

Earthbound Expeditions

Holy Mount Kailash Mansarovar Full Moon Tour

15 days, from US$3,087 per person

Duration	Group size	Country
15 days	**25 people**	**Tibet**

Holy Mount Kailash Mansarovar Full Moon Tour Overview

Meals, transport and equipment for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra with experienced organisers

Join the Mt. Kailash Mansarovar tour with Earthbound Expeditions, which brings you to the Mansarovar and Kailash area on the full moon day and night.

This pilgrimage takes you to two of the most important religious sites in Tibet, Mount Kailash and Lake Mansarovar, which are sacred to followers of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and the Bon religion. Earthbound Expeditions has been taking people to Kailash Mansarovar since 1999.

Earthbound Expeditions has designed this 15-day itinerary, which starts in Kathmandu with darshan at Pashupatinath and continues overland to Kailash Mansarovar. We can also organise the Kailash yatra via Lhasa with an exit through the Nepal to China border at Kerung or Nyalam.

The 15-day Kailash Mansarovar Yatra follows one of the most reliable classic routes to Kailash Mansarovar in Tibet.
If you wish to do the Kailash yatra via Simikot and Hilsa (west Nepal), using a helicopter for part of the route, we can also organise that.

Mount Kailash (6,638 m), known to Hindus as Kailash Parvat, is the most sacred mountain in Asia. Hindus believe that Kailash Parvat is the abode of Lord Shiva, which is why he is known as Kailashpati Mahadev. The peak is also sacred to Buddhists, Jains and followers of Bon.
Lake Mansarovar lies on the Tibetan plateau beside Mount Kailash and is connected to nearby Lake Rakshastal by the natural Ganga Chhu channel. Its colour changes through the day. A Mount Kailash tour and a holy bath in Lake Mansarovar are believed to bring salvation (moksha) and to remove all the sins acquired during a lifetime.

Several routes lead to Kailash and Mansarovar. The journey is much easier today than in the past, but some people still find it challenging, particularly the circumambulation of Mount Kailash (the parikrama or kora). Please prepare yourself well, both mentally and physically, before joining the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. If you have difficulty with the Kailash parikrama, you can hire a horse or yak to ride at extra cost. Earthbound Expeditions has organised the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra safely since 1999, and we are a well-established company organising trips in the Himalayan region.

We can drive up to Lake Mansarovar and to Tarboche (Yama Dwar), the starting point of the Mt. Kailash parikrama, so no walking is needed to reach them. Besides the Mt. Kailash and Lake Mansarovar parikramas, the main highlights of the journey are Tirthapuri, the place of Vishnu where the Sutlej river flows; Gauri Kund, the lake of compassion; Yama Dwar, the starting point of the Mt. Kailash parikrama; Shivasthal; Ashtapad, at the foot of the sacred mountain; the Tarboche flagpole; and the sky burial site.

Meals, transport and equipment for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra

You benefit from our knowledge and experience, as we have been taking people safely to Kailash Mansarovar for the last 20 years. We operate the tour ourselves and do not hand groups over to local agents. We aim to run and manage our tours to a high standard.

Our business is driven by passion rather than profit. We also support social causes: we built 153 classrooms after the earthquake, have built many schools and libraries, and run health camps for underprivileged communities. Please see our blog post 'Our Business Is More Passion-Driven Than Profit'. By travelling with us, you support an organisation with a commitment to corporate social responsibility.

When is the best time to visit Kailash Mansarovar?

Kailash Mansarovar can generally be visited at any time from April to October each year.
From April, the start of the tourist season in Tibet, visibility is good and the views are clear.

Earthbound Expeditions is recommended by Lonely Planet, TripAdvisor, the New York Times, the Guardian and many other national and international newspapers and magazines. The leader and co-owner of the company, Mr.Rajan, has led the trip to Kailash Mansarovar over 18 times, and our support crew are well trained and professional, with many years of experience on Himalayan expeditions.

The Kailash and Mansarovar parikrama (kora)

We drive all the way to Mansarovar by bus. The Lake Mansarovar parikrama is done by bus (provided by the Ngari Kailash tourism authority). For the Kailash parikrama (kora), we drive to Tarboche (Yama Dwar) and walk from there for 3 days. The total walking distance around Kailash is about 40 km over 3 days.

On the first day, we walk about 14 km to Diraphuk Gompa (north face of Kailash). The second day is about 18 km via the Dolma La pass to Zuthulphuk, and the third day is about 8 km to the end point of the parikrama. If you cannot walk, you can ride a horse, or return to Darchen from Yama Dwar and wait there for the others to complete the Kailash parikrama trek.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ny-NsLarXOo
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0a_UYbBv_o
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ZWwbTq0nZU&t=36s
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkfdSCHOJXk
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwJme3ITgOM
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXA295iB0GE

We have fixed departure tours that bring you to the Kailash Mansarovar area on a full moon day.

In 2025, the full moon days are May 12, June 11, July 10, August 9, September 7 and October 7, and our Kailash Mansarovar Yatra departures can be timed to include them.

Earthbound Expeditions is recommended by Lonely Planet, TripAdvisor, the New York Times, The Guardian and many other national and international newspapers and magazines. The Holy Mount Kailash Mansarovar Full Moon Tour Package from Kathmandu, Nepal starts from $3087 per person. For more information on departure dates and group size, please contact us.

We also have a separate website for Kailash Mansarovar tours. Please visit https://www.kailashmanasarovaryatra.com/ for more details of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.

Itinerary

Day 1

Arrive in Kathmandu

We meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel, followed by a briefing and preparation for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, arrival day Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Dinner

Day 2

Kathmandu sightseeing and drive to Nagarkot or Dhulikhel

Full-day sightseeing in the Kathmandu Valley. You visit the Hindu temple complex at Pashupatinath (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), the largest Buddhist stupa at Boudhanath, the 2000-year-old Swayambhunath (Monkey Temple) and Patan. Later, we drive to Nagarkot (7200 ft), a hill station with views of the Himalaya on a clear day.

Altitude: 2,175 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Hotel, Nagarkot Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3

Nagarkot or Dhulikhel to Kathmandu

After watching the sunrise and mountain views from Nagarkot, you can take an optional 4-hour hike down to Banepa. We then drive back to Kathmandu via the historic town of Bhaktapur. Overnight in Kathmandu and preparation for the Tibet trip.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: Optional 4 hrs Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4

Fly from Kathmandu to Lhasa

Arrive in Lhasa, the holy city of Tibet, with its rich culture and history. On arrival, clear immigration and customs, collect your luggage and follow the signs to the exit. An Earthbound Expeditions representative will be waiting outside with a sign reading 'Welcome Earthbound Expeditions'. The rest of the day is free to rest and prepare for the journey ahead.

Altitude: 3,656 m On foot: None, flight day Night: Hotel, Lhasa Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5

Lhasa sightseeing

Today is a full day of sightseeing in Lhasa, which also helps with acclimatisation. You have time to explore the Potala Palace, the former home of the Dalai Lama and Tibet\'s best-known landmark, with over 1,000 rooms, 10,000 shrines and over 3500 kg of gold on its golden roof. You also visit the Jokhang, Tibet\'s holiest temple, with its valuable statues and frescoes, and the Norbulingka, or Summer Palace, from which the present Dalai Lama fled in 1959. The Jokhang is the oldest temple and holds a statue of the Buddha at 11 years of age, given to Songtsen Gampo in the 7th century by the family of his Chinese queen. We also take you to the Sera and Drepung monasteries around Lhasa. If you wish to shop, visit the Barkhor, the busy bazaar of old Lhasa on the pilgrim route around the Jokhang, where you can buy souvenirs of Tibet. On both days we spend about 6 hours sightseeing. The drives are short, but there are some steps to climb and some walking at the monasteries, palaces and market.

Altitude: 3,656 m On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs Night: Hotel, Lhasa Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6

Drive from Lhasa to Shigatse

Drive to Shigatse, home of the well-known Tashilhunpo Monastery, the seat of the Panchen Lama. Visit Tashilhunpo Monastery and the surrounding area. Overnight in a hotel in Shigatse.

Altitude: 3,900 m On foot: None, 6–7 hr drive Night: Hotel, Shigatse Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7

Drive from Shigatse to Saga

After an early breakfast, we set off on the long drive to Saga. Our team serves a packed lunch on the way.

Altitude: 4,640 m On foot: None, 8–9 hr drive Night: Hotel, Saga Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8

Drive from Saga to Lake Mansarovar

After another early start, we drive over the Mayum La pass (5100 m), the highest point of the road journey. The drive is very long, on good roads, across the Tibetan Plateau, where the landscape changes from sand dunes to rocky ground and grassland. Today you have your first view of Mt. Kailash and Lake Mansarovar, which for many pilgrims is the fulfilment of a lifelong wish. On arrival at Lake Mansarovar, we change to the Chinese government bus to tour the Kailash Mansarovar region and begin the Mansarovar parikrama. The Mansarovar circuit is approximately 110 km. We complete half of it today and the other half on the way back after the Kailash parikrama.

Altitude: 4,590 m On foot: None, 8–9 hr drive Night: Guesthouse, Lake Mansarovar Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9

Rest day at Lake Mansarovar, puja and havan

Today is for worship, rest and acclimatisation at Lake Mansarovar. Together we perform puja, havan, meditation, the holy bath, tarpan and other rituals. You also have time to relax and explore around the lake.

Altitude: 4,590 m On foot: Optional 2–3 hrs Night: Guesthouse, Lake Mansarovar Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10

Drive from Lake Mansarovar to Darchen, trek to Diraphuk

Today we drive 45 km from Lake Mansarovar to Darchen, where the yatris who are not doing the full parikrama stay. Those not joining the parikrama can complete a short parikrama of about 100 m around the Tarboche flagpole, which is also considered a parikrama of Mount Kailash. We continue 13 km to Tarboche, where our prepaid horses wait, and then begin the 12 km trek to Diraphuk. The Chinese authorities sometimes allow us to drive the first 2 km to the starting point; otherwise we walk. Parikrama day 1, Tarboche to Diraphuk: 6 to 7 hours, 12 km. The trail is mostly flat with small ascents and descents as far as Diraphuk. From here you have a close view of the north face of Mount Kailash, the Kailash Maha Shiva Lingam.

Altitude: 4,900 m On foot: 12 km, 6–7 hrs Night: Guesthouse, Dirapuk Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11

Charan Sparsh hike from the north face of Kailash

Today we walk to touch the feet of Mt. Kailash (Charan Sparsh). The round trip is about 7 miles (about 10 km). The walking time is about 6 hours, and the full round trip takes 9 to 10 hours.

Altitude: 4,900 m On foot: 10 km, 6–9 hrs Night: Guesthouse, Dirapuk Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12

Parikrama day 2: Diraphuk to Zuthulphuk via the Dolma La pass

We start early, at 5 am. We trek 15 km from Diraphuk over the Dolma La pass (5650 m / 18,532 ft) to the Zuthulphuk valley (4760 m / 15,613 ft). This is the most physically and mentally demanding day of the yatra. The climb to the Dolma La pass (18,532 ft / 5660 m) is 6 km uphill. Many yatris find the day difficult, and the short personal puja at the pass is a very meaningful moment. The weather can be unpredictable, and snowstorms sometimes occur at the pass. After the pass, the descent passes Gauri Kund, a blue lake. Only experienced mountaineers can reach the lake itself. The 6 km descent is slippery, so walk carefully and steadily and use your walking stick down to the valley floor. From there, a flat, gradual walk of 3 km leads to the guesthouse.

Altitude: 4,760 m On foot: 15 km, 8–10 hrs Night: Guesthouse, Zuthulphuk Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 13

Parikrama day 3: Zuthulphuk to Darchen, drive to Saga

Trek from Zuthulphuk to the end of the parikrama. It is a pleasant walk with good views, many caves and mani stones, and migrating birds can be seen. The trail is known as the Valley of Enlightenment. Near Darchen, where the parikrama ends, we collect our bags and the yatris who stayed at Darchen, and drive to Chiu Gompa so that they can take a holy bath in Lake Mansarovar now that the parikrama is complete. We then drive directly to Saga.

Altitude: 4,640 m On foot: 12 km, 3–4 hrs Night: Hotel, Saga Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14

Drive from Saga to Kerung, Syabrubesi and Kathmandu

We start very early for a long drive on a narrow, winding and bumpy road with good views. The drive takes about 10 to 12 hours in total.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, 10–12 hr drive Night: Hotel, Kathmandu Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 15

Departure from Kathmandu

After breakfast, we transfer you to Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu for your flight home. Your tour ends here. Namaste and Hari Om.

Altitude: 1,400 m On foot: None, departure day Night: No overnight Meals: Breakfast

What's included

- Arrival and departure transfers by air-conditioned coach.
- Twin-share accommodation in 4-star hotels with full board meals.
- (Hotel upgrades are possible at extra cost.)
- Sightseeing tours with monument entrance fees.
- Flight from Kathmandu to Lhasa, and bus from Timure to Kathmandu.
- Luxury bus for the Tibet tour.
- One support truck.
- Best available accommodation at Kerung, Saga, Lake Mansarovar, Darchen, Diraphuk and Zuthulphuk during the Kailash journey.
- Full board vegetarian meals prepared by our experienced cook and staff.
- Boiled water free of charge.
- English-speaking Tibetan guide.
- One team leader and experienced support staff.
- All travel permits.
- Tibet and China visa fee.
- Duffel bag, beanie and snood, free of charge.
- Down jacket and sleeping bag, to be returned after the trip.
- First aid medical kit.
- Oxygen bottle and PAC (portable altitude chamber).
- One bottle of holy water from Lake Mansarovar.

Not included

- International flights and travel insurance.
- Evacuation costs in the event of an emergency.
- Hire of a horse, pony or porter during the 3-day Kailash parikrama.
- Personal expenses.
- Any other expenses not mentioned above.

Photos, videos and reviews of this trip:
earthbound.rajansimkhada.com/holy-mount-kailash-mansarovar-full-moon-tour