

# atc dharamsala insight tour 2012



## trip highlights

- Immersing yourself in Tibetan culture in Dharamsala
- Interacting with the Tibetan community
- A public audience with the Karmapa
- Meditation at the Tushita Meditation Centre
- Visiting important Tibetan organisations and learning about their inspiring work
- Visiting the Tibetan Children's Village



AUSTRALIA  
**TIBET**  
COUNCIL

[www.atc.org.au](http://www.atc.org.au)

<b>Trip Duration</b>	15 days
<b>Grade</b>	Adventure touring level
<b>Activities</b>	Sightseeing, Cultural interaction, Day walks
<b>Accommodation</b>	13 nights hotel

## welcome to World Expeditions

Thank you for your interest in our Australia Tibet Council Dharamsala Insight Tour . At World Expeditions we are passionate about off the beaten track experiences as it provides our travellers with the thrill of coming face to face with untouched cultures as well as wilderness regions of great natural beauty. We are also committed to making sure that our range of unique itineraries are well researched, affordable and tailored for the enjoyment of our small groups or individuals - philosophies that have been at our core since 1975 when we began operating adventure holidays. The itineraries will give you the very best travel experience, designed by people with incredible local knowledge who share our vision of authentic exchange and real exploration with a responsible tourism approach. Whether you like your adventures to include trekking, touring, cycling, mountaineering, kayaking or cruising World Expeditions can make it happen for you. We hope you will join us for a life changing experience!

## why travel with World Expeditions?

World Expeditions began in India back in 1978 and is one of the few adventure travel companies who own their operation in the country. This allows us to guarantee the quality of our trips. Our private vehicles are well maintained, air conditioned and comfortable. Accommodation has been hand picked for its local character and charm whilst still maintaining a good international star rating.

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## trip dates

3 to 17 November 2012

## trip cost

Joining Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide or Perth: \$5850

## options & supplements

Single Supplement: \$740

World Expeditions does not require single travellers pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above.

Your trip cost includes a recommended \$1750 donation to the Australian Tibet Council

## the trip

This Dharamsala Insight tour has been specially designed by the Australia Tibet Council (ATC) to immerse you in Tibetan culture whilst travelling in the safety and comfort of a group of like-minded people. From Australia you will travel to Delhi, where you will have a free morning before driving to Chandigarh for overnight, then on to Dharamsala. The next nine days will be filled with activities such as visiting The Norbulingka Institute of Art and Culture, Gyuto Monastery, experiencing a public audience with the Karmapa, visiting the Tibetan Children's Village and the Women's Association, visiting Men Tsee Khang Traditional Tibetan Medicine Clinic and participating in some introductory meditation. All activities whilst in Dharamsala have been arranged by ATC.

Some more information:

1. All activities are optional, you can do as much or as little as you like.
2. If you have suggestions on how to improve the itinerary then please contact Alison on [insight@atc.org.au](mailto:insight@atc.org.au)
3. There will be plenty of free time to relax, or for extra optional activities such as traditional Tibetan medical consultations, astrological consultations (3 month waiting list so please register early), and for volunteering in English conversation classes. To register your interest in these activities please contact Alison.

## our partners

Founded in 1988, the Australia Tibet Council is Australia's largest Tibet Support Group. ATC campaigns for the human rights and democratic freedoms of the Tibetan people and supports the Dalai Lama's Middle Way policy for the peaceful resolution of the Tibet issue. ATC works to highlight the real situation in Tibet, grow the Tibet movement in Australia and build active Australian Government support for the Middle Way policy. ATC combines public events, cyber actions, media work and direct political lobbying to achieve these aims. For more information see [www.atc.org.au](http://www.atc.org.au).

## about your leader

Alison Ribush led ATC's 2010 & 2011 Insight Tour and will be escorting you on this tour from Australia. Alison has been involved with Tibetan culture and religion for over 35 years. She has visited India on 10 occasions and has been an active Australia Tibet Council member for over 20 years. You can contact Alison before the tour on [insight@atc.org.au](mailto:insight@atc.org.au).

## at a glance

DAY 1	3 NOV: DEPART AUSTRALIA AND ARRIVE DELHI
DAY 2	4 NOV: IN DELHI, TO CHANDIGARH
DAY 3	5 NOV: DRIVE TO DHARAMSALA
DAY 4	6 NOV: INTRODUCTION TO DHARAMSALA GUIDED WALK; DALAI LAMA'S TEMPLE
DAY 5	7 NOV: NORBULINGKA INSTITUTE
DAY 6	8 NOV: TIBETAN CHILDREN'S VILLAGE
DAY 7	9 NOV: LIBRARY OF TIBETAN WORKS, NECHUNG GOMPA & VOICE OF TIBET RADIO
DAY 8	10 NOV: TUSHITA MEDITATION CENTRE & EVENING TALK
DAY 9	11 NOV: MOMO COOKING CLASS & WATERFALL WALK
DAY 10	12 NOV: TIBETAN NUNS' PROJECT
DAY 11	13 NOV: TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
DAY 12	14 NOV: PUBLIC AUDIENCE WITH HH THE KARMAPA
DAY 13	15 NOV: DRIVE TO CHANDIGARH
DAY 14	16 NOV: ARRIVE DELHI AND DEPART
DAY 15	17 NOV: ARRIVE AUSTRALIA

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## what's included

- 13 breakfasts & 3 dinners
- International economy airfares on Singapore Airlines, on the group flight (ex-Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth or Adelaide)
- Quality accommodation in Delhi, Chandigarh & Dharamsala, on a bed and breakfast basis
- Private transportation including airport transfers (if on group flights) in a/c vehicles
- A recommended donation of \$1750 to the Australia Tibet Council.

## detailed itinerary

### DAY 1 3 Nov: Depart Australia and arrive Delhi

Today we will depart on the group flights (approximate flight times) and arrive in Delhi.

SQ232 Sydney to Singapore 12.15/17.20

SQ238 Melbourne to Singapore 11.00/15.50

SQ224 Perth to Singapore 07.35/12.50

SQ256 Brisbane to Singapore 09.10/15.00

SQ278 Adelaide to Singapore 12.40/17.20

SQ408 Singapore to Delhi 18.55/22.10

Upon arrival in Delhi you will be met by a representative of World Expeditions at the airport and taken to the group hotel for overnight accommodation.

(Meals provided on the aircraft)

**meals: NIL**

### DAY 2 4 Nov: In Delhi, to Chandigarh

This morning there will be a group briefing at 0900 over a cup of coffee in the restaurant.

You will have a couple of hours free this morning before we depart the hotel at about 11am by a/c car to Chandigarh (260km, 4 hours). This afternoon will be yours to wander around Chandigarh or relax in the hotel. Chandigarh is former Premier Jawaharlal Nehru's vision for the 'symbolic future of India' with its orderly grid of sweeping boulevards and green spaces. Much of the city was designed by Le Corbusier.

Overnight: Hotel Hometel Chandigarh

**meals: B**

### DAY 3 5 Nov: Drive to Dharamsala

This morning we will leave the hotel at around 9am and take the 7-8 hours scenic drive to Dharamsala, stopping for lunch along the way.

After settling into our accommodation we will have a group dinner at 7pm.

**meals: B**

### DAY 4 6 Nov: Introduction to Dharamsala guided walk; Dalai Lama's temple

This morning at 7.30am (optional) we will join the local Tibetans in a circumambulation of the Kora, the circuit around His Holiness the Dalai Lama's temple complex.

After breakfast at the hotel, we will take a guided walk around town, visiting the Dalai Lama's temple, the Lha Charitable Trust and other places of interest.

**meals: B**

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## fast facts

### Countries Visited:

India

### Visas:

Yes\*

### Vaccinations:

Please consult a travel vaccination specialist for up to date information

### Singles:

A single supplement is available for this trip\*

### Leader:

Expert local leader

## 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. 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](http://www.worldexpeditions.com)

### DAY 5 7 Nov: Norbulingka Institute

Around 10 am we will travel by taxi (approx. 45 minutes) to the Norbulingka Institute, [www.norbulingka.org](http://www.norbulingka.org). We will have a guided tour of the workshops followed by a buffet lunch at the Norbulingka café. After lunch there will be free time to visit the Gomba (temple), gift shop and gardens.

We will return to our hotel about 4pm.

This evening we will have an Indian buffet dinner at 6.30pm at the hotel with Tibetan Non-Government Organisations.

**meals: B,D**

### DAY 6 8 Nov: Tibetan Children's Village

This morning we will depart from the hotel at 9am and visit the St John's Church in the Wilderness, followed by the Tibetan Children's Village (TCV).

The village is today a thriving, educational community for Tibetan children in exile. It has had more than 16,000 children under its care - [www.tcv.org.in](http://www.tcv.org.in).

In the late afternoon we will meet at Lungta Japanese restaurant for an introduction to Gu Chu Sum, the organisation of former political prisoners of the Tibetan freedom movement.

**meals: B**

### DAY 7 9 Nov: Library of Tibetan Works, Nechung Gomba & Voice of Tibet Radio

At 9am we will visit the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives for a guided tour. At 11am we will attend a 1 hour teaching with Geshe Sonam Rinchen. Lunch at the Nechung Café and visit Nechung Gomba, the monastery of the Oracle of Tibet.

In the afternoon we will visit Voice of Tibet Radio for a tour and talk by the staff.

In the evening we will host a buffet dinner at 7pm at the hotel for the executive members of the Tibetan Women's Association.

**meals: B,D**

### DAY 8 10 Nov: Tushita Meditation Centre & evening talk

After a free morning we will head off to the Tushita Meditation Centre ([www.tushita.info](http://www.tushita.info)) for a guided tour.

Dinner will be at the Common Ground Café with a talk on the representation of Tibet through Tibetan literature by writer, poet and blogger, Bhuchung D Sonam.

**meals: B**

### DAY 9 11 Nov: MOMO cooking class & waterfall walk

After a relaxed breakfast we will go to Learning and Ideas for Tibet and have a vegetarian Tibetan momo (dumpling) cooking class. Followed, of course, by a momo feast.

After lunch we will walk to the nearby Bhagsu village to visit the temple and waterfall. The evening is free.

**meals: B**

### DAY 10 12 Nov: Tibetan Nuns' Project

We will depart at 9.30am for a visit to the Tibetan Nuns' Project. We will have a guided tour of the Dolma Ling nunnery, watch a short video about the project and hear a talk by the Director. At 12.30 we will have lunch prepared by the nuns.

Rest of the afternoon and evening are free.

(Traditional Tibetan Medical and Astrological consultations can be arranged at Men TseeKhang.)

**meals: B**

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## trip grading

This ATC Dharamsala Insight tour is not very physically demanding. It involves little extended activity and is suitable for people with a basic level of fitness and good health. The itinerary takes place in a remote area and involves some long car travel. Sightseeing may be conducted on foot and all participants should be capable of carrying their own luggage from vehicle to hotel rooms. This adventure does not travel above 2500m. Suggested preparation: We recommend you be mentally prepared for travelling to a developing country, that you maintain a good level of health and that you are fit enough to participate in full day sightseeing activities (perhaps some walking once or twice a week for 2-3 months before departure).

## 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 out of your adventure it is important that you are 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.

## 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. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

### DAY 11 13 Nov: Tibetan Women's Association

Free morning. Individual activities can be arranged to suit travellers' interests. After lunch we will visit the headquarters of the Tibetan Women's Association. Dinner will be a Tibetan buffet at Learning and Ideas for Tibet with a talk from a guest speaker.  
**meals: B**

### DAY 12 14 Nov: Public audience with HH the Karmapa

This morning we have some free time before departing at 12:30pm for Gyuto Monastery where (schedule permitting) we will have a public audience with HH the Karmapa. In the evening we will have a group dinner/drinks at a local restaurant.  
**meals: B**

### DAY 13 15 Nov: Drive to Chandigarh

After a leisurely breakfast we will depart from Dharamsala to Chandigarh (7-8 hours drive). The evening will be free in Chandigarh. The vehicles are at our disposal if you would like to visit the town or do some other sightseeing.  
Overnight: Hotel Hometel Chandigarh I  
**meals: B**

### DAY 14 16 Nov: Arrive Delhi and depart

Morning free in Chandigarh. We will depart Chandigarh at around 12pm, and drive 4 hours back to Delhi, arriving mid afternoon. We will be taken to our day use hotel where there are a number of rooms allocated for us to use for the day (these are not twin share, but group share, if you would like your own room, at an additional cost, please let us know).  
The group will meet for a buffet dinner in the hotel. This dinner has been included so we don't have to think about where to eat before our homebound flight.  
We will be transferred to the airport for our late evening flight to Singapore.  
SQ407 Delhi to Singapore 23.25/07.35 +1  
**meals: B,D**

### DAY 15 17 Nov: Arrive Australia

This morning we all arrive in Singapore at approx 07.35. Before splitting off to our own capital cities (approximate flight times below).  
For Adelaide participants, there is no SQ daytime flight to Adelaide on the 17th Nov; the direct flight is in the late evening which lands in Adelaide on the 18th Nov morning (1 extra day). Accordingly if you wish to arrive on the 17th Nov, we suggest flying to Melbourne instead (note - domestic fare from Melbourne to Adelaide at your own expense).  
SQ211 Singapore to Sydney 09.40/20.35  
SQ217 Singapore to Melbourne 10.10/20.45  
SQ245 Singapore to Brisbane 09.30/19.40  
SQ223 Singapore to Perth 09.20/14.40  
SQ279 Singapore to Adelaide 23.50/09.10+1 (arrive 18 Nov)  
(meals provided on the aircraft)  
**meals: NIL**

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

## country information



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An enticing destination in anyone's books, India is certainly exotic and romantic. The land is geographically diverse, from Himalayan mountains and far ranging deserts in the north, to lush rainforests and white sandy beaches in the south. Love it or hate it, India has continued to fascinate travellers for thousands of years. India's people are colourful and inspiring. Predominantly Hindu, they still live their lives according to the complicated caste structure which was introduced a long time ago and is still believed to keep a sense of order and calm among the people in these modern times. Also an integral part of the Indian community is the Muslim people who came to India in the twelfth century and there are almost as many mosques as temples in India today. Some of the most magnificent of temples have been built by the smaller Jain and Buddhist communities. Many of the most well known monuments in the world are located in India; the Taj Mahal, Amritsar's Golden Temple, Fatehpur Sikri and the Red Fort to name a few. The population of India now exceeds one billion, and although more than a thousand languages are spoken, English is the second language and is widely taught in Indian schools. Throughout history India has been influenced and shaped by many different travellers and visitors to her shores. The rich and poor live side by side. Ancient influences and the modern world constantly blend and evolve in a way that can only be described as natural. India is a wonderful country with a heart and soul that will inspire and intrigue!

## climate

This trip is departing in November which is India's early Autumn.

Delhi - The days in Delhi will be pleasant and usually sunny and the nights cool. The usual temperature range during the day is 22-28C and the night is 13-15C.

Dharamsala - will be a little cooler as it is higher in altitude. Days will usually be warm and sunny with nights and mornings crisp and clear. The average temperature during the daytime is 22C and the night is 5C.

## accommodation on the trip

The accommodation on this trip is in a comfortable 4 star hotel in Delhi, Chandigarh and lovely guesthouse/hotel in Dharamsala. All rooms are twin/double share with private facilities.

## what you carry

As this itinerary is based out of comfortable hotels/guesthouses and activities are at a relaxed pace (and optional) you will usually only need to be carrying your personal items. We recommend you take a small daypack that you can put your passport, water, jumper, sunglasses, camera and other personal items in whilst out sightseeing or touring.

## what's not included

- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Bottled water, aerated and alcoholic drinks
- Personal Expenses – laundry, telephones, tipping
- Travel Insurance
- Indian Visa
- Activities in Dharamsala, most activities are donation based. We recommend taking 300-350AUD to cover your food, tips, local taxis and most activities. There is an ATM and Thomas Cook's in Dharamsala if you need to withdraw money.

## carbon neutral

If you would like to make your air travel carbon neutral you can do so through World Expeditions. The cost would be \$177.24 and would offset 6.2 tonnes of carbon. Please

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contact your reservations consultant for more information.

## **how to book**

To book this tour please fill in the booking form attached and fax (02 8270 8401) or post it to World Expeditions (Level 5, 71 York St, Sydney, NSW 2000) with your \$400 deposit. For enquiries about the trip please call Gesine Cheung (Gus) World Expeditions on 02 8270 8400 or email [gus@worldexpeditions.com.au](mailto:gus@worldexpeditions.com.au).

If you would like to make suggestions on adding some activities to the Insight program (whilst in Dharamsala) please contact Alison on [insight@atc.org.au](mailto:insight@atc.org.au).