

Many people want to get away from the hustle and bustle of modern urban life and spend their vacation in a remote and beautiful place. With this in mind, Tibet trips have been popular with western tourists since the 1960s. It's the nearest thing to Shangri-la with mountains, temples, monasteries and friendly people.

Known as the roof of the world, this country has gone through political upheaval and tourism is an important part of the economy. To go on Tibet trips, non-Chinese nationals need a special permit to gain entry. The main language is Tibetan, very difficult for foreigners to learn, and some Mandarin Chinese is also spoken.

Tibetan cuisine has not really caught on in the rest of the world but there are many good Chinese restaurants. Trying local delicacies is all part of the adventure however, and most visitors sample the local beverage of Yak Butter Tea. Momos is another staple, which are dumplings with a meat or vegetable filling. Lots of young backpackers embark on Tibet trips. There are also organized tours by jeep with a driver supplied. Other tourists like to explore the country by bicycle.

The capital city of Lhasa is a two hour drive from Lhasa Gonggar Airport, where international flights come in from Katmandu in Nepal. The best way to get around the city is by cycle rickshaw, bus or taxi. Accommodation is of a good standard in hostels and hotels. There are also plenty restaurants and traveler cafes. Tourists like to browse round the street market for bargains and see the monasteries and teahouses.

One of the most popular landmarks in Lhasa is the Jokhang Temple. The original construction dates from the 7th century and was expanded over the years. It contains many treasured statues. Potola Palace is another must see item on the itinerary, when visiting the capital on Tibet trips. The Dalai Lamas have lived here during the winter since 1755. The tombs of the Dalai Lamas are placed here and the palace contains rare relics and antiques

Mount Kailash, a mountain that is revered by Buddhists and Hindus alike, is well worth a visit. Pilgrims and tourists walk round the mountain, an excursion that demands a good level of fitness and takes three days. The journey is helped with the hire of porters and yaks.

Qomolangma National Nature Reserve covers the Chinese side of Mount Everest. It's possible to drive to base camp on the mountain on Tibet trips and visitors mostly stay in private houses. This spectacular location includes Rongbuk Monastery on the north face of Everest and is the highest monastery in the world