



Detailed Trip Notes

WWoT TREK TIBET

13th – 30th April 2010

Escorted by Diane Westaway, Director, WWoT

18 day trip

6 Day Moderate Level trek with challenging stages

7 nights camping/ 8 nights hotels/lodges



The Trip

This exclusive and remarkable program, designed especially for *Wild Women on Top* will appeal to all Wild Women who are seeking an amazing trek as those wishing to experience the rich cultural heritage of Tibet. This expedition includes all the highlights of Tibet (including time in Lhasa, Shegar and Shigatse) with a six-day trek to the Kangshung Face of Everest - a spectacular trek that is undertaken by only a select number of groups each season. We follow trails through conifer and rhododendron forest, past sacred lakes and across the verdant yak grazing pastures set beneath a backdrop of Lhotse, Makalu and the huge Kangshung Face (East Face) of Everest. After the trek we drive to the Rongphu Valley where we will join in a celebratory banquet dinner and appreciate the

huge dimensions of the North Face of Everest before heading back to the Kathmandu Valley.

We hope you can join us on this wonderful adventure!

Why travel with World Expeditions?

When planning travel to a remote and challenging destination, many factors need to be considered. World Expeditions have been pioneering expeditions in the Himalaya since 1975. Our extra attention to detail and seamless operations on the ground ensure that you will have a memorable experience. All mountaineering expeditions are accompanied by an experienced World Expeditions leader highly trained in remote first aid, as well as knowledgeable crew that share a passion for the region in which they work, and a desire to share

Lama. Within the Jokhang, a series of temples are situated on the ground and the upper floors – some are closed to the public, but our guide will be able to give you a detailed description of each of the main chapels. The main entrance to the Jokhang is always full of activity, with pilgrims prostrating themselves as they conduct their prayers before continuing on their ritual circuit around the temple.

This circuit area, together with the Barkhor – the marketplace outside the Jokhang – is a gathering place for Tibetans, who may have travelled for many months to reach Lhasa. The Barkhor is the 'real Tibet', with a multitude of stalls selling anything from ceremonial scarves to Chinese thermos flasks. You can spend many hours there people-watching, although be sure to ask first before taking any photographs.

Sera and Drepung monasteries. It is a short drive out of Lhasa to visit two of the most important Buddhist monasteries in Tibet. Drepung Monastery was founded in the 15th century. A century later the 2nd Dalai Lama established the Ganden Palace that was to be his residence until the 17th century when he moved to the Potala Palace in Lhasa. While at the monastery we visit the huge Main Assembly Hall and the famous teaching colleges.

Sera Monastery once housed a huge monastic population of around 5000 monks. However since the Cultural Revolution the number of resident monks has fallen to a few hundred. Like Drepung it was founded in the 15th century and includes several important teaching colleges (including the famous debating courtyard) and the Main Assembly Hall with its important thangkas and impressive statues.

The Norbulingka - This large compound, situated to the west of the city, is where successive Dalai Lamas spent their summer months. Indeed, the 14th (current) Dalai Lama preferred to stay in this Summer palace, rather than in the cold, isolated chambers of the Potala. The Palace of the 14th Dalai Lama is situated in the centre of the compound, and little seems to have changed since the time when he escaped into exile in 1959. Most of the private quarters

are open to the public, which always includes a steady flow of Tibetan pilgrims keen to pay homage to their exiled leader. The Palace of the 13th Dalai Lama, situated on the perimeter of the Norbulingka, is also open to the public.

The Potala Palace is one of the highlights of a visit to Lhasa. It is divided into two main complexes – the outer white building that housed the administration, and the Red Fort, where chapels, tombs and the living quarters of the Dalai Lama are located. Founded in 1645 during the reign of the great 5th Dalai Lama, the White Palace was completed in 1648, twelve years after the Dalai Lama's death. To avoid possible problems, the head monks related to the masses that the 5th Dalai Lama was in deep meditation until after the Red Palace was completed.

It is normal to approach the Potala through the Western Gate and make your way slowly through the labyrinth of chambers to the lower floor of the Red Fort. The most impressive hall within this medieval building is the chamber housing the tombs of the former Dalai Lamas, including the massive golden tomb of the 5th Dalai Lama. This chamber is currently undergoing renovation, however, and is not open to the public. Nearby is the chapel commemorating Padmasambhava's, the Tantric sage who introduced Buddhism to Tibet. On the upper middle floor is the tomb of the 13th Dalai Lama, while the next floor contains the official Reception Hall and living quarters, some of which are open to the public.

We complete our visit to the Potala Palace by leaving through the main gate to the Red Fort, before descending the series of steps to the marketplace immediately in front of the palace. The time spent in the Potala will depend on the number of pilgrims and tourists that are visiting while we are there.

Day 6 Sunday 18th April 2010 Drive to Shigatse – 7-8 hours

From Lhasa we drive down the Kyichu Valley to the Yarlong Tsampo (Brahmaputra) before ascending to the Khamba La (Khamba Pass) at 4900m. The views are outstanding – in the

foreground is the vast freshwater Yamdrok Tso or Turquoise Lake, while to the south the snow-capped ranges merge with the main Himalayan range. We arrive into Shigatse around mid afternoon.

**Day 7 Monday 19h April 2010
Drive to Shegar (5-6 hours)**

In Shigatse we visit the famous Tashilhunpo Monastery, founded in 1447 by the 1st Dalai Lama. Since the time of the 5th Dalai Lama in 1642, the abbot of Tashilhunpo has been known as the Panchen Lama (literally the 'Great Scholar'). Over the generations, the Panchen Lama became established as the chief spiritual and temporal adviser of the huge western portion of Tibet known as Tsang, and at times was even considered a rival to the Dalai Lama.

During the Cultural Revolution much of the Tashilhunpo and the nearby fort were destroyed, and what we see today is a huge complex in various stages of rebuilding. Of particular interest are the huge temple to the Maitreya Buddha (the 'Buddha to Be'); the tomb of the 10th Panchen Lama (who died in 1989), which is said to be encased with over 300kg of gold; the Palace of the Panchen Lama; and the tomb of the 5th to 9th Panchen Lamas. The latter, recently reconstructed, contains the remains of the former Panchen Lamas that were retrieved after their separate tombs were demolished by Chinese troops in 1966. Also of interest is the main Assembly Hall, adjacent to many of the important chapels that are in everyday use.

From Shigatse we drive along the Friendship Highway across the Tibetan Plateau. We cross a series of passes including the Yalung la to Lhatse before winding over the impressive Gyatso La to the town of Shegar. We visit the Shegar Monastery and if time permits we may climb and explore the remnants of the famous Shagar Dzong that was destroyed during the Chinese cultural revolution.

**DAY 8 Tuesday 20th April 2010
Drive to Kharta Valley (7 hours) & Commence trek to Dhampu (3 to 4 hours)**

From Shegar we divert from the main highway and drive south towards the Everest region. From the top of Pang La (5150 metres) we gain views of Everest and the lie of the surrounding country. From the pass we descend to the village of Phadruchi where the jeep track divides - the track to the west heading to the Rongphu Valley - the one to the east leading to the (Phung Chu) Arun Valley and the village of Kharta - the administrative headquarters and the nearby village of Yuba. After loading the yaks we head off on the first stage of the trek following a well defined track alongside the Kharta River before ascending above a series of small settlements set amid barley fields. Two to three km above the bridge the trail splits. The lower trail continues up valley eventually diverting to the Langma La, while we follow the upper trail that ascends steeply in places towards the valley leading to the Shao La. There are good views back down the valley. In particular we can appreciate the forested hillside to the south of Kharta village that marks the upper limit of the monsoon. Our first camp is on a grassy meadow known as Dhampu (4300 metres) - the first of many magnificent alpine camps.



**DAY 9 Wednesday 21st April 2010
Dhampu to base of Shao La (3 to 4 hours)**

The first few kilometres on this stage is hard going across a large boulder field. The trail ascends a series of 'glacial steps' before reaching a series of glacial lakes at the head of the valley located at the base of the Shao La (4700 metres).

DAY 10 Thursday 22nd April 2010
Base of Shao La to alpine ridge camp (6 to 7 hours)

An early start is imperative to ascend the Shao La (4970 metres) and gain our first views of Everest (8848 metres), Makalu (8475 metres) and Lhotse (8501 metres). From the pass there is a steady descent to yak pastures before a steeper descent to the valley floor and the trail on down to the Kama Valley. The rocky trail makes this stage quite demanding on the knees as it winds down through birch groves and dwarf rhododendrons to Joksam (4000 metres). There follows a steep 300 to 400 metre ascent through the conifer forest to a ridgeline high above the Kama Valley and camp (4300m) for the night.



DAY 11 Friday 23rd April 2010
Joksam to Pathang (7 hours)

We gain magnificent views south towards the Arun Gorge and Nepal as the trail winds across alpine ridges that support the camps of yak herders' from Kharta village. We also pass a series of beautiful lakes before ascending a ridge and gaining our first uninterrupted views of the Kangshung Face of Everest. We continue across a series of alpine ridges to the camp at Pathang (4550 metres), a beautiful meadow camp beneath the impressive peak of Chomo Lonzo (7790 metres).

DAY 12 Saturday 24th April 2010
Pathang to base of Langma La (5 hours)

The trail from Pathang heads back down the valley before diverting north towards the Langma La. It leads gradually across the yak pastures

and en route we gain views of the summit of Makalu. Our camp at Shurimo (4800 metres) is located at the base of the pass.

DAY 13 Sunday 25th April 2010
Cross Langma La to camp (8 to 9 hours)

A long but do-able day. The climb to the Langma La takes two hours. From camp we climb a well-graded trail with further views of Everest, Lhotse, and Makalu. From the pass (5330 metres) there is a steep descent to the valley floor. As the valley opens out we pass yak herders' camps from Kharta and the nearby villages. We then head down to the confluence of the Kharta Valley and gain views of the Kangchenjunga massif rearing above the ridges beyond Kharta on the Nepal- Sikkim Border. Our trail then leads past the substantial village of Lunrubling as we complete our circuit back down to Yuba village and the site of our first camp (3650 metres).

Day 14 Monday 26th April 2010
Drive to Rongphu Monastery & Base Camp (8 to 10 hours). Banquet Dinner

From Yuba we drive back to the village of Phadhruchi before continuing onto the Rongphu Valley.



Rongphu Monastery is situated 15 kilometres below the Base Camp and was reconstructed after the excesses of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960's. From here we will continue the 15km by road to the Everest Base camp. It is here at Everest Basecamp, with uninterrupted views of

Mount Everest, that we will join together for a celebratory dinner and banquet.



DAY 15 Tuesday 27th April 2010
Drive to Zhangmu (9 -10 hours)

An early start is necessary to complete the drive back to the highway and the Chinese/Nepal border at Zhangmu. After re-joining the highway, we drive across the rolling plains of the Tibetan Plateau to reach the Lalong La (5042m). From here we head down the spectacular Sun Kosi Gorge to the border town at Zhangmu, where we spend the night. Please note that the facilities at the government-run hotel here are basic.

DAY 16 Wednesday 28th April 2010
Drive to Kathmandu (5-6 hours)

After completing Chinese immigration and customs formalities we transfer our gear by truck down the eight-kilometre stretch that leads to the Friendship Bridge and Nepal. You will require a re-entry visa at this border, so please have your documentation ready. After clearing Nepal's customs and immigration, our chartered bus will complete the drive to Kathmandu. Overnight in Kathmandu.

DAY 17 Thursday 29th April 2010
Trip concludes in Kathmandu. You will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Bangkok and onward flight to Sydney

DAY 18 Friday 30th April 2010
Arrive Sydney on TG995 at around 1pm

Note: This itinerary is a guideline only and may change at any time due to weather conditions, group fitness and acclimatisation or other factors beyond our control. Our guide will always make a final decision after assessing the situation and liaising with our local guide and the group members.

**** If you would like to extend your stay in Kathmandu, please ask our office staff for details**

Trip Grading – Moderate with Challenging Stages

Anyone undertaking a challenging adventure should be aware of the physical and mental demands involved. Our challenging treks are designed for experienced adventurers who are seeking a real challenge. A well above average level of fitness is required as days can involve 10 hours of strenuous exercise in very remote and rugged terrain. Altitudes are generally less than 6000metres although higher pass crossings are possible. Generally trekkers can expect to carry a day weighing around 8kgs, however lower altitude treks may involve carrying full packs (approx. 12kg or more). The terrain will often be rugged and some walks may be exploratory, venturing far off the beaten track. Weather conditions may be harsh at times, and you will need to be comfortable trekking in adverse weather conditions.

We suggest up to one hour of strenuous exercise each day, interspersed with a relatively demanding bushwalk at the weekend. The best exercise for trekking is bushwalking involving relatively steep ascents and descents; multi day walks are ideal preparation for our challenging adventures.

What you carry

In your pack you will need to carry extra warm clothing (depending on the altitude, location and weather), a rain jacket, water bottle, film and camera gear, valuables and personal items such as sunscreen, lip-eze etc. Yaks carry all group gear on the trek portion of the trip.

A typical trekking day

You will be woken with a cup of tea brought to your tent between 6 am and 7 am, followed by a small bowl of warm water for washing. Before breakfast you pack your gear into your kit bag which is then taken by the porters and will not usually be available to you until camp that afternoon. We are usually on the trail between 7.30 am and 8.30 am. Following a good morning's walk, we stop for lunch at around 11 am. Lunch is usually a 2 hour break to allow for the trekker's meal followed by the crew meal. This break also enables you to do your washing in the warmest part of the day, catch up on your diary, read or rest. The afternoon walk is generally a little shorter and camp is usually reached by around 3 pm to 4 pm. Once we have reached camp and the kitchen is set up afternoon tea is served. Washing water is again provided to enable you to wash at the end of the trek day. Until dinner there is time to rest, explore the surrounding area and villages or sit and chat with the crew and local people. Dinner is usually served around 6 pm to 7 pm. Remember to bring your torch and water bottle to the mess tent so it can be filled with boiling water. It then makes a great hot water bottle. Trekking evenings afford some of the best memories of your trek, whether it is talking, playing cards, chatting with the crew or joining in some singing and dancing with the local people, it is always a special time.

All camp chores are done for you, leaving you free to use your time to the fullest. You carry only a light day pack as your gear is carried by yaks or porters.

Acute Mountain Sickness

When we ascend above 2500 meters our bodies have to acclimatise to the decreasing amount of the oxygen available. To allow our bodies to adjust World Expeditions has structured its treks so that you ascend slowly, allowing acclimatisation to occur. However, during the acclimatisation process, you may experience some of the following symptoms.

- Headache
- Tiredness
- Disturbed sleep

- Loss of appetite/nausea
- Shortness of breath
- Cough
- Palpitation
- Swelling of the hands and face

Individuals acclimatise at different rates. Your best strategy is to take your time and drink plenty of water. These symptoms may not indicate the onset of A.M.S. and if you experience them it does not necessarily mean that you should not continue. All World Expeditions group leaders have extensive first aid training and we urge you to communicate with the group leader at all times should you believe you have any symptoms in order that we can effectively monitor your symptoms. The only cure for Acute Mountain Sickness is to descend. Please note that your group leader has ultimate responsibility and may ask you to descend if symptoms persist.

COUNTRY INFORMATION

Tibet

Tibet was for centuries a mysterious Buddhist kingdom isolated from the rest of the world by the Himalaya. In the 1950s, however, when Tibet was annexed by the People's Republic of China, everything changed. The Dalai Lama, Tibet's religious and political leader, fled to Dharamsala in northern India in 1959, where he established a Government in Exile; and more than 120,000 Tibetan refugees now live in India, Nepal and Bhutan. Since 1965, Tibet has been administered as the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR). Much of what was once Tibet has been incorporated into the Chinese provinces of Qinghai and Gansu (formerly known as Amdo), and Sichuan and Yunnan (traditionally known as Kham). The first tourists stepped into what was formerly Tibet in the 1980s, only to find many of its legendary monuments and monasteries in ruins.

But the essence of Tibet is still there; the heart of the country is still beating. There are still pilgrims reciting mantras and spinning prayer wheels, the faith and goodwill of the people seems unaffected, and there's still the country's incredible location amidst the highest and most spectacular mountains in the world. Travelling in

Tibet may be a sobering experience these days, but it is still an incredible one.

Nepal

Above all else, Nepal is best known for its beautiful and dramatic scenery. It's not just for mountaineers, climbers and avid walkers: travellers of all persuasions have long been drawn to Nepal's mountains and foothills to view the Himalaya and the world's highest peaks, and to Kathmandu. Nepal is also a mosaic of cultures, ethnic groups and languages. Its 20 million people are Hindus, Buddhists and/or animists. It is remarkable that in a country of this size there are over 30 different ethnic groups, with at least as many languages. One million people live in the Kathmandu Valley alone, but at least 90 per cent of the population lives in the rural areas of the lower and middle hills of the Himalayan Range. Nepal has a predominantly simple rural society and we aim to spend at least some time meeting local village people.

Nepal Political Situation

In November 2006, an historic peace agreement between the Seven Party Alliance and the CPN Maoists was signed, ending a decade-old conflict and restoring lasting peace to Nepal. Contained within the signed agreement are issues which are fundamental to the success and longevity of the peace accord. Guaranteeing the rights of the Nepalese people is paramount. This will be achieved by putting democracy, peace and economic transformation first, in order to implement the commitments made on both sides.

After ten years of instability, this is great news for Nepal, and for travellers eager to visit this wonderland in the Himalaya.

World Expeditions' has been operating adventure holidays in Nepal since 1975, and has a large and busy office in Kathmandu which is in daily contact with our Sydney head office. Any changes to the political situation in Nepal are communicated immediately to the Sydney head office and to all World Expeditions offices worldwide.

Climate

The climate in Tibet is not as harsh as one would imagine it to be. Lhasa tends to have mild weather from May to November. Expect sudden cold snaps even in spring (April-May), and dramatic temperature ranges, particularly at high altitudes. Nepal, on the other hand, is subject to the defining influence of the Indian monsoon from late May to mid-September. The ideal time to visit this region is either pre-monsoon, from mid-March until the end of May; or post-monsoon, from October to mid-November, when the weather tends to be relatively cool and dry. Temperatures can vary considerably depending on your elevation but as a guideline, temperatures in April/May and October roughly range from 5C-15C.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Adventure Travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. In remote and developing countries do not expect standards you are used to at home. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable and itineraries may be altered. To get the most from your adventure it is important to be flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. If you are uncertain about your suitability for this trip we recommend that you speak with your consultant or travel agent.

Responsible Travel

The environments we travel through are fragile. It is our responsibility as visitors to minimise the impact of our presence.

World Expeditions were the proud recipients of the inaugural Australian National Travel Industry's Environmental Achievement Award for our *Responsible Travel Guidebook* in September 2001. This detailed guide to responsible and sustainable travel is provided to all World Expeditions clients before they travel. Please ask your consultant if you have not received your copy of our award-winning book. Alternatively, you may like to download a copy from our website www.worldexpeditions.com

Subscribe To Our E-News

To keep up-to-date with our new and exciting adventure opportunities, special promotions and adventure news, subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter! You can do this online through our website, www.worldexpeditions.com, or contact our office.

How do you book?

Please note that all reservations are subject to availability at the time of booking. Your booking will be held for seven days pending receipt of a non-refundable deposit per person and the completed booking form. The deposit is payable by cheque (made payable to World Expeditions), credit card or direct deposit.

Please fax or post your completed booking form to:

World Expeditions
Level 5, 71 York St
Sydney 2000
Ph: (02) 8270 8400
Fax: (02) 8270 8401

Important: You must be a financial member of Wild Women on Top to join this tour. Please call Di Westaway, Director of WWoT for details. 02 9907 9843 / 0419 612 704

Please download a copy of the Wild Women on Top booking form please go to www.wildwomenontop.com.au

Final Payment

Final payment by cheque is due 60 days prior to departure. For further information please refer to the terms and conditions outlined on the back of the booking form.

Single Travellers

For electing a single room throughout, a single supplement charge will apply.

Important Note:

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary and may supersede any information in the current brochure, including but not limited to the itinerary and price.

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ADVENTURE, PLEASE CONTACT DI WESTAWAY ON 9907 9843 AT WILD WOMEN ON TOP, OR GO TO www.wildwomenontop.com, or call WORLD EXPEDITIONS IN SYDNEY ON (02)8270 8400.

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