

Highlights:

- World's largest stone Maitreya statue - Leshan Giant Buddha
- Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding Research Base
- Cultural ruins - Sanxingdui Museum
- Famous pedestrian street in Chengdu - Jinlin
- Well-preserved ancient street of the Qing Dynasty - Broad & Narrow alley
- Authentic Sichuan cultural representative - Sichuan cuisine and opera
- The iconic architecture of Tibet - the Potala Palace
- The Central Monastery of Tibetan Buddhism - Jokhang Monastery
- Renown Monastery for Buddhist debating - Sera Monastery
- The monastery that houses the tombs of Panchen Lamas - Tashilhunpo Monastery
- One of the three holy lakes in Tibet - Yamdrok Lake

Group departure on 12 Sep  
Price: \$2999 per person  
including flights, accommodation,  
transport, meals and  
English-speaking guide  
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# Panda Delights & Tibet

**Day 1 (Tue 12Sep) Auckland Departure**

Tonight you will meet your group at 18:00 by Sichuan Airlines check-in area within Auckland International Airport and fly overnight with Sichuan Airlines 3U8910 (2030/0600+1) directly to Chengdu.

**Day 2 (Wed 13Sep) Chengdu Arrival (L)**

Arrive in Chengdu, the hometown of the Giant Panda. Your local guide will meet you by the entrance of the arrival hall and travel to Leshan (about 2 hours) to visit the Giant Buddha which, at 71 metres, is the world's largest stone-carved Buddhist monument. Take a short boat trip which gives you an excellent view of the statue from the river.

Transfer back to Chengdu. Check in to your

hotel. Free at leisure.

**Day 3 (Thu 14Sep) Chengdu (B/L/D)**

This morning you will make a stirring visit to Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding which is not only the most important panda scientific research centre, but also dwelling for more than 100 Giant Pandas.

Afterwards drive to Sanxingdui Museum (about 1 hour), the relics of a ruined city with a history of over 3000 years. Numerous exquisite objects of bronze ware, jade ware, stone ware, gold ware and other articles are unearthed from this site, which evident the highly developed civilization of the ancient Shu kingdom, and verify that Chinese culture as an entity came from diverse sources.

Continue to visit the silk factory.

In the afternoon, transfer back to Chengdu and get a glimpse of the local peoples life by paying a visit to Jinli Old Street with Three Kingdom culture. Time steals away from you quietly while walking on the lively streets which are full of delicious local snacks, delicate artifacts, interesting folk shows, etc.

Sample a delicious Sichuan meal tonight.

**Day 4 (Fri 15Sep) Chengdu-Lhasa (B/D)**

Transfer to airport and fly to Lhasa. (3U8695,1205/1425). Free at leisure in order to acclimatize to the altitude.

**Day 5 (Sat 16Sep) Lhasa (B/L/D)**

Morning tour to the landmark in Tibet - Potala Palace. This ancient architectural

complex is considered a model of Tibetan architecture. Located on the Red Hill in Lhasa, Tibet, it is 3,700 meters above sea level and covers an area of over 360,000 square meters, measuring 360 meters from east to west and 270 meters from south to north. The palace has 13 stories, and is 117 meters high.

Over the past three centuries, the palace gradually became a place where the Dalai Lama lived and worked and a place for keeping the remains of successive Dalai Lama.

In 1994, the palace joined the list of world cultural heritage sites.

Visit Sera Monastery in the afternoon.

#### Day 6 (Sun 17Sep) Lhasa (B/L)

After breakfast, visit The Jokhang Monastery, an example of the earliest architecture in Tibet, this area claims to be the center around which the city of Lhasa developed.

On November 30, 2000, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee listed the Jokhang Monastery on the World Heritage list as a part of the historical assemblage of the Potala Palace.

After lunch, tour to the Norbulingka Park. Situated in the western suburbs of Lhasa, Norbulingka Park was built in the middle of the 18th century during the reign of the 7th Dalai Lama and served as the Summer Palace of Dalai Lamas where they handle political affairs, practiced religious activities and spent holidays. Traditionally the Dalai Lamas would leave the Potala Palace every spring and spend the summer in Norbulingka.

In December 2001, Norbulingka Park was entered into the World Heritage List as a part of the historical assemblage of Potala Palace.

#### Day 7 (Mon 18Sep) Lhasa-(3.5h) Gyantse-(4.5h) Shigatse (B/L/D)

After breakfast, travel by coach along the winding road to reach the Peak of 4990 meters above sea level to enjoy the panoramic view of Yamdrok Lake which one of the three largest sacred lakes in Tibet. It is over 72 km (45 mi) long. The lake is surrounded by many snow-capped mountains and is fed by numerous small streams. Continue to Gyangze, visit Baiju Temple. After the tour travel to the holy place - Shigatse.

#### Day 8 (Tue 19Sep) Shigatse-(5h) Lhasa (B/L/D)

Morning tour the Tashilhunpo Monastery.

Founded by the First Dalai Lama in 1447, Tashilhunpo Monastery is one of the six big monasteries in Tibet. It is the seat of the Panchen Lama, the second ranking person in the Gelugpa Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy, after the Dalai Lama. The monastery houses the tombs of Panchen Lamas and a 22.4-meter statue of Maitreya

Buddha. Tashilhunpo remains popular among the Tibetans, as they carry on coming here on pilgrimage.

Standing on the entrance of Tashilhunpo, you can see the grand buildings with golden roofs and white walls. The remarkable Tangka wall which is nine-floors high, displays the images of Buddha on the 14th, 15th and 16th of May every year following the Tibetan Lunar Calendar.

Besides the grand palace and gigantic statues, the Tashilhunpo also treasures characteristic wall paintings. Because of the variety of shapes, resplendent colours and exquisite painting, the murals are considered to be another masterpiece of Buddhist art. Rare sutras, tangka, china and glass service of the Ming and Qing Dynasties are also invaluable asserts found in the monastery. These are good relics for researching the history and society of Tibet.

#### Day 9 (Wed 20Sep) Lhasa-Chengdu (B)

Morning free at leisure until your transfer to the airport for your flight to Chengdu (3U8696, 1525/1730). Later connecting your early next morning flight to Auckland. (3U8909, 0155/1845)

#### Day 10 (Thu 21Sep) Auckland

Arrive back to Auckland.



Price: \$2999 per person, twin share  
Single supplement: \$399

#### Inclusions:

- Economy class airfare with Sichuan Airlines Auckland-Chengdu-Lhasa-Chengdu-Auckland
- Hotel accommodation twin-share basis as per itinerary
- All transport (modern air-conditioned vehicles) from arrival until departure in China
- Meals, sightseeing and entrance fees as specified in the itinerary
- English-speaking local guide
- Tipping to guide and driver
- Tibetan permit

#### Exclusions

- Personal travel insurance
  - Gratuities (Chinese money RMB50, about NZD10 per day per person is suggested)
  - Tour extension
  - Personal expenses
  - China visa fee
- Important
- Price is subject to the fluctuation of exchange rates, flight availability, airlines fuel surcharges and any other taxes occurred.
  - The flyer is correct at the time of printing and is subject to change without notice.