourful and often drunken festivals. Travelling to Chitral from the

south you pass through Dir, only 115 km south of Chitral but it's a hard 10 to 12 hour trip and the road is only open for a few months of each year.

Chitral is the main town in the region. It has a natural hot spring and the tiny form of Birmughlast is 14 km from Garam Chasma, a steep four-hour climb. The Kalash Valleys, where the final remnants of the Kafirs live, are west and south-west of Chitral. There are only about 5000 of them left and they are found mainly in the Birer, Bumburet and Rumbur valleys. It is possible to walk from valley to valley.

GENERAL INFORMATION

| | |
|-----------|---|
| GMT | + 5 hours |
| Banks | Most change money |
| Insurance | Pakistan Mutual Insurance Company Shahah E Quaid E Azam Road (Mall Road) Pak Building, Jinnah Road, Quetta Ittefaq General Ins Co. Zonal Office, 85-Badami Bag Lahore. Tel 201036/7 Quetta - Adamjee insurance - near to New Lourdes - ask manager for directions. |
| Telex - | Public telex offices Quetta, Islamabad, Lahore, or from International Hotels |
| Shopping | No problems getting fresh meat, vegetables. Meatless days Tuesday and Wednesday but can buy fish and chicken. |
| Beer - | Require liquor permit. Possible to buy at some hotels Now possible Quetta but takes 1/2 day to get. |
| Gas - | Quetta Small shop opposite Northern Sports, Eid Gah Road. Lahore, 26 Chapel Road, (Rs 150/bottle) |
| Dress - | Not as strict as Iran but similar codes apply. Everyone should be well covered at all times. |
| Hotel - | Local courier companies; T.C's, DHL etc guaranteed next day deliveries within Pakistan. Useful Booking booking Spogmay Hotel in Peshawar, Sultan etc can find in Quetta, Lahore and Islamabad V. cheap |

ROUTE: TAFTAN - QUETTA - LORALAI - DERA GHAZI KHAN - DERA ISMAIL KHAN - KOHAT - PESHAWAR - (NORTHERN AREAS) - ISLAMABAD - LAHORE (roads generally quite bad)

PAKISTAN ROUTE PLANNER - Itinerary locations are underlined>

| | | Driving times | kms/miles |
|------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Taftan/Mijaveh | Nok Kundi | 2 hours | 131/82 |
| Nok Kundi | Dalbandin | 3 hours | |
| Dalbandin | Quetta | 8 hours | |
| Quetta | Ziarat | 3.5 hours | |
| Ziarat | Loralai | 4.5 hours | |
| Loralai | Kingri | 4 hours | |
| Kingri | Fort Munro | 2.5 hours | |
| Fort Munro | Dera Ghazi Khan | 3.5 hours | |
| Dera Ghazi Khan | Taunsa | 2 hours | |
| Taunsa | Bannu | 8 hours | 261/163 |
| Dera Ghazi Khan | Dera Ismail Khan | 7.5 hours | |
| Dera Ismail Khan | Bannu | 3.5 hours | |
| Bannu | Peshawar | 6 hours | 160/100 |
| Peshawar | Lahore | 11 hours | 395/247 |
| Peshawar | Islamabad | 3.5-4 hours | |
| Islamabad | Lahore | 7.5-8 hours | |
| Lahore | Border (Waggha/Attari Rd) | 45 mins | |

TAFTAN-QUETTA

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Distance | 650 kms |
| Driving Time | 1.5 days Do not rough camp on this stretch. |
| Driving Time: | Quetta - Yackmach 9 Hrs : Yackmack - Taftan 4.5 Hrs |
| Camping: | Border - new ('97) PTDC Hotel Yackmack Government Resthouse Dalbandin - resthouse Nok Kundi - police compound |
| Conditions: | Now tar Nok Kundi to the Customs house in Taftan, but the road is presently under construction between Nok Kundi and Yackmack. |
| Border | Pakistan side does not open until 09.00 hrs |

TAFTAN - NOK KUNDI

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Driving Time | 2 hours |
| Distance | 82 miles |
| Road | New tarmac - a bit bumpy. |
| Camping | Best places are in the compound at the western end of Nok Kundi and in the RTDC at the border. (if you are held up) There is also a resthouse at Dalbandin three 3 hrs further on from Nok Kundi if you make good time. Would be good to shorten the next days drive to Quetta. can also camp next to one of the "Levis" posts which are found near small village and manned by police. |

NOK KUNDI - QUETTA

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Distance | 275 miles |
| Driving Time | 11 hours |
| Road | Very rough tar/potholed. Some stretches of new tarmac |
| Shopping | Coming westbound - stock up in Quetta/Taftan Coming eastbound - stock up in Taftan Nok Kundi - little shopping ie. bread Dalbandin has good shopping |

QUETTA (See map No. 1)

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Camping | New Lourdes Hotel Staff Collage Road (tel: 829656 - 60, 822352, 843391) (Fax No: 00 92 81 841352) New numbers as of 03.04.96 - preferable, especially friendly to EO. Expensive Rs 80/head (US\$ 2.00) and Rs 350 (US\$ 8.75) (June '97) for truck but can bargain down (sometimes they will waive the truck fee if a lot of rooms are taken). All prices exclude taxes. Also possible at the Bloom Star - dont know if anyone has sayed here lately? pls update |
| General | There is an Australian Army Major in Quetta who will help you with any probs if they should arise, Lourdes hotel staff know him. |
| Communication | 24 hour telex service at Telegraph Office, very efficient. |

Fax and phone at hotel

Shopping Excellent fruit and vegetable market
Good to stock up truck particularly if westbound (milk powder etc) Good shops on
Jinnah road have HP sauce Heinz beans, Tin cheese, cornflakes weatabix etc
etc.

Money Exchange street near market. Get Rials here
Good cash exchange in the exchange "office" in bazaar off Jinnah Rd

Manager at New Lourdes Hotel very keen to change money (will do TC's) but at a
poor "hotel" rate.

Spare Parts Many parts available in Auto market near club road, off Jinnah Road. Nearly all Paki
trucks/buses are Bedford J types. Many parts suit M Types. Mechanics usually very
helpful.

Gas Indus Gas, Bhijly Road plant - ask for directions

Iran visas Can get an Iran visa in one day here, provided your passport shows you have had one
before. Useful if you expect to be coming back this way!

QUETTA-LAHORE

The fast way - via Bolan Pass - Shirkapur - Dera Ghazi Khan - Multan Lahore Traffic heavy - not very pleasant
(I tried this route Nov 95 and it took 4 and a half days lots of roadworks - not
recommended)

QUETTA-PESHAWAR 4-5 days

The road through Zhob (Ft. Sandeman) is out of bounds to foreigners as it is tribal area.
Three routes to Dera Ghazi Khan:

1. From Quetta Via Hindubagh to Loralai OR BETTER ROUTE
2. From Quetta via Ziarat to Loralai. Should not attempt this in winter or heavy rainfall. Road conditions -
have improved road however still some dirt/shingle. Slightly wild country, great scenery and villages.

No permits necessary now for these areas.

Camping - Possible to rough camp - areas before Ziarat or in Ziarat.

* IMPORTANT ** From Ziarat onwards camp near towns as now in Tribal territory.

3. Via Bolan Pass - Shirkapur - Dera Ghazi Khan. Please inform route info -
believe this is a faster route than via Loralai.
Update - roadworks and heavy traffic make this route equally slow, although it makes a change.

QUETTA - LORALAI (via Ziarat).

Driving time - 6 hrs (3.5 hrs to Ziarat).

Leave Quetta on the Charman Rd. Turning right to Loralai is 25kms from the New Lourdes Hotel.
Nelles map suggests that you have to cut across the mountains on a minor road to Kach from the
Muslimbagh road. This is now a main road to Loralai.

Loralai No problems with good shopping. Can camp in police station here. Very lively atmosphere and freindly. They will require various group lists and ask that you sleep as a group so that they may keep an eye on you. (For your own safety).

Westbound - Entering Quetta from Loralai: Follow main drag into Quetta over various railway crossings. At grey monument turn right for Quetta city. Few hundred yards turn left into Tipu Road. Go straight until black fenced triangle. Turn right over bridge. Keep right past field gun and Red Pagoda on left. 2nd entrance on left is New Lourdes hotel.

Roads - From Loralai road is potholed. Many diversions around bridges (collapsed).

***** N.B. DO NOT OPEN CAMP IN THIS REGION - DANGEROUS *****

LORALAI - KINGRI

Driving Time 4 hrs

KINGRI

Camping Good open area on RHS. Check with locals first - friendly.
In November 1992 camped in Kingri on flat area on opposite side of the road and down a bit from the guest house. Police provided two armed guards who slept in the truck. Believe this was due to us having permit which states that our security should be insured. Guards were complimentary.

KINGRI - D.GHAZI KHAN (5 hrs)

Long steep descent, many hairpin turns. May have manouvering problems with other vehicles as road very narrow. Heavy traffic from Dera Ghazi Khan. Lots of road works now.

DERA GHAZI KHAN

Shopping Reasonable
Ice Factory RHS out of Dera Ghazi Khan
Camping Possible just out of Taunsa. Mostly farmland.
Water There is large bore well 5 km out of Taunsa opposite Gypsum plant. Ask farmer if you can use. Good for wash.

DERA GHAZI KHAN - PESHAWAR

1. Via Muzaffargarh, Bhakkar(bypass) to Dera Ismail Khan. - 15 hrs (Probably better route due to recent colvert construction)
2. Via Taunsa. - 16 hrs - this route (Sept '94) they were building new colverts every 100m so very slow

Then Bannu, Kohat, Darra.

For 1. **Westbound** - Head south out of D.I. Khan on D. G. Khan road. About 5 kms out see major left turn with traffic islands: Several signs boards, no english. Turn left and cross Indus. (Can swim on left before you reach toll gates, in lakes). At major 'T' junction turn right on Lahore road.

At Bypass Bhakkar and continue 20 / 30 ks to right turn signposted to Muzaffargarh 161 ks. Muzaffargarh turn right at 'T' and right again to D. G. Khan.

TAUNSA-BANNU

Driving Time 8 hours
Distance 163 miles
Roads Rough seal and dusty
Camping Government Resthouse
Good rough camping about 15 mins north of Bannu - in wood lot areas, can drive well off road to R and hide behind bushes - nice and quiet.

DERA ISMAIL KHAN

Spare Parts Many available. Helpful mechanics - lathing etc.
Shopping Excellent market. Watch truck as locals crowd around.
Indus River From Dera Ismail Khan ask directions. Old steam boat and good view of river.
Water Bore well. Going north to Bannu 15 km out of D.I. Khan between 78-79 km peg on RHS. South its 15 km peg before D. I. Khan. Good for a wash.

BANNU-PESHAWAR

Driving Time 6 hours
Distance 100 miles
Roads Long climb up Darra pass. From Kohat to Peshawar must pass through Darra (aka Adam Khel)

Westbound Leaving Peshawar for Darra and Bannu: Left out of Spogmay, right into square, G.S.O. At next r'about G.S.O. After 200m Elizabeth School on left. After 500m take left turn under foot bridge. Go straight. Tribal area around Darra (famous for its weapons industry and drugs so may be turned back and have to go around). Many Afghani refuge camps around Peshawar and northern areas of Pakistan. Local police will approach you in Darra to check your permit.

Camping at Police Station 12 miles outside Pezu just at the top of the ridge. Near microwave station. Approx 1.5 hrs north of D. I. Khan and 2 hrs south of Bannu.

Coming from Peshawar you will need a permit - there have been European kidnappings on this road (April '92) and it is not advisable to use it though it is still possible coming north. Ideal to register group on entry at either start or top of pass and an armed escort (policeman with gun) will come with you for about 300Rs.

Darra In 95 police were moving us on if we stopped in a truck may be poss to come back in small groups without truck for the gun crazy ones.

PESHAWAR (See maps Nos. 2 A and 2 B)

Need at least two days. Girls should never go on street at night unless accompanied by guide or male companion.

It is recommended that you attempt to purchase "Pakistan Handbook" by Isobel Shaw (Liberty Books) for approx 324Rs (ask Khalid Sultan). This is quite a bit better than the Lonely Planet. You can find it in the bookshop in the Pearl Continental Hotel.

Accom - Worth booking ahead at:

Spogmay Hotel (old part of town), 3601 Namak Mandi. (See map No.)
Tel: 0521-214955 / 211749 / 213255. About Rs 275 /double; 325 Rs / triple (Jun '97).

Rooms excellent in new part of hotel, excellent restaurant, laundry service, safe (armed guard).
Can get them to cook and provide meat and then eat in restaurant.

Also New Tourist Inn, Saddar Road, around the corner from Deans Hotel. Owner is very helpful and can arrange Khyber Permit.

Galaxie Hotel - can stay 3 to a room here for about \$4p/p incl b/fast, if the other places are full.

Guide Khalid Sultan (Sultan)
 Qabr-E-Sultan
 6 Shah Qabool Colony
 Peshawar

Very worthwhile. Professor of History and Languages. Can be contacted through Spogmay or Galaxie Hotel.
US\$ 2 per hour.

Tour includes

Talk on Pakistan/Peshawar/people etc Bazaars, mosque, eunuchs.
Drive to Khyber pass/rifle guards
Afghani refugee camp etc

N.B. A permit and armed guard are required for both the Khyber Pass and Darra. Go with Sultan a.m. on the 1st day with 8 group lists and passports (4 lists for each permit). Takes about 2 hours to obtain. Khyber Pass costs Rs 120 p/p.

Group Meal - Sultan will organise a typical Afghani meal - excellent US\$ 1.70 p/p (Apr '95)

Darra Helps obtain permit at Home Secretaries office, Peshawar Secretariat, Police Road - usually takes half a day. Opportunity to sample and fire various weapons. Suggest no-one decides to buy anything it can cause a lot of problems if found at a border.
 You shouldn't need a permit for Darra nor do you need Sultan to go with you just stop there on your way through collecting a guard as you enter.

YOU WILL PROBABLY GET MOVED ON IF POLICE SEE THE TRUCK

Spare Parts - Near Galaxy Hotel. Workshops near Park Hotel in Railway Road.

Gas - US\$ 6.25 per bottle (cheapest in Pakistan, June '97)

GRAND TRUNK ROAD - PESHAWAR-RWALPINDI-LAHORE

Driving Time 11. Hours
Distance 247 miles
Roads Very fast and Pakistani trucks and buses drive like demented maniacs! Beware, slippery when wet. Possible in 1 day if you need to make up time
Rawalpindi 165 km from Peshawar. Sister city to Islamabad. Good for shopping and spare parts.

PAKISTAN VISA EXTENSIONS

Islamabad, Regional Passport Office - approx 5 minutes walk from the tourist camp back on the main shopping street. Takes one hour only. (**SEE NOTE BELOW - NOT SURE WHICH IS UP TO DATE ?**).

ISLAMABAD - Handy overnight stop between Lahore and Peshawar

INDIAN VISAS

Possible to get new visas if old ones out of date here but can take 5 days - You would have to send someone ahead from Quetta on the train, or fly (75USD)

Distance - 175 Kms (3.5 - 4 hours) from Peshawar, 7.5 - 8 hours from Lahore.

Camping - Tourist Camp, opposite Rose and Jasmine Gardens. Approx US\$ 4 for whole group

Iranian Embassy, Diplomatic Enclave. Open 09.00 - 13.00 every day except Friday. Tel (new March '92): 051 212694/5. If you receive approval for visas from Delhi, they will require 2 application forms and 3 photos, ladies covered, no comfort letter.

To extend Pakistan visas, first go to the Ministry of Tourism, College Road, Jinnah Market. Open 09.00 - 13.00 every day except Fridays. Obtain a Letter of Recommendation from them for the visa extension (will need passports and 2 photocopies of them, two passport photos and a request letter explaining why you need the visa extension). They will write a letter to the Passport and Immigration Office. Go there next, above National Bank in Aabpara Market, over dual carriageway from Tourist Camp. They should do them the same day.

Coming West you can extend Pakistani visas in Kathmandu.

Should anyone need them, Indian visas take about 5 days to issue in Islamabad and require comfort letters.

Needy pax can take a 3 hours bus ride from Peshawar to Islamabad to make applications and then return to

Peshawar, you can then collect on your return from the Northern areas. If not going up north, you might consider the US\$ 75 internal flight from Quetta to Islamabad; arranging to meet the nominated EM in Peshawar and then pick up visas on your way through.

NORTHERN AREAS - Now visited in the months May - October.

NB Any driving times are subject to the road conditions - here are often landslides and bridges washed out, so you can't be too certain how far you will get. However if you get to Hunza you will be rewarded with stunning views and some good day hikes if time permits. Don't waste time in Gilgit - it's not an attractive place, and doesn't have good mountain views.

You can easily spend a week or more in going to Chitral, Swat Valley, Gilgit and Hunza. The Karakoram Highway is newly built with Chinese help. A beautiful drive as it follows the Indus. Gilgit is quite a pretty town. For camping, try the Tourist Cottage or PTDC on the way into town, or it may be just as cheap to stay at a hotel in town. There is a new road joining Swat Valley (north of Saidu Sharif) to the Karakoram Highway. Cheap airfares are offered by PIA to Gilgit in the hope of getting more tourists into this area.

It is just about possible to get a truck to Chitral over the Lowari pass in about 14 hours from Peshawar, but it's not for wimps.

Can fly to Chitral and Gilgit very cheaply but flights often full in summer.

Camping - As you reach Hunza there is a new Hotel on the right, overlooking valley, large cream building, can't miss it, only modern building in Hunza.

Manager very helpful, 10Rs for camping, plenty of space and rooms available.

Aliabad (Hunza) - Camping Rakaposhi, next to Dunmani View Hotel, on RHS entering Aliabad on KKH. Beautiful spot plenty of space, cheap. Facilities basic but clean. Helpful staff. Cost +/- Rs 25 p/p (June '97).

Here are some timings and a few details from a trip made by Andy Sutcliffe (May 1990). Beware - he was in a T.L. These are all we have at present so please update a.s.a.p. Make sure you have plenty of Pax lists for many

police checks. June '97 - if you can keep up with Andy's timings then you're driving a supercharged monster and killing people all over the place - add about an hour to his times!

PESHAWAR - MINORGA

Driving time 3 hrs
Distance 166 kms
Roads first 62 kms very fast, then road winds up the mountain range from Mardan.

MINORGA - BESHAM

Driving time 4 hrs
Distance 84 kms
Roads Very windy and slow, fabulous views.
Camping PDTC 5 Kms out of town down Karakoram Highway

MINGORA - MIANDAM

Driving Time
Distance 40 Kms north of Mingora up a small side valley at 1900 mtrs
Camping PTDC guesthouse, v.friendly, can camp on lawn
Costs USD 22 per group (cost of one room)
Great views and cool in summer - some good treks into the hills behind and swimming in rivers.
Shopping Some food available in village (Veg, Bread etc)

BESHAM - DASU

Driving time 3 hrs
Distance 76 kms
Camping PDTC 15 Kms out of town up the Kharakoram Highway 25 RS p/p
Shopping Good here

Take care as ever in this area with dress code and behaviour when camping. A girl travelling with Exodus was raped in this region in 1989.

It is possible to camp at the police station at Dasu. Look for a blue and red sign with 'Kohistan'(Dasu) 'Superintendent of Police' Turn at sign down slight incline, you will see a clear area on your right opposite a covered in seating area, camp here. Police don't mind and are very freindly. You can sleep in the covered area if you wish.

DASU - DAINYOR (Turning for Gilgit).

Driving time 7 hrs
Roads Rough and slow most of the way.
Shopping at Thalpan good.

GILGIT

Takes about 30 mins from Dainyor

Things to see - Standing Buddah Chinese grave (those who died building the road) Bazaar

Fishing can be arranged you can organize permits and tackle in town, just ask the hotel management (Tourist Cottage).

Take 15 mins Suzuki wagon ride to see the largest single span swinging suspension bridge in Asia photo in old brochure.

Camping PDTC - marked in the Lonely Planets - 30 RS p/p

DAINYOR - ALIABAD (HUNZA)

Driving time 3 hrs

Distance 83 kms

Roads Reasonable, some landslides, stunning mountain views.

Accommodation Yadgar Hotel, Ganesh, Hunza. Phone: Karimabad 21 Only has 15 beds, comfortable, cheap, can put camp beds on the floor.

Much better - Camping Rakaposhi on rhs as you come into Aliabad. Beautiful spot, very friendly, costs +/- Rs25 p/p.(June '97)

M - Type Drive times to Hunza and SWAT Valley to Peshawar

| | | |
|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| Islamabad | - Besham | 9 Hours |
| Besham | - Dasu | 3 1/2 Hours |
| Dasu | - Gilgit | 9 Hours |
| Gilgit | - Ganish/Aliabad | 4 Hours |

Allow 3 days/2 nights Islamabad to Hunza

To Peshawar via SWAT Valley

| | | |
|----------------|------------|-------------|
| Ganish/Aliabad | - Gilgit | 4 Hours |
| Gilgit | - Besham | 11 Hours |
| Besham | - Kwaz (?) | 4 1/2 Hours |
| Kwaz | - Peshawar | 4 1/2 Hours |

Allow 3 days/2 nights Hunza to Peshawar

KARIMABAD

A stunning spot with great views of the mountains - definitely worth a couple of days if you have the time. Town is very small, has lots of little craft and book shops, money changer. You can even get all sorts of western goodies (including Holsten beer!) but at great expense. Get the camp site in Aliabad to organize Suzukis to get you there (130 Rs ea. June '97) and the hotel in Karimabad to organize jeeps to get you back (expensive - 200 Rs ea. June '97).

The road to Karimabad is only negotiable by jeep. If you wish you can stay at a number of hotels at Karimabad but it means loading everything into jeeps to get there.

Could try Hotel Karim (used on Gates of Tartary trips) Cost 120 Rs p/p to stay, dinner 100 Rs p/p, breakfast 50 Rs p/p (June '97) - nice place, good food, run by an old guy and his 6 sons - very friendly and helpful.

Things to do from Karimabad - Baltit fort is worth a look. Also can find a guide to take you to Ultar glacier, its a 4 hour round trip and quite strenuous but there's fantastic views of the mountains. Worthwhile 1/2 day round trip walk to Altit fort.. Can hire a jeep for 1000 Rs (US\$25 -June '97), seats 4/5 pax for the 1/2 day round trip to Hopar glacier, spectacular mountain drive takes you to within 15 minutes walk of huge glacier - makes Ultar look like an icicle. ! Can also take a jeep to the Chinese border on the Khunjerab Pass, costs 2,200 Rs (US\$ 73 - July '94) for 5/6 pax and is an 8 hour round trip - glaciers, mountains, marmots, the lot ! For the very fit an all day trek to Hon Pass at 4500m taking a guide (Rs 400 June '97) gives stunning mountain views.

DASU - MUZAFRABAD

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Driving time | 11 hrs |
| Distance | 288 kms |
| Roads | Very windy all the way. Leave the Karakoram Highway at Mansehra. |
| Shopping | Not good in Mansehra but good in Muzafabad. |

MUZAFRABAD - ISLAMABAD

| | |
|--------------|---------|
| Driving time | 3.5 hrs |
| Distance | 93 kms |

LAHORE 240 kms 2 nights (See Map No. 3).

Camping **International Hotel.** This place was closed Nov 95 but should reopen in 96 dont know if camping will be allowed then.

Salvation Army No camping here either as of Nov 95

*** **YWCA**, Queens Road, off Fatima Jinnah Road. Very basic facilities, and very strict on dress and behaviour, however, cheap and very central. Noisy, and lots of weirdos.

Zenobis Hotel/Tourist Camping, near Gulberg Main Market.

Take Mall Road towards International Hotel, turn right at canal, turn left at first major intersection onto Gulberg Road, turn right at 1st major roundabout into Gulberg Main Road, take 4th street on right, then go east at roundabout. Should see sign - Tourist Camping. 30 Rps per person, 50 Rps for truck. The manager will organise tours and beers.

This place is run down and has no showers, although the lawn is nice and its fairly quiet - if the manager gets his act together it could be Ok - until then probably best to use YWCA,

Insurance Pak Mutual Insurance Co.

Telex Most efficient and cheap at Central Telegraph Office opposite GPO in Mall Road. Otherwise use Hilton Hotel, or International Hotel if you're staying there.

Money Change at International or American Express office.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Sights | Lahore fort, Shalimar Gardens, Mosques, Jahangirs tomb |
| Transport | Best way is by Scootershaw (metered tut tut!) |
| Spares places Bandari many filters. | Badami Bagh - if the part you want is in Lahore you'll find it here. The other two spare are BUS ADA and TRUCK ADA. Ask any scooter driver. Go to the filter market at Bagh and stock up on oil filters and genuine CAV fuel filters (hunt around as there are many fakes) Both are virtually impossible to find in India and Nepal, especially TL oil filters. |
| Repairs | Trevor Lee, 58 Lawrence Road (behind Zoo) Ph 301059. Very helpful. Will do almost anything. Has pressure wash. Can also get Gas. |
| Bedford Dealer | Rana Motors, The Mall (Opposite Cathay Chinese Restaurant) |
| Tapes | Pirate Tapes - 'Off beat records' in the fortress Stadium. |
| Permits | For alcohol permits go to Hotel International Services. Bar at Pearl Continental |
| Gas | Contact for all things - Mr Afzaal, tel: 7561165 or mobile 0342 255910 66/3Muzang Road, near Y.W.C.A. He is very helpful and asks only if people would like a driven tour in his Suzuki van (8 people max, useful taxi). |

***June '97 - Afzaal is your only bet for camping in Lahore apart from the YWMC. Call him before hand and arrange to meet him on the way in to town. He will find you a place to camp. He's a handy guy and will arrange anything for the group. HOWEVER, at the moment (Nov '97) the only camping spot he's got is a small school where there really isn't enough room - you'd be better using the YWCA or finding a cheap hotel. Groups don't like Afzaal although he can be a useful contact for you.

Westbound Leaving Lahore for Peshawar: Leave early to beat traffic - v. bad. Follow Mall Rd to top (pass gun). Turn right at 'T' junction. G.S.O. Follow one way system to the left. Pass fort on r.h.s. Follow main drag.

To reach Spogmay: (See map No. 2).

over metres taking Follow G. T. Road until you reach fort on l.h.s. Just past fort turn left along side it, before railway bridge. Follow to major 'T'. Turn right into Khyber Bazaar road. Follow round to main crossroads and lights. Stay left and turn left (opposite turning goes a bridge). Watch the hole in the road!! Go over small crossroads and the turning is a few hundred on the left - ask. If the lane looks clear go in from this side and you can get in without the trailer off.

KARACHI-QUETTA (Overflight Contingency)

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Information | Be sure to stop at the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC). They have good maps and information on places to visit around Karachi. |
| Accomm. | Beach Luxury Hotel, Moulvi Tamizuddin Khan Road, Karachi 2 Ph 551031-7 Tlx 23899 AVARI PK Manager: Nadir Khan - very helpful |

Catch daily train "Bolan Mail" 1st class to Quetta. Takes 22 hours - good for the experience that's about all. Rendezvous with group/truck at hotel in Quetta. Or Bus which the New Lourdes Hotel may arrange to collect you from the hotel.

MOENJODARO

These 5000 year old Indus valley ruins are probably the best stop between Karachi and Quetta. There is a PTDC rest house on the site where you can stay. The PTDC offers a direct bus from Karachi to Moenjodaro, or catch a 'Blue Lines' bus from Karachi to Larkana, then a local bus the 27 km out to Moenjodara.

- Diesel is cheaper in Pakistan than India
- Not supposed to take more than 20 Pak Rupees in or out of Pakistan.
Plenty of money changers on the border.
- Border opens 9-9.30 closes at 1600 hours. A long procedure crossing both borders but officials are usually quite friendly.
- All nationalities need a visa for India.

Health cards are checked for Cholera entering Pakistan. Ensure all cards are completed with valid dates and rubber stamp. Otherwise the health officer likes to give you an injection (a few dollars seems to be good protection against Cholera as w