

Songtsam Lhasa Tour “Circling Holy Lhasa” 4N/5D



“In Tibetan culture legend has it that in another time and space there is a kingdom called Shambala. It is a quiet and peaceful kingdom because everybody there knows the source of happiness.”

Mr Pema Dorjee

Founder & Chairman of Songtsam

Lhasa is the capital of the Tibet Autonomous Region and is located at an elevation of 3,992m (11,975ft), making it one of the highest cities in the world. Due to its highland temperate and semi-arid monsoon climate, it is known as the 'Sunshine City' receiving nearly 3,000 hours of sunlight each year. The city's name literally translates to the "Place of the Gods" and has been the cultural, economic, political, and religious centre of Tibet since ancient times. Home to the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple, and the Drepung and Sera monasteries, it's the most representative "holy land" in the world because of its depth of history and strong cultural heritage. It is said that if you have not been to Lhasa, you will never know the history and essence of Tibetan culture. It is a city of mystical wonder and hidden beauty, attracting people from every corner of the world to visit, live, study, pilgrimage, and most of all, to be enlightened.

Songtsam Linka Lhasa (3,700m)

Built on the edge of an old park our retreat offers spectacular views of the nearby Potala Palace located only 5 kilometers away. From the hotel's slaked lime coloured walls to the indigo carved windows and fish-fin shaped facade, all of these architectural details pay great respect to traditional artisans, Tibetan culture, and ancient wisdom. Rooms exhibit a unique combination of modern and traditional Tibetan aesthetics that are elegantly decorated with wooden floors, wall tapestries, and handcrafted copperware. Each room is also fully equipped with oxygen concentrators to relieve AMS and ensure good rest.





Trip Schedule

Program starts and ends in Lhasa. All information in this itinerary is accurate to the best of our knowledge but please note that changes to our trips can and do occur.

Day	Overnight Location	Activities
D1	Songtsam Linka Lhasa (3,700m) Superior Suite Room D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pick up from Lhasa Gonggar Airport and check into hotel. - Relax to acclimatise to the altitude. - Dinner at the hotel.
D2	Songtsam Linka Lhasa (3,700m) Superior Suite Room B, L, D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After breakfast, visit Potala Palace, the iconic heart of Tibetan Buddhism and the highest palace in the world. - Return to the hotel for lunch. - In the afternoon, take part in a Thangka painting workshop to learn and understand the craftsmanship and techniques needed to make the delicate and intricate Tibetan Buddhist art. - Dinner at the hotel.
D3	Songtsam Linka Lhasa (3,700m) Superior Suite Room B, L, D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After breakfast, visit Jokhang Temple, the spiritual center of Tibet and the holiest destination for all Tibetan pilgrims. - Afterwards go to Barkhor Street to experience the most vibrant bazaar in Lhasa. - Have lunch at a local restaurant. - In the afternoon visit Ramoche Monastery to see the life-sized statue of the 8-year-old Sakyamuni. - Dinner at the hotel.
D4	Songtsam Linka Lhasa (3,700m) Superior Suite Room B, L, D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After breakfast, visit the Zhayeba Monastery, which consists of a series of small cave-chapels and has now become one of the four most sacred places to conduct religious rites in Tibet. - Return to the hotel for lunch. - In the afternoon enjoy traditional Tibetan performances and "Lhasa Time" afternoon tea. - Dinner at the hotel
D5	Departure B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After breakfast transfer to Lhasa Gonggar Airport.



Trip Costs

Date		Unit Price (CNY)/per person				Single Supplement
		Group of 2	Group of 4	Group of 6	Group of 8	
High Season	Jul 1 st - Aug 25 th , 2020	13,010	10,300	10,860	9,960	3,560
Shoulder Season	Apr 1 st - Apr 26 th , 2020 May 6 th - Jun 30 th , 2020 Aug 26 th - Sep 26 th , 2020 Oct 9 th - Oct 31 st , 2020 Dec 20 th , 2020 - Jan 4 th , 2021	11,960	9,480	9,990	9,170	3,160
Low Season	Nov 1 st - Dec 19 th , 2020 Jan 5 th - Feb 8 th , 2021 Feb 20 th - Feb. 28 th , 2021	10,910	8,660	9,120	8,370	2,760
Holidays	Apr 27 th - May 5 th , 2020 Sep 27 th - Oct 8 th , 2020 Feb 9 th - Feb 19 th , 2021	13,360	10,650	11,210	10,310	3,960
Tibetan Travel Permit		CNY 700/per person <i>*Songtsam will assist with your application</i> <i>*Guests from HK, Macau, Mainland China DO NOT need apply</i>				

**The above prices are based on TWO guests sharing one room.*

Land Costs INCLUDES:

- All land transfers on well-maintained local transportation indicated in the itinerary.
- All admission fees and activities as indicated in the itinerary.
- All accommodation based on double occupancy.
- All meals starting from dinner on the first day to breakfast on the last day.
- Drinking water and snacks throughout the trip.
- Complimentary soft drinks, coffee, tea, and drinking water at Songtsam Linka Lhasa.
- Service of local guides.

Land Costs DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Medical, travel insurance, or evacuation insurance plans.
- Personal telecommunication.
- Domestic or international airfare to and from Lhasa.
- Excursions and activities not included in itinerary.

Travel Notes:

- Since you will be travelling in a high-altitude area, we do not recommend you join this trip if you have heart disease, high blood pressure, or respiratory disease.
- This itinerary is suitable for ages 18-70.
- Due to the plateau's strong ultraviolet radiation please prepare 50+ sunblock and sunglasses.
- This itinerary needs to have a signed travel contract and exemption agreement.



Trip Expectations

Trip difficulty: This journey is considered easy to moderate. Our itinerary includes full days of activities, which start early in the morning and end in the evening. Each person can respond to a change in altitude differently so in the event of altitude sickness we would move to a lower altitude. After plenty of rest, symptoms usually subside. For more information we advise consulting with your doctor.

Road conditions and transportation: Depending on the size of the group, we travel in well maintained SUVs or vans. Experienced Songtsam drivers drive all vehicles. Some sections of the road follow winding mountain paths and are bumpy especially when some parts are under construction. We will make stops at beautiful villages and scenic spots on the way and will prepare water and snacks for the road trips.

Weather: During this trip you will experience diverse temperatures. The temperature can change from 20 degrees centigrade to 5 degrees centigrade within one day. Wearing layers of clothes is advisable to allow for changes in temperature.

Meals: During your journey you will get to try Tibetan cuisine, which includes a good amount of barley flour-based items such as dumplings and noodles, as well as red meat such as yak and mutton. At Lhasa Linka we will provide set menus, which combine Tibetan and Chinese cuisine and include complimentary soft drinks and a glass of wine.

Emergency evacuation and procedures: We suggest all travellers purchase an International SOS (an AEA company) Service Plan, which provides emergency evacuation to the nearest medical facility of international standards.

Trip escorts: Our well-trained local guides are specialists on Tibet and the local region and will travel with you throughout the trip. All originating from different villages and areas, all Songtsam guides have stories to share about their hometowns, which provides deeper travel experiences for all guests to understand the local culture and geography.

The Songtsam Story



Some memories never fade. It seems like only yesterday that Songtsam founder and Chairman Mr Pema Dorjee was on his way back to Shangri-La with ambitious plans to shoot a documentary of his childhood home. While it had been many years since he had last set foot in his native land, fond memories came pouring back. He remembered the excitement of climbing local mountains as a young boy, the intimate solitude of his town's temples, and the people who helped define him as a person.

Finally, he was home. The rush of emotions made him wonder: How could he give back? What more could he do? Soon it all became clear. He thought about the region's rich culture and how he could create a way for travellers to come and experience a new way of life. A place that was more than the usual hotel and gift shops, a place where guests could immerse themselves in living history. So Pema turned his family's small guesthouse into the first Songtsam lodge.

Inspired by the rich Tibetan culture, he worked with local artisans and members of the community to help produce and run Songtsam Lodge Shangri-La. Eleven properties and eighteen years later, Pema's vision continues to grow, and so does the Songtsam experience.

About the Area



The great China tectonic plate runs into the Tibetan Plateau in northern Yunnan, forging high mountain ranges with soaring snow-packed peaks. Three major rivers, the Yangtze (Jinshajiang), Mekong (Lancangjiang) and Salween (Nujiang) run through deep gorges with wild, untamed scenery. This charming destination is diverse in nature and culture due to its unique geography, indeed, one can experience all four seasons in just one day. Due to the vast range in altitude, travellers can quickly move from cold snowy mountains to warm flower-filled valleys.

Northwest Yunnan is the richest area in China in terms of biodiversity, boasting unique flora and fauna, and is possibly the most biologically diverse temperate region on earth. This is the original location of the world's gardens: in spring and summer, the surrounding hills are blanketed with rhododendrons and camellias. The Victorians collected and brought these to the Western world. The temperate forests and lowlands contain over 3,000 species of orchids and more than 200 of the world's 400 species of rhododendron. In summer time, strikingly blue irises are in blossom along the mountain paths.



Bird watching and cycling bring travellers in close proximity to all kinds of migrant birds at their winter heaven around Napa Lake, including the black-necked crane – the holy bird for Tibetans. High in the forests between the Mekong and Yangtze River lives the rare Yunnan Black snub-nosed monkey (*Rhinopithecus biteti*), one of the world's most endangered primates - fewer than 2,000 are now found in the wild. These monkeys live at the highest altitude (3,000-4,500m) of any animal primate.



Historically, people were separated by the soaring mountains and deep gorges in this area, facilitating the development of the most distinctive ethnic cultures. Kham Tibetans in Diqing are characterized by their big white wooden houses and colourful customs, which differ from Tibetans in other areas of Tibet. In this area along the Lancang River, although the shining golden roofs of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries sparkle in the light, Tibetans here follow Catholic teachings and practice their ceremonies at small Catholic churches surrounded by vineyards. Travelling from the highlands to the banks of the rivers, styles of housing and costume change. The Lisu people, another ethnic group, dwell close to the water in the mountain valleys.



The Tea Horse Road, an ancient trade route linking tea-producing areas with Tibet, connects the mountains and deep gorges as well as different ethnic groups. For hundreds of years, horse caravans travelled along this route carrying tea to Tibet and India, and bringing other commodities back home. This route has formed a corridor rich in culture, as different groups interact with each other in their daily lives. Today, one can travel around this area journeying along different parts of this ancient trail.

