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TSARAP CHU & ZANSKAR GORGE KAYAK EXPEDITION

Few places on earth can match the grandeur and sheer magnitude of the Zanskar Gorge. Sandwiched between two mountain systems - the Karakoram to the north and the Himalayas to the south. The whole region is full of amazing sights - strange gompas perched on soaring hilltops dwarfed by snowcapped mountains. Barren shattered looking landscapes splashed with small, brilliant patches of green and ancient palaces clinging to sheer rock walls.

The Grand Canyon of the Himalaya - one of the most spectacular river journeys in the world. This is high altitude self-support expedition kayaking at its finest!

- Day 1 Fly Delhi to Leh, transfer to Guest House
Acclimatize and relax in Leh
- Day 2 Day in Leh
Kayak packing demonstration, acclimatize
Visit Leh Palace and Monastery
Guest House
- Day 3 Kayak River Indus from Spituk to Nimmu
Day section kayaking with loaded boats
Guest House
- Day 4 Food & provision shopping
Final preparation & packing for the expedition
Guest House
- Day 5 Depart for Sarchu and kayak for a couple of hours
- Day 6 Kayak to Yarshun
Kayaking 6-8 hours class III-IV including one portage
- Day 7 Kayak to Dorshon
Kayaking 6-8 hours class II-IV
Visit Phugtal Monastery
- Day 8 Kayak to Honyo
Kayaking 6-8 hours class III-IV+ including one portage

- Day 9 Kayak to Nyerak
Kayaking 5-6 hours class III
Enter the Zanskar Gorge
- Day 10 Kayak to Red Gorge
Kayaking 2-4 hours class II-IV-
Opportunity to trek to a great view in the morning
Negotiate the main rapid in the Gorge and the tight squeeze
- Day 11 Kayak to Nimmu and transfer back to Leh
Kayaking for 4-5 hours exiting the canyon
Run some big rapids near Chilling
Transfer to Guest House
- Day 12 Day in Leh
Last minute shopping, taking in the ambience
Guest House
- Day 13 Fly Leh to Delhi then home
Transfer to Leh Airport

AN AVERAGE DAY ON THE RIVER

- Breakfast
- Pack kayaks
- Kayak until lunch
- Light lunch by the side of the river
- Kayak until around 3pm
- Camp
- Dinner
- Brief about following day
- Sleep

LEH

Leh was originally the capital of the Himalayan Kingdom of Ladakh. The town is dominated by Leh Palace and the Namgyal Tsemo Gompa and is small enough to find your way around. An important trading route between India, China, Tibet and Kashmir, Leh has now become a popular destination for trekkers and adventure tourists. Lying at 3500 metres above sea level the clear air offers spectacular views of the surrounding mountains and the Indus Valley.

TSARAP CHU RIVER

Originating close to the Baralacha La Pass on the Manali to Leh road, it is one of the main tributaries of the Zanskar River. The Tsarap Chu River cuts a path through some of the most striking scenery Incredible India has to offer! Box canyons, rapids from class II up to class IV+, a couple of portages, the amazing Phugtal Monastery clinging to the side of the cliffs and the sheer remoteness of the area are just some of its highlights. Just to reach the put-in takes you over two of the highest motor-able passes in the world!

ZANSKAR GORGE

The Grand Canyon of the Himalayas. A journey through one of the most spectacular gorges on the planet and with the knowledge that unless you are walking up the ice in the middle of winter it can only be accessed by river runners! The sheer sided walls, natural springs and with rapids from class II up to IV- will make the second part of our expedition just as memorable.

RIVER CLASSIFICATION

We use the standard International Classification of Difficulty
Class II - Moderate. Small rapids with regular waves. Some manoeuvring required but easy to navigate.

Class III - Difficult. Rapids with irregular waves and hazards that need avoiding. More difficult manoeuvring required but routes are normally obvious. Scouting from the shore is occasionally necessary.

Class IV - Very Difficult. Large rapids that require careful manoeuvring. Scouting from the shore is often necessary.

Class V - Extremely difficult. Long and very violent rapids with severe hazards. Continuous, powerful, confused water makes route finding difficult and scouting from the shore is essential. Precise manoeuvring is critical and a kayakers rolling ability must be guaranteed.

ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD

In Leh we will be staying at a quaint family run Guest House. Situated away from the hustle and bustle of the town centre it has a fantastic garden full of flowers and apple trees making it the perfect retreat.

Throughout the expedition we will be camping on remote beaches by the riverside. One camp will be below the village of Nyerak.

In Leh there are restaurants offering: Italian, Pizza, Indian, Tibetan and Chinese food.

On the river we will be cooking in our groups with pressure cookers. What you decided to purchase in Leh will be your meals for the duration!

EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

The Tsarap Chu and Zanskar Rivers are located in some of the remotest areas of the world. We will be totally self-sufficient and some experience of multi-day expedition would be advantageous.

A good standard of fitness will be an advantage as we will be kayaking on whitewater from class II-IV+ for up to 6 hours a day at altitudes of over 4200m, we will also most likely have to portage 2 rapids. So though you do not have to be an Olympic Athlete a good standard of fitness will make the trip more enjoyable and memorable!

GROUP COMPOSITION

The maximum number of clients for the trip will be 6.

We will have a ratio of no more than 3 clients:1 kayak instructor / guide

INSTRUCTORS & TEAM

The instructor team at Kayak School Arlberg is second to none! We have been exploring, teaching kayaking and leading expeditions in Northern India for the past 6 years. Steve has also soloed the Tsarap Chu and Zanskar Expedition during the summer melt of the beginning of August and we have made 2 successful expeditions on the Tsarap Chu and 4 successful expeditions through the Zanskar Gorge!

All of our instructors and trip leaders have wilderness first aid and vast experience in remote and wilderness locations.

CLIMATE

As we will be running the river during the lower water levels at the beginning of September it can get a little chilly at night. During the day when the sun is out the temperature will be around 20°C - coupled with the altitude this makes the sun extremely strong. In the evening the temperature gets down to around 10°C (sometimes even lower) but with the right equipment we can face any of the difficulties nature can give us! The river will be more of a turquoise blue than the dark brown glacier melt of July / August!

INCLUDED IN THE TRIP

- Guiding and Instruction
- Accommodation in Leh based on 2 people twin sharing
- Private 4 x 4 Jeep for transport to all put-ins and take-outs
- Transfer to and from the airport

NOT INCLUDED IN THE TRIP

- Visa, passport and vaccination charges
- Departure, airport and airline taxes
- International Flight
- Farewell dinner on night 12
- Sightseeing tours
- Laundry, postage, personal clothing, medical expenses, personal travel insurance and items of a personal nature
- Emergency evacuation charges
- Tips and excess baggage charges
- Drinks (both water, soft drinks or alcohol)
- Internal flight
- Kayak, Paddle and equipment (we can organise this for you)



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