

# India

## Nubra Nuns and Gompa Girls



Join us as we trek through the breath taking passes of Ladakh in the Indian Himalayas side by side with girls from the local school, an incredible experience which will build friendships and understandings like no other. In our acclimatisation phase, meet and live with local villagers to learn about their way of life and assist in a project which will aid the local community as well as understanding the unique role that women of the mountains hold. A night at a monastery guesthouse will prove most restful and open the doors of the life of Gompa nuns. And of course, no visit to India is complete without a visit to the iconic Taj Mahal.



### Recommended Itinerary

**Days 1/2: Depart UK / Arrive in Delhi:** Depart UK on overnight flight. On arrival in Delhi, we will be met and transferred directly to our hotel. We can freshen up before an afternoon of sightseeing through Lutyen's Delhi (named after the British architect Edward Lutyens) and Akshardam Temple.

**Day 3: Fly to Leh:** This morning we can enjoy the spectacular flight up to Leh through the mountain scenery. Upon our arrival we will enjoy a restful afternoon to allow us to acclimatize to the altitude of the mountains.

**Day 4: Woman's Alliance:** Today we will spend another day acclimatising with gentle explorations of Leh and a visit to the local Women's Alliance to meet with local women and learn about their lives in the plateaus.

**Day 5: Nyerma Gompa:** A short drive this morning will take us to Nyerma Gompa, a nunnery where we will spend the night at the local guest house. About 25 young women practicing to become nuns live here and we will spend the day with them, cooking, meditating beginning to understand their way of life.

**Days 6-9: Nubra Valley:** After a peaceful night at the Gompa guesthouse we will drive for around 4.5 hours to the breath taking Nubra Valley. Here we will stay in the village of Kyagar with local families to really allow us to settle into the traditional way of life in this area. Over the next few days we will have the opportunity to be involved in traditional handicraft activities, visiting local people, cooking, field work and project work which has been selected by the local community to ensure that our visit is meaningful to them. This will be a unique opportunity to experience the life of local village women and to feel ourselves become a part of their close community.

**Day 10: Trek to Skarchen:** We should now be acclimatised to the high altitude of the Ladakh region and so will begin our trek through the Indian Himalayas which we will experience alongside female students from the local school. There is no doubt that completing this adventure together will allow us to really connect with our international friends and come to see that despite our differences in culture, we are really not that different at all!

Our expedition will start at Hundar Bridge, from which the trail follows the river on a rough jeep road to an impressive gorge. The trail gets narrow and steep at Dzonga and until it opens out at the highest point between Hundar and Skarchen. At certain points the pack ponies can struggle so we may need to unload. Finally, we will descend along the river to reach our camp at the confluence of two streams.

Culture shock rating: 

Physical rating: 

**Day 11: Trek to Hundar Dok Village:** This morning we will continue to trek along the river in the gorge, passing below Wacham Village (a tiny settlement of just two families). The trail then climbs steeply to Dok Togma, another small village. We will pass their barely fields and follow the path until we reach Hundar Dok, a larger settlement of around 20 households which is particularly scenic in its surrounds of plantations, flowers and barley fields. This is only a short day and we should arrive by lunch time to make our camp just between the village and the river. We can then spend the afternoon resting our feet and visiting the friendly locals.

**Day 12: Hundar Dok:** To assist with our acclimatisation, we will spend today in the village of Hundar Dok where we will have the opportunity to experience village life and see how the role of local women differs as we climb higher into the mountains.

**Day 13: Trek to Thanglasgo:** Our walk today begins with a gradual climb through flowered pastures as we follow a stream up to our camp at either Thanglasgo or a little higher on to Jhingmoche. During the summer months, shepherds bring their sheep and yaks here to graze and there are temporary shepherd huts scattered through the region. Traditionally, two or three families from Hundar Dok will spend the summer here to graze all of the animals of the village and make cheese and butter for the villagers. They will stay here until the end of August before returning for the harvesting season.

**Day 14: Trek to Lasermola Base:** Today we follow the river upstream on a well defined path in this beautiful valley of meadows where we will no doubt spot plenty of grazing yaks. Our camp will be at the base of Lasermola and we will be able to see snow from our camp.

**Day 15: Trek to Phyang Sumdo:** Leaving the pastures, today we will climb to the snow line to reach the top of the Lasermola Pass at the top of which we will be rewarded with spectacular views of the Karakoram Mountains, Ladakh, the Zaskar Mountains and the valleys between them. From here we will descend to the Phyang Vally to make camp at Phyang Sumo.

**Day 16: Finish Trekking and Return to Leh:** A short two hour descent today will allow us to meet the team vehicles at the Morubuk road head. We will then return to Leh, stopping en route to visit the monastery in Phyang.

**Day 17: Agra:** This morning we will catch the early flight back to Delhi and drive onwards to Agra where we will have the opportunity to see the incredible Taj Mahal, perhaps the most famous icon of India, and the Agra fort. This afternoon we will also pay a visit to the Sheroes Hangout, a café run by female acid attack survivors. Acid attacks are an ongoing problem in India but this inspirational project is giving survivors the confidence to show their faces in public once more.

**Day 18: Taj Mahal:** We will rise early to view the Taj Mahal once more, this time in the beautiful light of the early morning and before the crowds get too large. After lunch we will return to Delhi to spend our final night in India.

**Day 19: Return to UK:** After an incredible adventure, we will wave a fond farewell to our guide and the beautiful country of India ready for our return to the UK.

*Important information:*

*It is important to realise that the itinerary needs to be flexible. While every effort will be made to follow the above schedule, in the event of political problems, airline schedule changes or natural events, we will do our best to make your trip as enjoyable and hassle-free as possible, but it is important to EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED and be prepared to accept some slight changes. Relax and have faith in your guides.*



**DAYS FOR GIRLS** This trip can include a session working alongside Days for Girls, a grass roots organisation aimed at giving every woman and girl access to proper feminine hygiene products and health advice. For more information look on our website: [www.thestc.co.uk/travel/days-for-girls](http://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/days-for-girls)



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