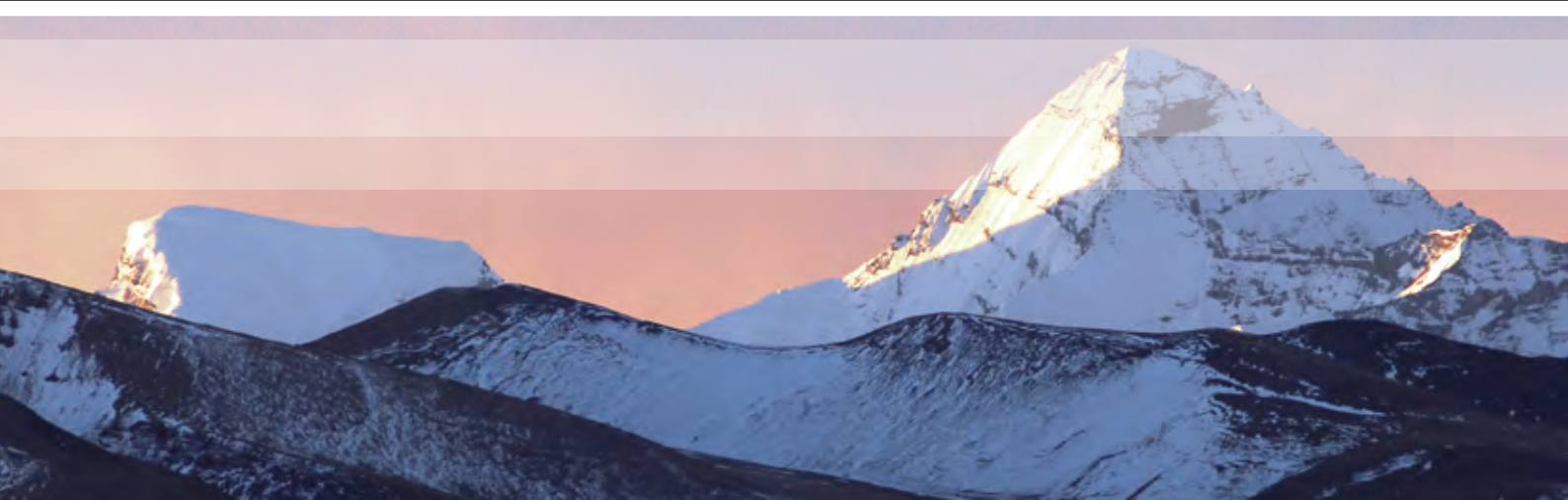


MOMENTS

on the road

Roads on the Roof of the World
(11 Days)





ON THE ROAD EXPERIENCES

BACK ROADS | HIDDEN GEMS

We love road journeys. They are by far our favourite way of traveling. We think the world of western China and the countries that border on this region – think Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, for example.

On the Road Experiences is all about sharing with like-minded travelers just how beautiful a road journey in these varied lands can be. Now turn the page to find out what we've come to love so much...




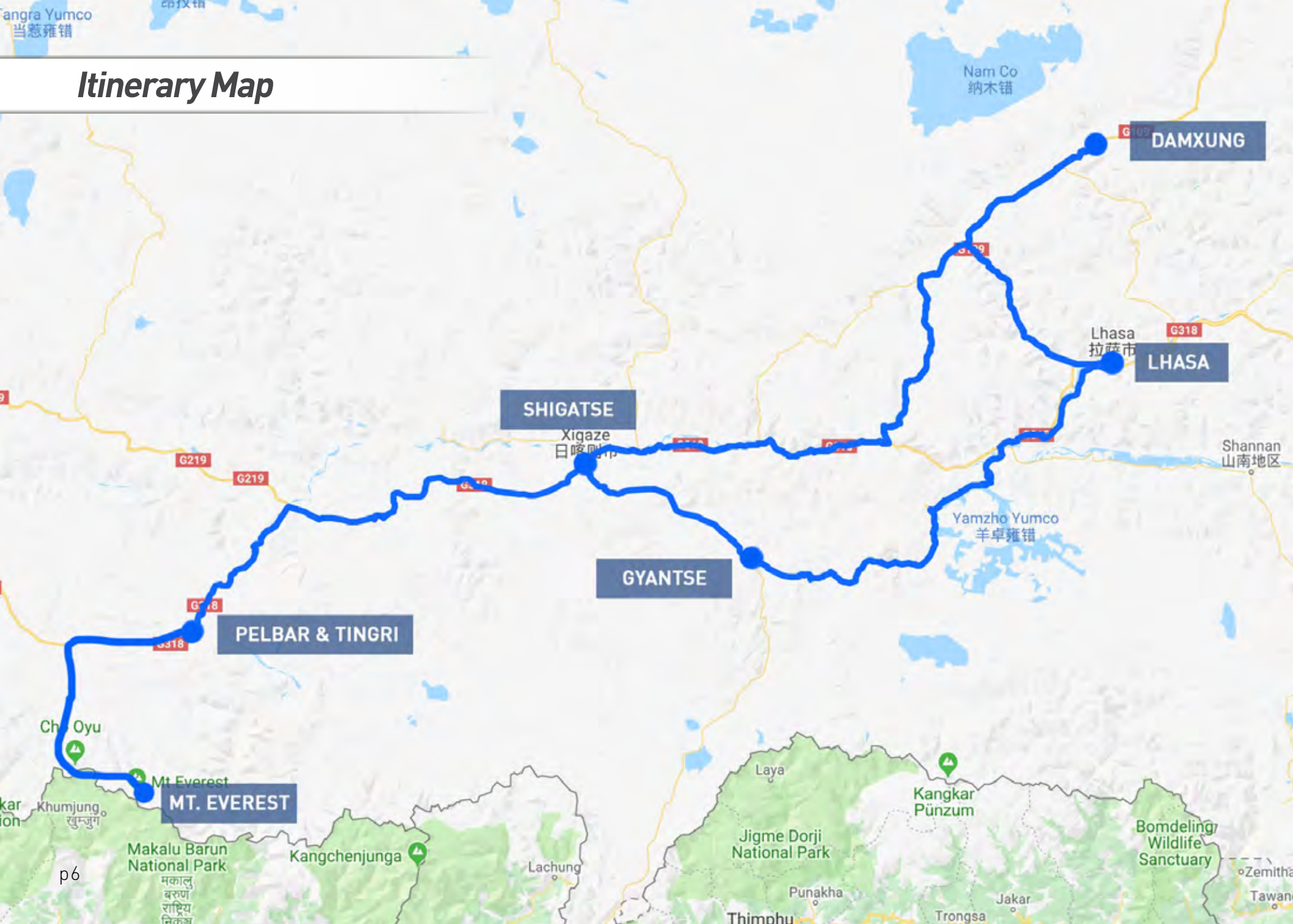


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Itinerary Map



Day-by-Day

Day1
Arrive in Chengdu –
Preparing for your journey

Day2
In Chengdu –
Driving license application &
visiting Sichuan's pandas

Day3
Chengdu to Lhasa –
Up and up to Tibet

Day4
In Lhasa –
Discover Tibet's sacred city

Day5
Lhasa to Gyantse –
On the road in Tibet

Day6
Gyantse to Tingri –
Into Tibet's Wild West

Day7
Tingri to Mount Everest –
Summit Day

Day8
Pelbar to Shigatse –
To Tibet's Second City

Day9
Shigatse to Damxung –
Beautiful back roads to Nam-tso

Day10
Damxung to Lhasa –
Nam-tso & Lhasa

Day11
Depart from Lhasa –
Farewell Tibet

Yes, it is possible...

“Roads on the Roof of the World” is a discovery of one of the world’s most stunningly beautiful and remote scenery: the serene, holy lakes of Tibet and the breathtaking view of Mt. Everest.

Tread in the footsteps of Mallory and other great Himalayan explorers on a road trip like no other as you explore this stunningly beautiful region and drive from Lhasa to Mount Everest Base Camp.

Travel through the finest scenery on earth in the comfort and freedom of your own car, stopping at remote cliff-top monasteries and holy lakes as you wind your way towards the heart of the Great Himalayan Range...

Drive to one of Tibet’s holiest lakes, Lake Nam-tso. Ringed by snow-capped mountains, the turquoise waters of the lake have been revered by Tibetans for centuries – the perfect end to a journey you will remember for a lifetime.

On the Road Experiences has paved the way for you to driving in Tibet in your own properly-insured SUV, so that you can enjoy the romance of a classic overland journey without any of the logistical headaches that typically accompany such journeys...

Journey of discovery





“Pandas, the symbol for FRIENDSHIP AND PEACE...”



“ You have
LEFT THE
BIG CITY
BEHIND...”



“One of the
WORLD’s
most ICONIC
buildings...”

The Potala Palace, Lhasa



“PILGRIMS
PRAY
in the shade...”

“GOSSIP
and PRAYER
go
hand-in-hand...”




The Jokhang, Lhasa

“ Elsewhere,
monks DEBATE
scripture...”







“DRIVE around this BEAUTIFUL LAKE, seen here in autumn, but STUNNING, whatever the season...”

“Explore historic
GYANTSE, now a
PEACEFUL
farming town...”

“ Into Tibet’s
WILD WEST..”

The road west, near Tingri

“5000km
AWAY from
Shanghai...”



The G318, China's longest road, near Tingri



“ADD your prayer flags to the collection FESTOONING this 5,300 meter MOUNTAIN PASS...”

The G318, China's longest road, near Tingri

“Heading WEST,
ever MORE
REMOTE...”

En route to Mt. Everest Base Camp



“OM MANI
PADME HUM,
TIBETAN'S
all-purpose
BLESSING...”

Shegar Monastery, Tingri

“ Mani Offerings...”

“Daybreak
over the
HIMALAYAS...”

**“UNFORGETTABLE,
the SIGHT of
FOUR peaks over
8000 metres!”**



“Practice
your HAIRPIN
TURNS...”

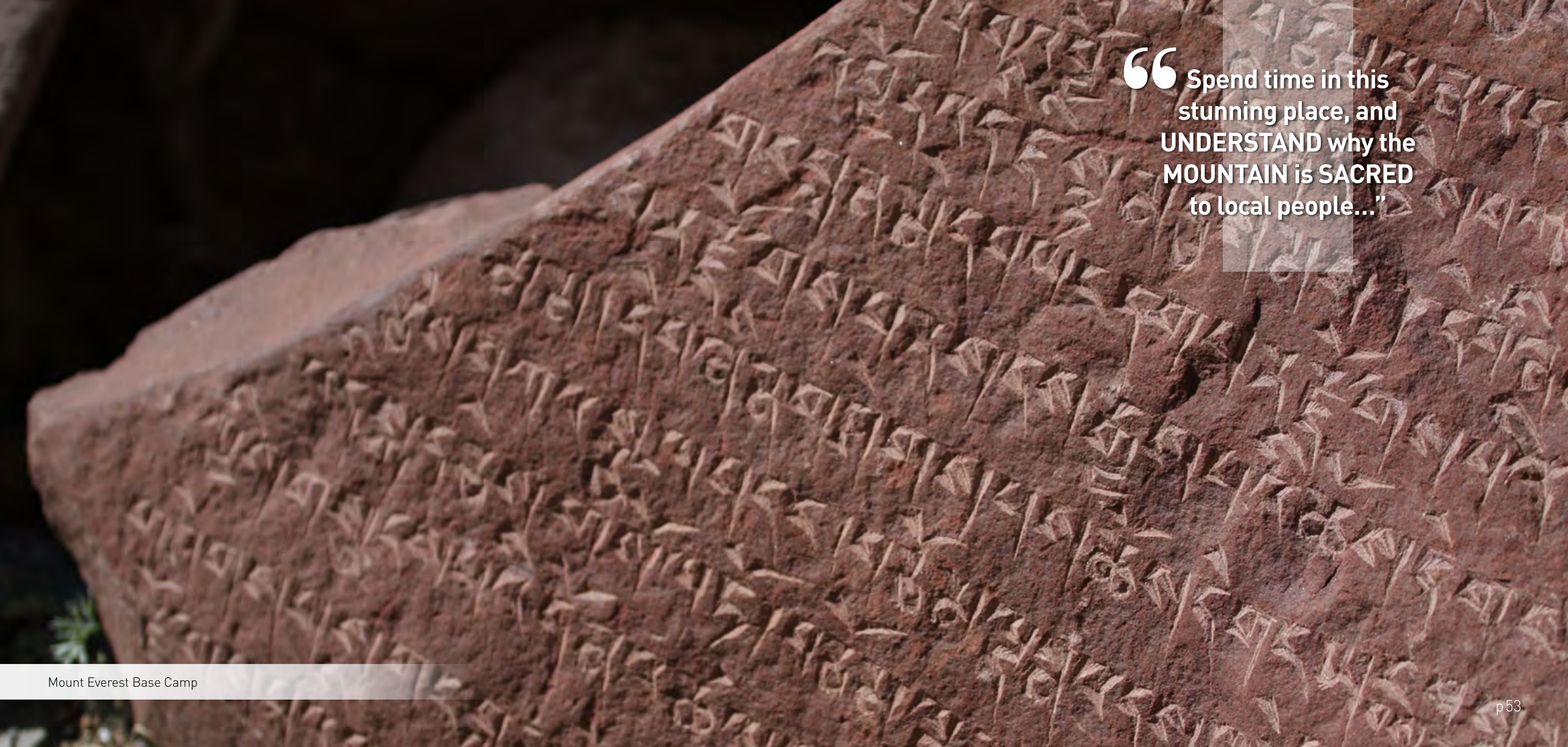
En route to Mt. Everest Base Camp



**“MOUNT EVEREST,
if ever you wanted
to GET THIS
CLOSE...”**



“Up-close-and-
personal with YOUR
YAK...”



“ Spend time in this stunning place, and **UNDERSTAND** why the **MOUNTAIN** is **SACRED** to local people...”



“EXPLORE this enormous monastery, HOME to generations of PANCHEN LAMAS...”

“PILGRIMS
doing their
KORA...”



Tashilhunpo Monastery, Shigatse




“A PICNIC
at 4,500m..”



En route from Shigatse to Damxung



“ Making
FRIENDS
after the PICNIC...”



“ In the middle of
NOWHERE, only
YOU and DRAMATIC
SCENERY!”

“The HIGHEST
mountain pass...
and still
FULL of ENERGY!”

Chogula Pass, 5450 meters



**“ FIRST VIEW of
TIBET’S second largest
HOLY LAKE...”**

Lake Nam-tso

“ Even here, the
ROADS are
PERFECTLY paved
and FOR YOU to
enjoy!”

First view of Lake Nam-tso



“BLACK FURBALLS...
YAKS,
EVERYWHERE!”





“7,000+ meter mountains all around you...”

“RAINBOW
not
included...”

The Jokhang, Lhasa

Day-by-day



Day 1 Preparing for your journey

Arrive in Chengdu according to your own arrangements. We will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel. After settling in, you may want to go for a stroll around the city. While downtown Chengdu has no major sights, many visitors find its laid-back pace and diversity of cultural scenes unexpectedly engaging. It could be its relaxing teahouse culture, or maybe it's the lively nightlife, but for many, the most memorable experience here will be the food. Sichuanese cuisine is famous

for its heat (which makes good use of mouth-numbing Sichuan pepper), history and variety. Chengdu is home to the finest Sichuanese chefs, a huge point of pride for the city. The quality of the food on offer here helped to make the city UNESCO's first-ever City of Gastronomy.

After an afternoon at leisure, meet your host in the hotel lobby for a first chance to test your tastebuds on some succulent Sichuanese stir-fries at our welcome dinner.



Details

Timing

Arrive in Chengdu at your leisure

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: NA

Duration: NA

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 500m

Overnight: 500m

Hotel

Shangri-La Hotel, Chengdu
[*****]



Day 2 Driving license application & an optional visit of Sichuan's pandas

After breakfast, we will help those who require a temporary Chinese driving license to complete the application process. This involves a simple eye test and some paperwork; we will strive to keep the process as streamlined as possible.

Spend the afternoon with Sichuan's most famous residents, the giant pandas at Chengdu's Panda Breeding Centre. Set on the city's outskirts amongst bamboo groves, the Centre's breeding program has been instrumental in supporting the giant panda population, particularly since 2008's catastrophic earthquake struck close to the province's main panda reserve at Wolong.

In the late afternoon we will

return to the hotel, driving licenses in hand, to prepare for the following day's journey to Lhasa. In the evening our staff will arrange a safety briefing for you, followed by dinner.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: NA

Duration: NA

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 500m

Overnight: 500m

Hotel

Shangri-La Hotel, Chengdu
[*****]

Day 3 Up and up to Tibet

Today will see you leaving the lowlands behind on the flight from Chengdu to Lhasa, at 3,650m elevation. The flight crosses the icy spine of the Himalayas, with fantastic views of the mountains and glaciers below.

Once in Lhasa, we will transfer you to your hotel in central Lhasa. Pity the planners who had to find enough flat land for a runway in this region! Lhasa's Gonggar Airport is actually 62km southwest of Lhasa, in the adjacent Yarlung Tsangpo Valley (more widely known as known as the Brahmaputra). The drive to the city has been substantially shortened, thanks to a new road and a tunnel.

Your hotel is situated just west of the Potala Palace and Lhasa's old town. On this, your first afternoon at altitude, please take things easy! If you do wish to stretch your legs, the Norbulingka

– a pleasant park that was once the summer palace for the Dalai Lamas, is within walking distance, as is the Tibet Museum. We recommend drinking plenty of water and avoiding caffeine and alcohol to help your body acclimatise. Minor discomfort and some difficulty sleeping is common, but please talk to our staff if you are feeling unwell.



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: NA

Duration: NA

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 3650m

Overnight: 3650m

Hotel

Shangri-La Hotel, Lhasa (*****)

Day 4 Discovering Tibet's sacred city

Spend the day in Lhasa as you acclimatise to the city's thin air. Start the day with a gentle walking tour around the old city, where you will pass markets and workshops where Tibet's traditional handicrafts are kept alive, as artisans paint thangkas and hammer out copper prayer wheels... Enter the holy precincts of the Jokhang Temple, one of Tibet's most atmospheric religious sites

with its yak butter lamps, clouds of juniper incense and pilgrims murmuring prayers around you.

In the afternoon, visit the magnificent Potala Palace, which lies on the slopes of Marpo Ri in the centre of the city, and wander through the richly decorated halls and chapels that were home to generations of Dalai Lamas.

Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 0 km

Duration: 0 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 3650m

Overnight: 3650m

Hotel

Four Points by Sheraton, Lhasa
(*****)

Day 5 On the Road in Tibet

Today will be your first day on the beautiful roads of Tibet, as you head west out of Lhasa to the stunning Yarlung Tsangpo Valley before climbing the winding road to your first high mountain pass of this trip, the Khamba-La (4,790m). As you crest the pass, you will catch your first glimpse of the vivid blue waters of Lake Yamdrok-tso...

After driving around the lake, you will pass glaciers and remote villages on the road to Gyantse, where you will have time to explore the old town and Gyantse Monastery with its beautiful chörten, before enjoying dinner under the mountain skies in a lovely garden restaurant...

Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 252 km

Duration: 6 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 5045m

Overnight: 3990m

Hotel

Gyantse Hotel, Gyantse (***)



Day 6 Into Tibet's Wild West

This morning you will drive to Shigatse, home to the enormous Tashilhunpo Monastery, one of the few monasteries that was saved from the ravages of the Cultural Revolution. You will explore the monastery on your return from Mt. Everest; today there is only enough time for a brunch before getting back on the road towards Tingri,

which curves south-west from Shigatse towards the Great Himalayan Range. Today's roads are some of the best on the trip, winding and smooth, and a delight to drive on.

You will stay overnight in a simple hotel in the village of Pelbar and prepare for your trip to Base Camp the following day.

Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 330 km

Duration: 6 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 5275m

Overnight: 4250m

Hotel

Baiba Hotel, Pelbar (**)

Day 7 Summit Day

Setting out from Pelbar before dawn, you will watch the sun rise over what is, quite literally, the roof of the world – an incredible mountain vista that includes four peaks over 8,000m; Everest, Lhotse, Makalu and Cho Oyu. After sunrise you will drive further in, towards North Base Camp, which lies at the foot of the Rongbuk Glacier. Stand in the shadow of Mount Everest and imagine you are about to set off for the summit, almost four

kilometers vertically above the North Base Camp itself..

From Mount Everest, you will return to the village of Tashi Dzom for lunch and the chance to meet with some local schoolchildren – help them to practice their English and learn about life in this harsh but beautiful environment.

In the afternoon, you will return to Pelbar for another night before returning to Shigatse the following day.

Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 300 km

Duration: 9 hours

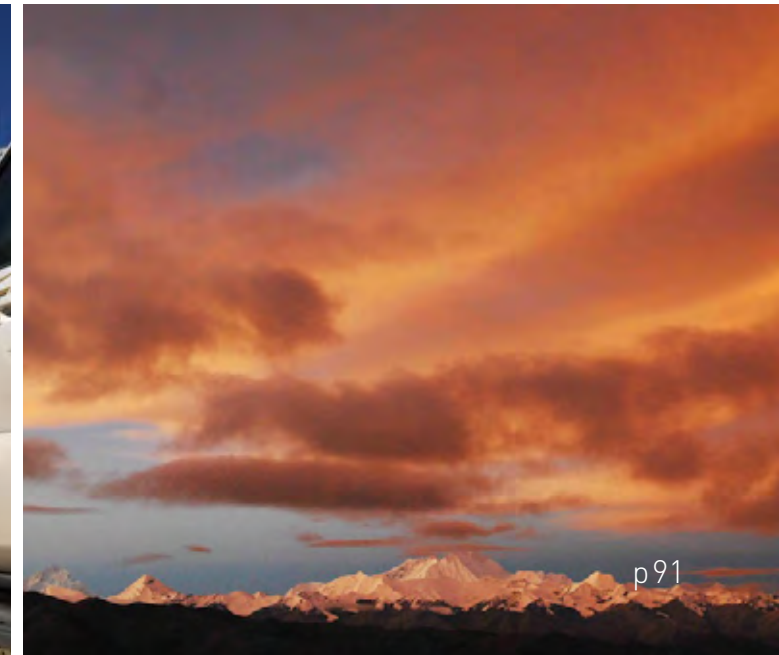
Elevation

Highest Daytime: 5210m

Overnight: 4250m

Hotel

Baiba Hotel, Pelbar (**)



Day 8 To Tibet's Second City

Today is a very relaxed day. You will drive from Tingri to Shigatse which will take around 4-5 hours on well-paved road.

Upon arriving in Shigatse you will head straight to your hotel. After checking in, we will head out to a nearby restaurant for a Tibetan/ Chinese lunch. In the afternoon, your guide will accompany you to the enormous Tashilhunpo Monastery, one of the few monasteries in Tibet that was largely saved from the ravages of the Cultural Revolution, and seat of the Panchen Lamas.

In the later part of the afternoon, you will have some time to yourselves. If you have plenty of energy, you could try walking the Tashilhunpo Kora for another perspective on the city and monastery – ask your tour leader for details! Otherwise, it's possible to head back to the hotel for a massage or to hit Shigatse's 'Pedestrian Street' (which is bizarrely one of the more dangerous places

to be a pedestrian in Shigatse – please take care in the chaotic traffic!).

Essentially, the afternoon is free for you to relax and unwind, as you will want to do, because the following day's drive north-east toward Lake Nam-tso is a long (but beautiful) one!



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 230 km

Duration: 4.5 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 4200m

Overnight: 3860m

Hotel

Qomo Langzong Hotel,
Shigatse (***)

Day 9 Beautiful back roads to Nam-tso

After a leisurely start in Shigatse and weather permitting, today will be the most beautiful drive on this journey. At first, you will drive an hour or so in an easterly direction toward Lhasa. Then you will turn north onto one of Tibet's provincial roads, the S203. It is a gravel road that will take you in around 160km to the G109 which runs from Beijing all the way to Lhasa. Once you arrive at the G109, you will have another hour to drive further north toward Damxung where you will stay for the night (in preparation for your visit the following day to Lake Nam-tso).

Today's highlight is the 160km gravel road and the stunning scenery you will pass through, not to mention the 5,450m mountain pass you will drive across. This road is the least frequented of all roads we've driven: along it, we always feel as remote as along any road on any of our journeys. As the dust

cloud rises behind you, you will drive as if into "nowhere" with a pure feeling of adventure: move yourself out of your comfort zone in exchange for unforgettable memories!

Along the S203 where you encounter nothing but yaks and the occasional Tibetan nomad, we have planned a picnic lunch.

All in all, your drive on this day will be most memorable, we're certain!



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 325 km

Duration: 8 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 5450m

Overnight: 4280m

Hotel

Pema Hotel, Damxung (**)

Day 10 Nam-tso & Lhasa

Today you will make an early morning visit to Lake Nam-tso, visiting the island of Tashi Do – the best place to enjoy the dramatic lakeside scenery. The saltwater lake lies at 4,750m, and is ringed to the south by the Nyechen Tanglha mountain range, whose snowcapped peaks soar to over 7,000m – a truly awe-inspiring setting.

After walking around the edge of the island on a kora circuit used by pilgrims, you will return to Damxung for lunch before setting off for Lhasa, where you will arrive in the late afternoon, in time to relax and enjoy a farewell dinner and – if you haven't already – sample a Tibetan specialty, yak butter tea!



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: 290 km

Duration: 7 hours

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 5000m

Overnight: 3650m

Hotel

Shangri-La Hotel, Lhasa

(*****)

Day 11 Farewell Tibet

This morning will be your last in Lhasa – perhaps spend the morning shopping for mementos of your journey, or take a moment to enjoy a leisurely lunch in the sunshine, or simply wander through the

city, absorbing the sights and sounds of the old town and reflecting upon your driving adventure over the past days...



Details

Driving Distance & Duration

Distance: NA

Duration: NA

Elevation

Highest Daytime: 3650m



Choice of Cars

We include in the package price an SUV we procure from Avis or Hertz or another reputable car rental company. Most of the SUVs are Toyotas, but on occasion Mitsubishi's or other brands may also make an appearance.

We wish the car rental markets of China would be more developed and we could give you more choice, but this is not so: since we want to provide well-maintained and well-insured cars, the choice is rather limited.

But SUVs are in fact the right choice for driving journeys in this part of the world because they are spacious enough to accommodate a lot of luggage, photography equipment, and good-and-bad-weather gear. Also, they reinforce the feeling of adventure, exploration and discovery...which is, in the

end, the mood of journeys in this region, no matter how comfortable or even luxurious the night's hotel may be.

What's more, they offer sufficient clearance when required and thus add a sense of safety and all-round ability. (4-wheel drive capability is hardly needed in China these days since all roads are either very well-paved or, with good gravel, offer solid support.)

And so SUVs from reputable brands are our car of choice!

**“ ANY car,
as long as
it is an SUV”**

Adventures in Local Cuisines

While this itinerary is not one of our special culinary journeys, we do believe that each one of our journeys should introduce you not only to hidden gems of cultural and scenic beauty, but that sampling local cuisines is also a must.

Wherever you travel with us, we will order, with very few exceptions, dishes fresh and on location with an emphasis on local produce. It is not uncommon for our guides to venture into the kitchen to pick this, that or the other vegetable and to ask the cook to prepare them in the finest possible way. (On occasion we do preorder a meal: this will normally be the case only for special occasions!)

Wine and beer is always included in our meals for you to enjoy. (When we travel into high-altitude, we suggest moderation!)

Finally, if you have special dietary requirements or are particularly interested in the culinary aspect of one of our journeys, please let us know.

For private journeys, we can, of course, tailor the meal experience to your taste (and budget).



What's Included / Best Months to Travel

Generally speaking, our journey packages and prices are all-inclusive. Once you've paid and you arrive at the starting point, you really won't have to take out your wallet again.

- **Cars** – a modern SUV is provided for all driving days, expertly maintained and serviced by Avis, Hertz, or other reputable car rental companies, and covered by the best insurance available, and hire car return from Lhasa to Chengdu is also included
- **International Journey Host, Guide and Support Vehicle** – you will be accompanied by a registered Chinese tour guide, an On the Road Experiences host and a fully equipped lead car with a local support driver
- **Routes** – we provide an extensively researched and carefully designed itinerary and state-of-the-art satellite navigation system with a pre-programmed route for the journey. You will also receive a detailed pre-departure pack and route book for the journey
- **Driving License** – You will need a temporary Chinese driving license for which all arrangements and fees are included.
- **Fuel & Tolls** – we provide petrol for the car throughout the journey and pay all tolls



- **Airport Transfers** – all airport transfers are included
- **Flight** – Your flight from Chengdu to Lhasa
- **Permits and Logistics** – all Tibet permits are included
- **Hotels** – the best available or five-star accommodation is included in each overnight stop

- **Meals** – breakfast (a choice of Western and Local is provided), and lunch and dinner are included on all driving days, as are drinks. Meals on non-driving days as specified above. Prepare for a culinary adventure!
- **Goodies** – you will enjoy an On the Road Home-Away-from-Home Kit containing wet towels, anti-bacterial gel and basic toiletries, and a daily picnic basket containing fresh fruit, fruit juice, water, and a mixture of sweets and nibbles

- **Other Essentials** – we provide each car with walky-talkies
- **Travel Insurance** – 24-hour medical assistance, evacuation and repatriation emergency service
- **Tips & Entrance Fees** – basic tips and entrance fees for jointly attended activities are included
- **Activities, Meals, Transport** during 'free times' as indicated in this Journey Dossier
- **Top-up Collision Damage Waiver** insurance

What's Not Included

The only items not included are your flights to Chengdu and back from Lhasa, your China visa, and personal purchases (e.g., gifts, souvenirs).



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“ A picture is worth a thousand words. True, but when it comes to a road journey, moving images are priceless. Please visit : <http://www.ontheroadexperiences.com/en/video-gallery> ”





**ON THE ROAD
EXPERIENCES**

BACK ROADS | HIDDEN GEMS

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

