

FMC Travel Club

A subsidiary of Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (Inc.)

www.fmc.org.nz

Club Convenor : John Dobbs

Travel Smart Napier

Civic Court, Dickens Street, Napier 4110

P : 06 8352222 E : john@travelsmart.co.nz

***** Ladakh *****

Three weeks in Little Tibet – Silk Roads and Salt Trails

20th September to 14th October 2018

25 days ex Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch

\$6395 (estimated as at April 2017)

(based on a minimum of 8 participants and subject to currency fluctuations)

Any payments by visa or mastercard adds \$200 to the final invoice

Trip Leader : Joe Nawalaniec

For Kiwi trampers, Ladakh is about as exotic and vibrant as it gets.

Our itinerary covers all of the recommended highlights in a mixture of history, tramping, culture, gompas, local cuisine, bazaars, rare wildlife and much more.

We travel from snowbound passes to ethereal lakes, and marvel at living monasteries and religious sites untouched by the ravages of the Cultural Revolution over the border in nearby Tibet.

PRICE INCLUDES :

- *Flights from Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch – Delhi – Leh return plus airport transfers*
- *All accommodation : hotels in Delhi and Leh, otherwise village homestays and tent camps*
- *All transport : vehicles as appropriate, otherwise on foot tramping*
- *All meals*
- *An experienced and knowledgeable Kiwi leader, payment to FMC*
- *Full support of local operator and staff, all camping equipment, inclusions as shown in the daily itinerary and a group tipping allowance*

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE :

- *Travel insurance (mandatory)*
- *Personal incidental expenses*
- *Indian tourist visa (online)*

Trip Leader

Joe has been a school teacher for thirty years (presently teaching a bit of outdoor ed) and has been poking around in odd corners of NZs bush and mountains since his early teens. He and his wife Vicky have enjoyed a lifetime of fun adventures, which have included memorable tramping and mountain bagging trips through Europe, America and Asia, and, of course, NZ.

“I’ve been fortunate to manage four trips to stunning India for over 8 months of independent (and usually arduous) travel throughout the country, and have a deep affection for the place and its people. Much of my Ladakhi travel has been solo, or with Vicky, and off the beaten trail. I have trekked and visited the hard to get to places of our tour and I am very excited to be returning there on this trip. Ladakh is incredibly exotic and magnetic and it keeps drawing me back. Vicky and I have crossed dozens of high (4000 – 5000m+) Ladakhi passes, in all kinds of weather and circumstances. I have solo climbed and also guided several of the 6000ers, including the first recorded ascent of Suku Kangri (at the onset of the Himalayan winter). I have a very good idea of what to expect, am confident to be able to make this journey a lot of fun, and am very aware of the contingencies. Bang for buck, commencing from NZ, this trip also represents some truly remarkable value.

You are welcome to contact me with questions, or if you need more information : aspiring3033@hotmail.com

I’m delighted to have seconded Joe to lead this trip and I’m confident you will have a brilliant trip to Ladakh with him, and will also be captivated by the country and its people.



Joe conquers Mt Aspiring!

*Joe has a good working relationship with the Head Guide and Manager of our local touring company, **Hayan Himalaya** - **Mr Tsewang Lee Gyatso** (referred to as “Gyatso”), and we can vouch for his judgement and professionalism. Joe is looking forward to working again with Gyatso and Hayan Himalaya.*

Overview

Tipping can be a vexed issue for Kiwis abroad. Tipping is an accepted practice in Ladakh and to make management of this easier, we have included a tips allowance of NZ\$50 per person, which Joe will administer.

General monastery donations are already included in our arrangements with Gyatso.

So our tips allowance goes largely to support the 4 – 5 trekking staff.

It is also a good idea to privately top this up and to have extra rupees for Delhi rickshaw drivers, barbers, shoe shine boys and the like - should you avail of their services.

Currency is the Indian Rupee and this can be pre-purchased in NZ before you leave or on arrival into Delhi Airport. While Indian ATM’s are plentiful, it is sensible to have a supply of cash. Credit cards can be used for larger souvenir type purchases, but cash is king at markets and smaller places. With most meals included, personal expenses are modest.

The following day to day **itinerary** is quite detailed and included meals are shown as **B.L.D.**

Once we fly to the State of Ladakh and arrive into Leh, we are truly in the mountains now. Leh is around 3500m so the effects of altitude will need a couple of days to get used to, and the itinerary amply provides for that. Although a small city of 30,000, Leh is the busy and bustling capital of Ladakh and sits in the Indus River valley. It is a crossroads of old trading routes, quite compact and easy to walk around. It is also a safe place and has a wide range of restaurants offering Indian, Tibetan and western fare. The main bazaar and Tibetan market are good places to shop for souvenirs. Our hotel in Leh is also well located and an excellent base as the itinerary takes us 'out and back' several times. If you have any surplus gear, then this may be stored at the hotel. Safe filtered and bottled water is readily available in Leh.

The roads in Ladakh are time consuming, being narrow and winding and there are numerous military checkpoints. Our Inner Line special military permits are arranged for us. Our drivers are local and well versed with the conditions encountered. Likewise the transport is appropriate to the needs of the journey. Plenty of breaks are included when we travel, for photography, visits to sights and comfort breaks etc.

A pre-trip newsletter will include important items and a full gear list etc.

This trip is arduous and a very good standard of fitness is not just recommended, it is expected. This is to ensure your comfort and enjoyment, and also so that when you arrive in Leh, you can focus on acclimatising. It is strongly recommended that you engage in a suitable fitness regime, have solid recent tramping experience, and are free from any medical or dietary issues. This is based on experience and feedback from members of the 2017 Ladakh group. A feedback document from one of our couples is available for you to gain a better understanding of the trip rigours and ardure.

The itinerary is constructed to maximise the time in Ladakh and includes no time in Delhi city itself. If you have not been to India before and would like to see Delhi properly or add travels in India either before or after the core trip, this is highly encouraged and can be considered either before or after the core trip. If you would like to make such changes, please discuss with John Dobbs first, as these affect the core flight route and cost set aside. John is well able to assist in planning your pre or post India travels. The online Indian visa period has been extended now to make this matter easier, too.

Itinerary

Day 1. Thu 20th Sep. Flights

Depart Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch.

Day2. Fri 21st Sep. Arrive Delhi

Joe will welcome you at the airport. Then transfer to the nearby hotel for a welcome chat and buffet dinner, followed by a reasonably early night. **D.**

Day3. Sat 22nd Sep. Delhi to Leh

A very early start as we return to the airport for the 6am flight up to Leh. A really spectacular flight over the Greater Himalaya Range to Leh, Ladakh. This will be one of our most memorable sunrises! Gyatso and his team will be on hand to greet us on arrival at the airport. Transfer to the hotel for breakfast and the beginning of our essential pre-tramp acclimatisation, as Leh is located at 3500m. Snoozing and hydration is advised for the day with perhaps an evening stroll through Leh Bazaar. **B.L.D.**

Day 4. Sun 23rd Sep. Touring Leh

A more relaxed start today. The intense autumn sun, golden poplars and huge blue skies under the dramatic ice clad peaks are somewhat reminiscent of Central Otago. Suku Kangri (6005m) and Stok Kangri (6153m) are magnificently imposing. After a hot lunch we take a gentle walk up to the stunning Leh Palace (the old royal home, 3600m), in the same style as Lhasa's Potala Palace. We weave through the alleyways of the old town and marketplace, and later enjoy an early evening sunset view from Shanti Stupa (3650m), before returning to the hotel for dinner and rest. Leh is a veritable Shangri-la, so have your camera battery fully charged. **B.L.D.**

Day 5. Mon 24th Sep. Walking and touring in the Indus Valley

After an early breakfast, we get driven up behind the Fort for a short trek : from Leh, via the Sabu La (3780m), to Sabu village (3490m, 2 – 3 hours easy walk). It's really a series of 4 mini-Las, as we skirt the headwaters of some dry nullahs. We are met by Gyatso's staff, and then drive to Thiksay Gumpa (c. 14th century, and known to the locals as 'Little Lhasa'), one of the most beautiful religious complexes in Ladakh. After this we drop into Shey Palace, the ancient capital of Ladakh, and see the big copper statue of Buddha built in 1633.

Finally we head back to our hotel in Leh. A packed lunch, and hot and cold drinks will be provided at Thiksay, with dinner at the hotel. **B.L.D.**

Day 6. Tue 25th Sep. Leh – Phyang village – Phyang Phu

We drive 20 mins to Phyang village (3550m), and visit the monastery there which is built on a hilltop above the village. Then we embark on our fairly short walk up to Phyang Phu, an area where villagers bring their animals for summer grazing. We gain about 500m, and our walk is a gentle 4 hours. **B.L.D.**

Day 7. Wed 26th Sep. Phyang Phu – South Base Lasermo La

Leaving Phyang Phu, we head steadily up to our South Base Lasermo La camp at 4700m, a climb of 650m today. Walking time is another 3 – 4 hours as we get used to the altitude gain and acclimatise further. **B.L.D.**

Day 8. Thu 27th Sep. To North Base Lasermo La (5438m)

Today is a long one of 7 – 9 hours, and we cross our first significant Himalayan pass, Lasermo La at 5440m. We leave early, as we have a 750m climb to the summit, and a total of 20kms to walk today. It'll be leg-burning and lung-stretching, but with gobsmack views in all directions, and probable snow on the northern slopes of the pass. **B.L.D.**

Day 9. Fri 28th Sep. To Hunder Dok

Today is a restful gentle stroll down through a pretty valley of meadows and alpine flowers. Over our 10kms 3 hour walk today, we lose more than 600m, as we follow the stream until Hunder Dok. There we will find shepherd huts, with grazing animals. **B.L.D.**

Day 10. Sat 29th Sep. Hunder Dok – Skarchen – drive to Turtuk

Today we amble for 3 – 4 hours, 9kms downstream, passing through the villages of Drok Gongma and Drok Yokma, before reaching Skarchen. We'll take a bit of time to visit and look over these villages, over lunch. We get great views of Saser Kangri (7672m) downstream. Not far past Skarchen, we get picked up by Gyatso's vehicles, and driven past the sand dunes of Hunder village 80kms, 2 hours through the Shyok Valley to Turtuk, one of the lowest villages in Ladakh. We may see Bactrian camels here, a reminder that this is part of the old Silk Road. **B.L.D.**

Day 11. Sun 30th Sep. Drive Turtuk – Khardung La (5370m) – bicycle to Leh

We retrace our vehicle journey, past Hunder, to stop at the Diskit monastery, before enjoying expansive views of the broad, stunning Nubra valley. We begin our climb up the famous military road through Khardung village, up onto Khardung La (5370m), once considered to be the highest motorable road in the world. This is a 160km, 4 hour drive. After lunch on the pass, we hop on bicycles for our free-wheeling almost 2000m 40 kms descent down the amazing Khardung La road, and back to our hotel in Leh. **B.L.D.**

Day 12. Mon 1st Oct. Leh

This is a convenient laundry, recovery and shopping day, and also a chance to revisit once more your favourite photogenic spots in town. This will be a good opportunity for a handcraft or souvenir, as many shops and markets now begin to close for the approaching winter. All meals at our hotel today. **B.L.D.**

Day 13. Tue 2nd Oct. Drive Leh -Hemis – Rumtse

We drive this morning up the Indus valley from Leh to the famed Hemis monastery, and tour this impressive edifice. After a packed lunch at the monastery, we then drive to our camp at Rumtse, the start of our Rupshu trek. We're fully acclimatised now, and ready for these wild highlands and lofty passes. Total driving time is 3 hours, and approx' 85 kms today. **B.L.D.**

Day 14. Wed 3rd Oct. Rumste – Kyamar

We leave Rumste at 4250m and follow the ancient Salt Road to Kyamar. Through this valley, the salt from Tso Kar was transported to the Indus. It is a unique landscape, like nothing else in Ladakh. We climb about 300m over 11 kms to our camp at Kyamar, in around 4 hours. **B.L.D.**

Day 15. Thu 4th Oct. Kyamar – Kyamar La (5070m) – Mandalchan La (5206m) – Tisaling

We head upwards gradually towards the Kyamar La, while enjoying some fantastic views of the Changthang region from the pass. We then climb down towards Tiki Doksa, a seasonal shelter for shepherds. Following our trail, we surmount Mandalchan La, and then climb down to our camp at Tisaling at 4940m. Just under 14 kms in 6 – 7 hours on shank's pony today. **B.L.D.**

Day 16. Fri 5th Oct. Tisaling – Shibuk La (5275m) – Ponganagu

There is an easy, brief climb of 380m up to the Shibuk La, with a spectacular view of Tso Kar from the pass. The walk is gentle down to Ponganagu, next to Tso Kar lake at 4650m. It's possible to see kiang (wild asses), marmots and ibex. The lake surrounds are full of migratory birds. The walk is a little over 14 kms today, taking 6 hours. **B.L.D.**

Day 17. Sat 6th Oct. Ponganagu – Nuruchan

It's a long but straightforward walk of 18 kms today, past the western shore of Tso Kar lake, where we might be able to spot black-necked cranes and brahmini ducks. Tso Kar is also called 'white lake' because of the salt that precipitates. There is a gentle climb to our camp at Nuruchan, which takes a total of 5 – 6 hours. **B.L.D.**

Day 18. Sun 7th Oct. Nuruchan – Kyamayuri La (5416m) – Gyamarbarma

We will actually be crossing two passes today, firstly the Horam Kongka La and then the Kyamayuri La to reach our lofty camp at Gyamarbarma at 5200m. We'll be passing several nomad families with their dzos, yaks and sheep on our 19 kms, 7-8 hour walk. We gain almost 1000m, so it's a long committing one today. **B.L.D.**

Day 19. Mon 8th Oct. Gyambarma – Kartse La (5384m) – Gyamar – Yalung Nyau La (5435m)

Our second to last trekking day is a shortish one, around 4 – 5 hours and under 6 kms over the Kartse La, and a further 5 km up onto near the Yalung. We will still leave early today, getting to Gyamar mid-morning after 2 – 3 hours, and up to the pass for our lunch and camp. The afternoon will be the option of rest, photography, self-exploration, or (depending on conditions) the possible opportunity to scramble with Joe up towards 'the world's easiest 6000+m "peak"' – Mt Yalung Nong (6080m), a very gentle scree-ringed plateau, avoiding its mellow northern ice-cap. **B.L.D.**

Day 20. Tue 9th Oct. Free day

Today is a free exploration / photography day at our high camp (higher than Everest Base Camp!), with plenty of options : wandering this rolling Tibetan upland and spotting rare wildlife like marmot, ibex, bharal and lammergeier ; visiting the Mentok Range's stream headwaters and alpine tarns ; or possibly going a little higher still with Joe scrambling towards Peak 6100m, a lovely pyramid, or even towards the impressive Mentok Pyramide (6293m). This summit appears to be the highest top in this lovely mountain range. Crampons and ice-axes will be available, but may not be necessary. **B.L.D.**

Day 21. Wed 10th Oct. Yalung Nyau La – Korzok

Today, on our last trekking day, we walk 10 kms downhill over 4 hours of the Yalung Nyau La (5435m), the highest pass of this trek. There is an expansive view of Tso Moriri lake, right out to the mountains of China. We amble down the Korzong Chu to our guesthouse on the shores of this beautiful lake for hot showers, cold drinks and a very well-earned dinner. The afternoon is free for photography, bird-spotting, monastery visiting, or a beguiling lakeside ramble. **B.L.D.**

Day 22. Thu 11th Oct. Drive Korzok – Chumathang – Leh

An early start as it's a 6 – 7 hour 215 km drive from Korzok to Leh. En route, we stop at the Chumathang hot springs for lunch. The Indus canyon is an absolute stunner – plenty of photo stops beckon. Back at Leh, we have our farewell dinner at our hotel with Gyatso's fine trekking staff, and say our goodbyes to them. **B.L.D. and some drinks with D.**

Day 23. Fri 12th Oct. Leh

A lazy brunch, laundry sorted, souvenirs bought, and a final optional trekking opportunity with Joe up to the Phyang La (4180m), and return via a long rocky ridge (4300m) down to the Shanti Stupa. A perfect photographer's swansong here, and hopefully there is a bit of fresh snow around the hills. Back to our hotel for a reasonably early dinner, then packing. **B.L.D.**

Day 24. Sat 13th Oct. Leh – Delhi and depart

After breakfast, Gyatso's drivers take us to the airport for the mid-morning flight to Delhi. Either you are connecting to the onward flights back to Auckland, or you are leaving us here for onward travels in Delhi or elsewhere in India. **B.**

Day 25. Sun 14th Oct. Arrive in Auckland
The flight returns to Auckland.

Booking Conditions : FMC Travel Club And Travel Smart Napier

1. The FMC Travel Club (FMC) offers this small group trip in conjunction with Travel Smart Napier (TSN). All travel arrangements for the operation of the core trip are made with TSN. Participants agree to all terms and conditions by signing the Registration Form.
2. FMC and TSN are not responsible or liable for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may arise from weather, defect in any vehicle, vessel or aircraft, or through the acts or default of any person or company engaged in carrying out any of the arrangements of the trip.
3. We reserve the right to cancel the trip if minimum numbers don't eventuate. In such an event, all monies paid will be fully refunded. We also reserve the right to make any modifications that may be essential, or to offer a modified trip to a smaller number of people.
4. The trip includes a payment to FMC.
5. **Registrations are accepted in good faith on a first comes basis on receipt of the Registration Form. The deposit is \$3000 per person and will be invoiced once a core minimum number of registrations have been received. This deposit covers the cost of the flights and securing land arrangements. Registrations close by 31st March 2018 (or earlier if the trip fills) and final balance is due by 30th June 2018. All payments may be made by cash, cheque, EFTPOS, internet banking, visa or mastercard to the offices of TSN. All or any payments by Visa or Mastercard adds \$200 to the final trip price. Our preferred method of payment is internet banking. Please use : 010685 0151601 46 at ANZ Napier. Cheques must be payable to Travel Smart Napier.**
6. Events beyond our control such as currency fluctuations or any unforeseen additional costs may affect the overall trip price. We cannot guarantee the price until such times as full payment has been received. Upon full payment, the trip price is guaranteed.
7. **Cancellations. If you need to cancel your registration for any reason, you must advise TSN in writing as soon as possible. An email is acceptable, a phone call alone is not. Travel insurance will cover you for unforeseen circumstances but will not cover you for changing your mind after committing to the trip. Cancellation fees apply as follows :**
 - **Cancellations received from 1st April to 30th June 2018 incur a fee of \$3000 (the deposit)**
 - **Cancellations received from 1st July 2018 onwards incur a fee of 100% of trip costs.**
8. Travel insurance is mandatory, and we are able to assist with cover through Kiwi Holiday Insurance or Covermore. For your own protection, travel insurance should be effective from 31st March 2018, the date that trip deposits become non-refundable.

Registration Form – Ladakh 2018

Complete and send to John Dobbs at TSN with a passport copy. **Registrations ideally close by 31st March 2018 (or earlier if the trip fills). So your earliest commitment is appreciated.** All or any payments by Visa or Mastercard adds \$200 to the final trip price. Our preferred payment method is internet banking into : 010685 0151601 46 at ANZ Napier . Do not send the deposit initially, this will be requested once a core minimum number of participants have registered.

Your full name(s) as per passport(s) and please underline or highlight your preferred first name(s).....

.....

.....

Mailing address.....

Day phone.....Night phone.....Mobile.....

Email.....Date(s) of birth.....

What are your recent tramping experiences? How often do you tramp? Please extend your answers overleaf or on separate paper, or by email.

.....

.....

Specify any dietary requirements, allergies or medical conditions.....

.....

.....

Contact person in NZ for any emergencies : name, address, contact phone numbers, email and the relationship to you. In the event of any emergency, this is the sole person you are authorizing us to liaise with

.....

.....

I/We have read the full trip dossier and I / We agree to pay all trip costs by due date, as advised by invoice. I / We understand that the final trip price is subject to minimum numbers and other cost impacts as detailed under the Booking Conditions section; therefore the final trip price cannot be guaranteed until such times as full payment has been made.

.....signed and dated by each person registering

Send to : John Dobbs, FMC Travel Club Convenor
Travel Smart Napier.

Civic Court, Dickens Street, Napier 4110. P : 06 8352222 E : john@travelsmart.co.nz

