

India

Nubra Valley and Samgyal Summit



The remote Nubra Valley lies 150km north of Leh, nestled deep in the Indian Himalaya. Home to Samgyal Peak - one of the region's best non-technical peaks, it the perfect destination for a remote mountain school expedition. Our journey starts in Leh where we will explore the ancient capital city and learn about its fascinating history and culture. Acclimatisation will be the order of the day over the next few days as students get used to the altitude; orientation walks, white water rafting and sightseeing will be on the agenda. We then head up to Hundar – the kicking off point for our 12-day trek, which, with the support of ponies and yaks to carry our equipment, will take us to altitudes of close to 6,000m. As we conquer the peaks of Samgyal and Lasermola, we will be rewarded with an array of amazing scenery including impressive gorges, plateaus, pastures, meadows as well as unsurpassed views of the Karakoram, Zaskar and Ladakh range of mountains and valleys. In August, flowers are in abundance and there is a good chance of spotting a variety of wildlife including marmots and barals. An all-round adventure which will take students way off the beaten track, show them culture in its purest form, while testing them physically. This expedition to Ladakh will be sure to stay with them forever.



Recommended Itinerary

Days 1/2: Depart the UK / Arrive Delhi: On arrival in Delhi, we will be met and transferred directly to our hotel, giving us the opportunity to freshen up and enjoy the rest of the afternoon at our leisure. Overnight: Hotel in Delhi

Day 3: Delhi to Leh: We will take an early morning flight from Delhi to Leh. Weather permitting we should be able to enjoy spectacular views of the Himalayas as we land at Leh Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport which, situated at 3,256m, is one of the world's highest commercial airports. We will transfer directly to our hotel and the rest of the day will be spent relaxing and acclimatising to the altitude with a gentle orientation walk of Leh. You can expect to feel the effects of the rarefied atmosphere, so we will be advised to take it easy for the first day or two and drink lots of water. Overnight: Hotel in Leh

Day 4: Leh: Today will be all about getting to grips with the fascinating city of Leh – the capital of Ladakh. We will have the whole day to explore its vibrant culture, Buddhist gompas, impressive monasteries and curio shops which will transport us back to its past as a trading post. Overnight: Hotel in Leh

Day 5: White water rafting: This morning we enjoy a thrilling rafting journey on the mighty Indus River. As we tackle the grade 2 rapids we pass tiny hamlets, imposing monasteries and towering peaks. Tired after an adrenaline filled morning we spend a relaxing and fascinating afternoon exploring the lowland village of Alchi, home to the spectacular monastic complex. The descent and change in altitude is an essential aid to acclimatisation. Overnight: Guesthouse

Day 6: Drive to Hundar: Today we hit the road and head towards the Nubra valley on one of the highest motorable roads in the world. A good four hours on the road will take us to the village of Hundar – the kicking off point for our trek. After settling in to our Guesthouse, we will enjoy a visit to infamous high altitude sand dunes – a unique geographical phenomenon, where desert, mountains and rivers meet. Overnight: Guest house

Day 7: Start of Trek: We start the day with a visit to the village of Deskit with its quaint hillside monastery of Samstaling. We begin the trek from the Hundar bridge (3150m). The trail follows the river on a rough jeep road; the landscape is spectacular as we continue along an impressive gorge. The trail gets narrow and steep at Dzongpa (an hour from Hundar) and continues so along the side valley until it opens out at the highest point between Hundar and Skarchen. We then descend and continue along the river to reach camp at Skarchen (3576m) at the confluence of two streams (2½ to 3 hrs). Overnight: camping

Day 8: Skarchen to Hundar Dok: Today we continue along the gorge passing Wacham – a small settlement consisting of the homes belonging to just two families. Crossing the river, we then continue on up to the beautiful pastures of Hundar Dok – a permanent settlement of approximately 15 – 20 households filled with flowers and barley fields. Overnight: camping

Culture shock rating:



Physical rating:



Day 09: Rest day: We will enjoy a rest day today in this beautiful village, getting to know the locals and understanding their customs. Overnight: camping

Day 10: Base Camp of Samgyal 1 (4482m): We make a diversion here and head to another valley to camp at Palzampiu a beautiful grassy pasture where Shepherds can be seen tending their flocks. The valley is surrounded by high snow-capped peaks, and a small river runs through the camp. Overnight: camping

Day 11: Base camp to High Camp (5018m): After leaving our camp we take a left turn, leaving behind the impressive views of Ajaling (6500m). We follow a small stream until we reach the terminal moraine of the glacier and our high camp. Overnight: camping

Day 12: Rest day: We walk to the glacier for an afternoon of training. This section of the glacier is fairly flat and we will spend some time training and honing our skills in glacier travel, in readiness for the summit day. Overnight: camping

Day 13/14: Summit day: Samgyal (5812m): After a 2am wake up call, we will be ready to leave camp by 3am. Heading first to the Glacier, we then make our way to the summit, arriving approximately six hours later. After enjoying the amazing views from the top and the obligatory celebratory photo, we head back to base camp where we will spend the rest of the day at our leisure. Day 14 is a well deserved rest day. Overnight: camping

Day 15: Base Camp to Sumdo (4575m) – Thanglasgo valley: Today we backtrack to the Hundar Dok River, which we follow to camp at Sumdo. We will pass Brok Gongma, another small beautiful village with views of the mountains of the Hundar Valley. Overnight: camping

Day 16: Base of Lasermola: We continue the gradual climb across the flower carpeted pastures again, following a stream for another 5 to 6 hours before reaching our camp at the base of Lasermola (4900m). During the summer months, shepherds bring their sheep, yaks and Dzomos for grazing and live in temporary summer huts here. There is a tradition that just 2-3 families from the village of Hundar Dok come here every summer with the animals of all the villagers for grazing and whilst here, they make cheese and butter for the villagers. They stay here till end of August/September to return to their village for the harvesting season. A very pleasant walk again today, camping in a beautiful spot on the banks of a river at the head of the valley. Overnight: camping

Day 17: Phyang Valley: Leaving the pastures behind, we keep climbing towards the snow line and moraine until the top of the Lasermola pass (5400m), taking approximately 2 to 3 hours to the top. At the pass we are rewarded with excellent views of the Karakoram and Zaskar mountain ranges and the valleys on both sides. For those of us who still have energy, we can continue on a little further beyond the pass to catch even better views of Stok Kangri. There will be snow at the pass and we would need to leave camp very early in the morning to make the crossing easier for the animals carrying our kit. From the pass, we descend the Phyang valley to camp at 4400m above Phyang village. (6 – 7 hours). Overnight: camping

Day 18: Phyang to Leh: We descend to the Morubuk pastures and then on to Phyang, where we will be rewarded with wonderful views of the Stok mountain range. We will be picked up by our 4x4 vehicles, which will drive us through the village of Phyang. We will fit in a visit to the local monastery before the short drive back to Leh (45 minutes). Overnight: Hotel in Leh

Day 19/20: Fly Leh to London via Delhi: After a stunning expedition, we head back to the UK via Delhi.

Note: We can easily extend this expedition to include a visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra. This usually adds two or three days on to the overall itinerary.

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.



The School
Travel Consultancy

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