



Tibet Tours Newsletter

June 2010



Welcome to the second newsletter from Tibet Tours. We aim to inform you about the situation in Tibet, related humanitarian projects and our tours to the region. We will email you a newsletter each quarter with articles and information on our upcoming tours and occasional update emails should something of particular interest arise between newsletter issues.

Welcome Message

Tibet Update

Upcoming Tours

Tibet Tours Guide / Sacred Feature

Inspiring Quote

Welcome message

Australia will again host a visit from His Holiness 14 Dalai Lama in June 2011, we are fortunate for a country with such a small population to have such frequent visits. A lot of the credit for the frequency of visits is due to Ian Green and the team at Dalai Lama in Australia. Although the exact dates and details of the tour have not been announced it will be in June and the tour will encompass several cities include Perth, Melbourne and Sydney. Once full tour details are available they will be announced on www.dalailamainaustralia.org, you can also register to receive updates of the forthcoming tour and all future tours by His Holiness at this website.

The 2011 visit by His Holiness will be occurring when I was due to be in Tibet, so as not to miss His Holiness teachings for both myself and tour participants I have changed the Tibet tour schedule for 2011, you can find details below. I will say in brief that the Kailash 2011 tour I have planned and the Amdo journey following excite more than any other tours I have previously planned and to visit Tibet so soon after being in His Holiness presence will be a wonderful gift to carry to this amazing land. I am particularly excited about visiting the lake of sacred visions, Lhamo Lhatso Lake 1 full day drive East of Lhasa. This is the Lake the regent would visit to gain visions of the whereabouts of the new Dalai Lama's reincarnation after the passing of his predecessor. Many other sages and wise people would visit the lake to gain



insights. Prior to heading West from Lhasa to Mount Kailash we will visit Nalendra Monastery, the seat of the Chogye Trichen Rinpoches, the last incumbent being a teacher of both His Holiness 14 Dalai Lama and His Holiness Sakya Trizin, the two highest throne holders in the Tibetan traditions. When we visited in 2009 we received a beautiful reception and this time we will ask for prayers for a safe and successful journey to the holiest mountain of all, Mount Kailash. I do not need to say much about Mount Kailash, however I will say that on the 2011 tour we will take a gentle 5 day kora with the chance for non trekkers to drive to the North Face so all can receive darshan from the Mountain.

For all those able to stay on in Tibet after the Kailash trip and any who just want to join for the Amdo trip it will be quite simply magical. Rappgay will guide us to monasteries he studied at and where family members are still resident, including a few days at Labrang Monastery where Rappgay did most of his studies. We will be received as family in each place, before an even greater honour of attending Rappgay's wedding in his home village of Amdo. That's right Rappgay has invited all tour members (who by then will be as good as family) to attend his traditional Tibetan wedding. I feel that despite travelling to Tibet regularly since 2001 this will be the real homecoming, I hope many of you can join me.

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Tibet Update

Tibet Earthquake

In April a massive earthquake rocked parts of Tibet. Centred in Jieqo (Yushu) with a population of 100 000, thousands of people died and were injured. Many monasteries were destroyed or damaged and survivors and other people in surrounding areas are still struggling. Please remember these people in your prayers and if you are able to send any money or supplies you can contact:

<http://www.yushuearthquakeresponse.org/>

Local Tibetan, Tashi:

"I received information about the earthquake from my brother who is a teacher in Yushu. At about 5:00 a.m on the fourteenth of April a low magnitude quake woke people up, but many people then went back to sleep. Later that morning the big earthquake came. At that time many students were reciting lessons outside, by the walls of the school buildings. They were crushed when the walls fell on them. Some female students were going to the cafeteria to collect boiling water to make instant noodles, and the cafeteria collapsed and killed them. Despite all these terrible things, many people survived. They did not have any food for three days. After three days, instant noodles arrived and the people, almost starving, happily ate them. Now people are cold; they don't have enough clothes, or blankets, or anywhere to stay."



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Tibet Tours Guide / Sacred Site Feature

Tibet News by Rapgay

After ten years of living outside of the snowy kingdom, former monk, Rapgay Sangkar returned to Tibet to visit his family earlier this year. "It was a joyful and beautiful reunion, a nonstop party," says Rapgay. He noticed quite marked differences in his homeland, the sky wasn't as blue, with greater pollution, rivers have shrunk in size due to the mining and construction enterprises of the Chinese and generally the environment was not as pristine and beautiful as it had been. Where grass had been, there was now sand and desertification. "Lots of lamas are now saying there's an urgent need for us to protect the environment, to clean up rubbish and plant trees." The roads mimicked those of a warzone, with empty sandbags and troops. He noticed a large increase in Chinese Special forces at checkpoints everywhere but general Chinese military was about the same as ten years ago. On a really encouraging note, the villages in his Amdo province are uniting and working together to take a stand to preserve their culture. They are speaking pure Tibetan, without the Chinese influence and some monks and scholars are coming up with new Tibetan words for expressing the modernization of today's society that the Tibetan people weren't exposed to before.



"Tibetans are better off in some ways than they were ten years ago, they have modern amenities, like cars but for nomadic farmers, their traditional way is dying with the Chinese compartmentalizing farming and preventing the nomads from moving around by trying to control them. So now the nomads are becoming farmers and aren't being allowed to maintain their traditional way of life." Here is widespread discrimination, if a Tibetan person wants a government loan or needs welfare assistance, they have to say an oath to the Motherland and renounce his Holiness and put up a Chinese flag. Rapgay says there is a lot more Chinese control now than there was in 1999 and says the large numbers of Chinese people living in Tibet are suffering too.

INSPIRING QUOTE

"Better than a thousand hollow words, is one word that brings peace."

Buddha

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Upcoming tours

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will be returning to Australia in June 2011 (including Perth, Melbourne and Sydney). The dates are yet to be announced, but given this wonderful visit, we will now be travelling to Tibet in July.

Mount Kailash Tour June 29 - July 21

Price approx \$7200 ex Chengdu, exact amount to be confirmed

Includes all ground fees (best guides, transport and accommodation) and return flights Chengdu to Lhasa

Not included international flights to Chengdu, travel insurance, tips and a some meals

Travelling via Chengdu to connect with Amdo tour and for eas of entry to Lhasa. I have allowed plenty of acclimatization time, 4 days site seeing around Lhasa and visit to Lhamo Lhaso Lake. Lhamo Lhatso Lake, the lake of visions, Tibet's holiest lake (along with Manasarovar) where you can see your future. Lhamo Lhatso plays a vital role in Tibet's reincarnation system of high lamas. Visions of reincarnate lamas and clues of where to locate them are given through this amazing 4000m high lake.

We will travel in luxury 4wd vehicles en route to Kailash visiting Gyantse and Shigatse. Staying in hotels in the larger towns and luxury camping in traditional style Tibetan tents.

Gentle 5 day kora with extended time for devotional practices. Yaks to carry luggage.

Option for those not walking the kora to drive and meet the group at the North Face of Mount Kailash. Returing to Darchen the day the group goes through the Dolma la pass, allowing more time to explore Darchen and nearby gompas.

Two days at Lake Manasarovar with driven kora.



Return to Labrang, Central Amdo Tour July 22 – Aug 1 apx

A special pilgrimage to labrang Monastery, with former monk, Rapgay Sangkar. We will also visit Meba and Kumbum monasteries. At each place Rapgay will introduce us to former colleagues and teachers and we will have teachings with khepos and audiences with Lamas . We will return to Rapgay's home village in Amdo to attend and celebrate his wedding in true traditional Tibetan style. A deeply intimate tour.

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