Equus Journeys
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Ladakh, little Tibet & Buddhist festival Phyang

INDIA LADAKH

A **horseback pack trip** through the lush Markha valley to the nomadic grounds of the Rushpu plateau, crossing the grandiose landscape of the magnificent Himalayas: jagged crests and the snow-topped peaks of Kang Yatse (6400 m) await you. Meet local Tibetan people who are free to live by their traditions.

Pack Trip	**16 days/8 days riding -**	**From £0**	





ITINERARY

Highlights

- A journey to the heart of the Himalayas on horseback
- Visit the Buddhist monasteries in the Indus Valley whilst acclimatising to the altitude
- Departure date is linked to a Buddhist festival at Phyang
- Pack horses carry your supplies and equipment as you climb ever higher into the Himalayas
- Meet a Tibetan population who live freely by their own traditions

Day 1 — 1: EUROPE - DELHI

Depart from Europe on your international flight to Delhi. Flights are not included but can be booked on request. Arrive in Delhi and transfer to the domestic departures to board your onward flight from Delhi to Leh, which departs at 06:00 or thereabouts.

Depending on your flight arrival time, you may prefer to book into a hotel on this first night. This is not included. Please contact us for more information.

Day 2 — 2: DELHI - LEH (3400 m) - ALCHI - No riding

ZIMSKHANG HOTEL

You will be met at Leh airport. You set off on a road transfer to the village of Alchi, where you will stay in a small hotel. here is in the afternoon to explore and see some of the most interesting sights in the area: its giant statues, chortens, prayer wheels and paintings. In the evening, relax back at the village.

Day 3 — 3: ALCHI - LAMAYURU (3200M) - LEH - No riding

HOLIDAY LADAKH HOTEL

After a short transfer (around 1h) you arrive at Wanla, where you will start your hiking to Prinkti La (3730m). You will enjoy sweeping views over the Monastery of Lamayuru, which beauty is in stark contrast with the aridity of the landscape. Back to Leh for dinner and a good night's sleep.

Day 4 — 4: LEH - PHYANG - LEH (3400m)

HOLIDAY LADAKH HOTEL

You will head to Phyang for the first day of the festival at the Monastery, built at the top of a mountain. A fabulous site that normally calls to meditation and elevation. Today however, the site is bursting with a colourful crowd of pilgrims and you will get a chance to witness Phyang festival. A once in a lifetime experience.

Day 5 — 5: LEH - THIKSEY & SHEY - LEH (3400) - No riding

HOLIDAY LADAKH HOTEL

This morning, you will visit the 10th Century monasteries of Shey and Thiskey, said to be in the style of Potala Palace in Lhasa. Afternoon again at leisure.
Overnight in Leh.

Day 6 — 6: LEH - SPITUK- ZINGCHEN (3400m) - 3 hours

An early morning departure to reach Alchi Monastery Spituk, the starting point for our journey on horseback. The small village of Zingchen is a green oasis surrounded by poplar trees and the gateway to the mountains. You will camp this evening.

Day 7 — 7: ZINGCHEN - YURUTSE - LARTSA (4500 m) - 4 hours

On horseback, you penetrate deeper into the mountains. A narrow gorge means you have to cross several streams before reaching a vast plateau that will gradually lead to the base camp at Khanda La.

Day 8 — 8: LARTSA - SKIU (3400m) - 4.30 hours

Cross the Shingo-La (4900 m): the view from the of the Zanskar range is striking. There is a long descent into a lunar landscape of lace rocks. Along the way , visit a small gompa (Temple). You will camp tonight on the banks of the Markha river.

Day 9 — 9: SKIU - MARKHA (4280m) - 5.30 hours

There are several river crossings today, sometimes wading through fords, others over small bridges in order to reach the village of Markha, the largest in the valley. You will stop at the monastery overlooking the valley.

Day 10 — 10 - MARKHA-LANGHAND CHU (4310m) - 5 hours

You follow the river towards the plains of Nimaling. You will get spectacular views of the Yatse Keang (6200 m). Then you veer south towards the high plateau of Rupshu .

Day 11 — 11: LANGHAND CHU - ZALUNG KARPO LA (5200m) - 5 hours

Climb steadily for two days from the bottom of very wild and huge valley, surrounded by jagged peaks. Cross the Karpo La, when reaching the summit the view is breathtaking . Beneath your feet lies a vast, green valley framed by jagged peaks. The night will be spent in the summer pastures of Tsokra

Day 12 — 12: ZALUNG KARPO LA - TSORKA (4560m) - 5.5 hours

Second half of the journey as above.

Day 13 — 13: TSORKA - DAT - 4 hours

Descend along the river; continuing through beautiful gorges, sometimes very narrow, which then flare out, giving way to the barley fields. The village of Dat is the only inhabited place in this valley, which is occupied for only a few months of the year.

Day 14 — 14: DAT- LEH

Return by bus to Leh, using the impressive road from Manali, with a pass over 5,300 m high !

Day 15 — 15: LEH-DEHLI

Fly from Leh to Delhi. Leh has the highest airport in the world. So this flight maybe subject to adverse weather conditions, which can cause significant delays. Overnight flight back to Europe.

Optional transfer to Agra where the rest of the day is free - please contact us. NB : In case of a flight delay, the excursion to Agra maybe altered or canceled.

Day 16 — 16: DEHLI - HOME

Return to Delhi, transfer to the airport for your flight home.

DATES & PRICES

We are currently updating our dates and prices they will be online soon. If you want details of this holiday, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Price details

No departure for this destination. Please contact our travel advisers for more information.
- Flights to Delhi are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates. The domestic flight is included.

- Rates are per person, based on two riders sharing a twin room/tent.

- The group is made up of 5 - 9 international riders plus guides

- There is a small group supplement payable if the group is less than four riders:
If 3 riders booked: c. €725/£630/£750 per person
If 4 riders booked: c. €300/£280/€340 per person

- There is a single supplement of c. €395/£345/$420 per person if you end up in a single room. This is refunded if we later find a sharer for you.

- A visa is required to enter India and is your responsibility.

- Weight limit is 95kg / 210 lbs / 15 st on this ride. Heavier riders please contact us.

Please Note
The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.
The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

Price includes

SUPPORT TEAM

1 English-speaking horse guide from Leh to Leh
1 English-speaking local guide in Dehli

LOGISTIC

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider
Packhorses to carry your luggage
1 horseman in charge of the packhorses and his assistants for logistics
1 cook

INLAND TRANSPORT

Airport transfers
Private bus for land transfers
Internal flights to Leh

ACCOMMODATION

Double/Triple room in a local hotel in Dehli and Leh
2 person per tent (3 men tent). Foam mattress.

MEALS

Full board from the lunch day 2 to the breakfast day 15

Price doesn't include

MEALS

3 lunches on days 15, 16 and 17 and 3 dinners on day 1, 15 and 16 in Delhi or Agra are not included in the price : expect to pay from around £1 - 6 per meal)

TRANSPORT

Visa fees
International flights

INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurances are not included. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend to take out an insurance policy as soon as your travel is booked in case of cancellation.

EXTRA

Tips to local team
Park, museum and touristic sites fees - approx. £30
Services in Agra (Guides and transfers) - approx. £20
Small group supplement - see price details for more information

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single room and tent supplement

EXTRAS

Extension to Agra. Double/Triple room in a high standard hotel in Agra

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

Ride small, calm, sturdy and sure-footed Tibetan mountain horses that are adapted to the terrain and altitude .

Guide & local team

An English speaking guide/interpreter joins the group in either Delhi or Leh.
The expedition leader, assisted by mules, is responsible for the horses and route.
There is a cook to prepare the meals.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You must be comfortable riding in the open and over varied terrain. Less experienced riders can safely participate in this expedition as the terrain is mountainous and dictates that there is no fast riding. You must be prepared for steep ascents and descents and be able to adjust your seat accordingly.

Weight limit is 95kg / 210 lbs / 15 st on this ride. Heavier riders please contact us.

PACE

The terrain is mountainous and dictates that there is no fast riding. You must be prepared for steep ascents and descents.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

There is no support vehicle and so you and the riding team are responsible for all of the horses and camp tasks.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

Please remember this is a high altitude ride (camping up to 4900 m). Please take adequate precautions against altitude sickness.

You need to be physically fit for long hours in the saddle. Riding is all at altitudes between 3400 m and 5200 m so acclimatisation is progressive throughout the ride. The temperature can change suddenly and the wind can be very violent, be prepared for large variations in temperature between night and day. There may also be frosts overnight.
Having previous experience of a riding a trail of several days would be an advantage but it is not compulsory. Guests who do not ride regularly are requested to get fit prior to the ride. It is of particular importance to ensure you are comfortable and balanced when riding across rough ground and in open spaces. You may be asked to dismount on particularly tricky parts and lead your horse on foot - please wear sensible footwear.

Visiting a new country offers the opportunity to meet other cultures with different mentalities, therefore it is important to accept these differences and respect the local way of life.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

You should take two medium sized bags with you rather than one large bag so that they can be carried by the pack horses.
We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

Hotel of good standards at Agra, accommodation in more modest double or triple bedrooms in Leh (en-suite).
On the trail, two man tents, with mattresses. Communal toilet tent. Meals will be simple as you are carrying supplies with you to last the whole of the trip.

MEALS

You have a licnic lunch and then a hot evening meal in the communal tent. The food is varied and tasty Indian cuisine.

Contrary to popular belief, all Hindus are not vegetarians and strict vegetarianism is limited to the south. However, you are unlikely to be served beef steak as the cow is sacred. Some Muslim restaurants will serve buffalo.

Water:
Take care not to drink water from unknown sources. It is better to buy mineral water when staying in the towns. On the trail you will need water purification tablets such as Micropur.

CLIMATE

In Ladakh the climate is mainly dry, with large variations in temperature between night and day, especially at altitude where it can freeze overnight. The days can be very hot, up to 30c, but at altitude the temperature can change very quickly and the winds can be very strong.

There are two main seasons in Ladakh - the harsh winters can see temperatures as low as -30c. The horse riding trails only run in the summer months when the climate is very dry and rough with an intense sun.

TIPS

Tipping is popular in India and it is customary to tip not only your team (guide, cook etc) but also staff in hotels and restaurants. You may find it useful to create a communal tipping "pool" at the start of the trip so that the group tip as a whole. Budget for c. £40-50 per person in total. However, tipping is not an obligation and so this is left to your discretion.

Be careful not to tip too much - being overly generous can affect the general standard of living and destablise the local economy. If children earn more money than their fathers by begging or asking for money for photos then this can create major distortions within the family.

PACKING LIST

IMPORTANT NOTES
- You should take two medium sized bags with you rather than one large bag so that they can be carried by the pack horses.
- Please pack in accordance with local religious and traditional cultures - it is important to keep your shoulders and knees covered when meeting local populations. Please do not wear shorts or strappy tops in towns and villages.

Head
- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit. There are many lightweight options available nowadays
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana
- Warm hat for cold nights when camping

Upper body
- Thermals (long or short sleeved)
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and are an extra layer
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm fleece or jumper (and a spare in case one gets wet)
- Warm and waterproof jacket - it can rain at any time of year and the evenings can be particularly cold

Legs
- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- Thermals
- Casual trousers for the evenings, such as jeans or tracksuit bottoms
- Waterproof over trousers
- Lightweight, comfortable trousers for non-riding days

Hands and Feet
- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps as an extra layer against inclement weather. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Waterproof shoes/boots can be useful for abundant dew in the mornings or when it rains
- Trainers or equivalent light shoes for moving around the camp in the evenings
- Several pairs of warm, thick socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, cold or rain whilst riding. Waterproof gloves can be particularly useful

Nightwear
- Sleeping bag. You need at least a comfort factor down to minus 10 celsius.
- Sleeping bag liner - silk, cotton or fleece - adds an extra layer
- Pyjamas or tracksuits or thermals for sleeping in

Other useful items
- Swimsuit - for swimming/bathing in rivers
- Small backpack for accessing items required during the day (carried by support crew)
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around camp at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre)
- Wet Wipes or equivalent (for when washing facilities aren't available)
- Toilet paper and a lighter to burn it with
- Small plastic bags for rubbish
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)

In your hold luggage
- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant unless they are less than 100ml and all bottles can fit in a small, clear, plastic ziplock bag. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- Swiss army knife (or equivalent)

In your hand luggage
- Any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes is highly recommended - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!

Medical kit
- Please remember this is a high altitude ride (camping up to 4900 m). Please take adequate precautions against altitude sickness.
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent, preferably containing deet
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Water purification tablets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

You may wish to ask your doctor for some specific medication for travelling at High Altitudes. We recommend that you discuss this directly with your doctor who is best placed to advise on your personal medical history.

Our Recommendations
- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided with a capacity of 60-80 litres. We recommend taking a backpack or similar. The luggage limit on the ride is 15kg per person.
- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)
- Even if foam mattresses are provided, you may pack your inflatable mattress for comfort sake.
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- Tall riders may benefit from taking a pair of long stirrup leathers with them (the local stirrups are adjustable but are sometimes limited in length)
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals
- Please take your rubbish home with you. There are no recycling facilities in Tibet, so take your used batteries, aerosols etc back home and dispose of them appropriately. Try to leave excess packaging material at home before travelling
- If you prefer travelling in a "light way" please choose a biodegradable soap or washing powder/liquid.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please see this page .