CHUMATHANG TO YAYA TSO

Situated along the banks of the Indus river, the picture perfect village of Chumathang beacons to the aspiring adventurist in you. What Chumathan is famous for are the hot springs and the various dhabas that dot the village where you can taste the Ladhaki cusines. There are numerous homestays in Chumathang where you can stay and get a glimpse of the daily life of the Ladhaki People and experience their hospitality. This is where our trek begins, in Chumathang. The trek from Chumathang to Yaya Tso takes you through a wildlife sanctuary after passing through plateaus. Once you reach Yaya Tso, enjoy the pristine clear blue waters of the Yaya Tso lake situated at an altitude of 4684m. If you are lucky enough you can see the blue sheep’s as well as the marmots on the plains grazing lazily, staring an occasional glimpse at you. This short week long trip is sure to blow you minds away.

SHORT ITINERARY

Day 1:

Drive from Leh to Chumathang

Duration: 3-4 hours

Day 2:

Trek from Chumathang to Gangra

Duration: 5 hours

Day 3:

Trek from Gangra to Sumdo

Duration: 4 hours

Day 4:

Trek from Sumdo to Phayalung

Cross the pass at Choku-La at an altitude of 5560m

Duration: 8 hours

Day 5:

Trek from Phayalung to Yaya Tso

Duration: 5hours

Day 6:

Drive from Yaya Tso to Leh

LONG ITINERARY

Day 1: Drive from Leh to Chumathang in 3-4 hours

The day begins with a drive along the river Indus, enjoying the cool morning breeze as it caresses your body till we reach Chumathang. The drive would hardly take 4 hours which gives you the rest of the day to explore the village. Chumathang village is famous for its hot springs where people come to rejuvenate their body and spirits. If we travel due west from the hot springs, we reach a large camping ground with beautiful tents where we will be spending the first night under the starry night sky.

Day 2: Trek from Chumathang to Gangra in 5 hours

Today we begin our first day of walking along a trail used by the nomads for centuries while taking their animals to graze in the high pastures. The trails starts off due north through the village which gives way to a valley. If we are lucky enough, we can see the famous blue sheeps as well as the wild marmots. With the beautiful Chumathang river giving us company all the way to our camping ground at Gangra, we hardly notice the gradual ascent of our trail from 4050m at Chumathang to 4630m at Gangra.

Day 3: Trek from Gangra to Sumdo in 4 hours

The trek today is a short one taking just 4 hours to complete. However the best part of this trek is reaching the campsite at Sumdo where you will get the best views ever possible. Take the rest of the day lazing around enjoying the soft sunshine or explore the nearby areas. The trail is along the Chumathang river as before, however slopes up gradually from 4630m in Gangra to reach 5140m at Sumdo. Enroute we can see Kyangs and at Sumdo, heards of Yak grazing on the lush green grass.

Day 4: Trek from Sumdo to Phayalung over the Choku-La pass in 8 hours

Today can be considered as the toughest day in our entire week. The threat lies in the high altitude, the lack of oxygen and the tough terrains. Taking almost the entire day to complete, we start quite early climbing over ridges and valleys due east of Sumdo. The terrain slopes up till the Choku-La pass at 5560m where we can get a beautiful view of the entire valley below. After resting here at Choku-La pass we start our descent into Phayalung plateau by plateau. These plateaus are all marked by unique rivers and lakes till we reach our camping spot near a shepherd’s place at an altitude of 5200m.

Day 5: Trek from Phayalung to Yaya Tso in 5 hours

The second last day of our trek, we start after a heavy breakfast as the day beacons us for another day of adventure. The trail today covers many shepherd’s place, rivers, a plateau, Lhato and gorges. Grazing animals like goats and yaks can be seen along the route with meadows till we reach Yaya where there are several houses. The river Yaya Tso is the most beautiful feature of the entire trek and is situated at 4700m. Our camp site is situated near several small rivers, all of which lead to Yayatso from where we can enjoy the peaceful serene night.

Day 6: Drive from Yaya Tso to Leh

On the last day, we drive back to Leh, taking with us memories that would last a lifetime. En-route we can visit one of the most famous nunnery and the monastery in Mahe. From Mahe, we drive back to Leh and onwards to our final destinations.