








Western Sichuan Tours



Eastern Kham and Gyarong

Culture and Trekking along the Eastern Border of the Tibetan High Plateau

-  Gyarong Canyons and Kham's Grassland
-  Remote Lamaseries and Watchtowers
-  Waterfalls – Ancient Forests – Wetlands
-  High Alpine Landscape — Glaciers
-  Timeless Mountain Villages
-  Tibetan Homestays
-  Pandas

Duration	15 days
Dates in 2011	29.Jun – 13.Jul 20.Okt – 3.Nov
Group size	4 - 14 Pax
Highest Pass	ca. 4600m
Price	from RMB 18,000.-
Contact and Details	wstourix@gmail.com

Gyarong is a fairly isolated area with its own distinctive culture and customs. It is famous for its watchtowers and castle-like houses. Deep canyons, steep mountain ridges, rushing streams and dense forests feature the natural aspect of this area. It is bordered by the Tibetan High Plateau to the west and north. Right over the edge is Kham, one of the cultural Provinces of Tibet. Kham is famous for its Tibetan tribes — the Khampa. Here, on the eastern part of the Tibetan High Plateau you still can find active Monasteries and a “living” Tibetan culture.

This tour gives you the unique opportunity to enjoy and understand this fascinating area. It is designed with emphasis on a reasonable balance between hiking and cultural components, for allowing you to maximally experience both local life and gorgeousness of this land.

Itinerary:

- 1. Day** Drive from Chengdu to Bifeng Gorge; visit of the Panda Park and Old Town of Shangli. Guesthouse in Shangli
- 2. Day:** Following the ancient “Tea-Horse-Trade-Road”: Via Ya’an we pass Mt. Erlang and continue to Moxi Town at the foot of Mt. Minya Konka (7556m). Hotel Moxi (1900m)
- 3. / 4. Day:** This area is perfect for acclimation while hiking in the world of glaciers. We have several options: (i) climb a ridge in front of the Minya Konka Massif (4-6h, easy) and visit the scenic hot spot Hailuogou Glacier the second day (easy; cable car not included); (ii) hike into South Gate Valley (medium; 6-8h/day); (iii) hike into Swallow Valley (medium; 4-8h/day). (ii) and (iii) overnight in tent (ca. 3100m)
- 5. Day:** We leave early and drive to the southern tip of the Minya Konka Range. From here we day-hike to a small village beneath the west flank of Minya Konka. Accommodation: Tibetan Homestay (3500m)



6. Day: On a day trip we visit the Monastery Konka Gomba (3800m). Oak forest and wild streams lay beneath the icy face of Minya Konka. From a pasture above the monastery we have an excellent view on this glacier world. Late afternoon return to our accommodation. Tibetan Homestay (3500m)



7. Day: Drive to Tagong/Lhagong. The road takes us over the Tsemet pass (4600m) and through the ancient Kingdom of Minyak. The people in Minyak have their own language which actually is not related to Tibetan. Accommodation: Hotel in Tagong (3600m)

8. Day: We spend one day with walking on the vast grassland of Lhagong, pass two small and remote monasteries of the Nyingmapa Sect, and will be able to witness nomadic life in Kham. Accommodation: Hotel in Tagong (3600m)

9. Day: In the morning visit Lhagang Monastery in Tagong. Afterwards drive to Bamei and hike over the never-ending rolling hills to Ghata Gomba Monastery. Accommodation: Hotel in Bamei (3400m)

10. Day: Through a cliffy gorge it goes down to the Dadu River and the Town Danba. On the way we can either visit the Boen Monastery Dingguoshan or hike to the holy lake Zharamtso at the foot of Mt. Zhara Lhatse (5820m). Accommodation: Tibetan Hotel in Zhonglu Village (2200m)

11. Day: On foot we explore this typical Gyarong mountain village with its astonishing watchtowers of different size and height; In the afternoon optional climb to a small pass. Hotel in Zhonglu

12. Day: Our van takes us along the mighty Dadu River to Barkam (Ma'erkang) and Choktse. In the afternoon we visit the residence museum of the "Tusi", the name of the tribal headman in feudal China. Accommodation: Hotel Barkam (2500m)



13. Day: Our day-drive through the breath-taking landscape of Gyarong ends in Dujiangyan. In this town the mighty Minjiang River pours into the Sichuan Basin. A huge irrigation system was build here more than 2000 years ago. Nowadays it is inscribed in the list of World Cultural Heritage. Accommodation: Hotel in Dujiangyan

14. Day: Visit Dujiangyan Irrigation System and return to Chengdu in the afternoon. Hotel and hotpot dinner

15. Day: Transfer to airport

Note on physical requirements

Some passes are above 4000m (sea level). Awareness of altitude sickness required!

Trekking durations are moderate and without big effort. However, thin air and new climatic conditions are factors which may stress the body and lead to uncomfortableness or even sickness.

In general, you should be in a good state of health. Though, it is not required to be a sportsperson ☺.