



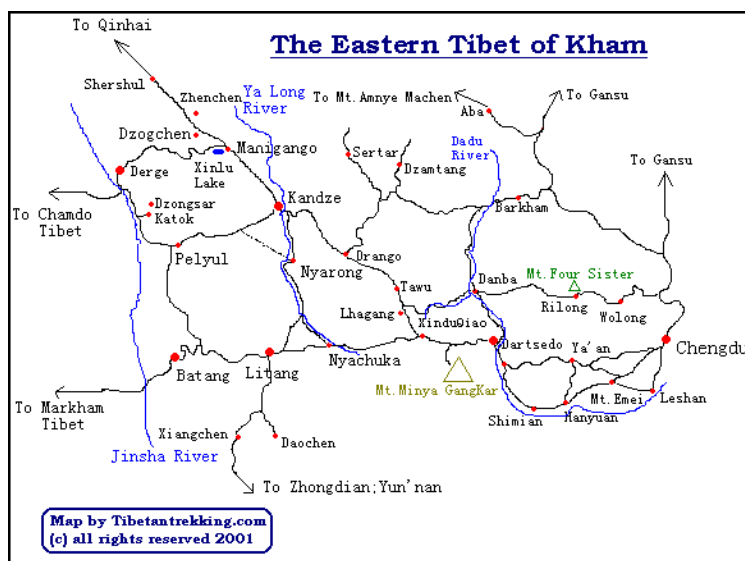
CHINE

TREKKING IN KHAM / EASTERN TIBET ON THE FOOTPATH OF ALEXANDRA DAVID NEEL

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|----------------------------|---|
| Dates: | XXX |
| Price (indicative): | XXX |
| Duration: | 19 days / 18 nights – 10 days trekking |
| Accommodation: | Hotel, guesthouses, and camping. |
| Group: | 8 persons minimum / 12 persons maximum |
| Lead: | 1 International Mountain Leader (IML) and 1 local Tibetan guide |

Located on the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau, the Kham region is one of the three traditional provinces of Tibet (with Ü-Tsang and Amdo). Today Kham is divided between the Tibet Autonomous Region and Sichuan Province, with smaller parts in Yunnan and Qinghai provinces.

About as large as Sweden, the Kham region is made up of high mountain ranges and deep valleys. Its highest point is Mt. Minya Gangkar at 7'556m above sea level. The region is also crossed by two major rivers, the Mekong and the Yangtze. A land of warriors, robbers and Lamas, the Kham has long remained mysterious and rebellious, its inhabitants (Khampa) were reputed to be ferocious soldiers, and excellent horsemen. In the early 20th century, the famous French explorer and travel writer, Alexandra David Néel, crossed the Kham region disguised as a beggar during her 2000km long trip to reach the then forbidden city of Lhasa, and all the way to India. Even today Kham remains wild and remote, with its vast, high altitude plateaus and high mountains populated by 2 million inhabitants, many of them still nomads.



From Chengdu, we will drive across the Kham region from east to west, to reach Derge, capital of one of the most powerful ancient Tibetan kingdoms. After 4 days of travel, visiting and acclimatizing to high altitude, we will depart

from Pelpung for a trek of nine days, through mountains, passes, valleys, pastures and forests ... to finally reach Lake Yilhun Lha-tso, one of the most beautiful sacred lakes of Tibet. The trek will culminate at Dza-La pass at 5050m. During the trek, participants will only carry their day pack. Horses will carry the rest of the luggage and equipment. A local team made up of a Tibetan guide, a cook and several horse(wo)men will accompany the trek.

ITINERARY

NB: The below itinerary is indicative only. Programme may have to be adapted depending on weather conditions, how fit participants are, and other local conditions.

Day 1: Chengdu

- Arrival in Chengdu. Transfer to the hotel.
- In the afternoon, meeting with your guides and other participants, general introduction & briefing on the trip, logistical details etc.



Day 2: Chengdu > Rongdrak (2100m) – 350km / 7 hours drive

- Road to Rongdrak (Danba in Chinese) in the central part of the Gyelrong Gorge area. The Tibetan people of Gyelrong, who speak an archaic Qiangetic dialect, are renowned for their military prowess and the bravery of their men. This region is now best known for the beauty of its villages and traditional architecture which are scattered throughout the valley.
- Night in a guest house/hostel in the pretty village of Tralung (Zhonglu in Chinese).

Day 3: Rongdrak > Drakgo (3200m) – 230km / 6 hours drive

- In the morning, walk in the village with its pretty traditional houses, its fields and of course its famous stone towers whose origin and function remain an intriguing mystery.
- Drive to Dragko (Luhuo in Chinese).
- Visit Garthar monastery, longtok grassland.
- Night in a guest house / hostel.

Day 4: Drakgo > Dzochon (3800m) – 240km / 5 hours drive

- Drive to Dzokchen Monastery. Dzokchen, which means "great perfection" in Tibetan, is the name of a set of Buddhist practices of the Nyingma tradition.
- Visit of Dzokchen Monastery. Founded in 1684 by Dzokchen I Pema Rigdzin on the advice of the 5th Dalai Lama, it became one of the most important monasteries of the Nyingma tradition. In the early 20th century, the monastery had spread throughout Tibet with more than 200 branches.
- Night at the monastery guesthouse.





Day 5: Dzochén > Dégé (3250m) – 150km / 3-4 hours drive

- In the morning hiking in the mountain behind the monastery to the hermitages where great masters have meditated such as Dodrup Jigme Trinle Ozer, Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje, Patrul Rinpoche and Miphan Rinpoche (count 4 to 5 hours for the hike).
- Drive to Derge (Dege in Chinese). This city was once the capital of one of the most powerful kingdoms of Kham. The kings of Derge played an important role in the preservation and development of Buddhism and Tibetan arts, notably by creating a printing house that became the largest and most

renowned in Tibet. Even today, the editions of Kangyur and Tengyur (Buddhist canon translated into Tibetan) are among the most prestigious in Tibetan monasteries.

- Night in an hotel.

Day 6: Dégé > Pelpung (3700m) – 90km / 2 to 3 hours drive

- In the morning, visit the monastery and Derge printing house (Parkhang in Tibetan) where traditional printing methods from engraved wood blocks, are still used.
- In the afternoon, drive to Pelpung monastery, which was the largest Kagyu teaching center in eastern Tibet. Founded in 1717 by Tai Situ VIII Chokyi Jungne, its assembly hall is particularly impressive and has not been destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Visit of the monastery.
- Night in a local guest house.



Day 7: Pelpung > Nyaglung Tang (4100m) – 3 to 4 hours trek

- In the morning, walk in the idyllic setting of the Pelpung Monastery. Upstream of the monastery, possibility to visit a retreat center where great Buddhist masters meditated (3 to 4 hours walk back and forth)
- After lunch, start trekking in an unspoiled area, dotted with sacred places, and sumptuous and varied landscapes. Crossing forest areas to Nyaglung-tang where we will establish the first camp.
- Night in tents.

Day 8: Nyaglung Tang > Meshö (3650m) – 5 to 6 hours trek

- In the morning, after the passage of the Hula pass (4,600 m), descent to the valley of Meshö which means "valley of the medicinal plants" in Tibetan. In the village of Gyalgen, welcome for the night with a Tibetan family. Meet with your guests and discover their way of life half-farming, half-nomadic.
- Night at local people's house.



Day 9 : Meshö (3650m)

- In the morning, visit the Dzongsar Monastery near the village. This Sakya Monastery was founded in 1253 by Drogon Chogyel Pakpa. In the 19th century, it became the seat of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, one of the greatest masters of the Sakya, Nyingma and Kagyu traditions of the 19th century.
- Drive to the Gagu Rutrö retreat center, which has become a favourite of meditators since a great Sakya lama, Khenpo Jamyang Senggé, has settled in this place.
- In the afternoon we will try to meet with a traditional Tibetan Doctor and get introduced to Tibetan traditional medicine (NB : this will depends on doctor availability and local context at the time of the visit).
- Night at local people's house.



Day 10: Meshö > Tashi Tang (4175m) – 3 to 4 hours trek

- Hike along the Meshö-chu River in the Dopu Valley to the camp at Tashi-tang, a beautiful open area traditionally used for the religious ceremonies of Kham kings and Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche.
- Night in tents.

Day 11: Tashi Tang > Turuma (4300m) – 6 to 7 hours trek

- Ascent to Shachen-la pass (4,700 m) and its magnificent panorama of the Dogyel Mönlam mountain which rises to 5,655 m of altitude. Crossing forests, meadows and nomadic encampments.



- Visit to the Rongmé Meditation Center Karmo Taktsang (4,350 m), another site linked to Guru Rinpoche and his consort Yeshe Tsogyal. In this place, the monks who have completed the 9 years of theoretical education of the philosophical college of Dzongsar come to practice mediation for at least 5 years. This is where the famous Mipham Rinpoche made a 13-year retreat.
- Night in tents.

Day 12: Turuma > Ngadrashing (4300m) – 7 to 8 hours trek

- Trek continues the trek to Ngadrashing which means the altar of Ngadra mountain. For the Tibetans, this mountain is a deity and this flat place at its feet is like an altar to present offerings.
- Night in tents.

Day 13: Ngadrashing > Ngamongna (4100m) – 6 to 7 hours trek

- Passage of the Dorda-la pass (4,900 m) and descent into the Hulungnang valley.
- Arrival at the small monastery of Ngamongna to spend the night.
- Night in tents close to the monastery.

Day 14: Ngamongna > Dza-La base camp (4350m) – 6 to 7 hours trek

- Crossing beautiful wild landscapes to the base camp of the Dza-la pass.
- Night in tents.



Day 15: Dza-La base camp > Dza-Tso Lake (4400m) – 6 to 7 hours trek

- Ascent to the Dza-la pass and the highest point of the trek at 5,050 m. Descent to Lake Dza-tso.
- Night in tents.

Day 16: Dza-Tso Lake > Kardzé – 3 to 4 hours trek & 2 hours drive

- In the morning hike to the road where vehicles pick us up.
- Say goodbye to the horsemen.
- Drive to Kardzé (Garze in Chinese).
- Night in a hotel.

Day 17: Kardzé > Barkham – 330km / 6 hours drive

- Early morning departure to Barkham (Maerkang in Chinese) for a long day drive.
- Depending on arrival time, visit the palace of King of Choktse 5 km from the hotel. Choktse was one of the 18 kingdoms of Gyelrong, 17 generations have succeeded to the power of this kingdom from the 11th to the 20th century.
- Night in a guest house.

Day 18: Barkham > Chengdu – 410km / 7 hours drive

- If the visit was not possible the day before, visit of the palace of King of Choktse.
- Drive to Chengdu.
- Farewell dinner and night at the hotel.

Day 19: Departure from Chengdu

- Transfer to the airport and flight back.



DATE & PRICE

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| <u>Proposed Date:</u> XXXX | <u>Price (indicative):</u> Contact us for more info |
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PRICE INCLUDES

- Transportation in country with private vehicles with driver, as per suggested itinerary,
- An International UIMLA Mountain Leader / Trekking Guide,
- A local Tibetan guide,
- Accommodation in hotel, guest house and at local people house (day 3 to 6 and day 16 to 17), in twin rooms*.
- Accommodation under two persons tents* (including camping mattresses) and food (breakfast, lunch, dinner) during the trek – Note that sleeping bags are not provided.
- Trek logistics (baggage handling, cook, toilet tent, dining tent, camping table and stools),
- Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) teleconsultation service (see below),
- Hyperbaric chamber / bag,
- Entrance tickets for the sites indicated in the program.

* For the one who prefer, accommodation in single room and/or tent is available against supplement – Please contact us for more information and pricing.

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International flight,
- Visa fee,
- Snacks, dry-fruits, energy bars during the trek,
- Additional drinks and personal expenses
- The tips of the guide, the driver and the trekking team
- Cancellation insurance, accident and health insurance, medical and repatriation expenses,
- All what is not included under « *Price Includes* » (see above).



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

DURATION

19 days and 18 nights.

FOOD AND ACCOMODATION

9 Nights in hotel / guest-house – half board.

2 night at local people house – half board.

7 nights camping – full board.

Noon lunch covered during traveling time before and after the trek.

Special consideration regarding food:

During the trek meals will be prepared by the Tibetan cook. For any food preference or intolerance, please inform us at time of booking to ensure that we can answer them. It is possible on request to have a vegetarian menu. However, a gluten-free menu is not possible. Meals with little gluten would be possible but given the type of food available in the areas crossed and the difficulties of supply, we can not guarantee 100% gluten-free meals. It is also advisable to bring small snacks such as cereal or energy bars, dried fruits etc. according to personal suitability.

TOUR LEADER

Julien Temple is an International (UIMLA) Mountain Leader based in Geneva and operates most of the year in the Alps. Before becoming a trekking guide, Julien worked 25 years in development aid and humanitarian assistance, including 10 years in Asia. During the 5 years he spent in China as Head of Mission for an NGO, he worked and travelled extensively in Tibetan areas, developing and managing development projects in and around Lhasa, and exploring remote parts of Tibet, Sichuan and Qinghai. Julien is a member of both the French and Swiss Mountain Leader Association.

GROUP

Minimum of 8 persons / maximum of 12 persons.

DIFFICULTY

High altitude trekking culminating at 5050m; 6-7 hours hiking / day (up to 8 hours on certain days).



WEATHER AND CLIMATE

The Kham region is at the crossing of several climatic areas. The climate in the high plateau and mountains becomes increasingly cold and dry as the altitude increases. In contrast, the Sichuan valleys bordering the region are more humid and temperate. Cold flows descend from the Tibetan plateau in winter, and warm, moist flows rise from plains in summer. During the September period, precipitation in the mountains is possible. Rain gear suitable for trekking are needed.



In high altitude, the days can be very sunny. Even though temperatures in this season are relatively mild during the day, they can drop significantly as the fall season approach, and will be cold at night. Equip yourself accordingly, to protect from strong solar radiation (hat, sunscreen, mountain sunglasses ...), as well as cold (mountain / trek clothing adapted to local conditions).

HEALTH

Due to the high altitude (with 9 nights at more than 4000 m altitude), participants are expected to be in good health. If your last medical visit dates from relatively long ago or if you have had health problems, we recommend that you consult your doctor, mentioning your trip and its specific conditions (altitude, physical effort, climate ...)



TRANSPORT

- Ground transportation will be done with private vehicle (minibus, cars) with drivers.
- Horses will carry the luggage during the trek.

FORMALITIES

- **Valid passport** with at least two blank visa pages and at least 6 months of remaining validity.
- **Chinese visa is required to travel to China for most nationalities.** An invitation letter will be provided by our Chinese partner with instructions on applying for the visa. It traditionally takes about 8 days to obtain a Chinese visa, depending on nationality and place of application.

At high altitude, some people can suffer from **Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS)**, a negative health effect of high altitude, caused by acute exposure to low amounts of oxygen at high altitude. Most symptoms (headache, swelling, loss of appetite, nausea ...) usually disappear after a few days of acclimatization. However, they sometimes get worse, requiring an immediate descent at a lower altitude.

During the trip, it is important to be well hydrated (drink at least 2 liters of water a day) and inform your guide or the local guide of any health problem or abnormal tiredness. In order to assist participants with AMS or other altitude-related health concerns, your guide has received specific training on first aid and mountain sickness from the French Training and Research Institute on Mountain Medicine (IFREMMONT) in Chamonix, France. In addition, all participant will benefit from "SOS AMS", a 24/7 specialized teleconsultation service from IFREMMONT doctors, for the full duration of the trip. This service is included in the price of the trip.

There is no compulsory vaccination required to travel to China. However its is recommended to ensure you are up to date with your routine vaccins such as DPT, MMR, Chickenpox, Hepatitis A, Typhoid. In addition you may consider vaccins against Hepatitis B and and raby. For more infoirmation and advice please consult your doctor.

REGISTRATION

To register to this trip, please fill the registration form and send it back, together with pre-payment of 40% of the total price. Payment can be done via bank transfer to:

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|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Account holder: | Julien Temple-Boyer |
| Account number: | 279 -275684.41Q |
| IBAN: | CH60 0027 9279 2756 8441 Q |
| BIC: | UBSWCHZH80A |

An official receipt confirming your booking will be delivered to you upon payment.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- 40% of the total amount of the trip at registration.
- Remaining payment to be done 60 days before to departure.

CANCELLATION POLICY

- Cancellation 61 days or more before departure: a cancellation fee of 300€ will apply.
- Between 60 and 31 days prior to departure: loss of deposit (40% of the trip package).
- 30 days or less prior to departure: 100% of the trip package will be charged.
- We reserve the right to cancel the trip prior to departure due to reason outside our control (i.e. Force majeure, political instability, disease outbreak, or any other unforeseeable event). In such a case, we will either postpone the trip, suggest an alternative itinerary, or refund the trip price.