

Summer Break 2011

Tibet China



The summer break trip takes us the Tibet, China. Experience this wonderful culture over the course of two weeks. We will arrive in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet which is 12,000 feet above sea level. We will spend four days in Lhasa to acclimatize. During this time we will visit several of the many Buddhist Monasteries located around Lhasa, such as Sera and Drepung. During our visit to Sera Monastery, we will have the opportunity to view the "Debating Monks." This is a unique and fascinating exercise of the monks demonstrating their knowledge of Buddhist scriptures.

After we acclimate, we will travel to Shigatse, the second largest city in Tibet and the location of Tashilhundpo Monastery and the original home of the Panchen Lama. Shigatse will serve as our base for several days as we visit and hike to several locations in Central Tibet. We will visit the town of Gyantse which is the location of the largest Stupa in Tibet. We will also hike to Ri Puk meditation caves in the hills over Shalu Monastery.

From Shigatse, we will continue our adventure with an attempt to reach the "Roof of the World," and Mt. Everest base camp! This is a three day side trip and is weather dependant. Also, Mt. Everest base camp is 17,000 feet above sea level and the acclimatization of the group will be a factor in reaching the camp.

While returning to Lhasa from Shigatse we will stop and hike to Yungdrungling Monastery, the largest Bon Monastery in Tibet. This is a beautiful hike to a seldom visited monastery.

Lhasa will be our base of operation for the remainder of the trip. After a rest day we will take a number of day trips near Lhasa. One trip will be to Ganden Monastery. While at Ganden Monastery we will hike the upper Kora, which is a pilgrimage trail around the Monastery. The trail is somewhat difficult because we will be hiking at an altitude of about 14,500 feet above sea level. Along the trail are many prayer flags stretched across the peaks of the mountain where Ganden Monastery is embedded.

Our last day trip from Lhasa will be to Namtso Lake north of Lhasa. Namtso Lake is a very religious location. In the past, Lamas assigned the task of finding the new Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lamas would come to this lake and wait for visions that would lead them to the correct candidate.

With our last few days in Lhasa we will explore the city and such places as Barkhor Square and the many pilgrim vendors. We will also have the opportunity to visit the Potala, which was home to the Dalai Lama.

