

Road to Everest



a 16 day Tibet Bike Tour

This is the journey you've dreamt about your entire life - a chance to experience the remarkable, ancient cultures of Tibet surrounded by a landscape that defies description. On The Road to Everest you'll begin in Lhasa exploring the historic temples, pilgrimage trails and hot springs concealed within the surrounding hills. We'll then mount up and begin our pedal out across the Tibetan Plateau toward the ever-towering Himalayas. A series of strategically placed hotels with welcomed amenities enable us to recharge in comfort each night with one spectacular day of cycling blending into another as we blaze our groundbreaking route to Everest.

Your grand adventure starts in Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet and former home of the Dalai Lama. To allow time for riders to acclimate to the high altitudes, we start with a walking tour of the ancient city followed by a short cycling loop through the surrounding valleys and hills. Dotted the countryside are a collection of Tibet's most revered temples and Buddhist universities, as well as secluded hot springs where we pause to rejuvenate active muscles. Our expedition warm-up continues with a few extra days in Lhasa offering a rare and unhurried opportunity to delve deeply into the soul of the city with its memorable cuisine, quiet cobblestone alleyways and colorful markets.

Pointing our compass south, the next leg of our journey takes us along a meandering route past scenic Yamdrok Lake, the Samding Monastery (home of the only female reincarnate of Buddha) and age-old villages renowned for their artisan traditions and carpet-making skills. We eventually turn onto the China-Nepal Friendship Highway venturing deeper into the Himalayas. Arriving at the intersection of old world meets new, we pedal down a recently paved and improved road to majestic Rombuk Monastery and the Everest Base Camp. As bikes are not allowed inside the National Park, we reach our final destination on foot by walking the last few kilometers to the base camp. Go ahead, pat yourself on the back and join the celebration - you just became part of lore and legend on The Road to Everest!

Day by Day Itinerary

Day 1 - We arrive Lhasa first thing in the morning, the capital of Tibet and former home of the Dalai Lama, the world-wide spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism. Aside from orientation, assembling the bikes and dinner, we have nothing planned for today. It's a chance to start your acclimatization to the altitude.

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Dinner tonight is highlighted by traditional Tibetan dancing and musical performances.

Day 2 - A leisurely day is in store. In the morning we will explore parts of the old city, watching the day to day life in the markets and temple squares near our hotel. After a light lunch, we will head out by pedicab to explore the Portola Palace. This massive monastery overlooks the city from a rocky outcropping in the heart of the city. Head out for a traditional Tibetan dinner at one of Lhasa's great restaurants near the Jokhang Temple.

Day 3 - The roads are calling our name. We will set out to the northeast today, cycling out to visit the monasteries at Sera and Drepung. These, along with Ganden, are the three famed Gelukpa University Monasteries of Tibet (Gelukpa is the Yellow Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism). Drepung at its peak housed some 10,000 monks. 45 kms

Day 4 - Today's ride takes us east from Lhasa, out into the countryside passing greenhouses, potato farms and small Tibetan communities. Midway through our ride, we will leave the Yellow River valley through which we have been riding and head up to the Ganden Monastery one of the oldest in Tibet with some buildings dating back to the 1400s. After touring this colorful complex, we enjoy a swift downhill run back to the Yellow River and a leisurely ride back to Lhasa. 84 kms

Day 5 - You have the day to your leisure. It is a great chance to relax and recharge from the high altitude exertion. Or perhaps you might wish to explore some more of Lhasa ancient streets and markets. (lunch & dinner are on your own today)

Day 6 - Our first ride on the Road to Everest is a leisurely journey through the Lhasa River valley. The road is often lined with poplar trees, as it winds alongside the many channels of the river. Tonight's lodging is in the quiet town of Quxul. 67 kms

Day 7 - Today we tackle our first big ascent, biking from Quxul to Nangartse. Other than the 30 kilometer slow ascent to Kamba La pass (4750 meters), the balance of our day is valley floor riding. Descending off the pass, we will pedal along beautiful Yamdrok Lake, whose shoreline we follow to Nangartse. The turquoise waters of Yamdrok will provide numerous photo opportunities. 120 kms (pass: Kamba La 4750 m)

Day 8 - Glacial landscapes outline today's ride to Gyantse, the third largest settlement in Tibet. The area is renowned for its carpet weaving and you may have an opportunity to look for some small rugs to treasure back home. Upon reaching Gyantse we will visit the Kumbum at Baiju Monastery dating from the 1400's, whose unique architecture resembles a three dimensional mandala and stroll up to the

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ancient Dzong (fortress) which overlooks the city. 95 kms (passes: Karo La 5045 m, Simi La 4330 m)

Day 9 - A day of mostly river valley cycling is in store today as we pedal to Shigatse. Home to the Panchen Lama who co-ruled Tibet with the Dalai Lama, Shigatse is now guarded by the restored Samdrubtse Dzong on the ridge high above. You will have ample time to stroll about town with our early arrival. 90 kms

Day 10 - We pick up the China - Nepal Friendship Highway today and follow it for the next two days. Today's landscapes are reminiscent of Utah's high desert regions, with rolling hills, decorated with multicolored stripes of browns and reds. The area raises not only barley, the staple food of Tibet, but sheep, yak and cattle. Along the way we will pass by the remains Narthang Monastery, one of the earliest printers in Tibet, using carved wooden printing tablets. Our goal for the evening is the village of Lhatse. 75 kms (pass: Yulong La 4950 m)

Day 11 - Our second day cycling the dramatic scenery of the Friendship Highway takes us over the highest pass on the road, Lappa La at 5220 meters. We will wind down for the night in Old Tingri, a few miles past New Tingri, the starting point of the new road to the Everest Base Camp. 90 kms (pass: Lappa La 5220 m)

Day 12 - China recently opened a new road from New Tingri to Rongbuk, to allow for the Olympic torch to be carried to Mt Everest before the Beijing 2008 Games. The project generated lots of controversy, but opened easier access to the mountain. We will travel this road to Rongbuk Monastery, sitting at the upper end of the valley, which has one of the most dramatic views in the world. Along the way Pang La (Pass) provides an unparalleled panorama of Shishapangma, Everest, Cho Oyu and Gyachang Kang peaks. Due to a total lack of maintenance, the road is currently unsuitable for cycling, so we may drive to Rongbuk. 110kms (pass: Pang La 5120 m)

Day 13 - This morning, if the weather gods cooperate, we may be treated to one of the most photographed images, the stupa of Rongbuk with early morning light on Mt Everest behind. Afterwards we will load the bikes and start the drive back to Lhasa. We will break-up the trip with an overnight stop in Shigatse once again. We will explore the Tashilunpo Monastery upon arrival in Shigatse town.

Day 14 - We'll visit the Gang Gyen carpet making factory, a project started by the 10th Panchen Lama after breakfast, then drive a short way out of town to the start of the Yellow River Gorge. The bikes will get unloaded for an 80 kms ride through this magnificent narrow gorge, punctuated by small villages and white water rapids. Our stop for the night is a small resort perched above the cascading river out in the countryside.

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Day 15 - A short drive takes us back to Lhasa, where you are free to explore, shop for souvenirs or just relax and take in the scenery. We will head out in the evening for a final dinner at one of Lhasa's better restaurants, taking in our last taste of delicious Tibetan cuisine. (lunch on your own today)

Day 16 - It is time to bid fond farewells to our fellow adventures. It was a monumental, journey without comparison through one of the world's most dramatic landscapes. We will offer a shuttle back to the airport to meet the major flights departing Lhasa. Kah Leh Phe

Dates & Prices:

Please check our website for the currently available dates and the applicable pricing.

<https://pedalers.travel/china-cycling-tours-tibet-bike-tours-road-to-everest.htm>

Lodging:

Boutique Hotels, Small Guesthouses and Simple Inns

What's Included:

- 15 nights Accommodation in the area's better hotels (double occupancy)
- Meals from Dinner on Day 1 until Breakfast on Day 16, except as noted in itinerary
- Water, sodas or beer included at dinner
- Service of bilingual Team Pedalers Guide(s)
- Permit fees for Tibet and Everest Base Camp
- Full Van Support
- Sightseeing and cultural activities
- Airport pick up & drop off

Meeting & Flights:

The tour meets on Day 1 at Lhasa Airport (guides will meet any flight arriving prior to 4 pm).

Fly into Lhasa (LXA) before 4 pm on Day 1

Fly out of Lhasa (LXA) after 9 am on Day 16

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Route Conditions:

The ride is mostly on paved roads, narrow but with light to moderate traffic. Pavement is a bit coarse and stretches of dirt road will be encountered. Suitable for touring, sport road and also performance road bikes with wider tires (25 or wider). The terrain is fairly hilly, some some big alpine style climbs. Due to the higher altitudes and long distances between some of our lodges, we will use shuttles on several days to keep things enjoyable. Riders are welcome to ride as much as they feel comfortable with, but guides may ask guests to hop in the vehicle if they feel the guest are over-exerting themselves for the altitude. Mileages listed for each day are approximate and will be adjusted based on the group's ability under high altitude conditions.

Altitude:

This tour stays at altitudes above 3300 meters / 10,800 feet throughout the entire time we are in Tibet. Our highest altitude reached is 5220 m / 17,225 ft while crossing Lappa Pass about two thirds of the way through our ride. We follow the climber's rule of climb high / sleep low, pedaling over high passes and then spending the nights in the lower valleys. However our final night's stay during the ride at Rongbuk is just above 5000 m / 16,500 ft (just barely below the 5100 m pass we cross the get there). Because Altitude Sickness effects people differently, some folks will be unaffected, while others will require preventative medication. We highly recommend speaking with your family physician regarding the effect of high altitude and preventative measures. You can find altitude details here to print out for your physician's reference.

Visas & Travel Documents:

Passports are required for all guests. Your passport should have at least 6 months validity past your intended travel dates. Permits for visiting Tibet are included as part of your tour fee, but guests are responsible for obtaining their own visa into China. Contact the China Embassy in your country for full details.