

## **Himalayan High Road Challenge- Ladakh**

### **Day 01: Arrive Delhi**

Arrive Delhi International airport where the group will be welcomed with garlands by our company representative. You will then be transferred by coach to your hotel, and after completing check in formalities get comfortable in your hotel. Before dinner have a briefing to outline further what we have planned for the next few days.

### **Day 02: Delhi / Amritsar .**

Transfer to the railway station to board Shatabdi Express at 07:20 am and arrive Amritsar at 13:05 Hrs. Pickup from Amritsar railway station, met by representative and transfer to hotel. Post lunch we will drive in our jeeps to Wagha border for Flag ceremony. On the way back to hotel visit Golden Temple . Come back to hotel for overnight stay.

**WAGAH BORDER** : One of the many nearby places to visit from Amritsar is the Wagah Border. Located on the Indo-Pakistan border, Wagah is 28 kilometres from the Amritsar main town. A good number of visitors come to this place to see the change of guards ceremony and the flag hoisting and lowering activities which are done with great skill and precision by the border security forces of both the countries. A site you cannot afford to miss

**Golden Temple** : Also called Sri Harmandir Sahib, the Golden Temple was laid by Guru Ram Das in the 14th century. It is acclaimed as one of the holiest sites of the Sikhs. It has four doorways and gorgeously decorated arches. Reflecting influences of both Hindu and Muslim styles of architecture, the temple standing in the middle of a tank, exudes tremendous architectural brilliance which draws the attention of numerous tourists around the globe. Although principally a pilgrimage spot for the Sikhs, it is visited by people of all religions and proves to be one of the greatest tourist attractions in Amritsar on your tour to India .

### **Day 03: Amritsar – Dharamsala (210 Kms / 5 – 6 hrs)**

After breakfast check out from the hotel and drive to Dharamsala via Pathankot. Arrive Dharamsala and check into hotel. Post lunch you will be introduced to your partners on road – Royal Enfield Motorbikes. Leave for acclimatization tour of Dharamsala on your bikes, you may visit Norbulinka Institute, McLeodganj and Dall Lake . Come back to hotel in the evening for dinner and overnight stay.

**Norbulinka Institute** : Just four kms from Dharamsala, Norbulinka was established to preserve and teach the ancient Tibetan arts. The shady paths, wooden bridges, small streams tiny water falls make this place look like heaven. Here one can watch the wooden carvings and the tangka paintings, golsithing and embroidery being done. The nunnery close to the institute is a place where women are taught the advanced levels of Buddhist philosophy.

**McLeodganj** : Originally home of the semi-nomadic Gaddi tribe, McLeodganj is today the residence of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama. This mid 19th century place was developed as a British Garrison. The place was developed as an important administrative point for the whole Kangra valley. Today the place has developed as headquarters of the exiled Tibetan Government. The impressive monastery has larger than life size images of Buddha, Padmasambhava and Avaloketeshwara.

**Dall Lake** : Surrounded by high and green Deodar trees is the lake, which fills a mountain bowl. Situated 11-kms away from the town, this lake is easily approachable by road and makes an enchanting and serene picnic spot.

### **Day 04: Dharamsala – Mandi (125 kms / 05 hrs) (Motorbike safari starts)**

After breakfast at the hotel we will ride to Mandi. Mandi is located at the lower end of the Beas valley. Mandi is renowned for its 81 old stone temples and their enormous range of fine carving. The town also has the remains of old palaces and notable examples of `colonial' architecture. Arrive Mandi and check into hotel. After lunch visit Bodhnath Temple , Symakali Temple and Rewalsar Lake . In the evening come back to hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

**Bhootnath Temple** : Practically synonymous with Mandi and located in its very heart, this is as old as the town itself and dates back to the 1520s.

**Symakali Temple** : Symakali Temple is another holy temple in Mandi built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Constructed by Raja Syama Sen, this temple is also known as the temple of Tarna Devi .

**Rewalsar** : Located on a mountain spur, an hour's drive from Mandi brings you to this dark jewel like lake. With water, woodland and high hills, it presents a variety of natural beauty and the spot is sacred for Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs. Enjoy the evening near the lake watching the devotees perform their regular daily prayers.

#### **Day 05: Mandi - Manali (110 kms / 05 hrs)**

The Mandi to Manali drive is pleasurable, the road going alongside the Beas river right up to Manali. Practise caution as blind corners and speedy super deluxe tourist buses abound. The final run upto Manali has roads lined with apple orchards that alternate with the hotels on the outskirts of the town. Arrive Manali and check into your hotel and relax. Dinner and overnight stay at the hotel in Manali.

#### **Day 06: Relaxed Day at Manali.**

Today get up on your own pace have breakfast and enjoy the natural beauty of this tourist resort Manali. You may go for local sightseeing of Manali visiting Hadimba and Manu Temples , Tibetan Monastery and Vashist Bath. Come back to hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

**HADIMBA TEMPLE** : Manali has many attractions but the chief centre of interest, historically and archeologically, is undoubtedly the DHOONGRI TEMPLE dedicated to goddess Hadimba, the Bhim of Mahabharat fame. It has four-tiered Pagoda shaped roof and the doorway is carved with legendary figures and symbols. This temple located amidst wooden forest of deodar is about 2.5 kms. from the tourist office. It is a pleasant experience to stroll in the temple complex which was built in 1533 A.D. A large festival is held here in May.

**MANU TEMPLE**: 3 kms. from the main bazar in old Manali lies the temple of MANU RISHI . It is believed that this is the only temple of Manu in India , who was the creator of human race on the earth.

**TIBETAN MONASTERIES**: There are 3 newly constructed colorful monasteries, where visitors can buy carpets and other Tibetan handicrafts. Two are located in the town and one at Aleo on the left bank of Beas river.

#### **Day 07: Manali – Tandi (2573 M.) 118 Km / 5 – 6 Hrs Drive.**

After breakfast drive to Keylong via Rohtang pass (3980 M) for acclimatisation purpose. Arrive Tandi for the last fuel filling station on Manali – Leh highway. Tandi is situated at the altitude of 2573 meters at the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga river, Tandi is just 8 km short of Keylong. The village has a population of about 500. It is believed that this place was founded by Raja (King) Rana Chand under the name of Chandi which over the years got corrupted in Tandi. According to the mythological story about this place that Chandra and Bhaga river were son and daughter of the Moon and sun God respectively. They were in love with each other and decided to meet here to enter the wedlock. People respect this place as most sacred place in Lahaul valley. Further drive of 08 Km will get us to Keylong. Dinner and overnight stay at hotel in Keylong.

#### **Day 08: Keylong – Sarchu (4253 M) 107 Km / 5 – 6 Hrs Drive.**

From this day we drive on Leh route and the road winds through extensive fields and long river of Bhaga on the way we stop at Darcha for Passport check. Darcha is the base point for many different trekking routes. Continue drive to Baralachla pass 4883 Mtrs. There is a lake known as Surajtal and it is worth to stop here for pictures. Finally we reach Sarchu which is the boundary line between Himachal and Jammu n Kashmir state. Tonight our camp will be at an altitude of 4253 Mtrs. And it will be the coldest night during the whole tour. This is the last point of Himachal in this safari. Dinner and overnight at Swiss Cottage Tents.

**Day 09: Sarchu-Tsokar (3950m) 175 km / 06 – 07 hrs drive**

Early in the morning drive to Tsokar over the Nakeela, and Lachung-la, through the plane of Pang, en route we cross unique landscape, on arrival check in the fix tent rest of the time visit surrounding our camping site, have a change to see the wild ass “Kyang” overnight at Fix Tent.

**Day 10: Tsokar-Tsomoriri (4245m) 135 km / 04 – 05 hrs drive**

After an early breakfast drive to Tsomoriri, en route visit Sumda the Tibetan Refuge village and school, before Tsomoriri Lake one small lake from where you can see the nice view of Tsomoriri. On arrival at Tsomoriri check in fix tent, Rest of the time visit surrounding the lake and Karzok Gonpa. Overnight at fix tent at Korzok.

**Day 11: Rest day at Korzok.**

Today visit the Changpa campsites on a large meadow above Korzok. Spend the day watching nomadic life at work. Return to Korzok by late afternoon. Overnight at Camp.

**Day 12: Korzok – Leh (226 kms / 07 hrs drive)**

After breakfast drive Korzok - Mahe - Leh (226 kms / 7 hrs). A long day's drive back to Leh via Mahe Bridge and travelling along the Indus river gets us to Shey village at Lunch time. We will have lunch at this beautiful village. Our lunch will be specially prepared by the local villagers. After exploring the Shey Palace and village continue drive to Leh.

**Day 13: Rest day at Leh.**

Today relax at the . Spend the daHotel or explore the Leh town. In the evening we will organize a small bonfire and cocktail session at the hotel. Overnight at Hotel.

**Day 14: Excursion to Khardungla Pass (78 Km round trip)**

After breakfast prepare yourself for the ultimate adventure of your life. We will drive upto the Kardungla Top to have a magnificent view of the surrounding valleys. After spending some time there come back to Hotel and relax. You can carry a picnic lunch or come back to hotel for a late hot lunch. (Please check the buffet timings at your hotel in case of hot lunch) In the evening take a small round trip to Shanti Stupa for the beautiful sunset view over the entire Leh Valley . Overnight at Hotel in Leh.

**KHARDUNGLA PASS:** The road journey to Nubra valley leads through Khardung La pass (The highest Motorable road in the world) 18,390 ft. around 39 Kms. Away from Leh. There are two checkpoints on the both sides of the pass. Khardong is the first village of Nubra valley at higher altitude than Deskit and other villages.

**SHANTI STUPA** (Japanese Peace Pagoda) : Shanti Stupa/Japanese peace pagoda is build by a Japanese religious organization headed by Head monk Nakamura with the help from the organization and local people. It is situated at a hill top in Cahngspa village providing a bird eye view of the Leh town and the surrounding mountain peaks. Architecturally it has the Japanese touch with small clean rooms on the side for meditators and the main Japanese shrine at the entrance.

**Day 15: Leh – Sarchu (250 Kms / 8 – 9 Hrs drive)**

Full day drive to Sarchu via Upshi and we have to cross second highest motorable pass in world ( Tanglangla Pass 5350 Mtrs.) Enjoy the nature beauty of the mountains continue drive through Moreplans there are chance to see tiny colonies of Marmots, Yaks & Herbs. At Pang we stop for lunch continue drive to Lachungla pass 5065 Mtrs rugged in the middle of the mountains. Arrive Sarchu tonight our camp will be at 4200 Mtrs. and it will be the coldest night during the whole tour. Overnight in Tents.

**Day 16: Sarchu - Jispa (3142 M) (95 kms/4 hrs approx)**

Morning after breakfast drive to Jispa via Baralachala (4892 M). This place is used for the itinerary as a night stop over before saying good bye to the Ladakh and the Zanskar range . Overnight stay at Hotel Ibex.

### Day 17: Jispa – Manali (147 kms/ 5 -- 6 hrs approx)

Morning after breakfast drive to Manali via Rohtang pass (3980 M). On arrival Check In at Hotel, if time permits take a round of Manali Town . Dinner and overnight stay at Manali.

### Day 18: Manali – Chandigarh . (300 Km / 07 – 08 hrs drive by Jeeps) - Delhi

After breakfast drive to Chandigarh . Enroute visit Pinjore Gardens and Rock Garden. Arrive Chandigarh and drop to Chandigarh for Evening Shatabdi Express train to Delhi . Arrive and transfer to hotel.

### Day 19: Delhi sightseeing

Morning after breakfast group will taken for sightseeing of Old and New Delhi visiting Humayun's Tomb, Qutab Minar , India gate , Raj Ghat and enjoy rickshaw ride at Old Delhi . Evening free . Overnight at the hotel.

The Old Delhi is famous for the historical sights like .

**The Jama Mosque-** built in 1650 AD - the India 's largest mosque, which is made of alternating vertical strips of red sandstone and white marble. Drive past the northern gate of the mosque which leads to fabled Chandni Chowk (Moonlight square) and is the main area of the old city. Also visit the breathtaking Red Fort (1639-48) built by the builder of the Taj Mahal – Shah Jehan, famous for its delicately carved inlaid and Royal chambers. Thereafter proceed on to **Raj Ghat** –the cremation site of the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi, who died in 1948.

The sightseeing tour of New Delhi includes a visit to **Humayun's Tomb** (1565 AD). Drive past Safdarjang's Tomb (1753 AD) and visit the **Qutab Minar** 73 meters high which tapers from a 15 m diameter base to just 2.5 m at the top. The walls consist intricately carved quotations from Koran (the holy book of the Muslims) and is one of the most perfect towers of the Persian world. Nearby amidst the ruins of Quwat-ul-Islam mosque stands the Iron pillar, which has stood the vagaries of weather and has not rusted over 1500 years. The drive through New Delhi , includes the Embassy area (Diplomatic enclave), Rastrapati Bhawan (The President's House –1929 ) and the Government buildings (1921-30 ).

Overnight at the hotel.

### Day 20: Delhi – Agra

Morning drive to Agra and first proceed to see the famous Fatehpur sikri . Return back and check in at hotel.

### Day 21: Agra – Delhi

Morning visit Taj Mahal during sunrise ( Taj is closed on Fridays ) . Also visit Agra fort and then drive to Delhi and departure.

**Taj Mahal** -The Taj Mahal is a *tear on the face of eternity* - as described by the famous Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore and symbolises eternal love frozen in white Marble. Emperor Shah Jahan constructed this famous Mughal Monument in the memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. It is described as the most extravagant monument ever built for love, for the emperor was heart broken when Mumtaz, to whom he had been married for seventeen years, died in 1631 while giving birth to her 15th child.

**Agra fort** - Emperor Akbar initiated the construction of this massive Agra Fort in 1565 and additions were continuously made until the time of his grandson Shah Jahan. While in Akbar's time the fort was principally a military structure but by Shah Jahan's time it had partially become a palace. A visit to the fort is a must as many of the events, which led to the construction of the Taj Mahal, took place here. This fort also serves as vantage location to have the fabulous glimpse of The Taj.

Arrive and drive to International airport to board flight back home with sweet memories of India .