

Minya Konka Test Trip - Emily Rhodes

Trip Code: MKTA

Version: MKTA Minya Konka - Test Trip for Emilys



WALK & TREK



FAMILY



CHALLENGING



HIGHLIGHTS

- TEST Trek beneath Minya Konka (7556m), the third highest peak beyond the Himalaya/Karakorum range
- TEST Meet the distinctive Khampa and Minyak communities of the Kham region
- TEST Discover the Great Mani Pile of the Tagong Plateau and overnight at Konka Monastery
- TEST See Pandas and Red Pandas at the Breeding and Research Centre at Chengdu

AT A GLANCE

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 14 Breakfasts
- 13 Lunches
- 14 Dinners
- 6 nights Hotel
- 5 nights Camping
- 1 nights Monastery
- 1 nights Homestay
- 1 nights Lodge

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

This superb adventure in remote China combines the experience of real Tibetan culture with a spectacular trek through the beautiful valleys of Riwoche and Moxi to the Monastery below the ice-fluted shark's fin of Minya Konka (7556m), the world's third highest peak outside the Himalaya. Situated on the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau, Minya Konka is also one of the most sacred mountains to Tibetan Buddhists, equal in status to Mount Kailas in Western Tibet. Impressive mountain panoramas and austere glaciers, babbling brooks and river torrents, azure blue lakes, enchanting mixed woodland, grazing yaks and their nomadic herders, chortens, mani walls, prayer flags and elaborately decorated Gompas can all be found here.

Our week long trek begins just south of Kangding, the 'Gateway to Tibet'. We make a steady ascent of the Riwoche valley with its soaring cliffs and fast river torrents. At the head of this valley we enter a high grazing area where we will encounter the temporary settlements of the nomadic yak herders. Climbing to cross the 4900 metre Bhuchu La, we then descend the beautiful Moxi valley eventually entering forests of rhododendron, juniper, birch and oak which in October become a riot of Autumnal colours. We stay overnight in the Konka monastery and the climax of our trek is the climb to the ridge above for unrivalled views of Minya Konka and the Daxue range of 6000-metre snowy peaks. Although Minya Konka is the undoubted centre-piece of this great trekking holiday to a little visited mountain region of Sichuan, there is much more to the holiday than this, admittedly, superbly photogenic mountain.

If you want to see real Tibetan culture, this is where you should come. This holiday will give you an insight into the rural life of the Kham region and also of the Minyak people who are an ethnic group distinct again from their Khampa neighbours. Combined with a fascinating journey through Sichuan province, with its many spectacular monasteries, gigantic 'hill paintings' and the great Mani Pile of Tagong, and sightseeing in the city of Chengdu, including the Pandas at the world famous breeding centre. This is a world class trekking holiday and also a real adventure and travel experience in an area visited by very few Westerners.

Is this holiday for you?

This holiday combines a week long trek with a cultural experience staying and touring in Western Sichuan - an area steeping in Tibetan culture. The trek to Minya Konka is not long or sustained but it

travels through rugged country, generally at a high altitude and across a high pass of 4900 metres. The average walking day is around 5 - 6 hours with one longer day across the Bhuchu La of 8 or possibly 9 hours. In general the underfoot conditions are good and we follow a well established trails used by the semi nomadic Yak herders who travel through these valleys. Though altitude will of course be a factor, this short trek is suitable for experienced hill walkers with a good level of fitness. Please note that this is a real adventure in an area rarely visited by other groups. Organised trekking is still in its infancy in this part of the world and therefore services will be more basic than you may have experienced trekking in the Himalaya. This holiday is perfect for those who are seeking to trek in remote areas and who are happy to accept the pioneering nature of the trip.

Itinerary

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DAY 1

Meet at the group hotel in Chengdu. A single timed transfer from Chengdu Airport is provided.

Meet at the group hotel in Chengdu. A single timed transfer from Chengdu Airport will be provided. Depending on arrival times there may be some time to look around our immediate environs. Close to the hotel are many shops selling traditional goods as well as supermarkets, cafes and restaurants. In the early evening we will have a briefing from the tour leader and we will then head out for a dinner in one of the local restaurants serving traditional Sichuan cuisine.

Meals: **D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Drive to Kangding (2550m).

Today the journey is definitely part of the experience as we set off on a 258 km drive (3.5hrs), travelling deep into the hill country. Arriving at our destination of Kangding (2550m) in the Eastern Tibetan province of Kham, we check into our hotel and have some time to relax before dinner. Kangding, known as the 'Gateway to Tibet', is an historical border town between Tibet and China, much fought over and eventually taken by Manchu troops in the 18th century. Once an important trading town where Chinese brick tea was carried by porters from Chengdu and other centres to trade for Tibetan wool, Kangding or Dartsedo to give it its Tibetan name, is now the capital of Garze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. The town is split by the Dadu River, which is channelled through a large square in the town centre. This is a lively place where folks of all ages gather in the morning and evening to dance Guozhuang (a Tibetan folk dance) or play games.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 3

Acclimatisation walk in the Pao-Ma Hills (2900m). Drive past Laoyuling (3060m) to our homestay.

From the hotel we have a drive down to the central part of Kangding, which is the launching point for visits to two monasteries located in the Pao-Ma Hills. There is a tourist cable car here imported from Germany but as we are seeking acclimatisation we will spurn the ride and instead take a winding track that climbs up into the hills. Reaching the upper station of the cable car we enter a park and visit the first gumpa. Behind this, a series of steps through woods adorned with prayer flags leads to a large stupa and beyond this, to a large amphitheatre. More stairs lead on up through woods to the second gumpa (2900m), providing not only useful acclimatisation for us, but also a fantastic view over Kangding and the gorge of the Dardu River. Afterwards we descend the steps and trails back down to the town. We will take lunch in a local restaurant before we meet our driver and journey towards Laoyuling (3060m) where we will stay as guests of our Tibetan horsemen who will accompany us on the trek. Here we will get a first taste of our cook's fare and can enjoy a convivial evening before setting off on trek.

Meals: **B L D**

**Accommodation**

Homestay

DAY 4

Trek to the first camp at Da-Cao-Ba (3500m).

Today we have a relatively gentle introduction to the journey. The distance we can walk in a day is limited by our elevation gain while we are still acclimatising to the altitude. We may opt to drive some of the way today, or leave a walk of around 3 - 4 hours, partly along a farm track to reach our first camp near Da-Cao-Ba (3500m). This will be our first day settling into the camp routine and so it is convenient that we will have a relaxed start to organise everything.

Meals: **B L D**

**Accommodation**

Camping

**Ascent**

770M

**Descent**

10M

**Time**

4 hours

**Distance**

16KM

DAY 5

Trek to a camp in the Upper Riwoche Valley (3900m).

Following the river on an undulating trail with the occasional steep climb, we trek through a wooded and hilly landscape surrounded by high cliffs and glimpsed higher peaks into more open country. At this stage of the journey we are still acclimatising to the altitude and it is important to adopt a relaxed pace. We also have plenty of stops for photographs and to take in the spectacular views. We make camp in the

upper Riwoche Valley (3900m) by a new settlement of herders' summer huts.

Meals: **B L D**

 Accommodation Camping	 Ascent 245M	 Descent 20M	 Time 5 - 6 hrs trekking	 Distance 8KM
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DAY 6

Climb to camp below the Bhuchu La (4332m).

Today the view opens out as we steadily gain height and we cross the river to its west bank on a wooden bridge. Ahead and to the southeast, we can still see the peak of 'Little Konka' and, to our left, Jiazi (6540m). A deep gorge running down to the main Riwoche valley from across the river marks the way to the climbing base camp for this impressive little cousin of our sacred peak. As we continue up to the head of the valley the trail starts to climb more steeply. We cross the river again on a simple wooden bridge and make a final climb to emerge onto a large open grazing area. There may yak herders' tents here at the time of our visit and they are sure to give us a warm welcome. We set up our own camp below the imposing face of Riwoche Feng (6376m) and within sight of our pass, the Bhuchu La. Altitude at camp is 4332m or at an alternative campsite further up the valley and a little higher still.

Meals: **B L D**

 Accommodation Camping	 Ascent 360M	 Time 5 - 6 hrs trekking	 Distance 7KM
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DAY 7

Cross the Bhuchu La / Riwoche Pass (4900m) into the Moxi Valley (4100m).

It is essential to make an early start to enjoy the sunrise and condition of any snow that might be below the pass. Setting off trekking we immediately cross the river on a plank bridge. We head up the valley with the going fairly level for the first half hour before we start to climb on a good trail that gradually ascends the rolling hills above a grazing area. Views open out as we rise higher with retrospective views of Little Konka and Jiazi Feng (6540m), while ahead the soaring cone of Grsvenor (6376m) draws the eye. As we go higher still, we overlook a blue lake at the snout of the Riwochie glacier. At last the serrated ridge marking the very head of the Riwoche Valley comes into view and if we look carefully, we can just see the line of prayer flags that mark the Bhuchu La. From this point we have a further 40 minutes or so of trekking and a final steep pull to reach the summit at 4900 metres. We should reach the top of the pass after 3 or 4 hours of trekking from camp. Cresting the ridge we are confronted with an array of peaks of the Daxue range lining the Moxi Valley, including nearby Leduomanyin, and a host of near 6000 metre peaks. From this vantage Minya Konka itself is hidden by the snow-fluted ridges of Daduomanyin (6380m), Lagemanyin (6394m) and Zhongshan Feng (6886m). After a picnic lunch on the summit we begin a long descent that is steep at first on scree but with a good trail made for us by the

horses. Eventually we reach the grasslands of the upper valley and the headwaters of the Moxi River, which we now follow downstream to reach our night's camp at 4100 metres. This is the toughest day of the trek, but more than adequate compensation is provided by spectacular views and continuously interesting trekking.

Meals: **B L D**

 Accommodation Camping	 Ascent 580M	 Descent 530M	 Time 6 - 7 hrs trekking	 Distance 8KM
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DAY 8

Downhill to our second camp in the Moxi Valley

We will make an early start for a long but gentle day of trekking as we continue down the long Moxi valley. The trek today is continuously interesting and at every turn, we encounter something new whether that be a lake formed by a natural dam in the river, a huge face of rock and ice glimpsed as we pass a side valley, or the many makeshift dwellings and chortens made by the people who inhabit the valley. The area is also teeming with birds of prey and small mammals. At one point we cross the river on a wooden bridge. If high water has swept it away we may have to call on the services of our horseman to escort us on horseback through the water. Tonight's is at 3660 metres and already we are benefitting from warmer climes and the added oxygen. Ahead we can make out the forests of the lower Moxi Valley but this evening we are still high in the 'alpine' zone.

Meals: **B L D**

 Accommodation Camping	 Ascent 60M	 Descent 680M	 Time 6 - 7 hrs trekking	 Distance 14KM
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DAY 9

Trek to Konka Monastery (3730m).

A long but fascinating day of trekking today. We continue our descent of the Moxi Valley, passing further signs of habitation. For most of today we trek through a mixed woodland of rhododendron, juniper, beech and oak. As we descend the scale of the valley becomes giant. We cross several side valleys requiring the negotiation of small streams on a variety of bridges or stepping stones. After each gully we have an interceding ridge, the climbing of which has the effect of popping our heads up above the forest for far-reaching views of the mountains to the south. During the October trek the colours of the forested hillsides are almost unbelievable as foliage of russet, ochre, rust and gold compete with one another to be the best dressed at the ball. After around 4 hours of generally downhill trekking we stop for a picnic lunch and afterwards the trail takes us back up and contours across the hillside as the river drops away far below us. Eventually we arrive at a trail junction with one path heading right and down to the valley and the other heading left and gently climbing. Taking the left turn we soon start to see

religious symbols and chortens and within 30 minutes we see the monastery buildings with the sensational backdrop of Minya Konka. This is a very special place which makes itself felt by the hundreds of small shrines, chortens, mani stones and fluttering prayer flags and by the monastery itself. Tonight we will stay in simple accommodation within the monastery.

Meals: **B L D**

 Accommodation Monastery	 Ascent 490M	 Descent 520M	 Time 7 - 8 hrs trekking	 Distance 17KM
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DAY 10

Exploration above the monastery and descend to Tsemi (3450m).

If the weather is clear this will be an undoubted highlight of the trip. Even if the monastery is shrouded in cloud it is well worth making the effort to climb up above the gompa as cloud inversions are quite common in the valleys of Minya Konka. Climbing just a couple of hundred metres will often be enough to get above the cloud and in these conditions the views of the peaks rising like islands above a cloud sea, are very special. The trail from the monastery to the viewpoint for Minya Konka heads up through the woods and emerges onto open hillside just below the 4000 metre contour. The view across to the pyramid of Minya Konka is sensational but even better from the ridge above, which is a further 20 - 30 minute climb. From the ridge we can look down onto Minya Konka's glaciers and the site of the original base camp. We can also see the Northwest ridge in profile and marvel at the feat of the four young Americans who climbed it in 1932, at that time setting an altitude record for the highest summit climbed. From our vantage, we can also see an array of jagged peaks stretching north and south and we can trace our route through the Moxi Valley. Having taken in the scene and captured it on camera, we descend back through the forest, possibly back into cloud, until we reach the gompa again and follow the trail back to the junction of the previous day. Now we begin a descent through the forest adorned everywhere with prayer flags, cross a substantial bridge and ascend on the zig zag track and then new road to Tsemi Village (3450m). We stay tonight in one of the village guesthouses.

Meals: **B L D**

 Accommodation Lodge	 Ascent 140M	 Descent 420M	 Time 3 hrs trekking	 Distance 7KM
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DAY 11

Drive to Tagong

A new road now links the settlement of Tsemi with the outside world and we take full advantage climbing the 1000 metres out of this remote valley on the top of the Tsemi La (4660m) in 11km of switchbacks. From the top, we can see Tsemi Village directly below but it is the view of Minya Konka that takes the eye and breath away. From the pass, we drive on more switchbacks past grazing yaks down to

Shangmuju village at the base of the pass. We are now in the Yulongxi Valley and we encounter an ever improving road and road construction as we follow the river downstream through a landscape of forested hills passing villages made up of little clusters of houses with orange tiled roofs and curled corners - the China of ancient drawings and paintings. We pass the busy town of Xinduqiao and follow the Liqi River north through an incredible landscape where entire hillsides are rippling with colour from a thousand prayer flags and river rocks are carved with Tibetan script offering prayers and instruction in the teachings of the Buddha. Reaching the fabled grasslands of Tagong, we check into a hotel and enjoy a shower before sitting down to dinner. Drive time: 4 - 5hrs.

Meals: **BLD**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 12

Visit temple and Mani Pile then drive to Luding

Before leaving Tagong we will visit some of the sights in this Tibetan Autonomous Cultural Area. Firstly we visit the Lhagang monastery, a collection of buildings which includes a temple dedicated to Princess Wenchen the wife of the great Tibetan King Songsten Gampo. This is one of a number of temples of Princess Wenchen which were built along the route the couple travelled from the province of Amdo to Lhasa culminating in the Jokang itself at the centre of the Tibetan capital. As well as the stunning art work and statues of the gompa, there are also an array of gift shops here including one run by the monks and this is a very good place to buy souvenirs of our journey through the Tibetan lands of Sichuan. We then visit the Tagong Golden Tower, another gompa with gold adornments surrounded by prayer wheels, chortens and prayer flags. From here we have a fine view of Yala Peak, another very distinctive and sacred mountain. A little further on, we make a detour from the highway to visit one of the most interesting sites in Tagong. Just below a sprawling village with labyrinthine streets of flat-roofed Tibetan houses, lies the great Mani Pile of Tagong. This structure built entirely of thousands upon thousands of intricately carved slates, piled one atop another is quite unique. The mani stones sit on top of gigantic prayer wheels which the faithful turn in their circumnavigations of the 'Pile' and as they do so, thousands of prayers are released to the heavens. The Mani Pile is overlooked by a gompa and a ridge above the monastery complex gives sensational views of Yala. Returning to the highway we follow this new smooth road which now climbs up above the grasslands with extensive mountain views to the Zheduo Pass (4200m). Here we have a fabulous final view of Minya Konka which now presents an almost conical shape with its flanking 6000-metre 'teeth' spreading out left and right. From the pass we make a long descent passing Kangding airport, one of the highest in the world and a series of switchbacks drops us down past lake filled valleys with the constant mountain backdrop, until eventually we see Kangding below. Entering the town we complete a circuit and we now follow the Dadu River back through its tremendous gorge until we reach the colourful Chinese market town of Luding where we check into our hotel. Drive time: 4 - 5 hrs.

Meals: **BLD**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 13

Visit Luding Chain Bridge and return to Chengdu

Luding Bridge is an important part of Chinese heritage. When it was built in 1706 by the Emperor Kang Xi of the Qing Dynasty it represented the only way to cross the mighty Dadu River other than by Sampan and therefore was the key to the tea trade with Tibet. The bridge has a 103 metre span and is 3 metres wide. It consists of 13 iron chains fixed to stonework at each end of the bridge. Nine chains are covered with slatted planks as the walking surface and the remaining four form rails. There are a total of 12164 chain links. At each end of the bridge, elaborate timberwork in unique Chinese style forms entrances to the bridge. Luding bridge was of extreme strategic importance during several conflicts including the communist revolution when famously in 1935, during the long March, the 4th regiment of the Chinese Workers and Peasants' Army captured and secured the bridge for the Red Army who were fleeing from pursuing Chinese Nationalist forces. Today the bridge is a major attraction and many Chinese tourists come to cross it. It is possible to hire Red Army uniforms from gift shops in the bridge housing and have your photo taken heroically waving the red flag on the bridge. Luding also has an interesting market and several coffee shops and we can enjoy part of the morning here before we set off on our 230km journey back to Chengdu, a drive of around 3 hours. Arriving in Chengdu, we check into our hotel, and after freshening up, we can enjoy a celebratory dinner in a local restaurant.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 14

Visit to Panda Breeding Centre and independent Chengdu sightseeing

This morning after breakfast we will visit the Chengdu Panda Breeding Centre. The total world population of Pandas is less than 1000 and 80% of these are found within Sichuan Province. Located approximately 10km from downtown Chengdu, the Panda Breeding Research Centre is a well laid out park which is designed to resemble the pandas' natural habitat. Wide walkways through the park facilitate easy access to several panda viewing points. The pandas are separated from the public only by a dry moat and low fence so the experience is reasonably intimate. This is definitely not a zoo and the well being of the pandas is the number one priority here. Visitors are expected to be quiet, walk slowly and avoid flash photography. There is also a museum which has lots of information on the breeding programmes and history of the panda and a small film theatre shows educational films about the pandas. Besides the cute black and white bears, there are red pandas and black swans on a picturesque lake. After the visit we take lunch in a restaurant and the afternoon is then free for independent sightseeing. Our guide will have lots of ideas of what to see in Chengdu and can arrange taxis as

required. Places to see include the 339 metre high Chengdu telecommunications tower for glass-floored views over the city, the 'Peoples Park' where you can take tea in the famous Heming Teahouse, the Wenshu Monastery complex with its 300 Buddha statues and over 500 pieces of exquisite painting and calligraphy, or the 17th century Wuhou Temple with statues of important figures in Chinese history. For shopping there are several interesting streets such as Jinli Old street and 'Wide' and 'Narrow' Alleys, where all kinds of arts and crafts and traditional Chinese artefacts are sold from restored buildings representing architecture from the Ming and Qing periods. After our free afternoon, we round off our Sichuan experience with another dinner of traditional cuisine and we spend our last night at the group hotel.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation

Hotel

DAY 15

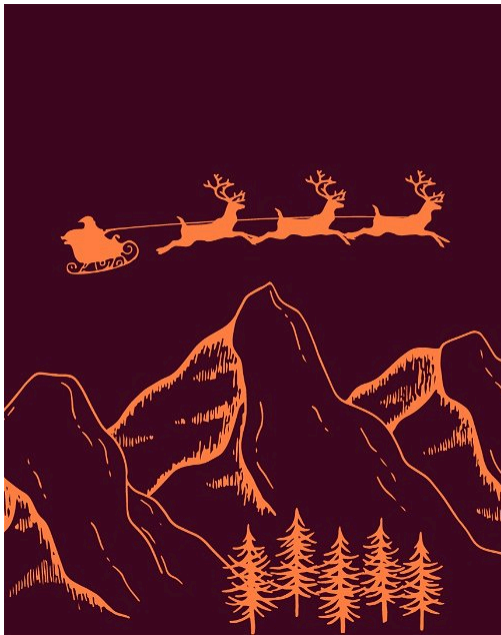
Departure day. A single timed transfer to Chengdu Airport is provided.

Our adventure ends after breakfast. A single timed transfer to Chengdu Airport is provided.

Meals: **B**

Extensions

When booking your holiday, you will be able to 'add an extension option'. Once we have received your booking we will contact you to discuss additional services required for the extension and to take any additional deposit.



GXXF Test Extension

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3 days from
US\$1,500 per person

Holiday Information

What's Included

- TEST An experienced KE leader
- A professional English-speaking local guide
- Group airport transfers
- Visit to the Chengdu Panda Centre
- All accommodation as described
- All meals
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- All permits and entrance fees required by the itinerary
- All camping equipment (except personal equipment)
- While on trek a support crew including cook baggage ponies and their handlers

What's not Included

- DBVisas
- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers other than group transfers
- Tips for local staff
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure - drinks etc.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

DBThe group will meet at the hotel in Chengdu.

A single timed transfer from Chengdu International Airport to the group hotel is provided on Day 1.

At the end of the holiday a group transfer from the hotel to the airport is provided.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost. Taxis are also available.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

DB All meals are included in the holiday price.

Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Sichuan cuisine has a great reputation within China and also in Chinese restaurants throughout the world. It is usually spicier than other Chinese cuisines although there is always sufficient non-spicy dishes to choose from on most menus. The food served during the trek is cooked from locally purchased ingredients by our trained trek cooks who never fail to impress. The emphasis is on providing a high-carbohydrate and largely vegetarian diet, which we have found to be easily digestible at high altitude. All meals while on trek and while staying in hotels are included in the trip price.

[test link](#)

more text

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

DBWe will have 3 nights at a four star hotel in Chengdu and a total of 3 nights in comfortable tourist class hotels in Kangding, Tagong and Luding. All rooms are en suite.

We will also have a total of 3 nights in basic homestay/monastery/lodge accommodation in Luoyling, in the Minya Konka Gumpa and in Tsemi Village respectively. Though twin rooms should be available, it is possible that you will have to share with more than one other person on these nights. Bathroom facilities will be shared.

While on trek there will be a total of 5 nights camping. Whilst camping we will have the use of a dining tent with tables and chairs and a toilet tent. Accommodation on trek is in 2 person mountain tents.

All accommodation is twin share. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Single hotel rooms and/or single tents are available for a supplementary cost. If you are planning to extend your holiday, additional nights are available on request.

Group Leader & Support Staff

DB The group will be led by a highly experienced KE tour leader travelling from the UK, who will be supported by a local English speaking guide. The tour leader will have the further assistance of a trek crew of cook plus baggage animals and their handlers.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to high altitude. During the course of your trip you will reach altitudes in excess of 3500 metres. This is not something that you should worry about; the human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of altitudes, but it is important that we follow some simple rules in order to acclimatise successfully. Before coming on this holiday you should read the advice on [trekking at high altitude](#). You can also talk to one of our trekking experts if you have any concerns about altitude. On this trip we carry a portable altitude chamber (PAC-bag) and/or bottled oxygen for use in emergencies.

Spending Money

Approximately £200 - 250 (or equivalent in US dollars, Euros etc.) should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses including around £50 - £60 (in equivalent local currency) for tips to local staff. It is not necessary to obtain local currency prior to departure. Sterling, US Dollars and Euros are equally acceptable for exchange in Chengdu or you can withdraw money from ATMs in Chengdu and Kangding. Note that most US credit cards will not work in Chinese ATMs but the majority of European cards are fine. If you are bringing your travel money with you we recommend that you carry this in the form of cash, since travellers cheques can be time consuming to exchange.

Guidance on Tipping

Tipping is the accepted way of saying 'thank you' for good service. Tips do not form part of the wages of your trek crew but they are very much appreciated. It is important to remember that tipping is voluntary and should be dependent on good service. Normally the tips are given at the end of the trek and this is best coordinated by the group rather than as individual tips. As a rough guide, we recommend that each group member contributes the equivalent of £50 -60 (in local currency equivalent) to a pool for these tips.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, which should be a soft and sturdy duffel bag, and one day pack. Your bag on trek will be carried by porters or pack animals and should not weigh more than 15kg. It is possible to leave travel clothes and other items not required on trek at the group hotel in Chengdu and you may wish to bring a small bag for this purpose. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

All British passport holders are required to obtain a visa for entry into Pakistan. Download our [Pakistan Visa Information](#) document for full details of how to apply.

Visa India

Most nationalities, including travellers from the UK, the USA and many European countries can apply for their Indian Visa online through the **E-Visa Application** process. You must make your application at least four days prior to departure. Please download the detailed information document for details of how to apply for your visa: [Visa India PDF](#)

Visa South Korea

A visa is not required by citizens of more than 100 countries including the UK, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand for a stay of less than 90 days.

A full list of countries not requiring a visa can be found on the Korea Visa Portal <https://www.visa.go.kr/>

Visa China

All nationalities require a visa. The visa fee is approximately GBP £171.50 (including handling fee) and you need to apply for it prior to departure. Please download the detailed information document: [Visa PDF China](#).

Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

VACCINATIONS

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you specific require any vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella), along with hepatitis A and typhoid. A certificate of yellow fever vaccination is required if travelling from countries with risk of yellow fever transmission and for travellers having transitted for more than 12 hrs through an airport of a country with risk of yellow fever transmission. On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dentist check up. A good online resource is [Travel Health Pro](#).

Dengue fever is a known risk in places visited. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you [take precautions to avoid mosquito bites](#).

Currency

The unit of currency in China is Yuan Renminbi.

Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 7-8 hours for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training, and we would suggest that you try to fit in a number of long weekend walks before you depart. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardio vascular fitness and stamina. There is little you can do to prepare for the altitude but if you have an excellent level of fitness this can help.

Climate

The Konka Shan range is located at the boundary of the south west and the south east monsoonal air masses and is influenced by both of these. As in the Himalaya, the majority of precipitation occurs between June and the end of August. At other times rainfall is very low. Winters are very cold which limits the trekking season to April-May and September - October. Daytime temperatures at these times will range from 17 to 22 degrees Celsius in Chengdu to 10 to 15 degrees in the mountains. At our highest camps the nighttime temperatures may drop below freezing and possibly as low as minus 10 degrees Celsius.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

Great pre-trip reading: [China Blog](#)

Maps

Mount Gongga Glaciers

A detailed map of the environs on Minya Konka at a scale of 1:25,000 published by the Chinese Institute of Glaciology based on surveys from the early 1980s and aerial photography from December 1996. Contours are at 20m intervals, enhanced by shading, plus graphics and/or colouring for exposed rock, scree, moraine, crevasses, vegetation, etc. Place names are given in both Chinese and Latin alphabet. The map highlights expedition routes and locations of camps.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Please note that a paper copy of your travel insurance is required if you are travelling to Huaraz and the Huayhuash region.

Equipment Information

FSW Equipment List

Please try to keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the 'baggage allowance' section for further details.

You should bring the following items

- Warm and waterproof snow boots
- Trainers or similar (for casual wear)
- Warm/Ski socks (2 or 3 pairs)
- Underwear
- Thermal baselayers - tops and leggings
- Waterproof padded ski salopettes OR waterproof overtrousers with warm/thermal leggings
- Casual clothes for evening wear and travel
- Fleece jacket and/or jumper
- Warm ski jacket or down jacket
- Warm hat
- Scarf
- Ski goggles and good quality sunglasses
- Warm fleece gloves
- Warm and windproof overgloves or mittens
- Daypack 20 to 30 litres (depending on how much of the kids' stuff you need to carry)
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottles 2x 1 Litre (quart) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Selection of dry bags (to keep daypack contents dry)
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial handwash
- Basic First Aid Kit including: Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters, blister treatment, antihistamine cream and tablets, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

The following items are optional:

- Karrimat or similar foam mat (for lunch stops)
- 1 litre Thermos Flask
- Swimwear (for spa)
- Camera
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Equipment provided locally:

- Additional warm clothing as required
- Snowshoes
- Ski touring equipment including boots

Notes:

Additional clothing and all equipment will be provided at Camp Ripan for all the activities. You should take the sort of warm clothing that you would use for a skiing trip. Warm outdoor clothing is available to hire at Camp Ripan for 175 SEK per person (pre-booking required), or 200 SEK on the spot.

Equipment List

Please try to keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the 'baggage allowance' section for further details.

You SHOULD bring the following items:

- Hiking boots
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer shirts
- Casual shirt and/or T-shirts
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Gloves or mittens

- Headtorch with batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottles 1 Litre x2 (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial handwash
- Small towel
- Selection of dry bags (to keep kit bag contents dry)
- Daypack (approx. 30 litres)
- Sleeping bag (comfort rating -15°C)
- Thermarest or similar sleeping mat
- Warm jacket (down)

Basic First Aid Kit including: A broad spectrum antibiotic, antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), altitude (Diamox), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, insect repellent, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

The following items are optional:

- Trekking poles (recommended)
- Training shoes or similar for camp use
- Shorts
- Baselayer - thermal leggings

- Gaiters
- Sleeping bag liner
- Scarf or buff
- Travel clothes
- Camera
- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers. [>> Find out more](#)

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for joining in Chengdu. Single timed transfers from Chengdu Airport to/from the group accommodation will be provided at the start/end of the holiday.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Chengdu. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the afternoon, arriving the following day. Return flights will depart Chengdu in the early morning the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK in the evening on the same day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Travel with KE, as the only UK based operator offering this off-the-beaten-track trek in the wildest regions of China. The chance to experience real Tibetan culture visiting the remote communities of Khampa and Minyak in the shadow of the majestic Minya Konka - the third highest peak outside the Himalaya.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 16/06/2024 and the trip is subject to change