



# India

## Mountains, Desert, Ladakh

14 Days

An unrivalled high-altitude desert in the Indian Himalayas Ladakh also known as Little Tibet. Our trip encompasses a challenging trek with breath taking views over the Karakorum and Indian Himalayas. Witness snow-capped peaks, glaciers, alpine pastures and shepherd's trails.

We also engage with the local people and their customs. The isolated former kingdom of Ladakh takes strong religious and cultural influences from Buddhism. We'll spend time in Leh, the capital of Ladakh, and explore its vibrant culture and impressive monasteries. A true all-round destination that offers a fascinating insight into a different side of India



Learn more about our  
[Carbon Labels](#)

# Your Recommended Expedition Itinerary

- Days 1 - 2** **Depart from the UK, Arrive in Delhi** LD  
We meet our local STC Expedition Leader on arrival in Delhi and transfer to the hotel for a welcome briefing and to freshen up. Stretching our legs this afternoon, we set off to explore some of Delhi's best attractions including Jama Masjid, Gandhi Samadhi and India Gate.
- Day 3** **Delhi sightseeing** BLD  
Today after breakfast, we visit Gandhi Nagar, known to most as the Asia's biggest readymade garments/textile market. We will see a large number of shops and factories in its lanes and marketplaces manufacturing and selling readymade garments at a frantic pace. Later we ride the metro and get a feel for Delhi's efficient and clean train services – that's despite millions travelling each day! After lunch take a rickshaw ride to explore the old city including Chandni Chowk, the oldest spice bazaar in the city and Raj Ghat, the cremation place of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of modern India. Back to the hotel for an early dinner.
- Days 4 - 5** **Fly to Leh, acclimatization, sightseeing** BLD  
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 transfer directly to our hotel and the rest of the day will be spent relaxing and acclimatizing to the altitude with a gentle orientation walk of Leh. You can expect to feel the effects of the rarefied atmosphere, so we advise to take it easy for the first day or two and drink lots of water.
- Days 6 - 7** **Leh community project** BLD  
These days are set aside for project working days and shadowing local families - the exact nature of the project will depend on what the local community needs at the time of our visit. Teams have in the past completed community projects involving the restoration of important cultural and religious stupas. A stupa is a dome-shaped building erected as a Buddhist shrine, usually containing relics, and used as a place of meditation. There are many dotted around Ladakh, and our project is to restore, clean-up and white wash those surrounding Leh.
- Day 8** **Spituk Monastery to Rumbak Lato, begin trekking** BLD  
Visit Spituk monastery and from there we drive for about an hour to Rumbak Lato. This marks the start of our trek! The trek begins gently, approx. 2.5 hrs along to camp near Rumbak (3878m). This area is famous for blue sheep, snow leopards, Tibetan wolves, wild dogs and red fox. Homestays are becoming popular in this village, and we can visit one of the homes for a cup of traditional tea. This afternoon we explore the local area.
- Day 9** **Rumbak Lato to Yurutse trekking** BLD  
Continue on to the lovely little settlement of Yurutse (4178m). Follow a well-defined path along the mountainside to a small valley and on to the base of Gandala (4543m), our camp for tonight, arriving in time for lunch.



- Day 10**      **Gandala Pass to Skiu**      BLD  
 Today is the biggest trekking day! We follow the path up the mountainside to the top of Gandala pass (4979m) where we are rewarded with excellent views of the Stok Mountain range. Afterwards there is a long but easy descent to Shingo (4170m). The route is now through wonderful gorges on to camp near the village of Skiu (3360m), approx. 5hrs of trekking.
- Day 11**      **Finish trek in Chilling, white water rafting**      BLD  
 The trek finishes today along a rough jeep track to the village of Chilling, approx. 3 hrs. A short drive brings us to the start of our white-water rafting adventure along a more gentle section of the Zanskar river!
- Day 12**      **Fly to Delhi**      BLD  
 Today we fly back to Delhi and transfer by road to Agra, 3.5hrs. This evening we explore the sights and sounds of Agra before a well-earned traditional feast
- Day 13**      **Agra Fort & Taj Mahal**      BLD  
 An early morning start today sees us hopefully beat the crowds to witness one of the world's most extraordinary sights – the Taj Mahal at sunrise. After, we start our journey back to Delhi, visiting en-route the Agra Fort, which lies across the river Yamuna. It was here that Aurangzeb, the third son of Shah Jahan, kept his father under house arrest. One can get a fantastic view of the Taj from the little octagonal tower at the fort. We then continue into Delhi, reaching the city in time for dinner.
- Day 14**      **Depart Delhi**      B  
 There should be time for final souvenir shopping this morning before we catch our return flight to the UK. Depending on flight times, this may arrive early the next day.



## Look what's included:

- International flights
- All accommodation, transportation and activities
- All food as described above
- Local, bi-lingual, first-aid qualified STC leader
- Parent and student trip launch presentation
- Pre-travel training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for school staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Emergency Medical & Repatriation Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Donations to two carbon & conservation charities
- Free Fairtrade t-shirt for every participant and teacher
- Free travel guide book to your destination

## What's not included:

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations or Covid tests
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters (ask for guidance)
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Personal effects and cancellation insurance



## A word about Responsible Tourism

On our expeditions and educational journeys, we strive to connect teachers and students with the people they meet, nurture the cultures they experience and protect the beautiful environments they are lucky enough to explore.

Many companies talk the talk, few truly walk the walk. We are far from perfect, but we are leading the way in sustainability in the school travel sector. In 2018 we were the first UK travel company to become **Travelife Certified** – a verified sustainability certificate formally recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.



This is our passion, and we'd love to tell you more about it in due course. In the meantime, for more information on some of the steps we take as a company to make our operations more sustainable, please visit:

<https://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/what-do-we-do/>

Trees for Life

## Physical Rating for this trip: Grade 5



A high level of fitness is required to participate on a trip of this level. We recommend previous multi-day trekking experience at this level, either in the UK or internationally. You need complete confidence in your ability to trek for multiple days over difficult terrain and cope with significant variations in temperatures throughout the tour. Altitude could be higher than 4,500m but good acclimatisation will be built into the programme. Longer periods of trekking could be of a sustained nature, but rest days will be planned. A pre-travel fitness programme of four to six months is essential to ensure you are in optimal fitness to make the most of this trip.

## Cultural Rating for this trip: Grade 5



Students should expect extended periods in remote locations where little or no English is spoken (your Trip Leader will always be fluent in the local languages and English). Accommodation is likely to be basic with limited access to hot water or other services. Expect the food to be quite different to home. You should observe local customs so not to cause offence and large parts of the itinerary will be in poor or challenging areas. Tourism in places grade 5 is likely to be less common, so strong traditional cultures are still very much in evidence



## Travel Safety & Other Expedition Training

Preparing students and teachers for their upcoming adventure is an opportunity to teach important life skills and a vital part of our overall approach to safety management. Please ask for your quote for the training schedule specific to your expedition. Topics covered will include:

### Responsible Tourism workshop

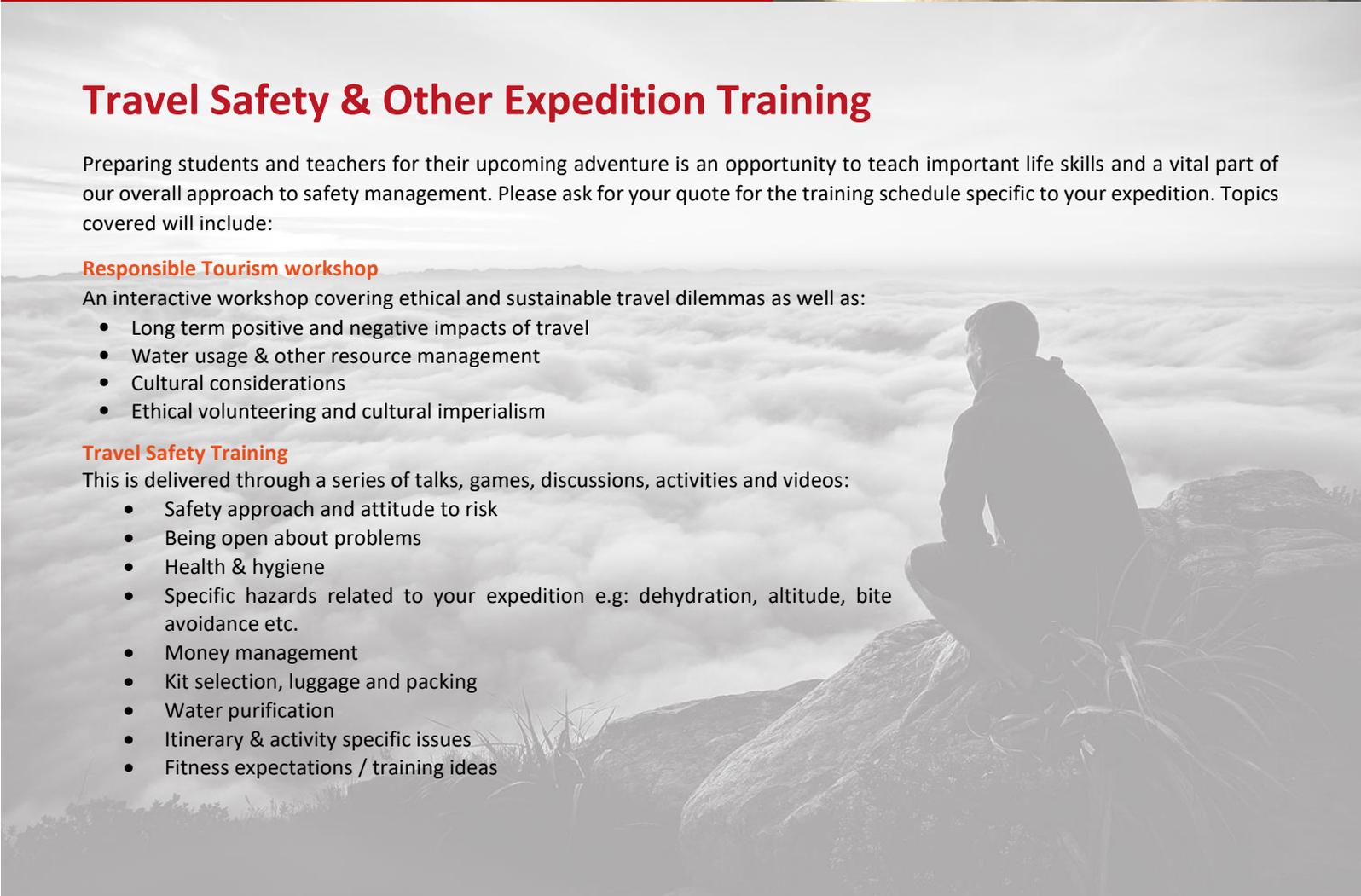
An interactive workshop covering ethical and sustainable travel dilemmas as well as:

- Long term positive and negative impacts of travel
- Water usage & other resource management
- Cultural considerations
- Ethical volunteering and cultural imperialism

### Travel Safety Training

This is delivered through a series of talks, games, discussions, activities and videos:

- Safety approach and attitude to risk
- Being open about problems
- Health & hygiene
- Specific hazards related to your expedition e.g: dehydration, altitude, bite avoidance etc.
- Money management
- Kit selection, luggage and packing
- Water purification
- Itinerary & activity specific issues
- Fitness expectations / training ideas





# A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey

## 1 Ask for your personalised quote & further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an adventure that's just right for you and your students. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

## 2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk and threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your Pre-Booking Information Pack too.

## 3 Arrange an expedition launch evening

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening covering the itinerary, safety management, the build-up to the trip and lots more. There is also plenty of opportunity for questions.



The home of the modern, innovative school expedition, where a sustainable, ethical approach guarantees unique experiences and a life enhancing adventure.



Our school trips and educational tours are all about maximising the learning opportunities of travel. It's all here, the humble school tour has just come of age.



Adventures, holidays and cultural journeys for teachers looking to 'Escape the Classroom' and discover more about our amazing world, its people and places.



*"I am being completely serious when I say that I won't ever run a school trip without you guys. I trust you and your team completely - and the in-country staff that you carefully cultivate and train are a cut above the rest."*

**Teacher feedback, King's High Warwick**

## Contact Us:

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