



Himalayan Adventure
22 Days
Fully Inclusive from the UK

This is a true high-altitude adventure that is not for the feint-hearted. Travel overland in four-wheel drive vehicles across starkly beautiful but inhospitable terrain. Stay in basic accommodation with primitive facilities. Most of all enjoy the huge reward of crossing remote lands rarely visited by others.

This tour spends 20 days above 3,500m with a maximum altitude of 5,400m.

Fully Inclusive price includes:

- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- All meals (excluding drinks)
- Touring with Guides and entrance fees
- Visa fees for UK passport holders

Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

China continues to amaze, fascinate and thrill our passengers, many of whom have travelled to one country in Asia with us, then another, year after year. We urge you to keep in mind all the rewards, as well as challenges of travelling in a country with a history, culture and attitude so unlike your own.

A typical day's sightseeing may include the bustle and noise of a city street, sights and smells of a local market and interacting with the locals. Travelling in China requires patience and potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout China, so your local guides or National Escort will be indispensable during your trip.

Almost everything will be different to what you may be used to. We have found that our passengers who embark with a sense of humour and adventure, who accept that things do not always go to plan, are those who find their experience most rewarding. It is essential that all passengers recognize the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they may encounter in some areas.

Book now on **0844 499 3899** visit www.wendywutours.co.uk or see your preferred travel agent.



Your Tour Dossier

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with the other pre-departure information provided by Wendy Wu Tours including the tour itinerary as described in our brochure and/or website. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour.

If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the length of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation; they will be explained here.

All passengers must read this document to ensure the itinerary is suitable for their interests and physical capabilities. This is not your final itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.

Himalayan Adventure - Medium Paced Tour

These tours are not strenuous but do require higher levels of fitness. A typical tour may include longer periods of sightseeing on foot, climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats will be necessary. These tours may involve longer periods of driving; sometimes on poorly maintained roads, and overnight train journeys; as well as some easy hiking. Some Medium Paced Tours may involve several days at altitude.

Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course our local guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you do have mobility difficulties, please contact us for our range of private tours which are more flexible and can better cater for individual needs.

Some difficult aspects of this itinerary involve areas of high altitude and very long driving distances. The section below also has estimates of driving times, distances and the altitude reached each day.

NB Please note that times and distances listed in the tour dossier are approximate.

Days 1-2: UK/Chengdu

On day 2 you will be met at Chengdu airport in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer approx. 30mins to your hotel. This evening, when the whole group has arrived, a tour introduction will be held in the hotel. There will not be food or drinks served at this meeting; it is simply a chance for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in China.

2 nights at 3-4 star hotels

Day 3: Chengdu

The Panda Reserve is located only 10km from the city centre. It is not guaranteed that you will be able to see the feeding of the younger pandas, as this only happens at the very start and end of each day. Sightseeing here involves at least 1.5hrs of walking. Afterwards drive approx. 2.5hrs to Leshan to see the Grand Buddha carving. From the bus park, we walk to board the small cruise boat to view the Buddha from the river. Spend approx. 2hrs at Leshan before driving back to Chengdu in the evening approx. 2.5hrs.

Day 4: Chengdu to Lhasa

Transfer approx. 30mins to the airport for your morning flight to Lhasa (flight duration 2hrs). Drive approx. 2hrs (95kms) north to the city of Lhasa and check-in to the hotel. The remainder of the day is at leisure to allow for acclimatisation to the higher altitude; you are advised to rest and drink fluids.

3 nights at 3-4 star hotels- limited western dishes for breakfast / Lhasa altitude 3650m

Days 5-6: Lhasa

Over the next 2 days you will be able to explore some of the most sacred places and sights in Tibet, amongst the procession of pilgrims and bustle of the capital city. Sightseeing at all of the monasteries and palaces involves climbing many steps and walking over uneven surfaces in dim light.

Day 7: Lhasa to Shigatse via Gyantse

Drive south along the Northern Friendship Highway to Shigatse, a major town which has been developed by the

Central Government to become the second largest city in Tibet. On the way we visit the Gyantse Kumbum inside the Pelchor Monastery. Sightseeing here involves approx. 2-3hrs walking and steep stairs – you should also bring a torch for the monastery as it is very dark inside. Total driving today is approx. 8hrs (248km).

1 night at 3 star hotels / Shigatse altitude 3900m

Day 8: Shigatse to Shegar

Sightseeing at Tashilhunpo Monastery involves walking over steep uneven ground inside the monastery. Afterwards drive 3-4hrs (290 km) to Shegar and transfer to the hotel.

1 night at Hotel Shegar / Shegar altitude 4342m

Day 9: Shegar to Old Tingri

There is an early rise today, to what will be a very long day. Drive from Shegar to Old Tingri (220kms). After crossing the Guela Pass we continue to Passum. This stretch of driving offers magnificent panoramic views of the eastern Himalaya, dominated by the Langtang Range, Dorje Lhakpa Range, Cho oyo (the 6th highest), Everest, Lhotse (4th highest peak), Makalu (5th highest), and Kanchenjunga (3rd highest) in the order from west to east from Nepal. A plaque on the pass shows which is which. Afterwards drive onto Paduk/Pasum and finally to the monastic village of Rongphu. The first views of Everest appear approx. 30mins before arrival at Rongphu. Here there will be a visit to the Rongphu Monastery, the highest monastery in the world. Afterwards we begin the journey to Mt Everest Base Camp on an environmental vehicle. If you wish to walk part of the way up, please mention this to your local guide who will be able to advise you where to leave the vehicle and approx. how long it will take e.g. to walk half way up takes approx. 2.5hrs. You will have plenty of time to explore Base Camp at 5200m and see the nearby Rhongpu Glacier – the Base Camp itself is dry and barren but the views of the north face of Everest more than compensate. The highest post box in the world is also here.

1 night at Tourist class hotel in Old Tingri / Old Tingri altitude 4400 m

N.B: A simple boxed lunch and water will be provided on this day and can be enjoyed whilst at Base Camp.

Day 10: Old Tingri to Zhangmu

Travel approx. 5.5hrs (180km) to Zhangmu, on a downhill slope where you will stay overnight. Weather permitting you may be able to view the panoramic white tops of the Himalayas. Stop for lunch en route at Nyalam, (30km from Zhangmu).

1 night at Tourist class hotel in Zhangmu / Zhangmu altitude 2250m

Day 11: Zhangmu to Kathmandu

Early morning rise to drive approx. 3-4hrs (130km) to Kathmandu, depending on local road conditions a there is on-going roadwork on this stretch. The scenery here is spectacular as you transcend from the dry Tibetan Plateau to the green hills of Nepal.

At the border you will have to walk carrying your bags down a sealed road for approx 500m to the Chinese Immigration building.

Here your Tibet guide will locate the Go India staff member who will assist with the border crossing. This person will have porters with them, who will take your main luggage and put them through X-ray machines and out the other side over the Friendship Bridge; they will then be loaded onto the bus. The entire group should clear the immigration procedures and meet outside the door by the Nepalese guide.

You will then walk over the friendship bridge dividing Tibet and Nepal and directed to the Nepal Immigration building. This is a 5-10mins easy walk. Each person will need to complete an immigration form, have their passport stamped and then make their way to the bus which is a couple of minutes' walk away. You will then be taken to your hotel to check-in for the next three nights.

3 nights at Shangrila Hotel in Kathmandu (subject to change) / Kathmandu altitude 1330m

Day 12: Kathmandu to Patan

Drive 5km south to Patan for leisurely sightseeing of approx. 2hrs on foot. Return to Kathmandu.

Patan altitude 1330m

Day 13: Kathmandu to Bhaktapur

Day trip to Bhaktapur, a drive of approx. 1hr (12km) to the east of Kathmandu along a winding road. Bhaktapur is prohibited to traffic, making it an ideal place to explore by foot. There will be 1hr of leisurely walking through the town.

Bhaktapur altitude 1330m

Day 14: Kathmandu to Pokhara

Drive approx. 6hrs (210km) to Pokhara. The tour around this small town consists of very easy walking and offers breathtaking scenery of the Himalaya Region.

1 night at The Landmark Hotel / Pokhara altitude 915 m

Days 15-17: Pokhara to Chitwan National Park

Drive approx. 5hrs to Chitwan National Park along roads that are well sealed and offer beautiful scenery on both sides of the road. Upon arrival check into the hotel. A naturalist guide will hold an induction meeting and provide information on all the options available to you during your time here. These include elephant safaris, jungle walks, canoe rides and bird watching. These activities are included in the tour cost; however you may like to consider additional tipping for the guides for each activity.

3 nights at the Island Jungle Resort / Chitwan National Park altitude 200m

Day 18: Chitwan National Park to Daman

We depart Chitwan National Park for the scenic hill country, a drive of approx. 6hrs (165 km). The outdoor activities on offer here include; a village hike, monastery walk, pony rides, mountain biking, bird watching and sunset walks.

1 night at The Everest Panorama Resort / Daman altitude 2500m

Day 19: Daman to Kathmandu

Drive back to Kathmandu, a journey of approx. 4hrs (80km). Remainder of this day is at your leisure.

2 nights at Shangrila Hotel in Kathmandu

Day 20: Kathmandu –Dhulikhel

The morning tour is at a leisurely pace taking in the sites of Kathmandu. At the Kumari Temple, photographing the temple is strictly prohibited and non – Hindu's are not allowed inside. At the Thamel markets please watch your valuables. Afternoon sightseeing is easy at Dhulikhel town and the nearby market area.

Day 21: Kathmandu/Delhi

Transfer to Kathmandu Airport and board the overnight flight to the UK via Delhi. Depending on your chosen airline, there may be a long stopover in Delhi.

Day 22: UK

Arrive home.

Land Only

If you are travelling on a land only basis, then you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel in Chengdu on Day 2. On Day 21, you will checkout from your Kathmandu hotel, and continue as per your own arrangements.

Please refer to the Wendy Wu Tours brochure and/or website for details on departure dates, prices, itineraries, inclusions and tour extensions available as well as full booking conditions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Before You Leave

Itinerary Changes - The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in China are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Roads in China have generally been improved over recent years, but some road construction and/or weather conditions may still lengthen the driving times.

- Potala Palace in Lhasa: In late 2006, the Tibetan Government imposed a new system of allocating entrance tickets to the Potala Palace. To limit the number of tourists inside at any one time tickets must be bought in advance and are valid for a set time of day. Our local office will buy the tickets for our customers, so you do not have to queue for them. Please note that this may affect the order of sightseeing for the rest of Lhasa too.
- There is ongoing extensive road construction taking place within the Tibetan region which may affect travelling times and durations.

Visas - A visa is required for entry into China and Nepal. Standard visa processing service is included in your tour cost. We will require your passport, completed visa application form for China and Nepal, and 2 passport photos, taken within the last 6 months, to process your visa. We will require all this information 8 weeks prior to departure. As per our standard visa processing service, we will have your passport for at least 4 weeks. In rare cases you may be required to provide further information or documentation to the Chinese or Nepalese embassy and or be required to attend an interview at the embassy in London. If this is the case we will notify you as soon as possible.

A Tibetan permit is required for entry to Tibet. Our office in China requires a copy of the Chinese visa and photo page of your passport to obtain the Tibetan permit. If our office is processing your visa we will pass these along. If you are processing your own visa you will need to provide us with this documentation.

Please note that if you intend to arrive more than 24 hours before your tour commences or intend to stay in China after your tour has ended and you are NOT staying in a hotel you will need to register with the local Public Security Bureau. If you are staying in a hotel, registration is done on your behalf as part of the check-in process.

Vaccinations and Your Health - We recommend that you contact either your GP or a travel doctor for advice on vaccinations and travel health. www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk is a comprehensive website that you may also find useful.

Climate - Please refer to our website for detailed temperature charts.

Insurance - It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurers and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

What to Expect on Tour

Development - Although China is developing quickly, it still lacks international standards of civil infrastructure and therefore tourist facilities. For example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade; concepts of personal responsibility are different to those in the UK. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in the UK. However, all of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense as well as refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort/Local Guides.

Group Size - All our Group tours to China are guaranteed to run subject to a minimum of 8 travellers and a National Escort will accompany each group of over 10. The maximum group size varies depending on the tour, but is usually no more than 28 passengers.

Accommodation - Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and China. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

During this tour, we will be driving through an extremely remote area, with villages, nomadic settlements, truck stops and small towns with hardly any two or three star hotels. To enable us to complete this amazing overland journey we will stay in some very basic accommodation including simple guest houses in the towns. These will provide basic but comfortable accommodation and are usually run by families.

Altitude - AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness) occurs in some people when they travel to altitudes over 3,000m [9,840ft]. Mild symptoms of AMS include dizziness, fatigue, nausea or loss of appetite, breathlessness or headache. These usually develop over the first 36 hours at altitude and not immediately on arrival. AMS symptoms are experienced by people of varying ages and levels of fitness, and usually the symptoms will subside after a day or so. If symptoms worsen, you should seek medical advice and descend in altitude immediately.

It is recommended to drink more (water, non-alcoholic and non-caffeinated drinks), exercise to improve your aerobic fitness before departure and avoid exertion after arriving over 3,000m. These are generally considered to be excellent ways to prevent or alleviate the severity of mild AMS. If you smoke, your doctor will probably also advise you to stop several weeks before your tour. If you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your doctor before undertaking this tour. Take this tour dossier with you to the appointment to explain the altitude at which you will be travelling. The highest point of altitude reached on this tour is in the Tibetan cities of Lhasa (approx. 3,595m), Shigatse (approx. 3,900m), Shegar (approx. 4,342m), New Tingri (approx. 4,400m), Everest Base Camp (approx 5,200m) and Tibet/Nepal Border (approx 2,300m).

Drinking Water - Be very careful of local water, especially ice served in drinks. Bottled drinking water is readily available to buy (roughly 4-5 Chinese Renminbi (RMB) and 25 Nepalese Rupees or 30 GBP pence) and you should get into the habit of buying a large bottle or two every day. Soft drinks and beer are also readily available. All drinks, including water are at your own cost. Please also be aware of milk as it will more than likely be unpasteurised.

Appropriate dress - When visiting temples, both men and women should dress in non-revealing clothes. Full-length trousers with a shirt or t-shirt for men; and pants or skirts below the knee with a top that covers the shoulders and upper arms for women. When visiting some temples, you may not be able to wear or take in any leather items such as belts, watches, camera straps, purses or shoes. Some religious sites require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter. It is recommended that you bring along shoes that can easily slip on and off, and carry a pair of thick, old socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot ground.

Meals - This itinerary travels through some regions where few foreign tourists visit. Hence you may come across some hotels and restaurants in the regional areas that are unaccustomed to catering for western travellers. However in the bigger cities and towns there is usually a wider selection of restaurants available.

In Sichuan Province, the cuisine (known as Szechwan in the west) is distinguished by its use of ginger, chilli and the 'Sichuan peppercorn' called fagara. Each meal will usually have some mild dishes for those who don't enjoy eating hot or spicy food, but please bear in mind that the majority of local specialty dishes will be hot. If your group finds there are not any mild dishes served, please inform your National Escort/Local Guide so that they may resolve the problem for the next meal.

In Tibetan areas, produce is limited, usually barley, wheat, yak meat and milk are produced locally and anything else must be trucked in from other parts of China. Local dishes include simple vegetable noodle soups (*thugpa*) or dumplings called *momo*. Simple, new restaurants are becoming more common but even in the larger towns the staff may not be used to serving groups, and this can obviously mean that you may need to wait a while to be served.

In Nepalese areas, the food differs from one culture to another. However, you can expect vegetarian based dishes; typically a dish called *daal bhat tharkari*, which translated literally means lentil soup, rice and curried vegetables. Chicken, mutton or pork is also typically served in most hotels. Newari (culture from the Kathmandu Valley) food is quite spicy with chilli a favourite while Nepali food is not as spicy.

There will be limited western dishes for breakfast. Typical breakfast dishes may include cold vegetable/ pickle dishes, bean curd noodles, soups, *congee* (rice porridge), steamed buns with pork or sweet red bean paste and green tea. You may also be served fruit, a fried egg, or toast – although the bread tends to be very sweet and unlike the bread we have in the UK. Black tea, fresh milk and coffee is not often available but can usually be requested. Please note that long driving distances or local conditions may delay/alter your mealtime.

Although there will be more than adequate food provided at mealtimes, you might like to bring some snacks with you from either the UK, or small supermarkets in Lhasa. These might include tea/coffee bags, drinking chocolate, instant soups or noodles, biscuits, energy bars, milk powder sachets and anything else you cannot live without. You may also find small shops and market stalls where you can buy a surprising amount of snacks such as instant noodles and muesli bars. Make sure anything you buy is safe and clean – dried fruit, nuts or unwashed fruit, etc. are not a good idea.

Book now on **0844 499 3899** visit www.wendywutours.co.uk or see your preferred travel agent.

Within monasteries - The interior of many monasteries is quite dark and usually lit by yak butter candles. Please remember to walk slowly and carefully, let your eyes adjust to the darkness and watch your step. Always walk in a clockwise direction along pilgrim circuits, around shrines, alters, temples and prayer wheels. If you are unsure of suitable and respectful behaviour within such places, please ask your local guide's advice.

Dogs in Tibet - Dogs, once raised as guard dogs by nomadic Tibetans, can be a nuisance in the streets of cities and small towns nowadays. They are treated quite differently to how we would treat our domestic pets and tend to fight on the streets, especially at night. It is advisable to keep your distance from any dogs and bring some earplugs so you're not disturbed during the night.

Finding your way - Many of the places in this region have several different names – so you may find it confusing when researching the route or looking at a map. None of these are incorrect as such; there are many languages and cultures in this region. For example, one town may have four different names used in the Chinese, Tibetan and Indian languages. The Tibetan name is frequently spelt phonetically when translated by English speakers, so 'x' becomes 'sh'. The result could be six different names for one place. Some examples are;

Shigatse - Xigaze

Tashilhunpo - Zhanshilunbu Si

Yarlung Tsampo - Brahmaputra River

Tibet – Xizang

Fort – Dzong

Monastery – Gompa

Shrine - Chorten - Stupa

Electricity - When staying in some properties consider that most buildings may only have a few hours of electricity each day, from either the town's supply or a generator, therefore the supply of electricity can be unreliable. This could impact on your ability to charge batteries for video or digital cameras. You will be able to recharge batteries/electrical devices at some places, but not all. You need to bring back up batteries just in case. Shops and markets in this region may not stock reliable or genuine batteries, so it is better to bring them from the UK. We recommend you also bring a torch, as electricity can be turned off during the night.

The electricity voltage in Nepal is 230 volts. The plugs normally used are 3 and 2 pin round plugs as illustrated below;



Two round pins



Three round pins

You can buy adaptors, also known as conversion plugs from hardware, department and Duty Free stores in the UK.

Tipping - As with most countries, tipping is a way of life in China. For our passengers' convenience we ask for a compulsory amount to be paid at the beginning of our group tours to cover tipping for guides, drivers, restaurant staff etc. Approximate tipping amounts can be found in our brochure and/or website; however exact tipping amounts will be stated in your final documentation pack.

Optional Extras - Our tours are planned to be as fully inclusive as possible. However, from time-to-time your National Escort or Local Guide may suggest optional tours/sightseeing in addition to the standard sightseeing planned for that city. Such options are at an additional cost, with prices ranging from 100-300 Yuan per person (payable in local currency). If you do not wish to take part in any optional extras, you will have the option of enjoying some free time at leisure or to return to the hotel.

After Your Booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form, help sheet, and a China travel guide. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard, suggested packing list and a phrase book, along with your final itinerary and international etickets.

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