

CHASING SPRING IN LADAKH



Ladakh is a land brimming with magic and mystery - a land of snowcapped mountains, vast barren plateaus and deep turquoise lakes. Remote, ancient and relatively untouched, a visit to Ladakh will leave you exhilarated and will stay with you forever. On our experience, explore some of the much-loved and some lesser-known destinations, taking in the best of it all. This is a land like no other. Spring in Ladakh sees life bounce back to life in full swing with all its glories and splendour as we chase the stunning apricot blossoms that create a magical spell all over Ladakh.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Enjoy the colours of spring**
- **Enjoy a wonderful glamping experience**
- **Experience a visit to the wonderful Alchi Monastery**
- **Visit the Maitreya Buddha statues in Kargil**
- **Visit to the unique Hunderman village**
- **Enjoy a range of culinary experiences**

Day 1: 16 April – Arrival in Leh

On arrival, you will be met at the airport and the transfer to the hotel in the Sham Valley (2 hours) will be arranged for you. Land and soak in the landscapes of beautiful Apricot Blossoms.

Depending on the arrival of your flight, the morning will be at leisure. Early check in will be on request.

The hotel is surrounded by Apricot blossoms

Lunch today will be with a view of the Mighty Indus.

In the evening, enjoy a leisurely walk down the river for sunset.

Early dinner at the hotel

Overnight Stay: **Ule Ethnic Resort or similar**



Day 2: 17 April - Ancient temples adorned in Gandhar Art

This morning, enjoy a leisurely breakfast at the hotel.

Post breakfast, visit Alchi Choskor.

Alchi Choskor, a beautiful 11th century temple, widely believed as the very first Buddhist temple in Leh Ladakh. Every inch of wall surface of this monastery is occupied by benign images of the Buddha and royal scenes. Artists and craftsmen decorated these paintings and images under the supervision of Lostava Rinchen Sangpo. It is the only monastery that has preserved 10th century Buddhism arts and crafts.



From here, we will head out for a lovely lunch at the Alchi Kitchen which offers fusion Ladakhi food.

Post Lunch we visit one of the Saspol Meditation Caves, paintings exist in these caves. One of the painted caves, have been given a coat of lime wash and red paint in the exterior is the most visited and is considered as the main cave. Paintings of Anuttarayoga Tantra images of the main cave are very rare during the period of execution of these paintings.



From here, we return to the hotel.

Dinner and overnight at **Ule Ethnic** or similar.

Day 3: 18 April - Brokpa villages along Apricot Festival along the river Indus

After an early breakfast, we will drive north towards the Aryan Valley (approx. 5 hours)

This valley features the villages of Dha, Hanu, Garkon and Darchik located on either side of the Indus River and together they comprise what is known as the “Aryan Valley”.

These villages are home to the unique Buddhist Dard tribes, whose members are known as Brokpas. With just under 4000 of them left in the world, the Brokpas are said to be “last pure specimens” of the Aryan race, thanks to their height and sharp physical features. Some believe they are direct descendants of soldiers of Alexander the Great’s army which stayed back in the region nearly 2,000 years ago, while some suggest that they migrated from Gilgit in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir.

Enroute, we will make a stop at Domkhar petroglyphs, Domkhar Rock Art Sanctuary was created in 2012 to preserve prehistoric petroglyphs in the area

We will have lunch in a local lunch amidst apricot trees. We then enjoy the Apricot blossom festival (dates to be confirmed yet)

We will then camp amidst an Apricot Orchard, have dinner and enjoy a bonfire.

Dinner and overnight at **Camp**.



Day 4: 19 April – Purig Town and Apricot orchard walk by Suru River

This morning, post leisurely breakfast, we will head on towards Kargil via Batalik, enroute stop at Apati to see the 6m future Buddha

Lunch at Hotel. post lunch, take a walk-through old town Kargil in to Apricot orchards along the Suru river, back to the Hotel.

Evening at leisure

Kargil used to be important trading post on the Silk Route and besides being home to many local tribes, it also boasts a rich heritage and culture. It features beautiful valleys, snow-capped peaks, glacial lakes and ancient Buddhist rock reliefs.

Dinner overnight at **Hotel The Kargil** or similar.



Day 5: 20 April – The future Buddha and a museum of memories

After an early breakfast this morning, we will drive out to **Kartsey Khar** to visit the Second Maitreya Buddha, a relic in the verdant Suru Valley, standing 7m tall in the erstwhile kingdom of Purig. Kargil was once known as Purig. Since the Taliban destroyed the famous Buddhas of Bamiyan in 2001, only very few such relics remain in the world. This relic is the work of a master craftsmans.

We will enjoy a lovely **picnic lunch by a stream** as we mull over the history of this ancient land. A special experience.

We then drive to the **Hunderman village** to visit the Museum of memories that has documented the life of the border village families. This Village has exchanged hands between India and Pakistan a few times over. Once an outpost on the historic Silk Route, this strategically-sensitive area has witnessed innumerable skirmishes and four wars with Pakistan (including the most recent Kargil war) and the families live under the whimsical reign of the Line of Control between India and Pakistan

If time permits we may visit Drass Memorial, a war memorial built by the Indian Army in the town of Drass, commemorating the 1999 Kargil War between India and Pakistan.

Dinner, Bonfire and overnight at **Hotel the Kargil** or similar.



Day 6: 21 April – Tracing our way back

This morning, we will work our way back towards Leh. A beautiful drive where, once again, we hope to see the changing of the colours on the trees.

On way back we visit **Mulbekh Maitreya Buddha**, the tallest of all three Chambas dating back to the Kushan period. *This is a 30 ft long rock sculpture of the “Future Buddha” or Maitreya Buddha featuring a Kashmiri and Kushan influence in the designs and style of the carving. The statue is believed to have been carved in the 8th-Century and has been guarding travellers on this path over the centuries.*

We then head to Khaltse to have dhaba lunch.

Enroute, you will also see the stunning blue and green colours of the confluence of the two rivers Indus and Zaskar. The green-tinged Indus River originates in the Tibetan Plateau near the Manasarovar range, whereas the shiny blue Zaskar has its source in the Zaskar valley. Both the rivers kiss each other near the scenic Nimmu valley.

This evening is free for you for some rest at the hotel.

Dinner, overnight at the **Hotel Chospa** or similar.

Day 7: 22 April – A Walk through history

This morning, we rise with the sun & attend morning prayers at Thiksey monastery / Stakna monastery

Less than 20km from Leh town, Thiksey Monastery built in 1430 AD belongs to the Gelukpa Order of Buddhism. Lakhang Nyerma a Temple dedicated to Goddess Dorje Chenmo is within the Thiksey monastery.

Descend down to a Ladakhi farm for breakfast. We drive to old town Leh to take a walk to understand its importance on the Silk roads and visit textile Museum

After lunch, if feasible you visit Lena Store for an interaction with the young designer at Lena.

Lena is a Ladakh based slow-textile label that crafts pashmina products in small batches, where each stage of textile production is carried by hand from spinning to dyeing to weaving. Started by two local women Minglak & Sonam in 2016, Lena takes pride in blending tradition with contemporary, old with new & creating pashmina heirlooms that are meaningful for the wearers & makers alike.



Evening is free for you to enjoy a shopping in Leh. Later, we will head out for a specially curated farewell dinner in Leh.

Overnight at the **Hotel Chospa** or similar

Day 8: 23 April – Departure from Leh

This morning, the transfer to the airport will be arranged for you for your flight back home.

***** Return home with wonderful memories *****

Price per person on a twin sharing basis: Rs. 1,10,000

Single room supplement: Rs. 22,800

Inclusions

- Accommodation in the hotels mentioned in this itinerary for 7 nights
- Assistance on arrival and departure
- Transportation for the entire journey
- All meals from Lunch on Day 1 to Breakfast on Day 8
- Oxygen cylinders in cars
- English speaking guide
- Services of a tour escort
- Monastery Entrance fees
- Overnight Glamping
- Entry fees at the Monasteries
- Inner Line Permit for Restricted area

Exclusions

- Airfare to Leh & back
- Tips to the driver / guide
- Any alcoholic / non alcoholic drinks
- Optional Massages
- Personal expenses
- Expenses arising from unexpected circumstances beyond our control.
- Medical or Travel Insurance
- Costs towards evacuation of customers for medical or any other reason
- 5% GST

Please note

- All guests will be required to submit a Covid Negative test report 72 hours prior to the start of the tour
- We need a minimum of 8 guests to operate the tour
- Your well being is of utmost importance. We therefore may need to change, alter or cancel a trip due to any reason which might not be in the best interest of your safety, like dangerous water levels, landslides and extreme weather conditions etc.



For bookings, please contact us on E: aparna@uniglobeodysseytravel.com | T: 020 66442929

BOOKINGS AND PAYMENTS

1. A deposit of Rs 10,000 per person is payable at the time of booking to block your seat on the tour.
2. Balance payment has to be made 30 days prior to the start of the tour
3. At the time of making the balance / full payment, please send us a copy of your ID proof (Aadhar Card / Driving Licence)

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

1. **Payment of the booking deposit constitutes acceptance of our terms and conditions**
2. We require a minimum **of 6 guests** to operate the tour. In case we do not get the minimum number of guests, the deposit paid will be refunded in full
3. The Balance / Full payment will be collected 30 days prior only when we get the minimum number of guests to operate the tour
4. Cancellation of any reservations are subject to the following conditions:
 - Cancellation effected after paying the booking deposit & within 30 days of start of the tour: Full refund
 - Cancellation effected between 30 and 10 days of start of the tour: An administrative service charge equivalent to the initial booking deposit of Rs 10,000 will be levied*
 - Cancellation effected within 10 days of start of the tour: 100% of the tour cost will be levied as cancellation charges*
 - ***Cancellation charges will be waived if the guest can find a replacement person to join the tour**
 - No refund will be due after commencement of travel
5. Cancellation due to Covid (prior to the tour): All guests will be required to submit a Covid Negative test report 72 hours prior to the start of the tour. If a guest tests positive, a full refund will be given
6. Cancellation due to Covid (during the tour): In the unfortunate event that the guest tests positive during the tour, there will be no refund due for the remainder of the tour. Any additional costs of hotel quarantine / isolation will be applicable as required and has to be paid directly by the guest to the service providers
7. Cancellation due to state travel restrictions: In the event that the state we are travelling to imposes travel restrictions that makes it difficult to travel, we will refund the entire amount paid for the tour or hold the entire amount as a travel credit to be used for a future tour.
8. Refunds due can take upto 5 weeks to process.