

## Mt. Kailash Circumambulation

<b>Trip code</b>	0
<b>Package name</b>	Mt. Kailash Circumambulation
<b>Duration</b>	12
<b>Max. elevation</b>	5630 m
<b>Level</b>	MODERATE
<b>Transportation</b>	Grounded vehicals during the tour.
<b>Accomodation</b>	Hotel and Camping twin sharing bed basis during the tour.
<b>Starts at</b>	Darchen
<b>Ends at</b>	Darchen
<b>Trip route</b>	Lhasa - Singatse - Saga - Manosarovar lake - Darchen - Dirapuk - Zutulpuk - saga - Kerung - Kathmandu.
<b>Cost</b>	USD 3,040 per person

## Highlights

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- Wonderful Lake Manasarovar.
- Snowcapped Mt. Kailash.
- Awe-aspiring Tibetan plateau and large numbers of different
- monasteries.

## Overview

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**Mount Kailash – Holy Center of Four Religions** is one of the charms in Tibet for thousands of tourist every year either for religious aspect or for the scenic beauty of the mountain and its surrounding.

Mt. Kailash is recognized as the lofty mountain in the world, and the center of the world by Hinduism, Tibetan Buddhism, Bon – native religion in Tibet and Jainism. At 6656 meters above sea level, Mt. Kailash, shaped like a pyramid, is the main peak of Gangdisé Range with symmetrical sides. Historically, there used to have many Chinese and foreign monks preaching in there. Thus, it became the center of worship for four sects a long time ago, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Bon, which is also the Mount Olympus in the east, a fascinated place for tens of thousands pilgrims of China, India and Nepal.

This tour will take you to the “Roof of the World’s Roof”- Ali prefecture, with an average altitude over 4,500m above sea level. It is known to the world for its remoteness. Three days of trekking around Mount Kailash gives plenty of time to enjoy the unique landscape of Tibet. If you are planning to have a spiritual trek in Tibet with exploring the best of Tibet and renew your soul at the same time, this Mt. Kailash Kora is the trip to make your dream come true! Mt. Kailash kora (circuit) actually is a pilgrim circumambulation. Many pilgrims of all religions come to worship the mountain and to walk around it. As we journey across the Tibetan Plateau, explore monasteries hidden high in the mountains, hike beside dazzling alpine holy lakes and discover the most sacred mountain in Asia. Starting from the heart of Tibet- Lhasa we proceed through the beautiful valley of Gyantse and Shigatse. Further proceeding towards Saga and then to Darchen to start the trek around the Mt. Kailash we conclude the trekking on the way back to Kathmandu.

## Trip Itinerary

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### Day 1 : Lhasa Arrival

With an approximately 1 hr. 10 minutes scenic flight over the high Himalayan range, you will arrive Gonggar Airport in Lhasa. Upon arrival meet our Tibetan representative with 2 hours’ drive to hotel. Check in hotel and take the rest of the day for acclimatization. Overnight stay in the hotel.

### Day 2 : Lhasa

For two days, you will proceed through the guided sightseeing tour of Lhasa. The sightseeing tour includes the visit to Sera Monastery, Drepung Monastery, Jokhang Temple, Barkhor Bazaar, Potala palace and Norbulinka palace. Visit the Sera Monastery, home to several hundred monks from different part of Tibet is one of the biggest monasteries, located in the northern foothills of Lhasa. This magnificent monastery comprises of big halls, colleges and dormitories. Setting against a backdrop of mountains, it makes for a good photographic experience by climbing the halfway mountain behind. Noted for its debate session, Sera Monastery stored many precious relics, arts, scriptures for monks to learn Buddhist knowledge. The daily Buddhism debating is a truly spiritual “class” to practice and test their mastery of Buddhism. Similarly another highlight is Drepung Monastery. As the largest monastery of Tibet constructed in 1416, there was a totally 10,000 monks once lived here in the peak times, Drepung Monastery plays an important role in

Tibet Buddhism. The monastery is especially known as the site of the annual Shoton Festival, during which a giant thangka painting will be unfurled on the hillside. Visit the Jokhang Temple - Tibet's holiest temple which contains a jeweled image of the Buddha in the Centre of the Old Lhasa city. This four stored temple is the fusion of Nepali and Tibetan architectural style. Walk around the Bakhor Street which is one of the most devotional circuit as well as crowded central market of Lhasa. It is about a kilometer and the devotees make circumambulation of the temple through this street. As a busy public square, the street gives you a closer look at the day to day life of Tibetans. Visit the famous Potala Palace, the masterpiece of Tibetan architecture. As the symbol of Tibet, Potala Palace has many things worth seeing, the architecture of the entire construction, the splendid well-preserved artworks and various kinds of religious treasures and etc. Another great palace to observe is Norbulinka, which means "Treasure Park" in the local language, is a palace. It was the summer palace of Dalai Lama till 14th Dalai Lama's exile. The palace consists of several complexes, and gardens; and is considered the biggest one of its kind in Tibet. Overnight, stay at the hotel in Lhasa.

#### **Day 4 : Lhasa to Shigatse – about 8 hours' drive**

Today after breakfast, you will leave Lhasa and drive about 8 hours to Shigatse, the second largest city in Tibet. It may be a long journey, but there are many things to do along the road. The first site you will reach is the holy Yamdrok Lake. As the largest fresh lake in the northern of the Himalaya Mountains, it spreads about 675 square meters from south to north, like an eardrop lying in the arms of snow-capped giant mountains. Viewing from a distance, you can see fertile pastures full of yaks and sheep, and some small Tibetan villages along the lakeshore. Keeping driving not so far from Yamdrok Lake, you will see the imposing Karola Glacier towering aloft on the right side of the road. Apart from its own overwhelming charm, the surrounding view is also quite gorgeous. There is a little white pagoda standing at the foot of Karola Glacier, with flying prayer flags around. When spring and summer come, the grassland turns green. The flocks of goats and yaks appreciate their feast in this beautiful land. If the weather is good, you can enjoy of unhindered views of Mt. Nojin Kangsang and the opposite mountain range of Mt. Kalurong. There is also a wooden walkway virtually right to the foot of the mountain if you have more time to spend here, which is certainly worthwhile. Continuing your trip, you will get to the historical city of Gyantse. Have a good lunch in the town, then go to visit the mysterious Palcho Monastery. The monks and tradition of three important sects of Tibetan Buddhism – Sakyapa, Zhalupa and Gelukpa, peacefully coexist in this monastery. Its Kumbum, which is 35 meters high and has 76 small chapels with hundreds images of Kriyatantras, is believed to be the largest such structure in Tibet. As a fusion of Han, Tibetan and Nepali architecture, this monastery is a three-storey flattop building complex, consisting of Temples, Stupas, Zhacangs, Fort walls, Wheel-prayer cloister and more religious sites. Cuoqin Hall of over 500 years' history is the main building and center of this monastery for the monk assembly and other Buddhism issues. By combined the three sects, the Buddha statues here has a different style from other temples here. After the Gyantse sightseeing, keep drive about 3 hours, you will arrive at your hotel in Shigatse. Have a good rest at hotel in Shigaste.

#### **Day 5 : Shigatse to Saga – about 9 hours' drive 450 kilometer**

Today after breakfast in the morning drive from Shigatse to Saga, which is about 450 kilometer's driving takes about 9 hours. Enjoy natural sceneries like meadows, rivers, and snow-capped mountains on your way to Saga. Upon arrival to Saga after a long drive check in to hotel and overnight accommodation at Saga Town.

### **Day 6 : Saga to Manasarovar Lake to Darchen – driving about 550km**

After breakfast, you have to take another long driving about 550km from Saga to Darchen (4,575m), a small village located as the starting point of the walking kora of the holy Mount Kailash. During the auspicious pilgrimage times, Darchen will be flooded with Pilgrims with hundreds of tents all over the small village. The best highlight of today is the holy lake Manasarovar that you will visit before reaching Darchen. Like Mount Kailash, Lake Manasarovar is a holy place of pilgrimage, attracting religious people from India, Nepal, the neighboring countries and Tibet. Believers bath in the Manasarovar Lake and drink its water are believed to cleanse all sins. Every summer, pilgrims from Tibet, India and Nepal cluster to make circumambulation and bathe in the lake. After that, they will return home and bring some samples of the holy water to family and friends as precious gifts. The views from the Lake Manasarovar are spectacular. In the daytime, facing the holy Mount Kailash in the northside, you can sit along the lakeshore to enjoy the minimal waves and view the different colors of water with blue, bluish green, green, etc. What's more, the rainbow and swans can be seen if you are blessed. After sightseeing in the Manasarovar continue drive to Darchen. Upon arrival to Darchen, check in to hotel for the overnight accommodation in Darchen.

### **Day 7 : Trek from Darchen to Dirapuk – Trekking: 5-6 hrs, 20km**

Today after breakfast in the morning, start trek from Darchen (4,560m) to Dirapuk Monastery (4,750m). The trek is a gradual walk in the clockwise circuit at the average altitude of more than 4,700 meters. You will be accompanied by many local Buddhist pilgrims also walking the same kora. If you meet people who comes the anti-clockwise direction, don't be surprise, they are Bon pilgrims. You will stop at the Tamdin (4,780m) for lunch and hot water supply. Then keep trekking 4km to the final destinations of today – Dirapuk Monaster. This section of trekking boasts some of the best scenery of the entire kora. Dirapuk Monastery (5,210m) is the place where visitors always spend their first night after trekking the outer kora for an arduous day. Since the original construction was ruined, the existing monastery was reconstructed in 1986. Now Dirapuk monastery could provide simple food and basic accommodation for visitors. Here you can not only enjoy the sheer icy north face of Mt.Kailash, but also explore the profound Tibetan Buddhism culture through the precious statues and historical relics store in the monastery. Upon arrival to Dirapuk monastery check in to guest house for the overnight stay.

### **Day 8 : Trek from Dirapuk to Zutulpuk – Trekking: 6-7 hrs, 18km**

Today after breakfast in the morning, start trek from Dirapuk Monastery uprising 762 meters at altitude to Zutulpuk Monastery by crossing Drolma-la Pass (5,630m) before quickly descending to Dzutul-puk monastery (Dzutul-puk means "magical cave" in Tibetan). This is the final point of the kora; from here you can view the Mt. Kailash clearly. Compared to Dirapuk monastery

accommodation here is better. Stay overnight at the tent guesthouse of monastery.

### **Day 9 : Zutulpuk – Darchen Trekking: 3 hrs. 11km**

Wake up in the holy sunrise of Mount Kailash, after breakfast; you will trek back to Darchen. Today's trekking is leisure and relaxing, which can be done in 3 ~ 4 hours. On route, explore the meditation cave of Milarepa, the famous Buddhist master and Yoga meditator. Surrounding the cave are many temples and shrines. Once you exit from the Zutulpuk valley, your driver will pick you up and transfer to Darchen.

### **Day 10 : Darchen – Saga**

Today after breakfast in the morning drive through the windswept territory passing many villages and camps of Yak herders, and back to Saga. You can stop by many scenic spot for taking photographs and observing the beauty of the valley around. After a long drive to Saga, check in to hotel and stay overnight.

### **Day 11 : Saga – Gyirong(Kyirong) – about 2 hours' drive 110 kms.**

After breakfast in the morning, explore the Saga valley. The sprawling truck-stop town of Saga, on the banks of the Yarlung Tsangpo River, is the last town of any size on the southern route and a logical overnight stop on the way to Mt Kailash. Most people use the time to wash up, check emails and stock up on supplies. After the sightseeing and round trip of the valley drive to the Tibet-Nepal border town of Gyirong. Kyirong is not a very pleasant town and doesn't have much to see or do, but serves as a good place to spend the night before crossing into Nepal.

### **Day 12 : Drive to Kathmandu – about 7 hours' drive (140 KMS)**

The border crossing from Tibet to Nepal is not actually located in the town of Kyirong, but about 20 kilometers further south. The border opens at 9:30am Tibet time. Your driver and guide will lead you to the border crossing. After the custom formality it's time to say good bye to the Tibetan guide and driver. On the other side of the border you have arrived in Rasuwagadhi, the first village in Nepal. Most foreigners can obtain a visa-on-arrival in Rasuwagadhi. After the visa formality proceed towards the Kathmandu. You can hire a jeep or other private vehicle to reach Kathmandu which is about 140 kilometers/88 miles from here. Upon arrival to Kathmandu, check in to hotel for overnight stay.

## **Inclusions**

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### **What is included?**

Airport pick up and drop as per the itinerary.

Necessary Tibet Travel Permit.

Private Transportation by jeep/van in Tibet.

Sightseeing and entrance fee as per the itinerary in Tibet.

English speaking Tibetan guide.

All the Government and local taxes.

Hotel + Camping Accommodation on twin sharing basis Tibet.

Full board meals ( Lunch, Dinner and Breakfast) with cup of Hot drinks during the trip in Tibet.

The above tour price does not include single room supplement. If you are a solo traveler, you need to share one room with another tourist (same sex in most cases); if you prefer to stay in one room by yourself, you will have to pay the single room supplement. And the exact price depends on market fluctuation in high and off season of Tibet tour. For the exact price, please refer to your travel consultant.

### **What isn't included?**

Tibet Visa and International airfare.

Insurance of any kind.

Personal expenses like beverage, mineral water and tips.

Loss, theft or damage to baggage and personal effects. (We strongly advise you to get personal travel insurance.)

### **Complimentary**