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15 days Chengdu to Lhasa overland tour via Daocheng Yading

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Chengdu
Kangding
Litang
Markham
Pomi
Bayi
Lhasa

Drive on the famous National Road G318 between Sichuan and Tibet to enjoy the vast grasslands, majestic mountains, beautiful valleys, stunning alpine lakes, glaciers, virgin forest etc. A detour to Yading Nature Reserve is another highlight.

Type
Private
Duration
15 days
Theme
Natural scenery, Overland, Photography
Trip code
WT-404
Price
From £ 1,574 per person

Itinerary

This trip will take you to drive on the famous National Road G318 between Sichuan Chengdu and Tibet Lhasa (Called Sichuan-Tibet Southern Highway), it has covered the area Tibetan Kham in the Western of Sichuan and eastern of Tibet (TRA). This tour presents an amazing contrast to the landscape of the Brahmaputra valley and is distinguished by extremely rugged mountains in parallel ranges extending from northwest to southeast broken by very deep alpine gorges. The beautiful ranges are narrow and rocky with steep slopes and sharp ridges, moreover the high altitude grasslands are the home for thousands of nomads and their animals.

The great rivers of Salween, Mekong, Yangtze are cutting through eroded valleys and deep forested limestone gorges are one of the wonderful part of the trip, breathtaking views of Rawu lake and Draksum tso lake are incomparable tour. The two day detour to Daocheng Yading Nature Reserve is another highlight of this tour.

Note: Part of the road could be blocked by landslide in the summer time and heavy snow in winter, so if you travel in summer or winter, it is better that you plan a couple of days more for the backup plans. The traveling season for this tour is from late March to early of Nov. for the best landscapes and accessible road.

Day 01 :

Arrival at Chengdu

Chengdu airport picking up, Check in and have a good rest. Overnight at Chengdu.

Day 02 :

Chengdu / Kangding (330KM, 6.5 hours drive)

Today drive from Chengdu to Kanding, the prefectural capital of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Western Sichuan, it is known as the gateway city to Khampa area. The population there is about 100,000 people split with approximately half Tibetans and half Hans and with a small population of other ethnic minorities.

Afternoon explore local market with your guide to discover the locals' life. In the evening enjoy the dance and music night at the public square in Kangding town, which you surely will be entertained.

Day 03 :

Kangding / Tagong / Xinduqiao (130KM, about 3-4 hours drive)

Morning drive along the Kangding airport road to Tagong, enjoy the beautiful landscapes on the way. Tagong is a small nomadic town in the beautiful grasslands. In Tagong, you will be arranged to visit Tagong Monastery, Ani Gumpa Nunnery, a nomad family and enjoy the breathtaking view with Yala Holy Mountain in the distance. (If you are interested in taking a horse ride, it is also possible to arrange in Tagong).

In the late afternoon head to Xinduqiao for overnight, Xinduqiao is called 'the paradise of photographers' because of the stunning natural views surroundings.

Day 04 :

Xinduqiao / Litang / Daocheng (350KM, 6-7 hours drive)

Morning cross over the Gao'ersi pass (about 4,410m high) to Yajiang county, from where follows another two high passes (about 4,700m high) - the Jianziwan & Kazila, the landscape on the way is very good including deep valleys, snow-capped mountains, pastures dotted with sheep and yaks. Lunch at Litang. With its 4010m altitude, Litang county is no doubt the highest city in the world. In addition to its beautiful scenery & spectacular local Tibetan customs, another tourist attraction is the Horse-racing Festival every August. Therefore, if you are here at the very right time, you'll never miss the chance for the horse-racing & dressing show. Another 146km ride to Daocheng will be continued after Litang. Daocheng is a county that you will enjoy for its rich soil & Tibetan culture and a good place for recharging yourself before the 2-day exploration at Yading Nature Reserve.

Day 05 :

Daocheng / Yading Nature Reserve (Pearl Lake) / Yading Village (110KM, about 2.5 hours drive)

Morning drive to Yading Nature Reserve, the countryside scenery en route is very charming and the road is perfect, it drives approximately 2 hours to Shangrila town, here you will buy the entrance tickets and take the local sightseeing bus to the terminal station - Zhaguanbeng (about 1 hour), then hike to Chonggu Temple, see the scenery of Chonggu Temple and holy peak Xiannairi. From Chonggu Temple trekking up to Drolma-la tso (Pearl Lake) about 30-40 minutes. Pearl Lake is the best place to view the holy peak Xiannairi. Then walk about 1 hour back to Zhaguanbeng where you will take the sightseeing bus back to your hotel. Overnight at Yading village

Day 06 :

Yading Nature Reserve (Luorong Pasture + Five Color Lake & Milk Lake) / Daocheng (110KM, about 2.5 hours drive)

Take the sightseeing bus to the terminal - Zhaguanbeng, from which you will arrive at the core of Yading. You will take the local battery car to Luorong Pasture (4150m), which is a natural pasture for the local cattle and horses. Then start your hiking tour up (Hiking: 5km/about 4 hours) to Milk Lake (4600m) and Five-Color Lake (4700m), or you could ride a horseback riding for the first 3KM to Sheshengya (optional, 305 CNY per person for single trip), then hike the rest of 2KM to Milk Lake and Five-Color Lake. Enjoy breathtaking views of the three sacred peaks: Mt. Yangmaiyong (5958m), Mt. Xianuaduoji (5958m) and Mt. Xiannairi (6032m). The up-and-down hiking tour will take you about 6 to 7 hours. Then drive about 2 hours to Daocheng. Overnight at Daocheng.

Day 07 :

Daocheng / Litang / Batang (320km, about 6 hours drive)

Morning return to Litang from Daocheng. Litang is situated on the Maoya grasslands, it means 'place as flat as a bronze mirror' in Tibetan. Litang is an important transit town along the ancient trade business route between Tibetans from Tibet and the local Hans at Kangding and Ya'an city. At Litang, visit Litang monastery, one of the larger Gelugpa monasteries in Sichuan Kham area, this monastery has a close and tight relation with the 7th, 10th, 11th Dalai Lhama.

Afternoon continue the drive to Batang in the grasslands, enjoy the best grasslands of your tour. At Haizi mountain have a stop to visit the sister's lake. Batang is the last town in Sichuan before you cross Jinsha River (the upper Yangtze River) before you get to Tibet (TRA). Note: You will meet your Lhasa guide in Batang to continue the rest of your trip.

Day 08 :

Batang / Markham / Dzogong (260KM, 7-8 hours drive)

Morning drive to cross Jinshajiang river to get into Tibet (TRA), another 2 hours you will get to the first town in Tibet - Markham. Markham for centuries has been a strategic crossroads town on the salt/tea trade routes between Tibet and China. Afternoon pass over the high passes of Wula and Dongda to get to Dzogong for overnight. The road running up and down through mountains and gorges makes the driving full of surprise and excitement.

Day 09 :

Dzogong / Pomda / Pasho / Ranwu (290KM, 5.5 hours drive)

Morning drives about 2 hours to get to Pomda, after getting to Pomda, the landscape changes to stretching grassland but sparsely inhabited due to the hard climate.

Cross the Yela Mountain Pass where you can see the 72 Curves of Nujiang River, one of the highlights along the Sichuan-Tibet Highway, then continue to Pasho town and enjoy the scenery of snow mountains, forests, countryside, and glaciers. Stay overnight at Ranwu town and enjoy the alpine scenery.

Day 10 :

Rawok-tso / Midui Glacier / Pomi (127KM, 3 hours drive)

Rawok Tso (Ranwu lake) is surrounded by glaciers and snow mountains. Thawed snow makes the body, the water appears different colors in different seasons, from aquamarine to turquoise. After Rawu town, go ahead to Pomi, you will enter the most beautiful part of this tour, the landscapes along the road vary from snow mountains, glacier to lakes and pasture. On the way stop and pay a visit to Midui Glacier, the lowest altitude glacier in China, covered with snow all year around. Overnight at Pomi.

Day 11 :

Pomi / Lulang / Bayi (240KM, 6-7 hours drive)

Today's road continually surprises you with incredible scenery. One saying describes it best: four seasons a day, the diverse climate in ten miles. Stop at Lulang to view the grand peak of Mt. Namche Barwa (7,756m). Overnight in Bayi.

Day 12 :

Bayi / Draksum Tso (Basum tso) / Lhasa (490KM, 8-9 hours drive)

Morning visit Bayi Cypress Park, afterward continue the way to Lhasa along the beautiful Niyang River, then make a detour to Draksumtso (Basumtso). The lake and its surrounding views are beautiful and the site is also connected to the semi-mythical ruler of the Kham region and Guru Rinpoche. The joint board floating bridge is the only way to the Tsodzung island and visit the Tsodzung Monastery amid of the trees, most probably the highest attraction of this site. Then keep driving along the Niyang River, cross over Mila pass (5100m) to Lhasa. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 13 :

Lhasa City sightseeing, visit Potola Palace & Jokhang Temple

Today you will be arranged to visit Jokhang temple and Potola Palace. Jokhang temple is the most sacred shrine in Tibet which was built in the 7th century and located at the heart of old town in Lhasa, the circuit around it called Barkhor street, which is a good place to purchase souvenirs. Potola Palace is the worldwide known cardinal landmark of Tibet. The massive structure itself contains a small world within it. Mostly it is renowned as residence of the Dalai Lama lineages (Avalokiteshvara). Both of them are the focal points of pilgrims from the entire Tibetan world, multitudinous pilgrims are circumambulating and prostrating in their strong faith. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 14 :

Lhasa City sightseeing, visit Drepung monastery, Sera monastery & Norbulingka summer palace

Today you will be arranged to visit Drepung, Sera monasteries and Summer Palace - Norbulingka palace. Both Drepung and Sera monasteries are Gelugpa (yellow hat) sect monastic colleges. Drepung monastery was the seat of the Government prior to Potola, it was once the world largest monastery in the history with 7,700 monks hailed from different monasteries all over Tibet. Sera monastery is famous for its Buddhism philosophical debate practice, the clapping sound and aggressive expression of the monks are well worth to see. Norbulingka is the summer palace of Dalai Lama, you can visit the residences of different lineages of the Dalai Lama. The park is crowded with picnickers and traditional activities during the Shoton (Yogurt festival) in August. Overnight at Lhasa.

Day 15 :

Lhasa airport / train station send-off

Your guide and driver will see you off at the airport or train station, end of the trip.

Inclusions

Tour notes:

Please note prices are based in CNY.

General inclusions:

All required government taxes and fees.

Please contact one of our Tour Advisors to get a custom quotation made to your requirements.

All required Tibet permits and domestic travel documents.

Necessary oxygen and medicine for the acute high altitude sickness.

Where possible 3 star hotels will always be provided, if the city or town does not have then the local guest house or monastery guest house will be provided (i.e. tent / dormitory bed, no private bathroom etc.)

All entrance tickets as noted in the tour's itinerary.

Local Tibetan guide fluent in English, Chinese or Japanese that is certified by the state tourism build. (If your native language is not listed please let us know, we are certain we can assist your needs.)

Airport and/or train station pick-up and drop-off.

Transportation will be provided via a comfortable and clean car, minivan or tourist bus depending upon the groups size.

General exclusions:

Personal expenses such as laundry, drinks, internet access, fax, telephone calls etc.

Tips for your guide and driver.

Meals that are not specified in the tour itinerary.

Optional Attractions that are not specified in the itinerary.

Flight tickets or train tickets in and out of Lhasa (Please note: We can offer you train and/or plane tickets in and out Lhasa from all cities within China. Please check the latest price with us via email.)

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