



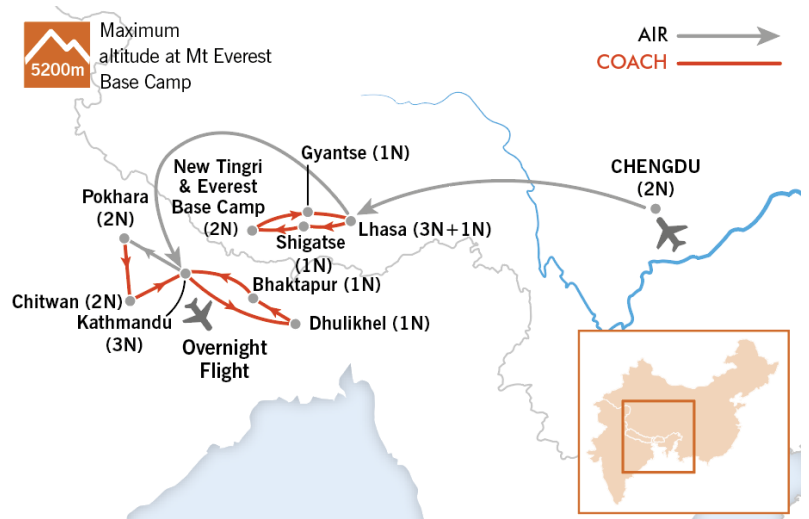
Himalayan Adventures Dossier Immerse Yourself Tour | 21 Days | Active

Chengdu - Lhasa - Shigatse - New Tingri - Gyantse - Dhulikhel - Bhaktapur - Pokhara - Chitwan National Park - Kathmandu

Embark on a journey of extremes; striking across the starkly beautiful landscapes of Tibet, on the roof of the world. Discover the verdant and chaotic valleys of Nepal under the ever watchful gaze of the mighty Himalaya.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Meet Chengdu's pandas
- Explore mystical Lhasa
- Watch debating monks
- Gaze upon Mt Everest
- Spot rhinos in Chitwan



Himalayan Adventure tour inclusions

- Return international flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English-speaking National Escort (If your group is 10 or more passengers)

Personal expenditures e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary are at your own expense.

Immerse Yourself

Designed for those who wish to be further immersed in the authentic charm of Asia; our Immerse Yourself Tours include more cultural and active experiences. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts or Local Guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience. Our Immerse Yourself tours include:

- Cycling and walking through classic sites
- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- Off the beaten track destinations
- More evenings at leisure for independent exploration

Active Tour

'Himalayan Adventure' is an **active** tour. Active tours require a good level of fitness, as they are physically more demanding. They may involve hiking, and some travel to remote, high altitude areas where tourist facilities are less developed.

Our National Escort and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

Country Profile: China & Nepal

China - China's civilization is the oldest in the world and has a history dating back over 5,000 years. With 56 ethnic groups, 22 provinces and eight major dialects, China has a rich and varied culture and way of life. It is home to a wealth of tourist sights and cultural relics which entice our guests to return again and again to this exciting destination

Nepal - Nepal is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of biodiversity and has an incredible variety of ecosystems. Here you will witness the greatest mountain range on Earth, which has eight of the world's 14 highest mountains, including Mt. Everest (8,848m). See thick tropical jungles teeming with a wealth of wildlife, thundering rivers and forested hills. Within this spectacular geography is a rich cultural landscape. The majority of the population is found in the Kathmandu Valley, located in the centre of Nepal and home to three major towns, Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur.

Joining Your Tour

The tour is 21 days in duration including international flights.

Travellers booked on Land Only, the price includes visa fees and your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations. Join the tour on Day 1 in Chengdu and end the tour on Day 20 in Kathmandu. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

Itinerary Changes

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Changes:

- 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.

- To improve the customers experience on this tour, customers will now fly to Pokhara from Kathmandu instead of driving on day 13
- The land border from Tibet to Nepal is currently closed, resulting in customers flying from Lhasa to Kathmandu. An alternative road option is scheduled to open early 2018 and once operational, the itinerary may resume the overland route.
- Due to local restrictions to help protect the environment, customers can no longer visit the original Mount Everest Base Camp outside Rongbuk. As an alternative, a new "Base Camp Boundary Monument" site will be visited on a two-hour walk in the Himalayas.

Important Information Regarding Itinerary Changes and Flight Delays

Due to unforeseen circumstances, flights can be delayed, and therefore connecting flights may be missed. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact our China office on **+86 21 5888 5681 or +86 159 0929 1082** (outside China) or **21 5888 5681 or 159 0929 1082** (within China) to urgently advise your arrival details have changed. Please ensure you have your trip number, tour name (both included in your final documentation) and new arrival details (flight number and arrival time) handy to pass on to our local office in China. This will ensure your National Escort/Local Guide can be informed of your most up to date information and ensure someone is at the airport to meet you on arrival.

If we are not advised of late changes and missed connections, Wendy Wu Tours cannot guarantee someone will be able to meet you upon arrival in China as our local office will have no way of knowing which flight you will be arriving on. Wendy Wu Tours will not be responsible for providing reimbursement of transportation costs from the airport to your hotel in the event that our local office was not advised of changes to arrival time.

Himalayan Adventure Itinerary

DAY 1: FLY TO CHENGDU

On arrival in Chengdu Airport, be met in the arrival 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 to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure.

Destination Information

Chengdu – China's symbolic western capital and the residence of the country's most lovable black and white bear, Chengdu has an abundance to offer. With a fast-paced economy that is dragging China's west into the 21st century, it is no wonder that Chengdu's appeal is growing year on year. As the gateway into Sichuan Province's large collection of sights, as well as Chengdu being its own trove of historical and cultural treasures, Chengdu is a must-visit on any trip to China.

DAY 2: CHENGDU

Sightseeing today begins with a visit to the famous Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding located 18km from the city centre. Opened to the public in 1995, the reserve has a museum, a research facility and a protected wilderness and breeding area. It is not guaranteed that you will be able to see the feeding of the younger pandas, as this only happens at the start and end of each day. Sightseeing involves approximately one and a half hours on foot. There are electric carts offered by

private vendors that can be organised at your own cost. This afternoon, stroll through People's Park and see Matchmaker's Corner, where parents search for suitable suitors for their children, before visiting a traditional teahouse. Sightseeing in the afternoon will be approximately one to two hours.

Please note: During your time in Chengdu it is recommended to increase your water intake daily to prepare for altitude in Lhasa and remain regularly hydrated, your National Escort/Local Guide can assist in recommending where to buy bottled water.

Destination Information

Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding – With over 80 pandas holding residence, the Chengdu Panda Research Base is equipped with the latest technology and research materials to gain a further understanding in how we can protect the panda and maintain, if not increase its numbers. The park is set up to resemble the mountain and forest regions in north Sichuan, the original home of the Giant Panda, with extensive bamboo trees and large green spaces.

Peoples Park – A pleasant respite from urban Chengdu. Here you can see beautiful golden koi, locals dancing and practicing Tai Chi, and Matchmakers Corner.

DAY 3: CHENGDU TO LHASA

Say goodbye to Chengdu this morning as you transfer to the airport for your two and a half hours flight to Lhasa. Upon arrival, transfer one hour to the hotel for a three night stay. The remainder of the day is free at leisure to allow you to acclimatise to the high altitude and prepare for your explorations at the Roof of the World. Please rest and stay well hydrated.

Please note, Lhasa is at an altitude of 3,650m. All passengers should rest and stay well hydrated to acclimatise to the higher altitude.

(Lhasa altitude 3,650m)

Destination Information

Lhasa – Historically and spiritually a centre for Buddhism, Lhasa is home to many culturally significant sights, including the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple and the Norbulingka Summer Palace. Set on the Tibetan Plateau, Lhasa is one of the highest cities in the world, reaching heights of 3,650m.

DAY 4: LHASA

Wander around the Barkhor to see traditionally dressed locals, stalls of religious trinkets and prostrating pilgrims. Inside the Jokhang Temple, the sacred centre of Tibetan Buddhism, the devotion is palpable as queues of people worship in the flickering light of yak butter candles. After lunch, take a short drive from the city into the low-lying hills which surround Lhasa to the Sera Monastery, a renowned seat of Buddhist learning, to watch the debating monks. Please be sensitive whilst at the temple as religion is an extremely sensitive topic in China. This is not a chance to converse with the monks, you will be able watch the monks debating between themselves and learning scriptures. Sightseeing at the Jokhang Temple and Sera Monastery will involve climbing many steps and walking over uneven surfaces in dim lighting. Later this evening, try yak burgers for dinner.

Destination Information

Barkhor – Encircling the Jokhang Temple, the Barkhor is a cluster of narrow streets that act as a circuit of pilgrimage for Buddhists around the Jokhang. There are many stalls here where you can peruse for Tibetan trinkets, religious relics and exquisite jewellery.

Jokhang Temple – Considered the most important and sacred temple in Tibet, the Jokhang Temple is located amongst Barkhor and dates back to the 7th century. The architecture is a simple blend of Indian, Chinese and

Nepalese designs and is a mix of stunning colours both inside and out.

Sera Monastery – The Sera Monastery is one of the ‘Great Three’ monasteries in Tibet located 5km outside of Lhasa. Although its monk population is rather small, there is still a bustle of activity, especially in the morning and late afternoon, when you can see debates on religious theory.

DAY 5: LHASA

Today, you will tour the Potala Palace, the former winter palace of the Dalai Lama. This iconic palace is the largest monastery in the world. Sitting atop Red Mountain, the Potala Palace is painted in a traditional Tibetan blend of deep red and stark white. Here you will climb over 1000 steps, some of which are uneven and steep, to the top of the palace. Later this evening, witness a Tibetan dance performance during dinner.

From October to April, the Tibetan Dance Performance will only run if there are 20 or more people booked to watch the show that evening. If it is not operating on the evening your group is due to attend, a suitable alternative will be arranged by your National Escort/Local Guide.

Destination Information

Potala Palace – The former winter residence of the Dalai Lama, the Potala Palace has long been a symbol of Tibetan Buddhism, and the struggles between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government. Abandoned by the Buddhist spiritual leader in 1950, the Potala Palace now acts as a museum of old treasures and intricate shrines.

DAY 6: LHASA TO SHIGATSE

This morning you will leave Lhasa and travel approximately six hours across the Northern Friendship Highway to Shigatse, the second largest town in Tibet. Dominated by a fort reminiscent of the Potala Palace, Shigatse is the traditional home of the Panchen Lama. You will have some time on arrival to explore the local markets before checking into your hotel for an overnight stay.

(Shigatse altitude 3,840m)

Destination Information

Shigatse – Shigatse is a major town that has been developed by the government to become the second largest city in Tibet. It has an interesting local market and one of the largest functioning monasteries in Tibet, Tashilhunpo.

DAY 7: SHIGATSE TO NEW TINGRI

Today you will enjoy a visit to the Tashilhunpo Monastery, one of the six monasteries of the Yellow Hat Sect in Tibet. Touring here involves walking over steep uneven ground inside the monastery. Afterwards, drive five hours to New Tingri, also known as Shegar. When crossing the Gyatso-la Pass (5,220m), admire small Tibetan villages and ruins of ancient dzongs along the way. Upon arrival check into your hotel for a two night stay.

Please note, the accommodation here is of basic standard with limited western dishes for breakfast due to the remote location of New Tingri.

(New Tingri altitude 4,342m)

Destination Information

Tashilhunpo Monastery – One of the six monasteries of the Yellow Hat Sect in Tibet. Also called the Heap of Glory, it is located at the foot of Drolmari (Tara's Mountain) and spans 70,000sqm, making it the largest functioning religious institutions in Tibet.

New Tingri – Once the capital of the Tingri Region. The town is nestled amongst mountains and contains the ruins of a fortress, which once snaked over the surrounding peaks.

DAY 8: EVEREST BASE CAMP BOUNDARY MONUMENT

You will rise early this morning and cross the Gue-la Pass with its magnificent panoramic views of the eastern Himalayas. Continue the drive, with your first views of Mt Everest appearing 30 minutes before your arrival into the monastic village of Rongphu (also known as Rongbuk). Visit the world's highest post office before continuing on a two hour walk (weather permitting) to the Mt Everest Base Camp Boundary Monument (5200m) to experience breathtaking views. Situated under the gaze of Mt. Everest's north face, the views of the world's highest peak are unsurpassed. You will return to your hotel in New Tingri late this afternoon, the drive is approximately three to four hours.

Please note, due to government restrictions and to protect the environment of Mt. Everest, visitors are not allowed to visit Base Camp where the climbers stay overnight. You will enjoy the views of Mt Everest from a point slightly further down the mountain.

Please note: A simple boxed lunch and water will be provided on this day and can be enjoyed while at the base camp. Ongoing road works on the road to Mt. Everest Base Camp mean the group will transfer to smaller vehicles and travel times may increase.

(Mt Everest Base Camp Boundary Monument altitude 5,200m)

Destination Information

Everest Base Camp Boundary Monument – Offers spectacular views of Mount Everest and is the perfect place to soak up the thrilling atmosphere so apparent in the Himalayas.

DAY 9: NEW TINGRI TO GYANTSE

Today you will drive around seven hours to the pleasant town of Gyantse. En route you will visit the Gyantse Kumbum inside the Pelkor Monastery, the largest shrine in Tibet. Sightseeing here involves one and a half hours of walking, including steep stairs. Continue to Gyantse for your overnight stay.

(Gyantse altitude 4,050m)

Destination Information

Gyantse Kumbum – Gyantse Kumbum houses exquisite Tibetan sculptures and paintings that rise 35m over four main symmetrical floors topped by a gold dome. The dome rises like a crown over four sets of eyes that gaze serenely out in the directions of the cardinal points.

Gyantse – Gyantse is an integral stop on the historic trade route between India and Tibet. Today this charming town is dotted with monasteries including its greatest sight the Gyantse Kumbum.

DAY 10: GYANTSE TO LHASA

Travel back to Lhasa today, driving for approximately four hours. En route, stop at Karuola Glacier and Yamdrok Lake to admire the spectacular scenery. Upon arrival in Lhasa, check in to your hotel for an overnight stay.

(Karuola Glacier altitude 5,036m)

Destination Information

Karuola Glacier – Covering nine square kilometres, this glacier lies between Nagarze and Gyantse county and rises sharply into the sky. It is easily approached as the highway passes just 300m from the foot of this glacier.

Yamdrok Lake – One of the three sacred lakes of Tibet, its vast turquoise blue waters span 72km. The lake is said to help Tibetans find the reincarnated soul of the next Dalai Lama.

DAY 11: LHASA TO DHULIKHEL

Say goodbye to Tibet this morning as you transfer to the airport for your one and a half hour flight to Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. After clearing immigration and customs, you will be met by your Nepalese Local Guide and

transfer to Dhulikhel for an overnight stay. Visit an assembly of fine Newari houses with carved windows and doors. Later, you will have the opportunity to wander around the small local market and observe the day-to-day lifestyle of the locals.

Destination Information

Nepal – The small Kingdom of Nepal sits atop the Himalayas wedged between India, Tibet and China. It is renowned for its incredible landscapes and is home to 10 of the world's 14 tallest mountains. The mountaineering race of the early 20th century brought this tiny nation to the attention of the whole world. Even today, from the low lands of the Terai (the plain in the southwest), through the ancient and noble towns of the Kathmandu Valley, to the unrivalled heights of Mt. Everest, the country retains a mediaeval atmosphere. Markets thrive in town squares, alleys wind between temples, homes and water wells, and statues of Ganesh are covered in rice, tiny flowers and coloured powder.

Dhulikhel – Dhulikhel is located 30km east of Kathmandu and offers spectacular views of the Himalayas. A well-preserved Newari town, Dhulikhel offers an insight into traditional life in Nepal.

DAY 12: DHULIKHEL TO BHAKTAPUR

After an early morning breakfast, depart Dhulikhel and drive 50 mins to the Changu Narayan Temple. Tour the temple then begin a 6km hike to Telkot through the forest (hike duration approximately three hours). Throughout the hike, you will walk for approximately three hours on uneven terrain, up and down hills and through small villages. Transfer to Bhaktapur and visit the 'Old Houses' and meet a local Newari family. Enjoy a typical Nepali lunch at a restaurant in Bhaktapur Durbar Square. After lunch, tour the ancient town of Bhaktapur, visiting sites such as the Golden Gate and the Palace of 55 Windows and weave your way through to the Taumadhi Tole Square. Depending the time, you may also try to visit the wonderful Potter's Square located nearby. There will be one hour of leisurely walking through the town.

(Bhaktapur altitude 1,330m)

Destination Information

Changu Narayan Temple – A UNESCO World Heritage listed site situated on a ridge overlooking the valley, this temple is dedicated to the Hindu God Vishnu and is one of the finest examples of pagoda architecture.

Bhaktapur – The third of the ancient royal capitals. Traffic is prohibited in the town, making it a wonderful place to explore on foot. The absence of traffic makes this antiquated site a treasure trove; in markets and alleys we

will see corn husks or hand-made noodles laid out on a sheet to dry in the sun, baskets of chillies, temples and shrines covered with offerings of food, brightly coloured powder, or flowers. Around town, in between their shops and homes, groups of men lounge and smoke under ancient and intricately carved shelters where their ancestors once bathed (and some children still do today).

Old Houses – An area of heritage-listed traditional Newari style houses. Enjoy a traditional Nepali lunch in one of the outdoor courtyards, where you will have the opportunity to meet the family members and gain a fascinating insight into Nepali lifestyle.

Golden Gate – The splendid Golden Gate is the entrance to the Palace of 55 Windows. Completed in 1754, the gate is one of the finest examples of Nepal's repoussé metalwork.

Palace of 55 Windows – Built in the 17th century, the palace features a balcony of 55 intricate wooden windows, a masterpiece of woodcarving.

Taumadhi Tole Square – Taumadhi Tole Square is one of the main three squares in Bhaktapur. The lively square includes shops, restaurants and guesthouses, as well as several interesting temples including Temple Nayatapola.

DAY 13: BHAKTAPUR – POKHARA

Travel by coach approximately 30-40 minutes to Kathmandu airport where you will board the short flight to Pokhara (flight duration 25 minutes). This afternoon, enjoy a leisurely walking tour of the town.

Destination Information

Pokhara – The finishing point for the famous Annapurna Circuit trek and the starting point for various other treks through the Annapurna Range. Pokhara became a popular tourist destination in the 1970s, with its laid-back setting and idyllic scenery. It has rapidly developed since then into a modern mountain resort and offers a last chance stop for trekking supplies. Yet it retains much charm, with its calm lakes and surrounding snowy peaks offering serenity to those who visit.

Walking Tour of Pokhara – The lakeside area is filled with restaurants, cafes, bars, pubs, and shops selling souvenirs and local wares. Head down towards the lake to purchase jewellery or small trinkets from the Tibetan women who sell their wares from blankets or backpacks. Enjoy the view of the mountain peaks of Machhapuchhre or Fish Tail, the Annapurna Foothills.

DAY 14: POKHARA

After breakfast embark on a city tour of Pokhara, which will involve five to six hours of leisurely sightseeing on foot. Begin at the colourful Old Bazaar. Stop to admire the Bindyabasini Temple, one of Pokhara's most important shrines.

Next drive out of the town to visit Gupteshwor Cave and Devi's Fall before continuing to the International Mountain Museum. At Gupteshwor Cave you will walk 50m through the cave to see the Manadeva statue. The caves inside are dimly lit and include some stairs where handrails are provided, but both the ground and the handrails are often slippery. We suggest taking rubbed soles shoes and cloth gloves. Afterwards, enjoy a boat trip on the picturesque Phewa Lake and visit International Mountain Museum.

Destination Information

Old Bazaar – Pokhara's traditional bazaar is colourful and bustling. In its temples and monuments can be seen ties to the old Newar architecture of the Kathmandu valley, Located about 4km from the lakeside area, the market's original charm is still evident. This area is strewn with shops selling items ranging from food and cloth to cosmetics and gold.

Bindyabasini Temple – The old Bazaar is also home to one of Pokhara's most important shrines. Locally called the Bindhyabasini Mandir, it is dedicated to Goddess Bhgwati, yet another manifestation of Shakti.

Gupteshwor Cave – A sacred cave located on the Siddhartha Highway leading southwest from the city. The entrance is right across from Devi's Fall and the cave is almost 3km long. This cave holds special value for Hindus.

Devi's Fall – Also known as Palate Chango (Hell's fall), Devi's Fall is a stunning cascading waterfall. Legend has it that a trekker by the name of David was washed away by the Padi Khola stream and mysteriously disappeared down into an underground passage beneath the falls.

DAY 15: POKHARA TO CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK

This morning you have the option to rise early and visit a nearby Hindu temple or remain in the hotel. Depart Pokhara early and drive six hours to Chitwan National Park along roads that are not well sealed. Please note that roadworks are taking place on the road to Chitwan and delays may occur.

Your accommodation while in the park will be simple. Rustic huts blend with the natural environment,

nonetheless the facilities are humble; they provide comfy beds and hot showers. After checking into your 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 jungle walks, canoe rides and bird watching, all of which are included in your tour cost. You may wish to consider tipping the guides for each activity, but this is at your discretion.

Destination Information

Chitwan National Park – Long regarded as the third biggest attraction in Nepal and one of the last refuges of the One-Horned Rhino.

Jungle Safari – Unlike the vast plains of Africa, the Terai Jungle is compact and dense, providing excellent cover for the animals. Most people come to see the One-Horned Rhino and the Royal Bengal Tiger; please remember that these animals are rare and elusive sightings are valued experiences. Dawn and dusk are the times when the animals are most active, as they tend to rest under deep cover in the heat of the day.

DAY 16: CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK

Rise early for tea and coffee before proceeding on a nature walk. Return to the hotel for breakfast followed by an elephant briefing and a visit to the elephant stables. Return to the hotel for lunch and enjoy some free time before the afternoon program begins. Take a traditional dug-out canoe down the Rapti River and in the evening, enjoy a Tharu Stick Dance followed by dinner around the campfire.

Please note that the program in Chitwan is subject to change according to local conditions and will be confirmed upon arrival. The activities are adjusted according to the property you will stay at, the length of your stay, the season and present weather conditions. During the jungle safari, you will be accompanied by an expert naturalist who will advise on safety procedures, we request you to respect their judgment at all times. If you wish to stroll in the forest alone, a guide will have to accompany you for safety.

Destination Information

Morning Walk – Led by your guide, the morning walk will introduce the main features of eastern Chitwan. Your guide will help you identify some species of birds, plants and other wildlife that you may encounter.

Elephant Stables – Learn more about these fascinating animals during a briefing by a guide and a visit to elephant stables.

Traditional Dug-Out Canoe Ride (Subject to water level) – Enjoy a silent ride down the Rapti River to view aquatic

birds and the animals of the riverbanks and observe the unique elephant bath.

Tharu Stick Dance – Farmers from the nearby villages will show some of their traditional skills and dances.

DAY 17: CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK TO KATHMANDU

Depart Chitwan early today to begin the nine to ten hour journey to Kathmandu. Please note that there are improvements being made on the road to Kathmandu and delays may occur. Enjoy the scenic drive as it winds up the mountains. Stop en route at Daman to have lunch and enjoy the panoramic view of the Himalaya (weather depending). Continue to Kathmandu where upon arrival you will transfer to your hotel for a three-night stay.

(Daman altitude 2,500m)

Destination Information

Daman – It has been said that arguably the best outlook over the Himalayas in the region with unrestricted views is from Daman. On a clear day, eight of the world's 10 highest mountains extending over 400km of unbroken range can be viewed, from Everest in the east, past Dhaulagiri in the west.

Kathmandu – Nepal's capital city is a fascinating mix of colourful bazaars, bustling squares, ancient capitals and a maze of alleyways.

DAY 18: KATHMANDU

This morning drive south to Patan, the second largest city in Nepal, and discover Durbur Square, including the UNESCO World Heritage listed Royal Palace. This will involve approximately two hours on foot. The ground can be uneven at times. On the way back to Kathmandu, explore the Bodhnath Stupa and monastery, where you will experience a special Lama blessing. The Lama Blessing is conducted inside the monastery so smoking, drinking alcohol and eating meat items are prohibited. You will be required to sit on the floor, where you will receive the blessing and Khada (traditional scarf) from the Lama one by one. Also, visit the holy Pashupatinath Temple before returning to Kathmandu. This sightseeing involves around 2 hours on foot and may have the climbing of stone steps. Please note that here you may see the practice of animal sacrifice or cremation - refer to the Nepalese Customs section for further information on touring.

(Kathmandu altitude 1,337m)

Destination Information

Patan – Patan is the second largest city in Nepal and is located 5km from Kathmandu, on the southern bank of the

Bagmati River. Until 1768, when King Prithvi Narayan Shah (a Gorka) unified the Kingdoms of Nepal into a single nation, the Kathmandu Valley supported three separate Kings - one in Kathmandu, one in Patan and another in Bhaktapur.

Durbur Square – Situated in the heart of city, Durbur Square is the centre of Patan's religious and social life. The stunning display of Newari architecture houses three main courtyards, an array of temples, shrines, houses and the Royal Palace.

Royal Palace – Though parts of the richly decorated Royal Palace dates back to the 14th century, the majority of the construction was completed in the 17th century. The Royal Palace forms the eastern side of the Durber Square and contains a series of courtyards, temples and a museum for the royal collection.

Bodhnath Stupa – The largest stupa in Nepal and the capital city's religious centre for ethnic Tibetans who form a significant proportion of Nepal's population. The Bodhnath Stupa is thought to have been originally built in 600AD, after the famous Tibetan King, Songtsen Gampo was converted to Buddhism.

Lama Blessing – Rinpoche or incarnate Lamas have long been offering a variety of blessings and ceremonies for well-being of both the individual and the community. The Blessings include the following:

House/Land Blessing - This is a blessing to promote the health, peacefulness, and productivity of house and land.

Blessing For Children – This is a blessing to promote fertility.

Blessing Of Children – This blessing promotes the safety, health and auspicious development of children.

Anniversary Blessing – This is a blessing to commemorate an event or special occasion.

Pet Blessing – This a blessing for the sentient beings that people adopt as a loving part of their lives.

Pashupatinath Temple – A Hindu temple of Lord Shiva situated 5km east of Kathmandu on the banks of the sacred Bagmati River. Pashupatinath Temple has a two tiered golden roof and is famous for its superb architecture. It is a centre of annual pilgrimage on the day of Maha Shivaratri. Here one may also witness the cremations of the dead bodies of Hindus. Devotees from all over the world come here to pay their homage to Lord Shiva.

Please note: Entrance to Pashupatinath is permitted to the Hindus only, however visitors can clearly see the temple and the activities performed inside the temple from the eastern bank of the Bagmati.

DAY 19: KATHMANDU

Tour the city of Kathmandu today. Sightseeing begins at the Swayambhunath Stupa before continuing to Durbar Square and the Kumari Temple. End the day with a stroll through Thamel Markets where you can do some last-minute shopping. At the Kumari Temple, photographing the temple is strictly prohibited and non-Hindus are not allowed inside. At the Thamel market please be mindful of your valuables.

Destination Information

Kumari Temple – Situated close to the palace is the Kumari Temple, the temple of the Living Goddess. The Living Goddess is a Weng girl who lives within the temple, acknowledging visitor's greetings from the central window.

Swayambhunath Stupa – Often called 'the monkey temple' because of the hundreds of monkeys that scamper about the place. Its location, atop a hill west of Kathmandu, makes the stupa visible for miles and is thought to have been a Buddhist pilgrimage site since the 5th century.

Durbar Square – At the heart of the Old City is the UNESCO World Heritage listed Durbar Square, a cluster of ancient temples, palaces and courtyards that date back to 12th and 18th centuries. The square is located on the site of Hanuman Dhoka Palace, which was the Royal Nepalese residence until the 19th century.

DAYS 20-21: KATHMANDU TO AUSTRALIA

This morning is at leisure. After check-out you will be transferred to Kathmandu airport to board your onward flight home, arriving back into Australia on the same or following day.

HIMALAYAN ADVENTURE TRAVEL INFORMATION

Visas

Entry visas are required by all visitors to China and Nepal. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

Wendy Wu Tours will supply you with all paperwork to be completed by hand and submit the visa application on your behalf for China and Nepal. Visas for China are valid for 90 days from the date of issue and allow you to stay in the country for up to 30 days.

Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office 90 days prior to departure; if received after this date urgent visa processing fees will apply. Passports will be returned with your final documentation two to three weeks prior to your group tour's scheduled departure. If you require your passport to be returned earlier, a \$15AUD courier fee will apply.

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 police station. If you are staying in a hotel, registration is done on your behalf as part of the check-in process.

Tibet Permits - Travellers on this tour require a Tibet Permit which is issued by our office in China. Changes can occur to the Chinese Government policies regarding the issue of these permits, sometimes at short notice. Wendy Wu Tours will keep all customers up to date with any changes regarding the issuing of Tibet Permits that may affect our ability to operate this tour as per the original itinerary. In all cases, alternative arrangements are offered.

For Nepal - Please be advised that for all visa applications to Nepal, Wendy Wu Tours will provide passengers with forms to be completed by hand. Once the form is completed, the application and passport will need to be sent to Wendy Wu Tours. Visa application forms and all relevant documentation are due in our office 60 days prior to departure; if received after this date; urgent visa processing fees will apply.

Altitude

This itinerary visits several areas of high altitude. If you have an existing respiratory, vascular or coronary condition, we recommend checking with your doctor before undertaking this itinerary. The following parts of the itinerary have high altitude:

- Lhasa – approximately 3,650m

- Shigatse – approximately 3,840m
- Gyantse – approximately 4,050m
- New Tingri – approximately 4,342m
- Karuola Glacier – approximately 5,030m
- Mt. Everest Base Camp Boundary Monument – approximately 5,200m

AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness) occurs in some people when they travel to altitudes over 3,000m. 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 and avoid exertion after arriving at altitudes over 3,000m.

Making sure you are well hydrated (by drinking lots of water and refraining from alcohol/caffeine) before and during the tour, as well as exercising to improve your aerobic fitness before you leave, 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. During this tour, the Wendy Wu Tours group tour coach will be equipped with oxygen tanks for emergency situations. Take this Tour Dossier with you to your appointment to explain the altitude at which you will be travelling. Information on AMS can also be found in a document below or at http://www.travelvax.com.au/resource_files/Travel-Tips---Altitude-Sickness.pdf.

Insurance

We strongly encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the originals.

Eating in China & Nepal

Chinese and Nepalese cuisine is one of the most influential, diverse and flavoursome culinary styles in the world. Asian dishes incorporate many spices and seasoning to create an explosion of flavours. Though local cuisine can vary greatly from the Asian food we get in Australia, it is important to keep an open mind and be adventurous. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive Himalayan Adventure group tour, from the groups' arrival until the groups' day of departure. Please be aware that dishes selected for your meals reflect the cooking styles and signature dishes of the local area you are in.

In the Sichuan Province, the cuisine (known as *Szechwan* in the west) is distinguished by its use of ginger, chili 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.

There will be limited western dishes for breakfast in Tibet. 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 Australia. 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 Australia, or small supermarkets in Lhasa. These might include tea/coffee bags, drinking chocolate, instant soups or noodles, biscuits, energy bars, milk powder sachets, vegemite 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!

In Nepal, dishes served in restaurants on our group tours are varied. Some will be vegetable-based with meat mixed in, and a few will be meat-based. Our restaurants are well aware of the western palate – there are plenty of non-spiced options.

When eating meals on group tours, you will be seated around a circular table with other tour members. Dishes will be served in the traditional 'family style'; meaning that various dishes will be laid out in the centre of the table top. These dishes are intended to be shared amongst the group – there is always more than enough to feed everybody. Please read your travel guide, which

you will receive with your final documents for more information about eating in Asia. We recommend that when it comes to Chinese and Nepalese food, you stay open minded and try to be adventurous!

Accommodation

All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and a telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide.

Your accommodation has been 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 or a heritage-type hotel. In remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have 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 Australia, China and Nepal. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards are met. Please note double bed requests can be made at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

Accommodation in remote areas enables us to complete this amazing journey. We will be staying in varying levels of accommodation allowing us to enjoy the areas to the best capacity. You can expect to be staying in **locally classed** properties and please keep in mind that due to the remote locations, the standards of accommodation will not be what you would find in a major city, but are the best available in those areas. It is not essential to bring a sleeping bag as bed linen is provided at each type of accommodation and is adequate for the night temperatures. However, bringing a 'sleep sheet' insert to use under the linen is a very good idea.

Early Check-In/Late Check-out

Early check-in and late check-out is not included in our China & Nepal group tours. If you wish to add these to your booking, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

Transport

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Main and inner city roads in China and Nepal have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner. Roads in China and Nepal have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections above are approximations only.

Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law and therefore people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your National Escort/Local Guides.

Air: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Pre-flight seat allocation is not available on international and internal flight sectors.

Development in China & Nepal

Although China & Nepal is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in Australia. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in Australia; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. 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, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort/Local Guides.

Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not

for everyone so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by both a National Escort/Local Guides. There will usually be no more than 18 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of eight travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with Local Guides only.

Tipping Policy

Local tipping is customary in Asia. However, this can often lead to awkwardness in knowing when it is appropriate to tip and how much, as well as ensuring you have a suitable amount of change available at the time. For your convenience, with years of experiences in providing the best customer service, Wendy Wu Tours operates a kitty system on our Group Tours so your National Escort will look after this aspect of your trip for you. It also ensures that the amounts paid are reasonable for you but still fair for the local people. The amount is stated on each Group Tour page will be advised again on your final documentation. Tipping is in US Dollars and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf. Any additional tipping on any of our tours is welcomed at your discretion. Further guidance for tipping contributions will be outlined in your final documentation.

Packing List and Climate

You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which will be included in the pre-departure information link sent within your deposit documentation. Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on www.weather.com

Luggage

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 15kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 5kg. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

Exchanging Cash

It is highly recommended that when travelling to cities outside of Chengu, Kathmandu and other main cities that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money. US Dollars are easily exchanged throughout Asia however, other currencies such as Australian Dollars can generally be exchanged in hotels and airports provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort/Local Guide will remind you to do this before departure.

Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AUD\$250 per person, per week should be sufficient; however for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional Tours - May be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. In your Final Documentation an Optional Excursion Sheet will be included outlining the activities available in each city and local cost associated. Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

Climbing Steps

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

Nepalese Customs

Nepal has many special customs and rituals that tie into daily life, some of these may be surprising or unsettling for some passengers. While the guide will make every effort to forewarn passengers when visiting sites that may participate in the practise of animal sacrifice or cremation, there may be special local festivals within villages where such rituals are unavoidable. When visiting the Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu, please be aware that you may witness cremations taking place across the canal. If you would prefer not to participate in this touring, please let your National Escort/Local Guide know upon arrival in Nepal.

Cultural Differences

Nepal has many religions, cultures and histories. Foreign tourists, particularly female travellers, may be stared at as Nepalese women in some areas generally do not go out without their father or husband. Please be considerate of this, the local beliefs and customs and dress with consideration and modesty.

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 are appropriate 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 socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot ground.

Within Monasteries - The interior of all Tibetan 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 National Escort/Local Guide's advice.

Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.travelvax.com.au

Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

After Your Booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice with deposit documentation via email. This includes important information and links to access the visa application form and instructions sheet online (if applicable). Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately four weeks prior to departure.

Updated: 14th March 2018

Travelling on an Active Paced Tour

We hope you are looking forward to what we are sure will be a trip of a lifetime. Before you embark on this adventure, we ask you to consider the points listed below that relate to our active paced tours. This will ensure you understand what is involved with an active paced tour and therefore help you decide if your chosen tour is right for you.

This is to ensure that your tour runs as smoothly as possible for you and your fellow tour members.

Please consider the following aspects of active paced tours prior to confirming your arrangements;

- While we believe that age is no barrier, please give special consideration to the fact that medical assistance and public infrastructure can be limited in these areas.
- There will be long periods of physical activity, including walking, climbing of stairs, in/out of boats. Tour participants who will travel with a cane/walking stick may come across difficulties. It is our experience that using a cane/walking stick in these areas where there are rough and uneven surfaces, stairs to climb and high altitudes, becomes difficult.
- Only limited meal options will be available. People with special dietary requirements should expect difficulties on these tours. Please understand that depending on the trip you are taking, you may be given very little or no meat.
- Your tour may include basic accommodation facilities including home stays, guest houses, truck stops and tented accommodation. This may mean, no or limited hot water, and no private bathroom facilities.
- There will be long periods of driving on often unsealed, rural and bumpy roads in vehicles ranging from tour coaches to local jeeps and canter vehicles.
- Altitude affects people in many different ways and a certain level of fitness is required in order to limit the effects. Please discuss how to manage altitude sickness with a health care professional.
- Overnight trains only have basic bedding in four berth compartments with limited or no ladder facilities to climb to the top bunk. You may be sharing with other tour members or locals.
- Some tours may have sightseeing en route to the next destination. Therefore participation is required or you will need to remain with the coach until the rest of the group has finished touring.

National Escorts/ Local Guides will endeavor to provide rest stops in your itinerary where possible. Please be advised that some days may have a more physical programme than others.

If you are comfortable with the above mentioned aspects of travelling on an active paced tour, we look forward to welcoming you on what is sure to be a unique and memorable experience.

However, if you have any hesitations please contact your valued travel agent or our reservations department to discuss the tour further or explore alternative options.