

# JAN Treks & Travels

Journeys into Adventure and Nature

## **Yoga retreat at Shyok River Lodge plus cultural tour of Ladakh**

**15 days tour / 7-day yoga retreat**

Visit the Buddhist monasteries of Ladakh and Nubra and learn & practice yoga at a secluded ecolodge.

**Tour JTT-LA-Y01:** Leh – Shyok – Pangong Tso – Nubra - Leh

Group tour

Dates: July 23 – Aug 06, 2014

During this trip you'll explore the Indus Valley, the heartland of picturesque Ladakh, visit its many Buddhist monasteries and then make a round-trip along the stunning cobalt-blue salt lake of Pangong Tso, situated at an altitude of 4400 m on the Indo-Tibetan border and the culturally well-preserved and secluded Nubra Valley. But the main event on this tour will be a seven-day stay at a remote eco-lodge in the middle of a traditional village, facing the awesome Karakoram Mountains.



Here you'll get an unforgettable experience in a magical setting learning and practicing yoga with Brian Bale.

### ***Your teacher***

[Brian Bales](#) has been doing body work and teaching yoga for over 17 years. He has his own nationally certified TT at the 200 Hr level. He is the founder and creator of B1Yoga and has devoted more than 25 years to various healing modalities including massage, yoga, energetic healing, East & West techniques. Brian studied to become an EMT and did nursing before he got into alternative healing. This special background helps him to understand alignment in yoga from a very unique perspective.

It is his great wish to share the joy-filled freedom of *alignment* with *source* that comes through the practice of yoga! Some of his favorite activities include hiking, scuba

diving, skydiving, climbing, mountain biking, traveling with his kids, floating in his sensory deprivation chamber and doing yoga, yoga, yoga!



## ***Ladakh***

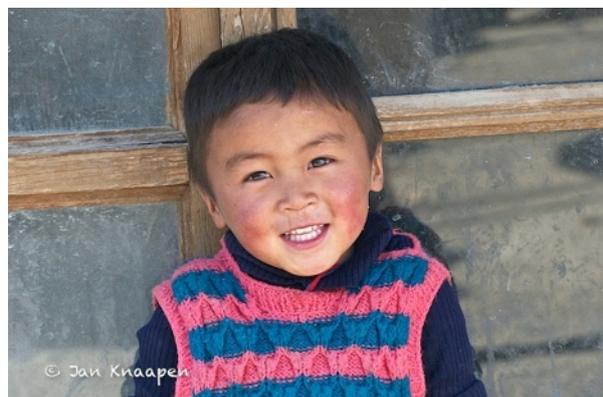
Ladakh lies north of the Himalayan Range. Though it is part of the Tibetan Plateau it lies within India. There is no religious persecution here. In eastern Ladakh, where the Indus flows on the first leg of its course from the holy mountain of Kailash (Tibet) down to the Arabian Sea, and where the capital Leh is situated, a large majority of the population practices Tibetan (Mahayana) Buddhism. Though it has been an independent kingdom for over 900 years before it was captured by a maharadja from the Punjab and merged with Kashmir (later India), it shares much more than its religion with neighbouring Tibet. For instance the way the people have managed to eek a living out of an arid and high altitude environment where hardly anything grows, by an ingenious form of irrigation, or, on the higher parts, by living a fully nomadic lifestyle following their herds of yak, goat and sheep in their search for edible vegetation.

On this short trip, apart from spending time in the pleasant commercial capital of Leh, you'll see both lifestyles – the farmer's and the nomad's - and you'll be amazed and touched by the genuine goodness of the Ladakhis, the way their inner warmth and peace of mind offsets the unforbidding environment.

## ***Yoga retreat at Shyok River Lodge***

After two days in and around the Indus Valley, in which we have to take it easy in order to allow our bodies to adjust to the altitude, we'll climb into jeeps and follow the ancient caravan route to Lhasa (Tibet). Climbing out of the Indus Valley you'll get awesome views of the Zaskar Mountains on the other side of the valley. But only after reaching the 5360 m high Chang La (pass) you'll get a whole new perspective on the word 'breathtaking'.

Luckily you don't have to stay here long. While descending, you get glimpses of the Karakoram Mountains to the East, technically a whole different mountain range form



the Himalayas in which you have been traveling thus far. After veering off from the caravan road you enter a beautiful and seldom traveled gorge. Coming out of the gorge you'll glimpse an enchanting small oasis of green fields and quaint white-washed houses on the banks of a big river surrounded by spectacular mountains. This is where you'll be staying the next seven days. Shyok River Lodge will be your home away from home during this time. This community-based eco-lodge is housed in a traditional Ladakhi farm. Hardly distinguishable from the other houses in the village, it is the interior that makes it stand out: simple but well-appointed rooms with locally crafted furniture, four-star bedding and clean bathrooms. Shyok River Lodge takes the concept of sustainable tourism seriously: you'll eat only organic vegetables that are locally grown (food will be strictly vegetarian and for those who prefer so vegan), no non-biodegradable garbage is left behind and both the electricity and the hot water supply are solar-powered. For more information please see the website: <http://frs.tl/SRL>

We'll be practicing yoga daily. Yoga sessions will take 1.5 - 2 hours, generally in the early part of the day, so that afternoons are free to do as you like. There will be organized walks in and around the village and in the beautiful natural surroundings almost daily. We'll visit the small local gumpa (monastery) and learn about the monks' way of life. The village is like a big connected family that will welcome us wholeheartedly, eager to show their homes and traditional lifestyle. If the time is right we can see and partake in the sowing, plowing, or harvesting of the barley. On another day we'll take you by car to the legendary Pangong Lake - only 2 hours away from Shyok. But you are free to retire in the afternoon with a book to the hammock in the willow grove or just enjoy the peaceful atmosphere of the remote mountain village.

For those who like, there will be late afternoon yoga session as well. You can practice particular asanas or explore new postures with Brian.

## ***Visit to Nubra Valley***

After the seven days of yoga at Shyok we'll head back to Leh by jeep along a different route than the one we came over. This will take three days. Along a not much traveled road we follow the Shyok River down to the idyllic Nubra Valley. Here we'll stay in a pleasant guesthouse for two nights. Nubra is a small-scale version of Ladakh and home to picturesque Buddhist monasteries and lush green oases of traditional houses



hidden among apricot orchards. You can visit some of the larger gompas here by jeep or do a camel ride on Bactrian (two-humped) camels through large sand dunes that have been formed out of the river sands here. The camels have descended from animals that used to work the caravan road to Yarkhand (Turkmenistan, present day China). Or you can discover small hidden gompas in the mountains that can only be reached on foot. Those who are interested can travel all the way to the Pakistani border by car. After two



nights in Nubra we return to Leh over another high pass, the Khardong La. At 5450 m it is one of the highest motorable roads in the world. Again, the drive is spectacular, especially the views over the oasis of Leh while descending from the pass that won't be easily forgotten. In Leh, you'll check in to your guesthouse or hotel.

The next day you fly back to Delhi where the journey ends.

## ***Itinerary***

### **Day 01: Arrival at Delhi**

At Delhi Airport you will be received by our representative and taken to your guesthouse not far from the airport for overnight stay.

### **Day 02: Flight Delhi - Leh**

Early morning you'll board the short but spectacular flight to Leh, Ladakh. As you fly over the Himalayan Range, you'll see a transition from mountains covered in dense green forests with their peaks blanketed by glaciers to the high altitude desert of Ladakh, where the small hamlets of inhabitation stand out as green islands among the bare but colorful mountain slopes.

You'll be received at the airport by our representative and taken to your guesthouse or hotel. You can choose to stay in the bustling centre of Leh or just outside the city in the rural community of Sankar. Especially this first day you are advised to keep the physical activity to a minimum, as you need to get used to the altitude.

### **Day 03: At Leh**

Second day for acclimitization. We propose and have arranged an excursion to the most famous and oldest monasteries in the lower Indus Valley (Alchi Gumpa and Lamayuru Gumpa) (included in the price) but you are most welcome stay in town and enjoy the pleasant atmosphere in Leh, or go out on your own excursion by jeep.

### **Day 04: Leh – Shyok**

It's a 5 hour drive, crossing the 5360 m high Chang La pass from Leh to Shyok River Lodge. There is time for visiting one or two less known gompas on the way.

### **Day 05 – 10: Yoga retreat at Shyok River Lodge**

During the days spent at Shyok River Lodge there will be yoga sessions in the mornings, while the afternoons are free or can spent on excursions. Again yoga sessions for those who are interested in the afternoon, as well as massages.

### **Day 11: Shyok – Hundar/Deskrit (Nubra)**

Following the Shyok River downstream we drive to Hundar/Deskrit in Nubra where we check into a guesthouse.

### **Day 12: At Hundar/Deskrit**

Day spent on discovering the monasteries of Nubra Valley, riding camels or doing walks. Optional jeep drive to Turtuk at the border with Pakistan.

### **Day 13: Nubra - Leh**

Return to Leh via the Khardong La.

### **Day 14: Flight Leh - Delhi**

Early morning you'll board the flight back to Delhi. This most likely leaves you with a full day to spend in Delhi, as most international flights depart late at night or very early next morning (KLM). Sight seeing in Delhi can be arranged (visiting Old Delhi Red Fort, Kutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb and Akshardam Temple, for instance). Also the use of a day room facility plus diner at a hotel close to the airport can be arranged.

## ***Prices***

**Group tour**, with English & Dutch speaking tour guide and yoga teacher who speaks English.

Price: € 1595/\$ 2145

*Price includes:* Air fare Delhi - Leh and Leh – Delhi), all accommodation on twin-sharing basis (starting with guesthouse in Delhi on 1/2, ending with guesthouse in Leh on day 14/15), full board except in Leh (CP, breakfast only), all transport by SUV vehicles, excursion to Alchi and Lamayuru on day 03. Yoga teacher and English speaking guide throughout (except day 01 in Delhi), as well as English speaking Ladakhi guide. Six-day/seven-night yoga course at Shyok River Lodge, Restricted Area Permit fees; village visits.

*Not included:* international flight, tips; alcoholic drinks; laundry service; telephone calls; travel/personal insurance; other expenses of personal nature.

Please ask for quotation for additional services.

## ***More information and booking***

For more information on this tour and for booking please mail us at [info@jantreksandtravels.com](mailto:info@jantreksandtravels.com).

To be sure of a place on this awesome tour you are requested to down-pay 10% of the tour price (i.e. € 160/ \$ 215) to our bank account:

Acc. no.            913020031243013

Acc. holder        Jan Treks And Travels

Address of acc. holder:    G63, Regent House, DLF Phase IV, Gurgaon - 122002, Haryana, India

(IFSC Code        UTIB0001720)

SWIFT             AXISINBB056

Bank address    Axis Bank, Gurgaon DL Branch, Sco No. 120, Sector 46, Gurgaon, Haryana – 122001, India

In case you're interested in other yoga tours and retreats please check our website: [www.jantreksandtravels.com/Yoga-tours.html](http://www.jantreksandtravels.com/Yoga-tours.html).

## ***Extension and prelude options***

After reaching Leh at the end of the trip, in all likelihood you won't want to take the first flight out. Ladakh is a magical place that definitely warrants more exploring. Alternatively, you can spend more time on *getting there*. If you have the time, we strongly advise you to travel to Ladakh by road. It is one of the most spectacular road trips in the world. Crossing the Himalayan Range, you'll witness an amazing transition from the green, Hindu-dominated southern slopes of the Himalayas to the barren, colorful mountains of Buddhist Ladakh. To check out this tour, please click on 'The Great Himalayan Crossing' on this page: <http://www.jantreksandtravels.com/Ladakh-tours.html>.