

Northern India & Pakistan

Foothills of the Himalayas

Blue Dot Travel

Go somewhere different

October 2026 | 24 Days

\$16,990 per person, twin share

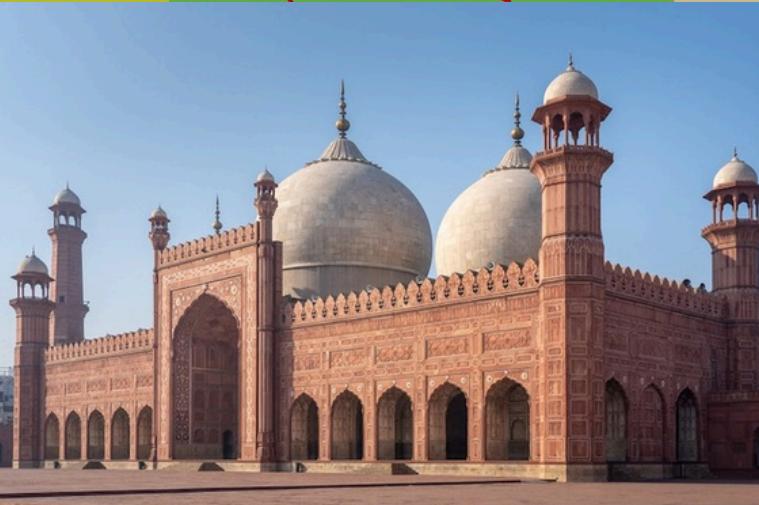
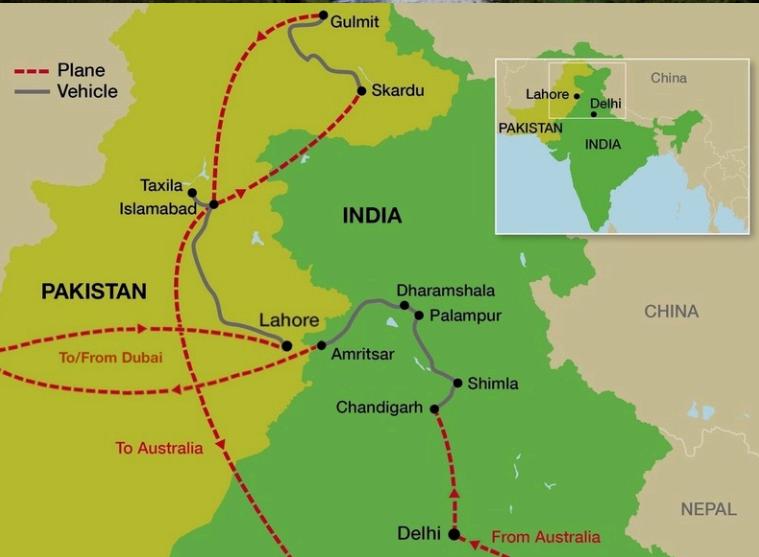
Solo Supplement: \$3,490

Tour Highlights

- The changing landscapes and magnificent scenery of the Himalayan foothills
- The arts, crafts and bazaars of Hillside Shimla – Britain's colonial summer capital
- Amritsar's Golden Temple
- The colourful markets of Lahore
- Wander the ruins of Taxila, a key trade hub of the ancient world
- Chandigarh's architecture, with its mix of local and Swiss/French influence



Northern India & Pakistan



Tour overview

In the lower elevation landscapes of the Himalayas, the world's loftiest mountain range lies forested river valleys girded by majestic panoramas. From wildlife sanctuaries teeming with biodiversity to challenging mountain slopes, this region has many experiences to offer. A journey through the Himalayan foothills brings together the region's cultural richness. Learn about India's freedom movement and the impact of her partition; trace the legacy of Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism; dive deep into India's ancient spiritual wisdom of yoga and meditation; or taste traditional flavours from the kitchens of the mountain folk.

Pakistan is home to some of the world's most spectacular mountain scenery, thriving cities, and colourful markets. A trip to this part of the world will excite even the worldliest of travellers. This tour combines extraordinary landscapes and fascinating historical sites with ample opportunity to embrace the region's warm hospitality and observe its rural life. Beyond its impressive collection of summits, many of which top out at over 7,000m, the region boasts a patchwork of colourful ethnic clans, remote mountain villages and some of the most visually spectacular countryside. Most areas in Pakistan - particularly around Chitral and the mountains of the north - pose little danger. On this tour, you'll get to see it all as you travel on an in-depth journey from the plains through the mountains of the north, the Babusa Pass and Kaghan Valley to the high-altitude Deosai Plateau, the surreal landscapes of Skardu to the towering Nanga Parbat at Fairy Meadows and majestic Rakaposhi in Hunza; the forts of Baltit, Mastuj and Chitral to the otherworldly valleys of the Kalash.

On this incredible journey along the Northwest Frontier, you will drive up from the capital, Islamabad, to the ancient kingdom of Chitral. Here, we will spend two days with the Kalash before heading over the Shandur Pass to one of the most beautiful places on earth, Hunza. We will complete our circuit by returning to Islamabad via the Buddhist University town of Taxila.

Activity rating: Moderate

 You must be capable of: walking up to 8,000 steps daily; occasionally ascending 3-4 flights of steps; standing at attractions for up to 1 hour; boarding and disembarking transport unaided, and handling your own luggage.



Monday 5th October DEPARTURE**Welcome to India**

Depart Australia and fly to Delhi. Upon arrival at Delhi International Airport, a representative will transfer the group to an airport hotel in a private vehicle. Flights are to be confirmed, but they are likely to arrive late evening. Overnight at Novotel Aerocity.

**Day 1, Tuesday 6th October DELHI – CHANDIGARH**

This morning, you will be at leisure in Delhi for an hour or two before transferring to the airport for Flight AI 6573, departing at 1:40 pm and arriving at 2:50 pm. Chandigarh is the first modern city of post-independent India designed by the internationally renowned Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier. On the drive from the airport, you'll see some of Le Corbusier's architectural works. Your stay for just one night is in Chandigarh at Taj Chandigarh. **B/D**

Day 2, Wednesday 7th October CHANDIGARH – SHIMLA

After breakfast we'll drive to Shimla – about 3.5 hours. Once a modest town graced with temples and palaces, it was elevated to the British colonial summer capital status. Alongside the iconic Kalka-Shimla railway, many prestigious schools and institutes were established in this era. Evolving into a sought-after hill station, it charms visitors with a pleasant climate, exquisite crafts, and sweeping views of pine-clad slopes and river valleys. Your journey through history discovering colonial relics will begin on arrival with the walk from the grand Vice-regal Lodge, a silent observer of pivotal discussions paving the way to India's 1947 Independence. Drive to your hotel for check-in and lunch (at your own cost). Afterwards, we will walk past colonial-era buildings, temples, heritage hotels, banks and government offices as your expert guide narrates the stories of Shimla's glorious past. The walk culminates at Christ Church, a prominent landmark of the city. You'll explore Shimla's famous mall, where you can mingle with locals and domestic tourists busy shopping and eating on this lively road, a place to see and be seen. At the end of the mall is the city's colourful local market called Lakkar Bazaar. Return to the hotel. Your three-night stay in Shimla is at The Oberoi Cecil. **B/D**

Day 3, Thursday 8th October SHIMLA

Today, you'll enjoy a ride on board Shimla's famous toy train – one among the three UNESCO-listed heritage Mountain Railways of India. Your journey will begin from Shimla railway station at 10:55 AM. Constructed during the late 19th century under colonial rule, the narrow-gauge railway track was an engineering marvel of its time, tackling the challenging terrain of the Himalayan foothills. The railway not only facilitated easier access to the hilly region of Shimla, the summer capital of British India, but also played a pivotal role in opening the otherwise remote areas to trade, travel, and administrative connectivity. The leisurely train journey offers a charming glimpse into the scenic beauty of the Himalayan foothills, passing through tunnels, bridges, and lush landscapes. The gentle swaying of the carriages and the rhythmic clickety-clack of the tracks bring the old-world charm to life. You'll be served a packed lunch today. After alighting from the train at Kandhaghat station at 1:17 PM, you'll drive for about an hour to reach your hotel in Shimla. Check-in and spend the rest of the day enjoying the comforts of your hotel. Spend the rest of the day at leisure. **B/L/D**

Day 4, Friday 9th October SHIMLA

Today, we'll journey 30 km (a 45-minute drive) from Shimla to Dhami House, the cherished ancestral abode of Kunwar Dushyant Singh. This heritage gem passed down from his father, Rana Dilip Singh, the last formal ruler, exudes a unique blend of English and traditional architectural styles. Constructed primarily of wood and stone, the house boasts a modern exterior while the interior rooms come alive with an array of antiques, each with its own story to tell. On arrival, share a cup of tea with your host as he gives you a brief introduction of the history of the place. He'll then take you on an engaging two-hour walk through the estate of a neighbouring village. Walking amidst the thick forests, you will also be accompanied by the symphony of birdsong with magpies, starlings, wobblers, Mayana, bulbuls, and street thrushes, creating a background score for your trail. Then, a delightful home-cooked lunch perfectly concludes the day's exploration. After lunch, return to your hotel. **B/L**

Day 5, Saturday 10th October SHIMLA – PALAMPUR

After breakfast, we'll drive to Palampur, the tea capital of north India. This is a long but wonderful journey which will take over 6 hours. The valley where Palampur is located is riddled with numerous streams that irrigate tea plantations and rice paddies – and perhaps explains why it is known as the tea capital of north India. Check into your hotel upon arrival. Stay at The Lamrin Norwood Green for two nights. **B/L/D**

Days 6, Sunday 11th October PALAMPUR

Today we will visit Sherabling Monastery (about an hour's drive), one of the world's largest Buddhist teaching centres. The monks received a Grammy (best Traditional World Music Album) for their Sacred Buddhist Chanting. The Monastery nestles in the gentle pine-forested foothills of Kangra Valley, the seat of its founder, His Eminence Ti Situpa XII, a leading Tibetan Buddhist teacher and peace campaigner. Driving back, you'll visit Baijnath, a 13th-century temple built by two local merchants. Following a Vesara style of architecture, it primarily follows the Nagara style while incorporating subtle elements typically seen in Dravidian architecture. The carvings and sculptures often express a symbolic meaning tied to the themes of healing, divinity, and cosmic balance, denoting the temple's dedication to Shiva as Vaidyanath, the healer. Continue to WAH tea factory where you'll have lunch on arrival. Then, the group will walk through the tea estate and a store visit where a lovely tea-tasting session awaits. With the tea bushes, you can learn how to taste different teas. You'll also stop at the organic farm to view the plucking process. On the way back, visit Dongyu Gatsal Ling Nunnery, where more than 100 practicing nuns live from the Himalayan region. (Depending on her availability, we may be able to spend some time with Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo, an author, teacher, and founder of the DGL Nunnery. She is best known for having spent twelve years living in a remote cave in the Himalayas and three years in a strict meditation retreat). Return to your hotel. **B/L/D**

Day 7, Monday 12th October PALAMPUR – DHARAMSHALA

After breakfast, the group will drive to Dharamshala – about 2 hours. Dharamshala, meaning 'the school of religion,' is nestled in a valley of dense pine and deodar forests with a horizon dominated by the snowclad peaks of the Dhauladhar range. For years, it has offered refuge to the Tibetans through their tumultuous history with China and served as the headquarters for His Holiness the Dalai Lama. On the way, visit Gyuto Tantric Monastery Temple dedicated to practising and teaching tantric rituals and meditation, a highly specialised and esoteric aspect of Tibetan Buddhism. While Gyuto Monastery was originally founded in Tibet, it was re-established in India in 1959 after the Tibetan diaspora. It is also home to the Karmapa Lama, the head of the Karma Kagyu tradition, one of the major schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Continue to Norbulingka Institute, a major centre for Buddhist teaching and practical work. Named after the summer residence of the Seventh Dalai Lama, it was established to ensure the preservation of Tibetan Buddhist cultural heritage. Here, students learn a variety of crafts in wood, metal, silk, and thangka painting. The temple has a 4.5-metre (15 feet) high gilded statue of the Buddha and over 1,000 painted images. Proceed to the Kangra Art Museum, dedicated to preserving and showcasing Kangra Valley's rich heritage, arts, and crafts. Among the artifacts is an exquisite collection of Kangra miniature paintings dating back to the 18th century. These paintings are known for their delicate brushwork, vibrant colours, and intricate depictions of scenes from Hindu mythology, particularly the romantic tales of Radha and Krishna. Drive on to Dharamshala and, upon arrival, check in at your hotel for two nights in Dharamshala at the Hyatt Regency. **B/L/D**

Day 8, Tuesday 13th October DHARAMSHALA

Today, we'll visit the Tushita Meditation Centre, a spiritual centre dedicated to the study and practice of Mahayana Buddhism, with a strong emphasis on the teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa, the founder of the Gelug school. You can opt to join a guided meditation class. Later, head out to explore McLeod Ganj, known as 'little Lhasa', home to numerous schools, monasteries, and Buddhist temples. Visit to the Namgyal Monastery, also known as Dalai Lama's temple. Continue to Tibet Museum, to learn about the history of Tibet, its people, their religion, and escape journey to India. You'll also visit the Tibetan Parliament in Exile and the Tibetan Medicine and Astrological Museum and witness how they preserve, promote and practice (Sowa Rigpa), the ancient Tibetan system of medicine, astronomy, and astrology. Later, embark on Kora Walk around Dalai Lama temple and his residence. During the 30-40 minutes' walk, experience the Tibetan people, monks, nuns walking by chanting mantras and rotating their hand wheels. Witness the many prayer wheels and prayer flags that make the environment full of positivity. Note: The walk is level except the last steep stretch of 5 minutes. **B/D**



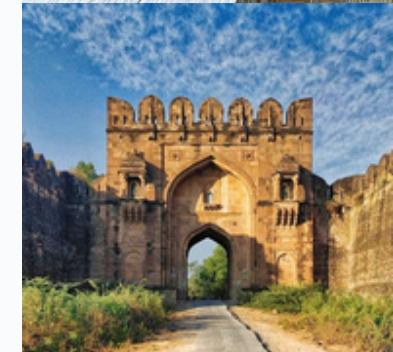
Day 9, Wednesday 14th October DHARAMSHALA – AMRITSAR

After breakfast, depart for Amritsar, a 5-hour drive. We'll grab some lunch at the café at the institute (own cost), then continue to Amritsar, a significant pilgrimage site for Sikhs that offers the most interesting insight into the faith and their traditions. Check into your hotel on arrival. Later in the evening, visit the Golden Temple again to witness the closing ceremony. As part of the daily ritual, the holy book of the Sikhs is carried out from the Akal Takht (meaning the throne of the timeless one and located in the temple complex) to the Hari Mandir (Temple of God) at daybreak. From dawn until late night, the temple echoes with music and verses from the holy book. After the final evening prayers, the holy book is reverently closed and carried in a silver palanquin to the Akal Takht. We'll stay at Taj Swarna for two nights. **B/D**



Day 10, Thursday 15th October DHARAMSHALA

After breakfast, we'll visit Amritsar's key draw – the Golden Temple or the Sri Harmandir Sahib. The central spiritual centre for the Sikh faith is a spectacular, gilded monument that offers spiritual solace to people of every caste, creed, race and faith. Amritsar, or 'the lake of Ambrosia,' is named after the pool surrounding the temple. Visiting the Golden Temple is like a pilgrimage irrespective of your religion or race, as it is resonant with symbolism that stands for universal truths of brotherhood, humility, and egalitarianism, among others. It is a superb synthesis of Islamic and Hindu styles of architecture, and in keeping with the syncretic tradition of those times, its foundation stone was laid by a Muslim saint. The temple was virtually destroyed by an Afghan invader in 1761 and later rebuilt by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, ruler of Punjab, who covered the dome in gold. No trip is considered complete without a visit to the Guru Ka Langar, a free kitchen where all visitors are fed a simple meal. Run by volunteers (kar sevaks) this kitchen feeds about 10,000 people a day! The notion of Kar Seva (voluntary manual labor) is an important part of the Sikh order. Volunteers enthusiastically perform tasks such as sweeping the temple, cooking at the Langar, or looking after the pilgrims' shoes. Spend some time in the bazaars exploring the colours, heritage and crafts of Amritsar in the old city before proceeding to Jallianwala Bagh – the site of a grim massacre that chronicles the horrors of the British colonial period. A memorial to those killed stands in the Garden. Then, visit the Partition Museum, retelling the heart-wrenching stories of families separated, brutally massacred, piled onto trains in their thousands and of a few who found refuge on either side of the border. Colonial history is writ large across India in the numerous monuments and institutions, many of which have present-day functions like those during the British era. Yet, almost 80 years on, the most devastating legacy of colonial rule is nearly forgotten – the India-Pakistan partition! Described by academicians as the 'greatest migration in human history', but the Partition of 1947 left scars in India's political and social fabric that continue to mar the relations between the two countries. With the help of newspaper clippings, audio recordings, sketches of refugee camps and everyday objects that held a deeper significance for couples or families – the Partition Museum pieces together a bitter history, yet through stories of bravery and solidarity, offers a glimmer of hope. In the afternoon, drive to Wagah Border (a 45-minute drive), also known as the Berlin Wall of South Asia. It is the only road crossing between India and Pakistan. Each evening, as the buglers sound the last post, two splendidly uniformed guards on either side of the border lower their respective national flags. The ceremony attracts crowds of spectators on both sides and is a poignant reminder of the Partition of 1947. It can be witnessed from a viewing gallery barely 100 metres from the border. Back to the Taj Swarna. **B/D**



Day 11, Friday 16th October AMRITSAR – DUBAI

Today, we will head to Dubai for a stopover. We'll transfer to the airport early in the morning and arrive in Dubai around late morning. Check in to the hotel for some leisure time before meeting up later for a group dinner. **B/D**



Day 12, Saturday 17th October DUBAI – LAHORE

Late this morning, we'll fly to Lahore. **Welcome to Pakistan!** Once through customs, we'll be met by our English-speaking guide and transferred to our centrally located hotel – The Pearl Continental Lahore – where we will stay for three nights. We'll hop on rickshaws from our hotel to visit the best food vendors in Lahore, sampling a variety of dishes as we make our way to the walled city, savouring the essence of Lahori mornings. Then we will visit the Lahore Museum and pass through the Mall, where some of the city's best-preserved colonial architecture can be found. From the museum, we walk over to Anarkali Bazaar and take the metro to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Shalimar Gardens. The newly built metro runs above ground, and as you go over different neighbourhoods of Lahore, you get a real sense of the city as it exists today. We'll return to the hotel for rest before visiting the richly decorated tomb of the Mughal emperor Jahangir, a blend of Persian and Mughal architectural styles. **B/D**



Day 13, Sunday 18th October LAHORE WALLED CITY

We'll take a food tour this morning, starting our day the Lahori way! Lahore comes alive with an elaborate breakfast, a social and cultural ritual that showcases the city's rich heritage, historical influences, and vibrant food culture. As the cultural capital of Pakistan, Lahore's cuisine is a delightful blend of Mughal, Persian, Punjabi, and British traditions. The region's agricultural abundance ensures fresh, high-quality ingredients for dishes such as nihari, halwa puri, siri paye, and aloo paratha. Lahore is home to numerous monuments from the Mughal Dynasty, Sikh Empire, and British Raj, and this is reflected in the city's wonderful and diverse architecture. The Walled City has traditionally been influenced by Mughal and Sikh styles, while the leafy suburbs to the south and the Cantonment southwest of the Old City were largely developed under British colonial rule and feature colonial-era buildings along broad, leafy avenues. Begin your day with a visit to see traditional Kushti wrestling in Lahore, then visit Shahi Qila (the Lahore Fort), a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the country's most important sites. While the site has been inhabited for millennia, the earliest historical reference dates to the 11th C, during the rule of Mahmud of Ghazni. Destroyed by the Mongols in 1241 during their invasion of Lahore, it was rebuilt and then destroyed several times over the centuries. The present design and structure of the fort date to 1575, when the Mughal Emperor Akbar established a post at the site to guard the empire's northwest frontier. Afterwards, continue to the Badshahi Mosque on the Walled City's outskirts. Constructed by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb between 1671 and 1673, it is now one of Pakistan's and Lahore's most iconic sights. The mosque, constructed of red brick, is a magnificent piece of art with wide courtyards and eight minarets. After lunch, we will walk through the bazaar and the restored part of the old quarters to the restored Shahi Hammam, a 17th-century Persian-style hammam and the only remaining one in Pakistan. Our next stop is the 17th-century Wazir Khan Mosque, featuring glazed tiles in the Kashi-Kari style, considered the best example of this style of tile work. We continue our walk through the bazar and spice market, then make our way to the food street, where we will stop for some chai before continuing to our restaurant for a private dinner and a night of Qawalli music. **B/L/D**



Day 14, Monday 19th October LAHORE – SALT MINES – ISLAMABAD

Following breakfast, the group will travel to Islamabad. On the way, we will stop at the Himalayan Salt mine in Kewra. Today's journey is about 430km. The Himalayan Salt Mine was first discovered by Alexander's army and has operated ever since. A train takes you inside the salt mines, where there are numerous pools of brine water. A circular path takes you around the various spots. The journey offers an opportunity to witness the rural beauty of Punjab, with expansive fields, charming villages, and the occasional glimpses of grazing livestock. We continue the drive to Islamabad and check into the Serena Hotel for two nights. **B/D**



Day 15, Tuesday 20th October TAXILA

After breakfast, depart for the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Taxila. A remarkable confluence of history and culture, the site comprises 30 distinct settlements, each telling its own tale. Dating back to 1500 BC, Taxila was a pivotal centre for Buddhism as early as the 5th Century BC and a significant city in the Greco-Bactrian kingdom during the 2nd century BC. Among its archaeological treasures is the Bhir mound, which marks Alexander the Great's triumphant entry into Taxila. Notably, the Dharmarajika complex, established in the 2nd century, safeguards precious relics of Buddha, contributing to the area's spiritual significance. The journey through time culminates at the Taxila Museum, showcasing the exquisite Gandhara Art, a testament to the region's rich artistic heritage. We will finish our visit with a tour of the colonial-era Taxila Railway station, where we will have a home-cooked meal prepared by the Gandhara Resource Centre, a Centre for Culture and Development project, which has been created as a residential facility at Sirsukh for visiting scholars, monks and tourists, equipped with a library and a gallery of Gandhara and Potohar. Our next stop is a yard/workshop where the distinctive Pakistani art form of 'truck painting' is practised and perfected. Truck painting has become a distinctively Pakistani art form **B/L/D**



Day 16, Wednesday 21st October SKARDU – KHAPLU VALLEY

After breakfast, we'll take a morning flight to Skardu, another of Pakistan's amazingly isolated and beautiful regions and home to both cultural and historical treasures. Today's destination is the Shigar Valley, the gateway to some of the highest mountains in the world, including K2 – the second-highest mountain on earth. Our destination today is Khaplu Valley, often called the "Valley of Serenity," a hidden gem in Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan region. Nestled in the shadow of towering peaks, this picturesque valley is renowned for its stunning landscapes and as a gateway to some of the world's most breathtaking treks. The drive is beautiful, with poplar trees lining the road as you pass through villages, with views of the High Peaks and the Skardu River. Late this morning, check into your charming hotel, where we will have a chance to get settled. Later, visit Khanqah-i-Chauchan, one of the oldest mosques in Pakistan. Built of wood, this mosque is a vibrant blend of Persian, Kashmiri, and Tibetan architecture and has stood for almost 700 years. Overnight at the Serena Khaplu Palace Hotel – one of Pakistan's most unique hotels and an experience on its own. First built in 1840, it served as the royal family's formal residence until 1983. Khaplu Palace is one of Baltistan's finest surviving royal residences. Each room is unique, showcasing antiques and cultural artifacts from the original palace. The group will stay here for two nights. **B/L/D**



Day 17, Thursday 22nd October KHAPLU VALLEY

This morning, take an optional hike to Thoksi Kar Mosque, then drive to the nearby village of Machlu, a gateway for mountaineers. We will stop at a trout farm for lunch before heading back to Khaplu to stroll through the town. Visit the 400-year-old Khanah (a building designed specifically for gatherings of the Sufi brotherhood), the largest Khanqah built of mud and wood in the region. Machlu Village, nestled amidst breathtaking landscapes, is a haven of tranquillity and cultural richness. This charming settlement captivates visitors with its stunning vistas of the majestic Mashabrum peak and the meandering River Shyok. The village is home to the Balti people, known for their warm hospitality and love for their heritage. Return to the hotel for dinner. **B/L/D**



Day 18, Friday 23rd October KHAPLU – SHIGAR VALLEY

After breakfast, we will head to Shigar Valley, stopping at the Katpana Biang-acold desert. Shigar Valley is a haven of serenity and beauty in the heart of Gilgit-Baltistan. The journey of about 3.5 hours to Shigar unfolds with vistas of towering peaks and lush green terraces. The centrepiece is the 400-year-old Shigar Fort, now a heritage hotel, offering a glimpse into the region's royal past. The valley, fed by the glacial waters of the Indus River, is dotted with apricot orchards and traditional Balti homes. After lunch at Shigar Fort, enjoy the optional hike to Shigar Rock, located next to the Shigar Fort. Then, visit the 14th-century Amburiq Mosque, a UNESCO site, and the intricately carved Khanqa-e-Moallah. Then, continue to the Serena Shigar Fort Hotel for just one night. **B/L/D**



Day 19, Saturday 24th October SHIGAR – GILGIT – HUNZA VALLEY

This morning, we'll drive towards Hunza, stopping in Gilgit for lunch. One of Gilgit-Baltistan's most famous mountains, Rakaposhi, will come into view with an elevation of 25,551'. The next couple of days will let us immerse ourselves in the local culture. The famous mountaineer Eric Shipton called Hunza 'the ultimate manifestation of mountain grandeur. Perched high in the enchanting Hunza Valley, Eagle Nest Viewpoint offers a breathtaking vantage point to witness the natural splendour of the surrounding landscape. A 30-minute drive will take you from Hunza to Eagles Nest; at the top, we'll be rewarded with panoramic views of the emerald-green terraced fields, quaint villages, and the meandering Hunza River. Check in to the Hunza Serena Hotel for three nights. **B/L/D**



Day 20, Sunday 25th October HUNZA VALLEY

Today, the group will embark on a cultural day trip to the Hunza Valley, beginning with a visit to the historic Baltit Fort for stunning views and royal gardens. Next, explore the CIQAM Women's Collective to witness local women's craftsmanship. Wander through the 1,000-year-old Garnish Village, the oldest Silk Road settlement, then head to Baltit Fort for a guided tour of its intricate architecture and panoramic vistas. Conclude the day with a traditional Hunza music performance featuring indigenous instruments and folk dances, encapsulating the valley's rich heritage and leaving you with unforgettable memories of this unique region. Return to the hotel for dinner. **B/L/D**



Day 21, Monday 26th October GULMIT – ATTABAD LAKE

Begin our day at Borith Lake, with options for a lakeside walk or a hike to Passu Glacier. Today, we head over to the 'Passu Cones', also known as the Cathedral Ridge, a series of jagged and pointed 19,000' mountain peaks located all along the famed Karakoram Highway. We continue to Gulmit, where we visit Korgah. A women-run carpet weaving centre where women weave traditional, pure, handmade, high-quality carpets/rugs and handcrafted purses and wallets. After lunch, we will take a short hike to the Ondra Poygah viewpoint. Ondra is the name of a hill and an ancient fort, while Poygah, in the local Wakhi language, means "stair" or "step". The Ondra Poygah is the name given to over 1,600 steps built by the local community to connect Gulmit village to the Ondra fort. You can hike down the steps or retrace your steps and return to Gulmit using the transport. Finally, we will visit Attabad Lake. A massive landslide in 2010 blocked the Hunza River for five months, creating this 12-mile-long lake. The flooding displaced over 6,000 people from upstream villages and stranded another 25,000 who had travelled along various routes and 12 miles of the Karakoram Highway. Subsequently, until the new road and tunnel were completed in 2015, all traffic had to be shipped by barge across the lake. Nevertheless, it has also created one of the most beautiful lakes in Asia, surrounded by imposing and stark mountain peaks in every direction. We will take a boat ride to a lakeside restaurant, have tea and snacks, and then head back to our hotel in Hunza. **B/L**

Day 22, Tuesday 27th October HUNZA – KACHURA

Hunza to Kachura (Distance 273km / 6 hours). We will drive from Hunza Valley to Kachura Lake, stopping in Gilgit for lunch. The drive is beautiful with several high peaks along the way. Here, you'll visit the Hussaini Suspension Bridge and the Korgah carpet weaving centre run by local women. Check in to Byarsa Hotel Kachura for just one night. **B/L/D**

Day 23, Wednesday 28th October KACHURA – ISLAMABAD

Check out of the hotel early for our flight to Islamabad. Transfer to the hotel, with free time to rest or explore Islamabad with suggestions from your guide. Later this afternoon, travel to Rawalpindi to visit Raja Bazar. Enjoy a farewell dinner tonight to reflect on your wonderful journey. Check in to the Serena Islamabad Hotel for your final night's stay. **B/D**

Day 24, Thursday 29th October DEPARTURE



Accommodation

Our hotels are carefully chosen to capture the local atmosphere and set you up in an ideal location. You can expect accommodation that comprises a mix of standard hotels, boutique-style hotels, and smaller, independently owned establishments. Below are some of the hotels on this tour. Final hotels may change, and a complete list will be shared with you.

The Oberoi Cecil, Shimla
www.oberoihotels.com

Peal Continental, Lahore
www.pchotels.com/pearl-continental-hotel-lahore

Hunza Serena Hotel, Karimabad
www.serenahotels.com/hunza

Why Blue Dot?

Travel is more than just moving from one place to another; it is an opportunity to explore this vast planet, connect with its people and marvel at its beauty. We have established a group of loyal, like-minded travellers who share this feeling and have taken multiple tours with us. With Blue Dot, you'll experience

- Thoughtfully designed itineraries with unique experiences
- Small, inclusive groups with a maximum of 16 travellers
- The support of both an Australian tour leader* and experienced local guides
- Programs designed to meet the needs of mature-age travellers
- Hands on, personalised service including customised flight bookings
- Tipping included in your tour cost

*Australian leaders accompany groups with more than 10 travellers.

Blue Dot welcomes solo travellers

In fact, over half of our clients are solo travellers. We understand it can be daunting to travel on your own, and we'll ensure your travel is safe, inclusive and enjoyable. You can confidently join our groups, knowing that we bring solo travellers together to share the camaraderie of an unforgettable adventure.

Enquiries and bookings

A \$500 deposit is required to secure your booking.

For more information:

 02 9906 5770

 enquiries@bluedottravel.com.au