

Western Sichuan Tours

Blue Bird

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The Three Buddha Peaks

Trekking from Lake Lugu to Daocheng, traverse along the 6000m peaks of Chenresig, Jambeyang and Chanadorje

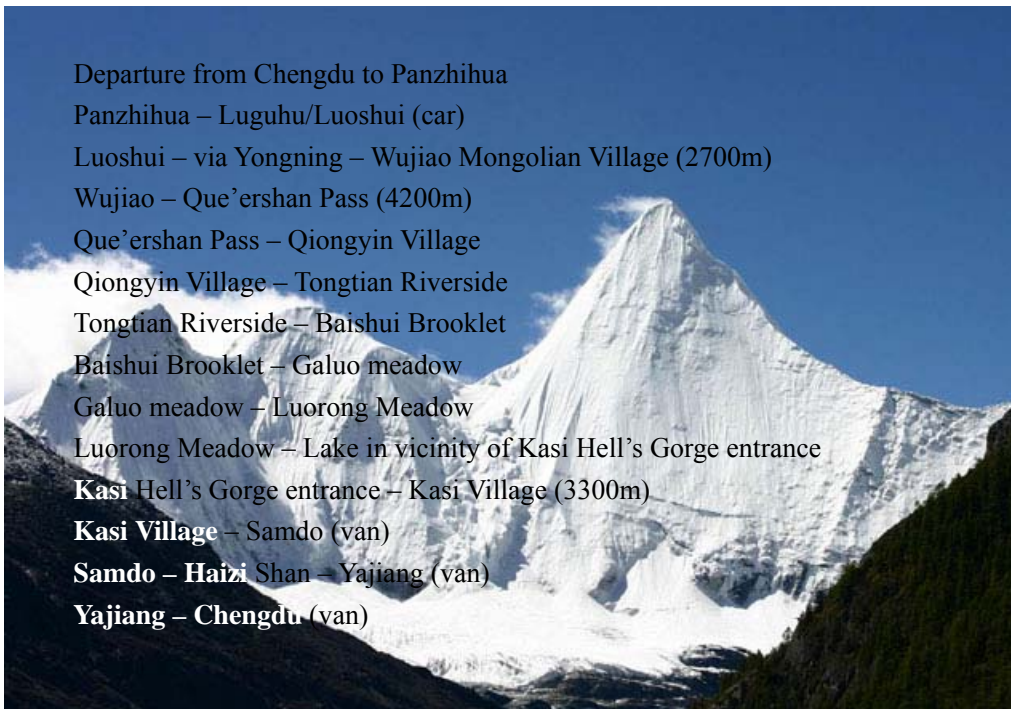
Daocheng County is located in the most Southwestern part of Sichuan and boasts with an ancient memory of earth (Haizi Shan) and three holy peaks of about 6000m. It is said that the names of these three holy peaks are granted by the fifth Dalai Lama. The northern peak is called Chenresig, the name for the Goddess of Mercy (chin. Guanyin), and is 6032m above sea level. The southern peak is named Jambeyang after the Bodhisattva of wisdom (chin. Wenshu; Manjushri), with a height of 5958m above sea level. Also 5958m above sea level is the third and eastern peak, named Chanadorje after the Bodhisattva of power and wrath (chin. Jingangshou; Vajrapani). These peaks are covered by ice and snow all year long. They bear a strong religious meaning for Tibetan people.

High mountain ridges as well as deep and mysterious river valleys are characteristically for the geography and landforms of Daocheng County. In its North, on Mt. Haizi, we find the biggest glacial erosion within the Sichuan part of the high plateau, a witness of the last ice age. In the middle, the more or less plain area around Daocheng city features rolling hills and vast grass land interlocked with rivers, streams and spots of forest. In the South the three holy peaks raise their icy faces and watch out over the country.

Lake Lugu – the start of our travel – is located at the borderline between Sichuan and Yunnan. On both sides of its shores live a lot of different ethnic groups. Among the bigger or famous groups are Tibetans, Yi, Pumi, Miao, Mosuo, Mongols and Han. The Mosuo people who are practicing matriarchal traditions for more than two thousands of years should be mentioned particularly.

Itinerary:

1. Departure from Chengdu to Panzhihua
2. Panzhihua – Lugu/Luoshui (car)
3. Luoshui – via Yongning – Wujiao Mongolian Village (2700m)
4. Wujiao – Que'ershan Pass (4200m)
5. Que'ershan Pass – Qiongyin Village
6. Qiongyin Village – Tongtian Riverside
7. Tongtian Riverside – Baishui Brooklet
8. Baishui Brooklet – Galuo meadow
9. Galuo meadow – Luorong Meadow
10. Luorong Meadow – Lake in vicinity of Kasi Hell's Gorge entrance
11. **Kasi Hell's Gorge entrance – Kasi Village (3300m)**
12. **Kasi Village – Samdo (van)**
13. **Samdo – Haizi Shan – Yajiang (van)**
14. **Yajiang – Chengdu (van)**






1. Day: Chengdu to Panzhihua

Start&End Points: Chengdu Main Station – Panzhihua Railway Station

Stops: Emei Shan, Hanyuan Dadu Canyon, Xichang

Sights: Typical Sichuan Landscape, Rice Fields, Tea plants, Dadu Canyon






Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
13h	Hard-sleeper 		↗ 600m	None			Train 

2. Day: Matriarchal Society

Start&End Points: Panzhihua (1100m) – Lake Lugu/Luoshui (2690m, Yunnan side)

Itinerary: On the Yunnan side of the Sichuan-Yunnan border, lunch in a town of the Daidai people

Sights: Culture of different ethnic groups (Mosuo, Pumi, Yi, etc.), architecture, buildings, liveries etc.






Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
9h			↗ 1600m	None			

3. Day: First Day in the Mountains

Start&End Points: Lake Lugu/Luoshui Village – Wujiao Village (2700m)

Itinerary: On a clay road via Yongning Village to Wujiao Mongolian Village, lunch in Yongning Village

Sights: much forest, hamlets of ethnic groups






Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
5-6h			↗ 1200m ↘ 1200m	None			

4. Day: The Hike Begins

Start&End Points: Wujiao Village (2700m) – Que'er Shan Pass (4200m)

Itinerary: Early in the morning we get in the jeeps and follow a narrow sand-clay road to the Dakegudou Pass (4100m, 3h). This beautiful road leads through forest and spots of pasture land. At the pass we leave our vehicles behind and begin with our hike. Together with our ponies which we met at the pass we walk down to the Ka'er pasture (3000m, 2h) and up again to the Que'er Pass (4200m, 3h) at which's other site we build up our tents on a small spot of grassland.

Sights: Grassland and rooling hills, pastures, soft and peaceful landscape, culture of ethnic groups






Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
3h by car 6h walking			↗ 2700m ↘ 1200m	easy ▲▲▲		 Ka'er Pasture	

5. Day: Rolling Hills

Start&End Points: Grassland below Que'er Shan Pass (4200m) – Qiongyin Village (3000m)

Itinerary: Leaving the meadow behind and crossing over rolling hills and through thick shrubbery the track will bring us to the Tasi Pass (4100m) which yet separates us from the beautiful and charming Tasi prairie (4h). After lunch we merge into a wonderful forest. We walk along a small brook when the road carries us up again to the mountain village Qiongyin (3000m, 4h).

Sights: Beautiful meadows and great forests between rolling hills, Yaks, and the crescent feeling of getting closer and closer to the Tibetan High Plateau

Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
8h			↗ 1200m ↘ 1700m	easy ▲▲▲		 Tasi Pass	








6. Day: The Margin of Chanadorje

Start&End Points: Qiongyin Village (3000m) – Tongtian Riverside (2000m)

Itinerary: We leave our camp near Qiongyin Village and mount the pass above it (3800m, 2h). After five hours walking on a clay road downhill, and via Ludu Village we reach the only bridge across the Tongtian River (= Shuiluo River). On the other side we stand at the margin of the massif of the Three Buddha Mountains already.

Sights: Arid slopes formed to an impressive landscape, Tibetan Villages and their agriculture






Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
7h			↗ 800m ↘ 1800m	easy ▲▲▲		 Ludu village	

7. Day: The Gold Mine

Start&End Points: Tongtian Riverside (2000m) – White Water River (2500m)

Itinerary: Today our journey has got a relaxing day. We only have to manage an elevation of about 500m while we are walking along the Tongtian River. An arid and cultural not very interesting valley with several small Tibetan hamlets is lying on our 25km journey to this evening's campsite. One hour before we reach our camp we pass an illegal gold mine that has been producing gold and pollution since many years. Behind that mine the world becomes very beautiful again. A wonderful small brook – a branch of the Tongtian River – leads straight to our campsite where we finally can appreciate a spectacular view of Chanadorje's eastern glacier side.

Sights: Some Chörten, remote and poor villages, Gold Mine, Chanadorje's eastern glacier

Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
5h			↗ 500m	easy ▲▲▲			







8. Day: Up to the Flank of Chanadorje

Start&End Points: White Water River (2500m) – Galuo Meadow (4500m)

Itinerary: Well recovered we leave our camp to master a very exhausting day. We cross the wooden bridge over the White Water River, and then straightly climb a steep slope until we reach a small ridge. This ridge leads us to Galuo Village where we arrive after about 2h. Continuously we get higher and higher, and soon we will have a beautiful view of the way we already left behind us. The widespread farms and its vicinal fields become less and less, and we will find us hiking through thick and miscellaneous forest. When we reach the timberline and get to the Galuo meadow over an edge, the sun is about to vanish behind the impressive ridges of Mt. Chanadorje that lie in front of us, and leaves us behind within the mountainous magnificence.



Sights: Galuo – a charming Tibetan mountain village, fabulous forests, rocks and solitude

Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
6h			↗ 2000m	easy 			






9. Day: Plunge into Fairy Land

Start&End Points: Galuo Meadow (4500m) – Luorong Meadow (3980m)

Itinerary: The early sunrise will paint the northeastern ridge of Chanadorje and at the same time warm us up. Now we have been strengthened for the challenge of 300m vertical distance to the pass (4800m) we will reach after 2 hours. From here we almost horizontally move along the slope towards Mt. Chanadorje. After an awe-inspiring traverse we descend to the Luorong Meadow at the foot of Mt. Chanadorje, and build up our tents.

Sights: View of the peak of Chanadorje and its ridge, high alpine atmosphere and beautiful scenery








Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
6h			↗ 300m ↘ 800m	easy ▲▲▲▲			

10. Day: Awe at the Highest Point

Start&End Points: Luorong Meadow (3980m) – Lake in vicinity of Kasi Hell’s Gorge (3900m)

Itinerary: Today we tramp along the feet of the three marvelous mountains, walk in a semicircle that ends at one of the exits out of this fairy ground – the Kasi Hell’s Gorge. On our way we pass two beautiful lakes and have to climb the highest elevation of our journey – the Songduo Pass (5208m). On this pass we can fully appreciate the overwhelming view of the holy mountains and will feel awe.

Sights: Milky Lake, Five-colours-lake, a fascinating view of the high alpine and holy world of Chanadorje, Chenresig and Jambeyang with glaciers and vertical rock formations

Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
6-7h			↗ 1200m ↘ 1200m	easy ▲▲▲			






11. Day: The Kasi Hell's Gorge



Start&End Points: Lake in vicinity of Hell's Gorge Entrance (3900m) – Kasi Village (3300m)

Itinerary: After a grateful night under the shelter of the three holy peaks we have to say farewell to paradise and start the way downhill. Just a few tens of minutes and we reach the funnel-like entrance of the gorge. After a descent of about 7h through the ravine we reach at Kasi Village and thus at the end of our hike.

Sights: Fascinating wild water, cataracts, scary cliffs and vertical gorge walls






Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
7h			↘ 700m	easy ▲▲			

12. Day: Kasi Village to Samdo/Drigung Monastery

Start&End Points: Kasi Village (3300m) – Samdo/Daocheng

Itinerary: In the morning we get in the van waiting for us, and take a long ride (5h) over the E'Chu Mountain Range to Daocheng. On the way we stop at a very interesting lamasery and spend some time for a visit. From the Lamasery it takes another hour to get to Daocheng where we can have lunch in a decent restaurant. After lunch and one hour drive we arrive at Drigung Monastery – a Lamasery of the Yellow Hat Sect. There we can put up our tents or ask for accommodation in the rooms of the monastery. In the afternoon we have a walk upon some of the grass hills around and may catch a last view of the three Buddha Mountains.

Sights: Lamanuo Monastery, Daocheng, Drigung Monastery, Haizishan,





Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
6h			↗ 700m	none		Daocheng 	

13.Day: HaiziShan

Start&End Points: Samdo/Drigung Monastery - Yajiang

Itinerary: Today we have to drive for a couple of hours, but at the top of the Haizishan there is still enough time to get off the van and stroll around for a small examination of the amazing formation of boulders lying around higgledy-piggledy. Via Lithang where is one of the biggest Yellow Sect Monasteries in Kham and its vast high land we drive down the curvy road to Yajiang – a big town at the banks of the Yalong Jiang (...) the longest stream of Kham. If we are good in time we can go further to Xinduqiao to stay over night.







Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
6-8h			↘ 700m	none		Lithang	

14.Day: Back to Chengdu

Start&End Points: Yajiang/Xinduqiao - Chengdu





Itinerary: Yajiang – Xinduqiao – Zheduo Pass (4300m) – Kangding – Luding– Ya’an - Chengdu

Sights: Highland of Kham, Tibetan stone houses, prayer flags, Chörten, Kangding: the Gate to Tibet







Duration	Accommodation	Transport	Altitude Difference	Physical Requirement	Meals		
					B	L	D
12h			↘ 2800m	none		Kangding	

Legend:

Accommodation:

Tent	Guesthouse	Hotel	Monastery
			

Transportation:

on Foot	Bus	Car	Train	Van	Pony
					

Physical requirement:





- Walking Skill: Simple(S), Medium difficult(M), Difficult(D), Extremely difficult (EX)
- Physical Persistency depending on Altitude:

walking time \ absolute altitude	4-6h	6-8h	8-10h	10-12h
2000m – 3500m		▲	▲▲	▲▲▲
3500m – 4300m	▲	▲▲	▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲
4300m – 5000m	▲▲	▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲▲
Above 5000m	▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲▲▲

Altitude Difference:

Ascent/Climbing	Ascent/Hiking	Descent/Climbing	Descent/Hiking
↑	↗	↓	↘

Meals:

Restaurant	Provisions/cold	Provisions/cooked	Breakfast
			

(Breakfast: B; Lunch: L; Dinner: D)