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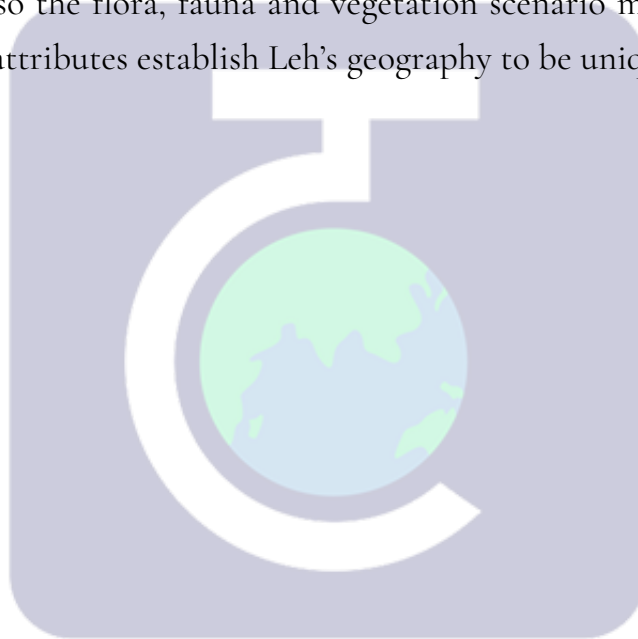
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1. Geographical location

Visiting Leh is nothing short of experiencing mountainous paradise. Situated amidst a landscape dominated by mountains, Leh is situated at an altitude of 3,500 meters. Despite being one of the largest district areas of the country, Leh is scarcely populated and has the minimum population density in the country. Due to its high altitude, Leh is the coldest and highest inhabited area in the country. Also, vegetation levels in the region are scanty; however, plantation projects are underway in the region so the flora, fauna and vegetation scenario may change. According to experts all the aforesaid attributes establish Leh's geography to be unique.



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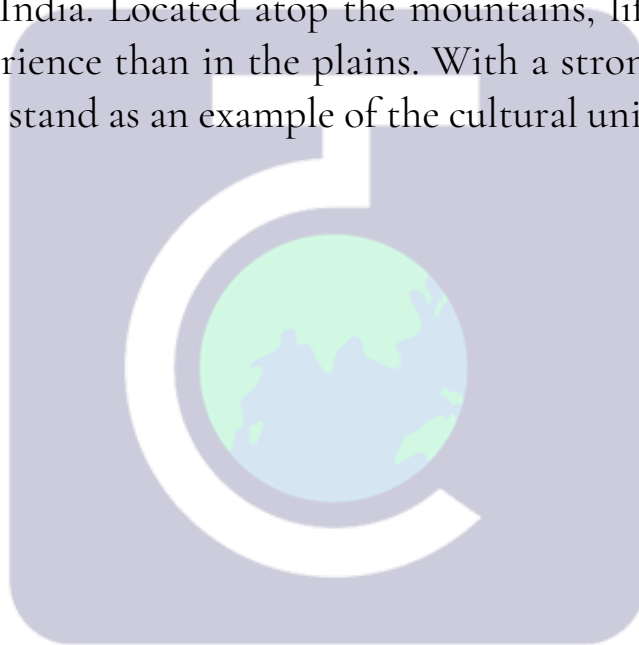
2. Neighbouring cities/countries

The Leh Region Is Hugged By Borders In Three Directions. In The North And North-West, Leh District Shares Borders With Pakistan And China Respectively. In The East, Tibet And Leh Share A Boundary And In The South, The District Has A Border Marked With Lahoul-Spiti Area Of Himachal Pradesh.



3. Significance

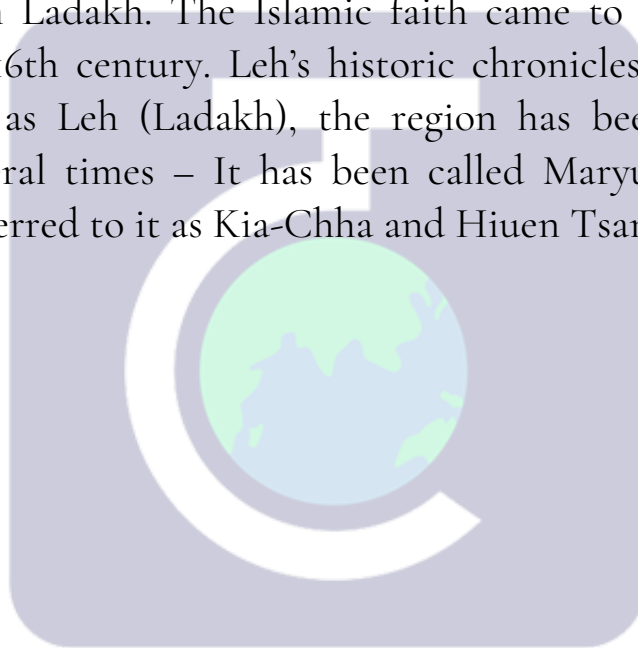
Ladakh is a strategically important place for India. Its proximity to the neighboring countries has caused several disputes over the years and the Indian military has a strong presence in Ladakh due to the ongoing issues between the neighbors. Historically, Ladakh had been part of a crucial trade route which later became closed because of the fissures in strategic relations. Culturally, it is a far cry from the rest of India. Located atop the mountains, life in Leh-Ladakh is a totally different experience than in the plains. With a strong Tibetan flavor, the people and their lives stand as an example of the cultural uniqueness and diversity in India.



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4. History

The region of Leh was the home-turf of Dards, an Indo- Aryan race. They are known to be the first settlers in Leh. Other immigrants from Tibet and other nearby areas set up base in Ladakh. As a result, their racial profiling and cultural values were similar. Afterwards the faith and practice of Buddhism moved through Central India and entered Tibet via Ladakh, thereby leaving behind a strong impression in Ladakh. The Islamic faith came to Ladakh with Islamic missionaries in the 16th century. Leh's historic chronicles a long and lengthy. Before being called as Leh (Ladakh), the region has been rechristened with different names several times – It has been called Maryul or low land, Kha-chumpa, Fa-Hein referred to it as Kia-Chha and Hiuen Tsang as Ma-Lo-Pho.



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5. Cultural identity

The District of Leh prides itself for having such a rich cultural heritage. The region of Leh Ladakh is famously known as the ‘Land of Monks and Monasteries’, and it’s admirable and praiseworthy that people of all faiths and belief live together in harmony in the region. The people that reside in Leh are known to be very welcoming and honest. Jabro, Shondol, Marriage Dance and Kampa Sumsak are few of the well-known traditional dances.



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6. Natural resources

Leh-Ladakh is covered with the Loafy Mountains and doesn't receive the heavy rainfall but is covered with snow due to its great height. The forest cover is just 36% of the total area and is known for its forest based industries such as Turpentine Industry, Eco-tourism, Joinery, ply and other wood based industries and also for the industry like pharmaceuticals. The natural shrubs like Hyphophea and Myrcaria is also found.



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7. Key site seeing places (paid and free)

7.1. Paid

7.1.1. Thikse Monastery

Thikse Monastery is one of the best examples of the Ladakhi architecture and will remind you of the Potala Palace. This yellow hat building is where you can find many Buddhist art collections such as Thangka paintings, statues, swords, stupas and a nunnery. The main attraction of this destination is the famous Maitreya Temple.

Address : Thiksey Villay, Leh Manali Highway, Thiksey, Leh, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Zipcode : 194101

Location : 34.0568266, 77.66696260000003

Contact : 093200 89774

Entry Fee : INR 20 per person

Open & Close Timing : Daily: 07:00hrs-19:00hrs

Time Required : 4

Expected Wait Time : 5 minutes

Buy Ticket : No



7.1.2. Diskit Monastery

Diskit Monastery is one of the oldest and largest Buddhist monasteries located in the Nubra Valley. Founded in the 14th century, it houses a statue of the Maitreya Buddha in the prayer hall. Every year when the famous Dosmoche Festival takes place, this spiritual haven plays the esteemed role of hosting the entire festival.

Address : Deshkit, Jammu & Kashmir, India 194401

Zipcode : 194401

Location : 34.5409579, 77.5606881

Entry Fee : INR 30 per person

Open & Close Timing : Daily 07:00hrs-19:00hrs

Time Required : 1

Expected Wait Time : 10 minutes

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.3. Likir Monastery

Established by Lhachen Gyalpo, the fifth king of Ladakh, Likir Monastery is known for its Buddhist teachings and enlightens the visitors about the basic disciplines named Pratimoksa. Also known as Likir Gompa, the monastery houses close to 120 monks and is known for the famous hand-painted art of the 'Wheel of Life'.

Address : Likir, Jammu and Kashmir, 194101, India

Zipcode : 194101

Location : 34.293164, 77.215097

Entry Fee : INR 5 to 10 per person

Open & Close Timing : Daily 09:00hrs-13:00hrs; 14:00hrs-18:00hrs

Time Required : 3

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.4. Spituk Monastery

Founded in the 11th century, Spituk Monastery consists of a giant statue of Goddess Kali which is open to the public during the Spituk Festival. Established by Od-de, Spituk Gompa is known to be the dwelling place of 100 monks. Located about 8 kilometers from Leh, it is also known as 'Pethup Gompa'.

Address : Leh, Jammu and Kashmir, 194101, India

Zipcode : 194101

Location : 34.1254451, 77.52656090000005

Entry Fee : INR 20-30 per person

Open & Close Timing : Daily 08:00hrs-13:00hrs; 14:00hrs-18:00hrs

Time Required : 3

Expected Wait Time : 15 minutes

Buy Ticket : Yes

7.1.5. Monastery Circuit

Monastery Circuit is located on the flood plains of the Indus River and offers a spellbinding view of Leh and Ladakh. Consisting of numerous shrines and monasteries, various religious celebrations, chortens and ancient walls are what attract many visitors to this place. It is referred to as a circuit since it takes you through several monasteries that belong to the Tibetan Buddhist.

Address : Ladakh, Leh, India

Location : 34.2237143, 77.175207

Entry Fee : Alchi Monastery – INR 20 Thiksey Monastery – INR 25 Lamayaru Monastery – INR 35 Likir Monastery – INR 20 Phyang Monastery – INR 20

Open & Close Timing : Alchi Monastery – 10:00hrs-13:00hrs Thiksey Monastery – 07:00hrs-19:00hrs Lamayaru Monastery – 06:00hrs-19:00hrs Likir Monastery – 09:00hrs-13:00hrs Phyang Monastery – 08:00hrs-12:00hrs

Time Required : 2

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.6. Hemis Gompa

Built by King Singge Namgyal, the Hemis Monastery is the biggest monastery in Ladakh. Being the richest place of worship in Leh-Ladakh, the monastery houses a statue of Lord Buddha, holy Thankas and a number of Stupas. It also includes a museum that is known to hold a vast collection of spurious tiger skins, swords and skull vessels. Hemis Gompa is also known for the Hemis Tsechu Festival which is celebrated every year. The highlight of this festival is the holy mask dance performed by the Lamas to celebrate the victory of good over evil.

Address : Hemis High Altitude National Park, Hemis, Leh, Jammu and Kashmir, India 194201

Zipcode : 194201

Location : 33.91259639999999, 77.70296889999997

Entry Fee : INR 50

Open & Close Timing : Daily 06:00hrs-20:00hrs

Time Required : 2

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.7. Leh Palace

Built in 1825 by King Tsepel Tondup, Leh Palace is currently the dwelling place of the royal followers of King Sengge Namgyal. The palace includes a huge library and is surrounded by beautiful gardens. It also houses a museum which is known to display artefacts that are close to 450 years old. Visit the rooftop of the palace to witness spellbinding views of the snowcapped mountains.

Address : Stok, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Zipcode : 194101

Location : 34.1659783, 77.58657319999998

Entry Fee : INR 50 per person

Open & Close Timing : Daily: 07:00hrs to 16:00hrs

Time Required : 3

Expected Wait Time : 5 minutes

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.8. The Lamayuru Monastery

The Lamayuru Monastery is known to be one of the oldest monasteries of Leh. Founded by Mahasiddhacharya Naropa, Lamayuru Monastery mainly belongs to the Red Hat sector of the Buddhists. Built along with the Alchi Monastery, this monastery also includes a number of attractive wall paintings as well as Thangkas. Make sure you also visit the Lamayuru Lake while you stop over at the this monastery.

Address : B.P.O Khaltse, Ladakh, Leh, Jammu and Kashmir 194106

Zipcode : 194106

Location : 34.28300629999999, 76.77418809999995

Contact : +91 9469732677

Website : <http://lamayuru.com/>

Open & Close Timing : Daily 06:00hrs-13:00hrs; 13:30hrs-18:00hrs

Time Required : 2

Buy Ticket : No

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7.2. Free

7.2.1. Shanti Stupa

Overlooking the city, Shanti Stupa is located at a height of over 4,000 meters and offers a captivating view of the snow-clad mountains. Located just 5 kilometers away from the Leh city, this enormous white colored dome can be seen from the main parts of the town. Walk your way through 500 stairs to reach the Shanti Stupa which was built to commemorate 2,500 years of Buddhism. Built as a memorial, the pillars inside this huge dome give an insight of the life of Lord Buddha.

Address : Chanspa, Leh, Jammu and Kashmir, India - 194101

Zipcode : 194101

Location : 34.17361959999999, 77.5749988

Contact : 01982 252 297

Website : <http://www.jktourism.org/index.php/shanti-stupa>

Open & Close Timing : Daily: 05:00hrs to 21:00hrs

Time Required : 2

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.2. Pangong Tso

Located in the heart of Leh, Pangong Tso is one of the salty lakes in Asia. Embracing the borders of India and China, the crystal clear lake expands over 100 kilometers. Symbolizing a sheer beauty of nature's craftsmanship, it is also known as the Hollow Lake.

Address : Pangong Tso, Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, India - 194101

Zipcode : 194101

Location : 33.7379612, 79.00752940000007

Open & Close Timing : Daily: Open 24 hours

Time Required : 2

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.3. Zanskar Arts

Zanskar Arts is known to sell unique silk and cashmere shawls.

Address : main bazar, near suar market leh ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Zipcode : 194101

Location : 34.162839, 77.58523400000001

Time Required : 0

Buy Ticket : No

7.2.4. Tibetan Market

The Tibetan Market is known for selling Pashmina shawls, stoles and other authentic Pashmina garments. Handmade woolen caps, socks, gloves and sweaters are items that tourists definitely shop for while in Leh. Traditional handicraft items including Buddhist masks, prayer wheels and Thangka paintings can be purchased here, alongside traditional silver and Ladakhi jewelry. Visit this local market to fill in your bag with souvenirs of traditional Ladakhi items.

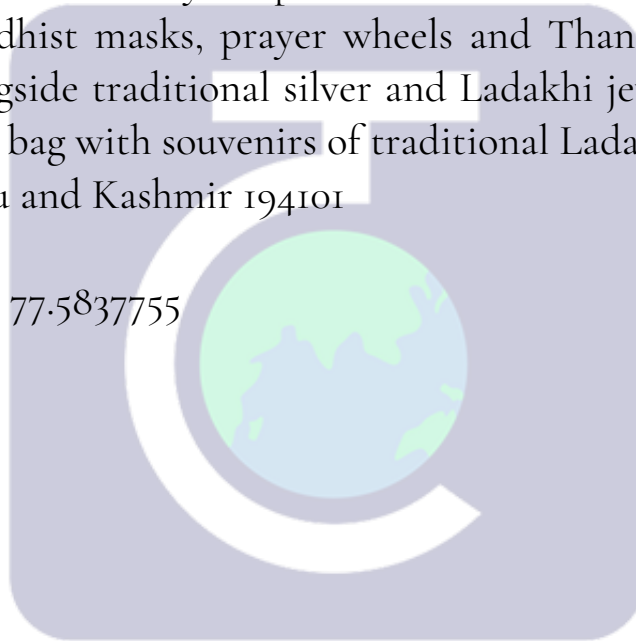
Address : Leh, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Zipcode : 194101

Location : 34.1633873, 77.5837755

Time Required : 0

Buy Ticket : No



8. Key sites sports & adventure

Ladakh offers an ideal destination for adventure seekers like hiking, trekking, mountaineering, white water rafting and mountain biking.

- **Mountaineering at Khardung La -**

Address : Khardung La, 194101

Location : 34.278728,77.604674

Open / Close Time : Open 24 hours

Time Required : 0.00

- **Water sports at Tsomoriri -**

Address : Tso Moriri, 194404

Location : 32.911229,78.315946

Open / Close Time : Open 24 hours

Time Required : 2.00

- **Trekking -**

Address : Markha Valley, Ladakh, India - 194101

Location : 33.979699,77.254691

Open / Close Time : Open 24 hours

Time Required : 4.00

- **Water sports Zaskar Rivers -**

Address : Zaskar Rivers, Leh, India - 194103

Location : 33.840069,77.086619

Open / Close Time : Open 24 hours
Time Required : 4.00



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9. Adventure sports, Local sports, stadiums

Ice hockey is the most played sports in Ladakh. Natural ice is available in plenty during the winter season from mid-December to mid-February. Cricket, like anywhere else in India, also very popular here. One of the traditional sporting events that is still alive in Ladakh is archery. Archery festivals are held in many villages in the region. Polo is another old and traditional sport, played right from the mid-17th century. Annual polo events are held in Kargil.



10. Spas and relaxation

- **The Zen Ladakh:**

Address : Sheldan Fort Road, Leh, Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Location : 34.158728,77.57464800000002

Contact No : 094199 52359

Website : <http://www.thezenladakh.com/>



11. Events calendar

Month

Events

Gustor Festival @ Spituk Monastery in Ladakh (7th & 8th)

This is a religious and cultural festival that features cham performances and mask dances. Losar Festival @ All over Ladakh (27th)

This event was established to celebrate the founder of Gelukpa School. During this festival Gods, animals and ancestors are fed properly as people dance and celebrate.

BIKE LADAKH - Practice Ride Sinhgad @ Sinhgad Fort (6th)

This bike practice is an introduction to the Bike Ladakh 2016. It's open for and participant are required to carry a repair kit, water bottle and snacks

Only women trip to Leh @ Leh Ladakh (13th-18th)

Be part of this affordable trip which includes visits to Leh palaces and monasteries,

Pangong lake, shopping at the local markets and many other events.

Saka Dawa @ All over Ladakh (20th)

This religious festival entails celebration Shakyamuni Buddha's birth, enlightenment and parinirvana!

Sindhu Darshan (Visit Indus) Festival @ Shey Manla (1st-3rd)

Enjoy performances by local artists and traditional dances. People from all religions can participate in this festival.

Hemis Festival @ Hemis Monastery (3rd -4th)

Hemis Gompa is one of the richest and largest Buddhist temple in Ladakh that hosts the popular annual festival called Hemis Tsechu.


Ladakh Bike Expedition @ Manali to Leh & Back (1st July- 12th Sept)

Enjoy a bike tour from Manali through Rohtang, Keylong and Sarchu as you witness great landscape and key attraction Ladakh Festival @ All over

Ladakh (20th - 26th)

The inauguration ceremony takes place in Leh with diverse cultural troupes performing dances, traditional music and ancient dresses.

Deskrit Gustor Festival @ Nubra (28th & 29th)



This festival features traditional performances and costumes that are very insightful of the locals' culture.

Thiksey Gustor Festival @ Thiksay (17th-18th)

Taking place in the Spituk, Thiksey, and Karsha Nanzkar monasteries, the sacrificial cake (Torma) is distributed by Black Hat dancer to commemorate victory of good over evil.

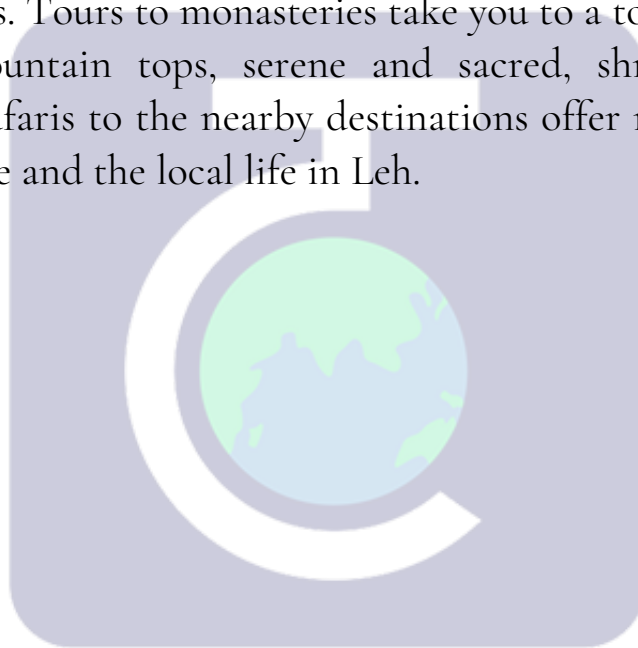
Galdan Namchot Festival @ All over Ladakh (23rd)

This event is hosted to commemorate the birthday and Buddhahood of Tibetan saint known as Tsongkhapa.

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12. Key local guides and tours

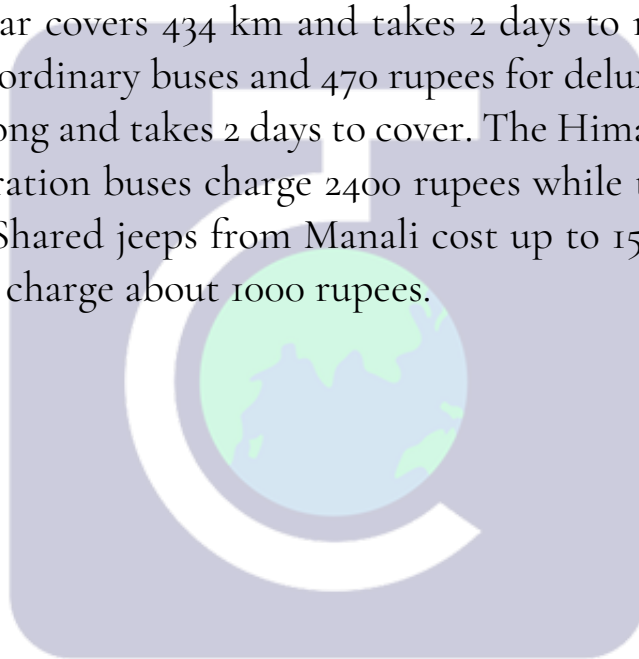
Though far removed from the plains and big cities, this mountainous region probably offers more adventures and sights to the travelers. There are travel and tour agencies in Ladakh that can offer you the best packages to explore this breathtaking land. Trekking and hiking tours are the most popular ones in Leh-Ladakh. The rugged paths and trails offer the most exciting challenges for the adventure enthusiasts. Tours to monasteries take you to a totally different world, so high on the mountain tops, serene and sacred, shrouded in mist and magnificence. Jeep safaris to the nearby destinations offer mesmerizing views of the pristine landscape and the local life in Leh.



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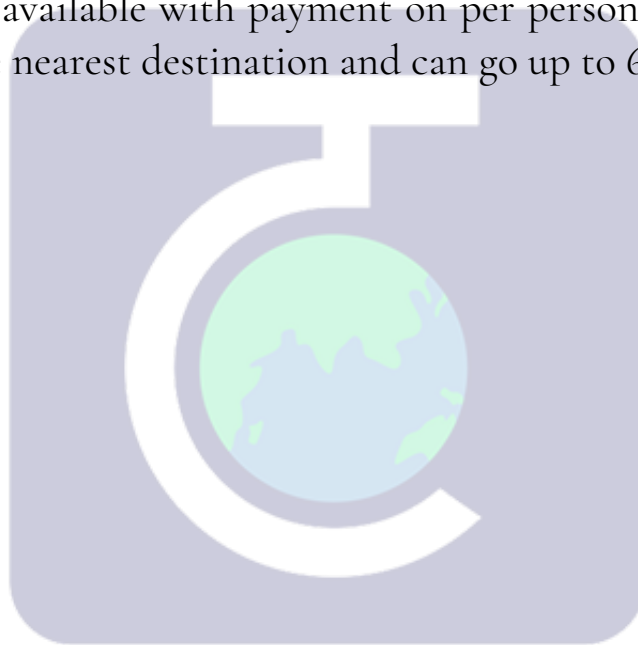
13. Transportation hubs

Ladakh is reached by air or by road from Delhi, Srinagar, and Manali. Travelers who land at the Indira Gandhi International Airport at Delhi can fly to the Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport at Leh in Ladakh. Another option is to fly to the Srinagar International Airport in Jammu and Kashmir or to the Kullu Manali Airport in Himachal Pradesh, and then take bus from these places to Ladakh. The bus ride from Srinagar covers 434 km and takes 2 days to reach Leh. The ticket fare is 370 rupees for ordinary buses and 470 rupees for deluxe buses. The Manali-Leh route is 473 km long and takes 2 days to cover. The Himachal Pradesh Tourist Development Corporation buses charge 2400 rupees while the state run bus fare is about 645 rupees. Shared jeeps from Manali cost up to 1500 rupees. Taxi jeeps from Srinagar to Leh charge about 1000 rupees.



Index**14. Transportation cost**

Most of the places in Leh are accessible on foot. To go to the nearby tourist destinations, taxis are available. Unions fix the rate of taxis. If the driver is contacted directly, a 10-15 % reduction in rates is possible. The average rate is 18-20 rupees per kilometer. A driver allowance of about 400 rupees has to be paid as extra charges. To go to the Leh airport, the taxi fare is 100-150 rupees. Shared taxi services are also available with payment on per person basis. Bus rates start from 20 rupees to the nearest destination and can go up to 600 rupees as distance increases.



15. Baggage allowance

Taxi rates are somewhat higher in Leh-Ladakh than the rest of India. Tourists may be expected to pay extra charges for heavy or large luggage in taxis. Usually, tourists don't have to carry much luggage with them as they will be leaving them at the places where they are staying. There are no extra charges for luggage in public buses. Some hotels offer left luggage facilities to their guests. If you have plans to visit other parts of India after returning from Leh, it is better to leave your luggage at the main cities from where you start your journey to Ladakh.



16. Restaurant & Nightlife

Most of the best restaurants are found near the Gompas or the Monasteries of Leh.

Food -

Most of the best restaurants are found near the Gompas or the Monasteries of Leh.

- **Lamayuru Restaurant:**

Address : Fort Road Opp Hotel Yak Tail, Leh, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Location : 34.163941,77.582585

Contact No : 01982 256 069

Open / Close Time : Daily 07:00hrs-22:30hrs

- **Chopsticks Noodle Bar Leh:**

Address : Raku Complex, Fort Rd, Leh, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Location : 34.163941,77.5819851

Open / Close Time : Daily 12:00hrs-23:00hrs

- **Il Forno Restaurant:**

Address : Leh, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Location : 34.1647655,77.583941800

Contact No : 919622965941

- **Gesmo Restaurant:**

Address : Leh, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Location : 34.163849999,77.582733100

Contact No : 09418064040

Open / Close Time : Daily 09:00hrs-22:30hrs

- **World Garden Café:**

Address : Leh, Jammu and Kashmir 194101

Location : 34.1661222,77.583210000

- **Neha Snacks:**

Address : main Bazar Near Soma Gompa, Leh, Jammu and Kashmir
194101

Location : 34.164281,77.585382

Open / Close Time : Daily 08:00hrs-22:00hrs



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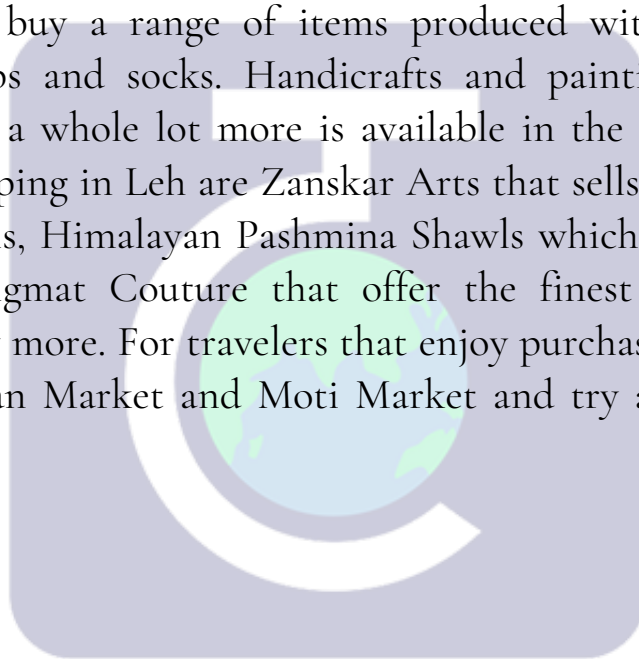
17. Average meal cost

The average cost per day for food for two people is available at 500.00 rupees. For about fourteen days, so roughly you need to spend 7000- 10,000 rupees per person for food. If you dine at Dhaba and likewise cheaper places or restaurants then it comes out around 50-70 rupees only per person. But for the same meal you have to pay 150 rupees to 170 rupees in restaurants. The domestic beer as well as imported beer is available both in cheaper and higher prices.



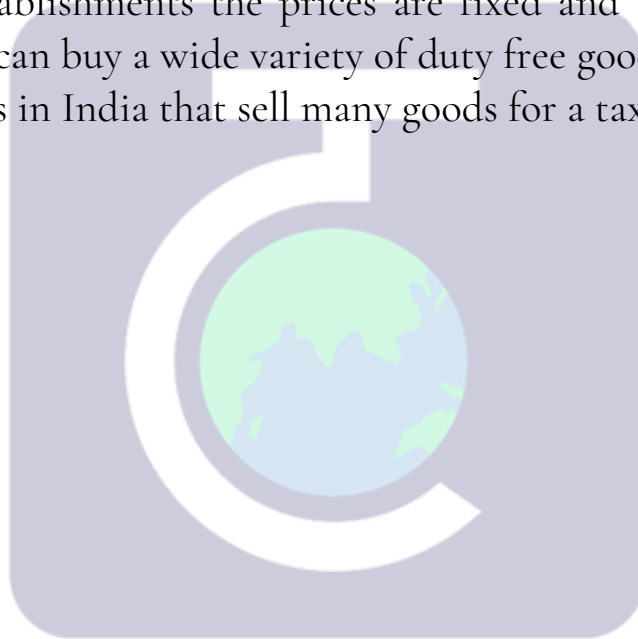
18. Shopping

Just because Leh is a predominantly mountainous destination, doesn't mean that it does not have shopping experiences to offer to the visitors and tourists. On the contrary, there are some nice and fun markets and bazaars that tourists could stroll over to make as many buys as they want. The markets and bazaars are decked with goods such as pashmina shawl – which is the signature product of Leh. Travellers can buy a range of items produced with pashmina wool – sweaters, gloves, caps and socks. Handicrafts and paintings, Tibetan tables, Buddhist masks and a whole lot more is available in the markets. Some other great places for shopping in Leh are Zanskar Arts that sells the most unique silk and Cashmere Shawls, Himalayan Pashmina Shawls which are famous for their Pashmina Shawls, Jigmat Couture that offer the finest range of handloom collections and many more. For travelers that enjoy purchasing in open markets, they can visit Tibetan Market and Moti Market and try a variety of different products.



19. Tourist benefits

VAT refund for goods purchased within the country is not applicable for international tourists in India. In Leh-Ladakh, most of the shopping is confined to local handicrafts and street shops and markets. The only shopping benefits available are got by some hard bargaining for prices. In open markets, negotiations can get you a good product for a good price. But, in government run stores and larger establishments the prices are fixed and there is no scope for bargaining. Tourists can buy a wide variety of duty free goods and products from international airports in India that sell many goods for a tax free price.



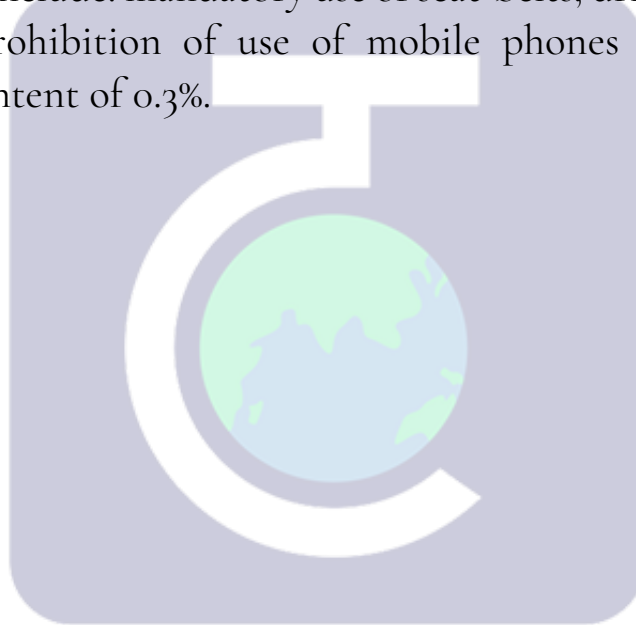
20. Essential local apps

To have a relaxed trip, it is important you have all the resources well before in your hand. It is difficult to travel road to road in search of finding tourist attractions or an accommodation. Hence, downloading the perfect range of travel apps can save you the trouble. Zomato is another best app to check on the reviews and see if the restaurant you have chosen or check on the menus of the finest range of restaurants in Leh. Get the audio tours of various hotspots in Leh with AudioCompass.



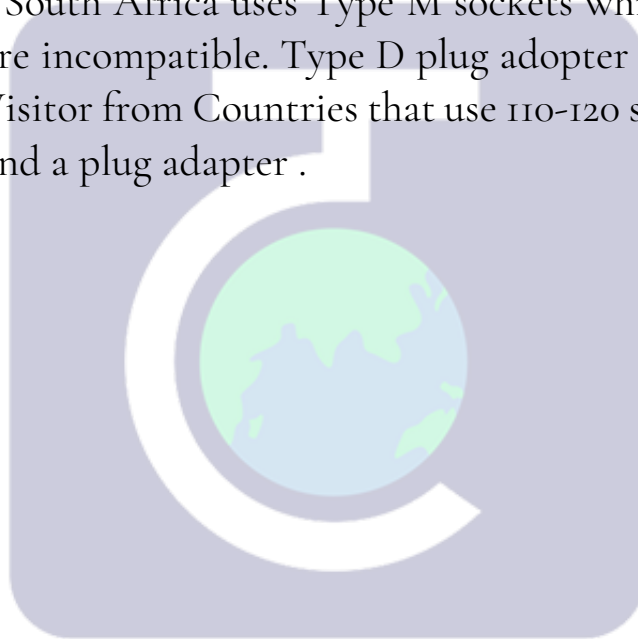
21. Driving

Leh ladakh is a famous destination for self-drive enthusiasts and bikers. However, for foreigners aspiring to go on a road trip in Leh-Ladakh, it's recommendable to get a local Indian driving licence or get an International driving permit. Visitors are also cautioned to be careful when driving along Leh highway which seems quite straight and safe but can be equally dangerous. Some important regulations when driving in Leh include: mandatory use of seat-belts, driving on the left hand-side of the road, prohibition of use of mobile phones when driving and a minimum alcohol content of 0.3%.



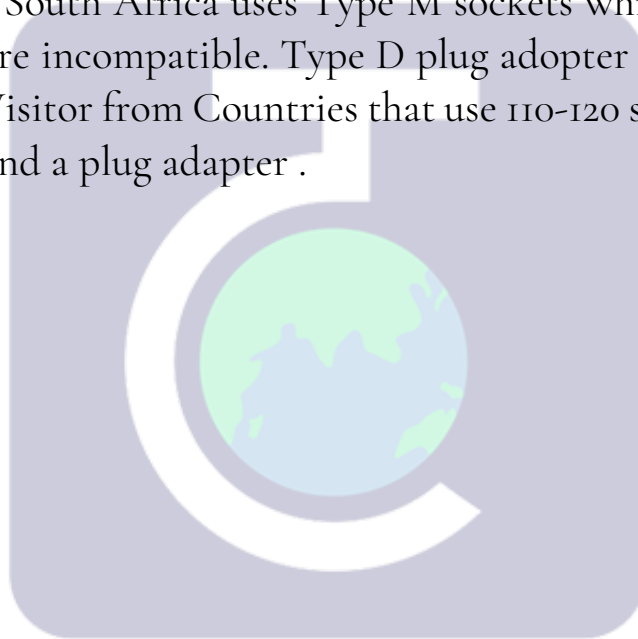
22. Travel essentials

Leh-ladakh is connected to the electric grid at a standard voltage of between 220-240 volts. The frequency is 50 Hz. This standard is the same as the one used in most countries found in central and Western Europe including United Kingdom. Visitors who are planning to visit India from these countries do not require a step down transformer although they require a plug adopter because Leh-Ladakh only uses Type D sockets. South Africa uses Type M sockets which look quite similar to Type D but they are incompatible. Type D plug adopter are easy to get in Leh and only cost 25Rp. Visitor from Countries that use 110-120 standard voltage must carry a transformer and a plug adapter .



23. Essential clothes

Leh-ladakh is connected to the electric grid at a standard voltage of between 220-240 volts. The frequency is 50 Hz. This standard is the same as the one used in most countries found in central and Western Europe including United Kingdom. Visitors who are planning to visit India from these countries do not require a step down transformer although they require a plug adopter because Leh-Ladakh only uses Type D sockets. South Africa uses Type M sockets which look quite similar to Type D but they are incompatible. Type D plug adopter are easy to get in Leh and only cost 25Rp. Visitor from Countries that use 110-120 standard voltage must carry a transformer and a plug adapter .



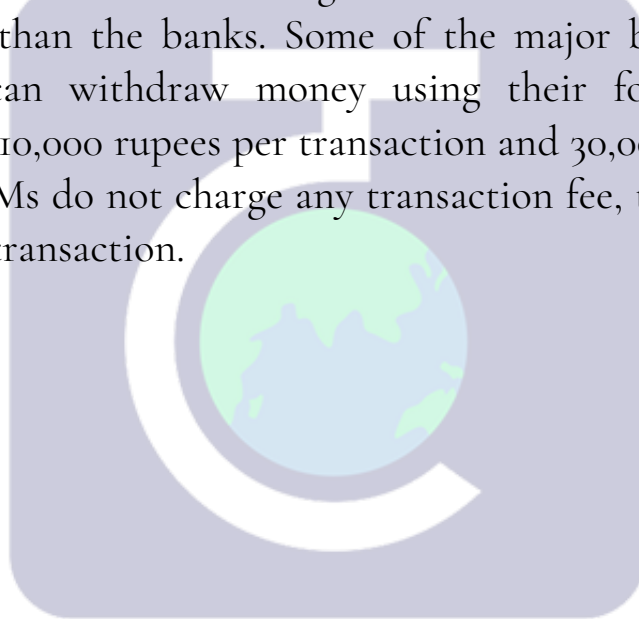
Index**24. Local currency**

The local currency of Leh is Indian Rupee. It is denoted as INR. 1 USD = INR 66.87.



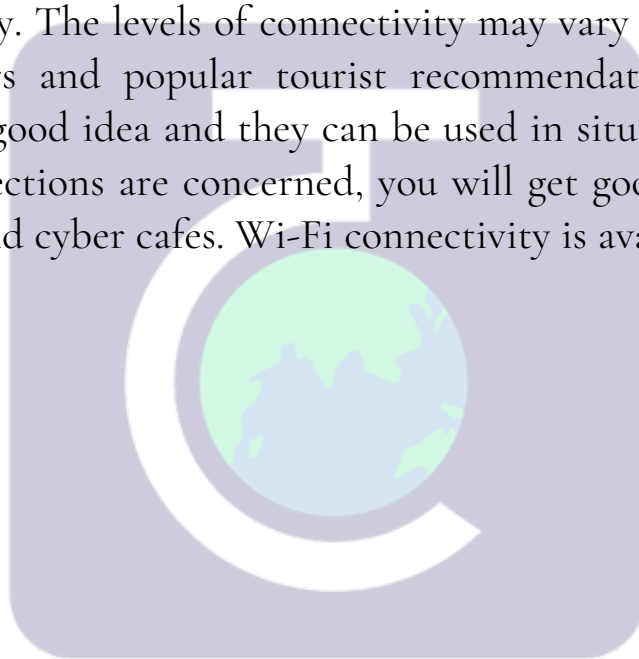
25. Change vendor's commission, ATM charges

The best place to exchange foreign currency in Ladakh is at the banks. They offer better rates and the commission is also a nominal 1%. The branches of State Bank of India and J&K Bank in Leh and Kargil provide exchange facilities. If you are travelling to Ladakh from Delhi airport, exchange only a small amount to Indian rupees from the airport counters as the exchange rates are extremely low there. Some hotels in Ladakh also offer exchange services to in-house guests though the rates may be lower than the banks. Some of the major banks have ATMs in Ladakh. Travelers can withdraw money using their foreign cards. Expect withdrawal limits of 10,000 rupees per transaction and 30,000-40,000 rupees in a day. Though the ATMs do not charge any transaction fee, the card issuing bank may charge for each transaction.



26. Staying connected

Travelling to Leh region sure has its bonuses. Phone and internet connectivity is not one of them. In order to enjoy maximum mobile phone reception and connectivity it is advised that travelers carry a mobile phone which as a Postpaid SIM card. Although prepaid connections are available in Leh, but postpaid mobile phone connectivity will last longer. Also be informed that not all places in Leh have connectivity. The levels of connectivity may vary from good to erratic. Experienced travelers and popular tourist recommendation is that carrying satellite phones is a good idea and they can be used in situations of urgency. As far as Internet connections are concerned, you will get good Internet speeds in hotels, restaurants and cyber cafes. Wi-Fi connectivity is available in these places too!



27. Time Zone

Leh follows Indian Standard Time Zone with UTC + 05:30 hours.



28. Languages

Bhoti, also known as Ladakhi, is spoken widely in Leh. Shina and Balti are the following languages.



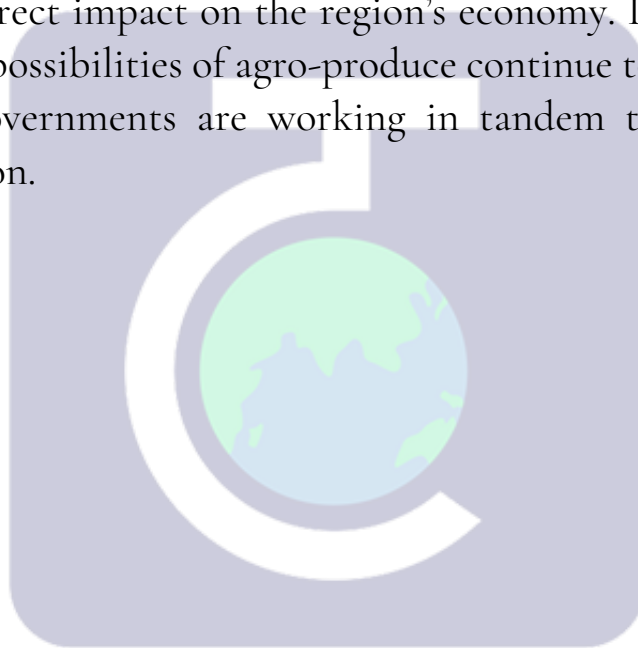
Index**29. Political Scenario**

The region's political bearings are governed by the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council. Leh has a councilor-strength of 30 members which is fronted by the Chief Minister and his team of four Executives.



30. Economic Scenario

Tourism is the sole honey-pot industry of Leh at present. Due to the successful influx of tourists in the region, employment opportunities have emerged. Thanks to tourism, the local population is engaged in services and jobs of travel and transport, hotel and accommodation, hotels and catering, and cottage industries. Every year there is a surge in the number of tourist footfalls in the region, and this increase has a direct impact on the region's economy. Due to the unfriendly climatic conditions, possibilities of agro-produce continue to be minimal. But the state and central governments are working in tandem to increase economic prospects of the region.



Index**31. Religious belief**

Leh-ladakh religious beliefs and practices are quite different compared to other regions in the main land. The most dominant religion is Buddhism which is mainly practiced in eastern and central areas of Leh-ladakh. Lamaism Buddhism also known as Mahayana Buddhism is one of the Buddhism groups still found in Ladakh. Other religious groups found in Ladakh include Islam which is mainly practiced in western region and Christianity mainly found in the town of Leh.



32. Visa requirements

Travelers going to Leh Ladakh need to possess a valid passport document which has a remaining validity of minimum 6 months. A visa application needs to be submitted at the Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC). The applicants' would be allotted an interview date which they must attend accompanied with their relevant documentation. Upon approval, the Indian tourist visa which gets issued is valid for six months maximum (180 days.) Foreign nationals visiting Leh Ladakh will also need to apply for PAP (Protect Area Permits.) After permits are granted, they'd be allowed entry into the restricted zones in Ladakh - Nubra Valley, Tso Moriri, Pangong Tso, and Dah - Hanu Villages. For more details go to: <http://www.lehladakhindia.com/innerline-permits/>



Index**33. Essential vaccination**

It is required that all visitors get vaccinated against yellow fever especially those coming from yellow-fever prone countries. Other vaccinations that are essential include polio, hepatitis A & B, rabies and Malaria vaccines.



Index**34. Theft and Safety**

It is safe for the tourist but as because it is a hilly area, it has several threads related with natural disasters like landslides, slipping and many more. If you are travelling in a shared taxi or in a government operated bus then you are very safe but if you are traveling in a reserved taxi then you have to be very cautious about the driver and as well as for your safety. And for a girl it is not as safe.



Index**35. Embassy/Consulate**

There are no foreign embassies or consulates in Leh. However, you can find them in nearby cities. Visit the site <http://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-in/india> for more information.



36. Accessibility

Some of the destinations in Leh-Ladakh can be accessed by people with disabilities and the elderly. The social amenities like washrooms are not that friendly to physically impaired People. There are few hotels that are friendly and accessible. Although Leh-Ladakh has insufficient amenities for those with physical challenges, organizations such as 'Travel another India' are trying to make it better.



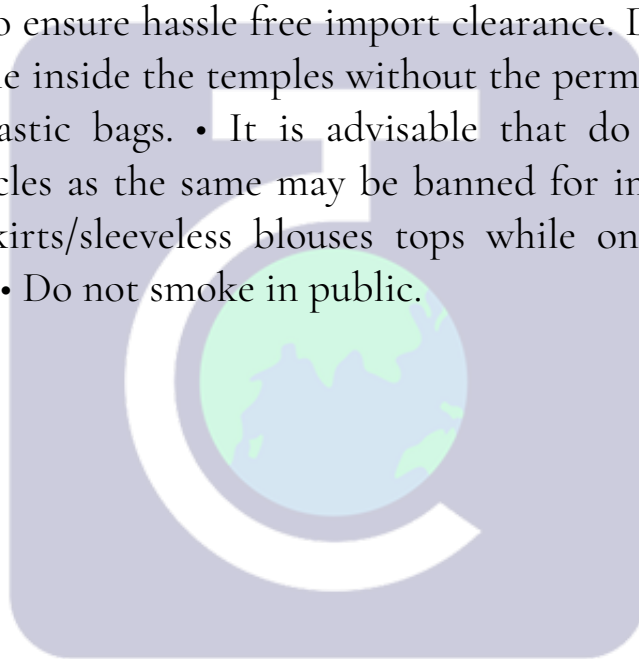
Index**37. Emergencies**

Leh-Ladakh is a nice, quiet and peaceful place but not completely immune from a few tragedies and theft cases. If you are in any emergency situation, you can call the police hot line number 100 or 252018, the ambulance service number is 102, fire and rescue number is 101 while 252360 is for casualty wing. Mahabodhi Karuna Charitable Hospital is one of the most dependable hospitals here.



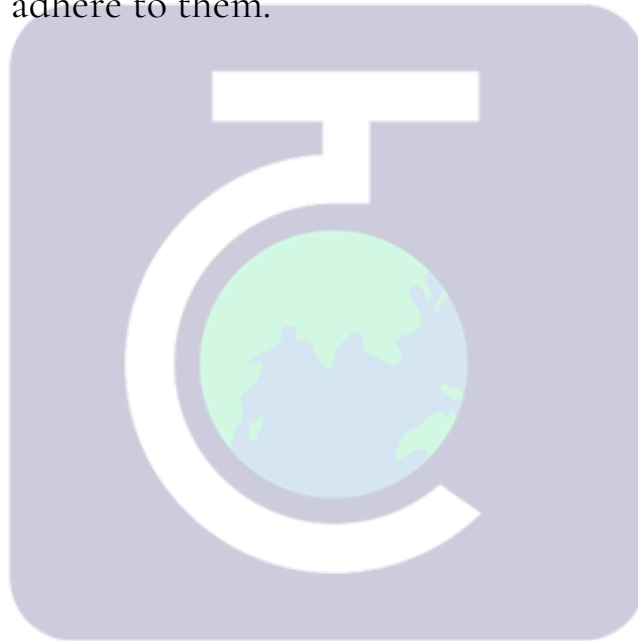
Index**38. Do's and Don'ts**

Do's - • Make sure you carry enough treated water (for drinking) and dry food stuffs. • Carry a proper first aid box with the all medication including headaches and nausea medicine. • If you feel lost, confused or hesitant, approach the nearest police post or traffic police for assistance. • Keep your wallets and valuables safe especially in public. • It is advisable to carry a certified doctor's prescription along with the medicines to ensure hassle free import clearance. Don'ts - • Do not take photographs of people inside the temples without the permission of monks. • Do not carry or use plastic bags. • It is advisable that do not carry unsealed/unbranded food articles as the same may be banned for import. • Do not wear short clothes like skirts/sleeveless blouses tops while on roads, especially in Buddhist monastery. • Do not smoke in public.



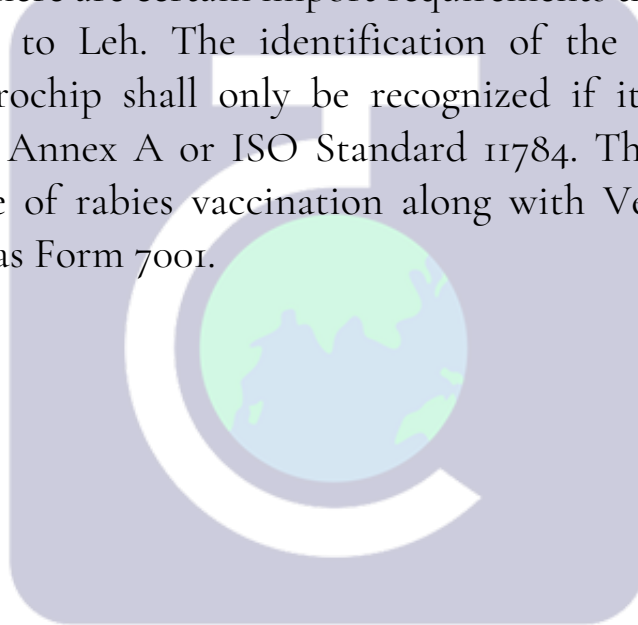
Index**39.Tipping basics**

Tipping is highly expected by the people who offer goods and services to tourist in Lakdah. Almost all hotels include a 10% service charge which is included in the bill. Those traveling in a group get a discount of 5% service charge. Bell boys are tipped Rs 20 or Rs 10 if you traveling in a group. It is recommend that you give 1 to 2 USD tip to tour guides. However the mentioned amounts are just guides and it isn't compulsory to adhere to them.



Index**40.Pet info**

Leh- Ladakh is not pet friendly as it is a hilly area and its temperature and at the same time altitude is variable and which not worth for the pets is. Most importantly, due to the deliberate effects of cold on the pets this place is not worth. This is because pets would not get enough time to acclimatize to the change of mercury reading. And also they have to undergo an altitude transition of over 10,000 feet. There are certain import requirements that has to be followed while traveling pets to Leh. The identification of the pet shall be with a microchip. The microchip shall only be recognized if it complies with ISO standard 11785 from Annex A or ISO Standard 11784. The owners must carry their pets' certificate of rabies vaccination along with Vet Health Certificate which is also known as Form 7001.



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Conclusion – Why to select this destination

Why Choose Leh-Ladakh ? Lying in the lap of the mighty Himalayas, this land should be your ultimate destination if what you are looking for is peace, peace, and more peace. Life comes to a slow pace in Leh where you become one with nature, so high above the rest of the population below in the plains. The silence of the imposing mountains, the music of the birds, the snowcapped peaks, the muted burble of the crystal clear rivers, and the chilly breeze create transform you into a meditation like state. Leh is not just about ice and mountains. The land is blessed with the best of nature. Exotic wild flora and fauna flourish in the pristine valleys and rocky mountains of the region. Some rare and endangered species of animals are found here. The natural landscape of Leh is an excellent venue for extreme sports and adventures. It is a favorite destination of trekkers, bikers and mountaineers. A trip to the Buddhist monasteries is a must if you are in Leh-Ladakh. The ancient monasteries and their architecture provide a colorful contrast to the snowy mountains around. The cuisine of Ladakh has a distinctive style and flavor. The local people use only the produce from their farms and lands. The food is mildly flavored yet nourishing. Soups and momos are the popular dishes. The food of Leh is a mixture of Indian and Tibetan culinary styles. This sparsely populated region surprisingly has many shopping options for the tourists. The renowned Pashmina shawls, handmade woolen garments, and other Pashmina products are quite popular among the visitors. Samples of Tibetan handicraft can be seen in prayer wheels, paintings, and Buddhist masks. No one can leave Leh without trying its apricots and apricot jam.

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