

## HEMIS FESTIVAL WITH MARKHA VALLEY TREK



The Markha Valley Trek is certainly one of the most varied and beautiful treks in the world. It ventures high into the Himalayas crossing two passes over 4,500M as it circles from the edges of the Indus Valley, down into parts of Zaskar, and passes through terrain that changes from incredibly narrow valleys to wide open vast expanses. It is made all the more interesting by the ancient form of Buddhism that flourishes in the many monasteries that dot the landscape perched high atop hills.

As we trek to the upper end of the Markha Valley we are rewarded with spectacular views of jagged snow capped peaks before crossing the 4955M Gongmarlu Pass and descending to the famous Hemis monastery, where we end our trek.

### **Hemis Festival:**

The 10th day (Tses - Chu) of the Tibetan lunar month is celebrated as the birthday of Padmasambhava (Guru Rimpoche), the founder of Tibetan Buddhism. The Hemis Monastery celebrates this event in the form of a 2-day festival. Its resident Lamas perform sacred masked dances. The festival takes an auspicious turn every 12 years in the Tibetan year of the Monkey. Hemis Festival in Ladakh showcases the best of cultural heritage of the region. Splendid masked dances are performed to the accompaniment of cymbals, drums and long horns. The tour has been so designed that you cover the famous Hemis festival with Markha Valley Trek.

**Duration:** 15 DAYS (DELHI –DELHI)

**Grade:** MODERATE TO STRENUOUS

### **DAY 01 DELHI**

Meet and assistance on arrival at the Indira Gandhi International Airport and transfer to Hotel Imperial. Delhi – Capital of modern India “The Heart of India”. Many dynasties and rulers have flourished on its regal soil over the last 3000 years. The legacy still survives in many monuments varying from the 13<sup>th</sup> century mausolea of the Lodi King to that of imperial India’s Parliament House and the President House. Where medieval palaces and bazars exist beside a modern metropolis. Delhi is the city waiting to be explored, so enjoy! Overnight stay at Hotel Imperial.

### **DAY 02 DELHI- LEH(3506M)**

After breakfast transfer to domestic airport on time to connect flight for Leh. Meeting and assistance upon arrival. Thereafter transfer to Hotel. Day free for acclimatization. Lunch, dinner and overnight at Hotel Spic-n- Span.

### **DAY 03 LEH – HEMIS – LEH**

After breakfast drive to Hemis Monastery. Enjoy Hemis festival. Packed lunch will be provided.  
Evening return to Hotel.  
Dinner and overnight stay in Hotel Spic –n -Span.

**DAY 04 LEH – LIKIR –ALCHI**

**After Breakfast drive to Alchi via Likir. Packed lunch en – route.**

**Likir Monastery: A few kilometres short of Alchi, a scenic road passing through rocky mountains and the river, takes one to this Gompa which contains a number of enormous clay statues of the Buddha in different forms. Founded in the 12 century, Likir was the first royal monastery to be established in Ladakh under direct Tibetan influence.**

**Alchi Monastery: 66 Km west of Leh, this monastery consists of six temples, which contain chorten, seated Buddha's and exquisite paintings. Over 10 centuries old, profusely painted walls depict the events of the Buddha's life, lamas and musicians.**

**Dinner and overnight stay at Hotel Spic-N-Span.**

**DAY 05 LEH – STOK(17Kms)– FOOT OF STOK LA (4900M)**

Breakfast in hotel. Drive to Stok and trek to the foot of Stok La (03-hrs trek). Cross the village of Stok, then follow on the left bank the river, which comes from the massif of Stok Kangri. After 2 hours, the path leads away from the river. Climb gently, then leave a small pass on the left and go up a small valley. Camp near a sheepfold. Packed lunch enroute. Dinner and overnight in tents.

**DAY 06 FOOT OF STOK LA – YURUTSE(3900 M)**

Breakfast in camp. Trek to Yurutse (06 hrs) with packed lunch. From the sheepfold, long and steep ascent to the Stok La (4900M, 03 hrs). Steep descent, then a kind of flat until Rumbak. Pass the village, cross the river (bridge) and an escarpment. Go up the right bank, then the left bank, easy going.

Dinner and overnight in tents.

**DAY 07 YURUTSE – SKIU(3018M/20 Kms))**

Breakfast in camp. Trek 6-7 hours to Skiu. From Yurutse, good path along the mountainside, then cross a small valley and zigzag steeply upto a flat, then go along the mountainside to the Ganda La (4900M, 03hrs). Long, easy descent towards Shingo, then into splendid gorges. Several easy fords. After a 2 hour descent arrive in the valley of Markha. Turn to the left (east) then a few hundred metres further to Skiu. Packed lunch.

Dinner and overnight in tents.

**DAY 08 SKIU – MARKHA(3589 M/16 Kms)**

Breakfast in camp. Begin 07 hour trek to Markha with packed lunch. From Skiu, good path on the right bank of the Markha. A great deal of vegetation. Then on the left bank (bridge) cross a barren plane, go back onto the right bank (bridge) and arrive in Chaluk which has a few houses. Go to the river, cross it and walk along the left bank. Another crossing, then a short climb towards Markha. There is a beautiful campsite beyond the houses, near the river.

Dinner and overnight in tents.

**DAY 09 MARKHA – TCHATCHUTSE(3986 M)**

Breakfast in camp. Trek to Tchatchutse with packed lunch (06 hrs). Go up the main valley on the right bank. The path is sometimes difficult in the riverbed. Pass the monastery of Humlung. Then carry on along the right

bank and arrive in Hankar. The path improves. A bit beyond Hankar, leave a broad valley on the right-hand side. The valley narrows and goes higher. Cross onto the left bank (bridge) to reach the pastures of Tchatchutse. Dinner and overnight in tents.

#### **DAY 10 TCHATCHUTSE – NIMALING (4906 M)**

Breakfast in camp. Trek 3 hours to Nimaling. The path can be seen easily, several small inclines. The river is rather far to the left (gorge). Walk near a small lake, then across pastures to Nimaling. This is one of the most beautiful high valleys in Ladakh (4700M), dominated by the Kang Yaze (6400M). Several fairly difficult routes lead to the summit. Climbing the antecime (west) on the other hand is not too difficult. Packed lunch.

Dinner and overnight in tents.

#### **DAY 11 NIMALING – SHANG(4033 M)**

Breakfast in camp. Trek 8 hours to Shang with packed lunch. Cross the Markha. Long climb along the mountainside, then some zigzagging up to the Kongmaru La (5150M, 1 ½ hrs). Steep descent. Pass a campsite (4700M) then reach a stream. Long descent into gorges. Several easy fords. Leave the gorges and keep walking on the left bank to Chukirmo. Then sometimes in the riverbed, right bank and again on left bank. Arrive in Shang. Beautiful campsite amidst groves. small Gompa one hour away from the village.

Dinner and overnight in tents.

#### **DAY 12 SHANG - HEMIS – LEH**

Breakfast in camp. Trek to Hemis (3-4 hrs) with packed lunch. Take the riverbed again, then a good footpath through large blocks. Go back onto the left bank. You reach a dusty trail suitable for motor traffic. Pass a small house built to last and then a series of chortens. Leave Martsellang on the right and follow a gently rising trail to Hemis. On arrival drive to Leh ( 43kms).

Dinner and overnight stay at Hotel Spic –N Span.

#### **DAY 13 LEH – LOCAL SIGHT SEEING**

After Breakfast sight seeing tour of Leh Gompa, Sankar Gompa, Stok Palace Museum & Explore the Leh city.

**Leh City:** The capital of Ladakh, at one time was a major stop on the Asian “Silk Route”. A stroll along the main bazar, observing the varied crowd and peering into the curio shops, is an entrancing experience. Chang Gali, behind the main bazar is less bustling but has intriguing little shops selling curios and jewelry like pearls, turquoise, coral, malachite, lapis and many other kinds of semi-precious stones, as well as curiously carved Yak-horn boxes, quaint brass locks, china or metal bowls etc.

**Sankar:** The small monastery at Sankar (3 kms from Leh), harbours accomplished modern tantric murals and a thousand-headed Avalokitesvara deity. It has innumerable collections of small statues of pure gold and a number of interesting paintings. A relatively modern monastery, it is closely associated with the Spituk monastery and serves as the residence of the head priest. It is well lit and can be visited in the evening as well.

**Leh Gompa:** It is situated above the Leh Palace and was built in 1430. It contains a 13.7 metres high statue of the Buddha, which the Ladakhi call Chamba. According to the Lamas this splendid statue is the future Buddha. A butter lamp burns day and night in front of this statue.

**Stok Palace Museum:** 17 Km, 1 Hour drive from Leh. Just across the river from Leh, is the village which the deposed Royal Family was compensated for the loss of its throne. Its palace houses a museum of art facts associated with the dynasty, and there is also a small Gompa. The museum in the Stok Palace is a showcase of the Royal Thankas, while the collection of Turquoise head-dresses worn for the Royal wedding is the most impressive in Ladakh

Dinner and overnight stay at hotel Spic –n- Span

**DAY 14 LEH – DELHI**

Breakfast at Hotel. After breakfast transfer to airport on time to connect flight for Delhi. Meeting and assistance upon arrival and transfer to Hotel Imperial. Day at leisure.  
Overnight stay at Hotel Imperial.

**DAY 15 DEPART DELHI**

After breakfast transfer to International airport on time to connect flight for on ward destination.

**Includes:**

Two nights accommodation on twin sharing bed and breakfast basis at Hotel Imperial \*\*\*\*\* ( Imperial room) in Delhi as per itinerary.

Five nights accommodation in Hotel Spic – n Span (A- Category) at Leh on twin sharing and full board basis as per the itinerary.

Seven nights accommodation in trekking tents on full board and twin share basis as per itinerary.

Supporting staffs like local guide, cook and kitchen helper, porter etc.

Trekking support like mattresses, trekking tent, dinning tent, toilet tent etc.

Transportation by non-A/C 4X2 Toyota Qualis in Ladakh (04 pax in a jeep) as per the itinerary.

All arrival /departure transfer in Delhi by a/c Toyota Qualis / Tempo Traveler / Mini coach as per itinerary in Delhi.

Monasteries entrance fee in Ladakh as per itinerary.

Local guide for sight seeing in Leh.

Ladakh entry fee.

**Above cost does not includes:**

Any airfare

Any expenses that arise due to change in itinerary because of natural forces like land slides, weather, roadblocks, flight cancellations, sickness etc.

Any medical, travel or evacuation insurance.

Expenses of personal nature like tips, laundry, phone calls drinks etc.

Any increase in taxes or govt. duties.

Any sight seeing in Delhi

Any other services or item which is not specified above.

Note: Kindly note 4.08% government service tax will be extra on total billing.