



## TOUR PROSPECTUS

This prospectus sets out the contents of the tour and together with the Booking Conditions and Booking Form is the basis of our contract with you.

# **Ladakh – Himalayan Traverse**

## **13 - 29 August 2010**

### **Tour 1040**

This is an adventurous and demanding moving-on tour over some of the world's highest roads crossing the Himalayas to Leh in the Mountain Kingdom of Ladakh. The route, starting in Manali and finishing in Leh, ascends and crosses several passes over 4500 metres, with a final ascent of the Khardung La, the world's highest motorable road at 5603 metres. Daily mileages are modest, but the gradients, often rough road surfaces and the altitude combine to make this a challenging and rewarding tour for fit adventure cyclists. There are 7 nights fully supported camping at altitude with vehicle support.

#### **Itinerary**

Fri 13 Aug	Fly from London Heathrow on Vlrigin Airways flight VS300 to Delhi, departing 2200.
Sat 14 Aug	Arrive Delhi at 1100. Vehicle transfer from airport to hotel. Stay 1 night.
Sun 15 Aug	Transfer to Delhi domestic airport for internal 1 hour flight to Bhuntar (Kulu); bikes will be transferred by road. Short vehicle transfer to hotel in Manali. Unpack and assemble bikes. Stay 2 nights.
Mon 16 Aug	Day ride to the small village of Nagar to visit castle and temple.
Tues 17 Aug to Tues 24 Aug	Cycle from Manali to Leh. Daily distances are reasonable, and campsites will be at appropriate altitudes to aid acclimatization. Arrive in Leh on 25 August and stay for 3 nights (see detailed itinerary in Leaders Information).
Wed 25 Aug	Day at leisure or local cycling in and around Leh.
Thur 26 Aug	Day ride to the summit of the Khardung La, the highest motorable pass in the world. Prepare bikes for the journey home.
Fri 27 Aug	Flight from Leh to Delhi and transfer to hotel. Remainder of the day at leisure in Delhi. Stay 2 nights.
Sat 28 Aug	At leisure in Delhi. Farewell dinner.
Sun 29 Aug	Fly from Delhi on Vlrigin Airways flight VS301 to London Heathrow, departing 1315 and arriving London Heathrow 1755.
Distances	40–104kms per day

#### **Luggage carrying**

A support bus for the transfer of luggage will accompany the group on all moving on days, with space for passengers and bikes should the need arise. Camping equipment will be transferred by jeep.

#### **Accommodation and meals**

On the eight nights spent in Delhi, Manali and Leh, the accommodation will be in 3 star hotels, half board, based on two sharing. Seven nights are spent in large, comfortable walk-in tents with cots, 2 people sharing a tent. All camping kit, with the exception of sleeping bags, will be supplied. Breakfast, lunch and evening meal are included on all cycling days.



## Price - £1795

The price is based on a minimum number of 15 participants taking part in the tour. If there are insufficient bookings by the closing date of 30 May 2010, we will contact you and return all monies paid, though in certain circumstances the tour may still run at below minimum numbers but at the same price.

Price includes:

- Return flight from London Heathrow to Delhi
- Internal flights Delhi to Kulu and from Leh to Delhi
- Coach transfers in Delhi between airport and hotel
- Vehicle transfers as per the itinerary
- Support vehicles to transfer luggage and camping equipment
- 8 nights hotel accommodation, half board, sharing rooms
- 7 nights fully serviced camping, breakfast, lunch and dinner, 2 people per tent
- Supplies of mineral water on cycling days
- Farewell evening meal
- The services of an English-speaking guide throughout the tour
- Route information
- CTC Cycling Holidays & Tours costs

Price does not include:

- Travel to and from London Heathrow
- Meals in transit
- Drinks with lunches and evening meals
- Lunches on 7 days
- VISA costs – budget £35 (see leaders information)
- Gratuities for support crew – budget £20 (optional)
- Any other personal expenses
- Travel Insurance

## Payment schedule

A deposit of £200 per person must accompany the Booking Form and an interim payment of £300 per person is due by 31 March 2010. The final balance of £1295 per person is to be paid ten weeks prior to departure, by 5 June 2010. Cheques should be made payable to **CTC Tours** or complete the credit/debit card slip in the booking pack.

## Cancellations

Should you be forced to cancel your booking for any reason you must notify us in writing. Cancellation charges are as follows:

Written notice received:	Cancellation charge:	
Before 31 March 2010	Deposit	(£ 200)
31 March 2010 to 4 June 2010	28%	(£ 500)
5 June 2010 through to departure	100%	(£1795)

## To make a booking

Complete, sign and return the Booking Form together with your deposit and the relevant part of the Travel Insurance Declaration Form **directly to the leader** (address on Booking Form).

### Passports, Visas and Health

EU citizens must hold a passport that is still valid for at least six months at the end of the tour. A visa is required for EU passport holders. Holders of non-EU passports are advised to check whether they require a visa.

There are no compulsory vaccinations for EU residents although it is strongly recommended that you are vaccinated against: Typhoid; Hepatitis A and B. Tetanus and polio vaccinations should also be up to date at the time of travel. You should contact your doctor at least 3 months prior to travel to obtain these vaccinations and the latest advice to travellers.

### Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you are adequately insured for this tour.

Whether you already hold a policy or will be taking out a new one, the cover it offers must be comparable to that stated in clause 8 of the Booking Conditions, and you must complete the enclosed Insurance Declaration Form and return it with your Booking Form.

CTC Cycling Holidays & Tours Ltd can accept no responsibility for any costs you may incur due to insufficient insurance cover.

## LEADER'S INFORMATION SHEET

The information below is given by the tour leader to help enquirers decide if the tour is suitable for them.

# **Ladakh – Himalayan Traverse**

## **13 - 29 August 2010**

### **Tour 1040**

#### **The area covered by the Tour**

Geographically isolated by the Tibetan plateau to the north and the heart of the Himalaya to the south, Ladakh existed for centuries as an independent Buddhist kingdom. It is now India's most northern state.

The opening of the airport and the building of the military road from Manali to Leh triggered the development of a reasonable tourist infrastructure at either end of the new highway, but the land between remains very much the domain of nomadic herders and Tibetan refugees. Unlike Tibet, the Buddhist religion and culture was not suppressed by China and is still very much in evidence. It is often called 'Tibet in India'.

The land we travel through is a dramatic lunar-like high-altitude desert, lightly populated by a hardy people clinging to life at altitudes that permit travel on the roads for only 4 months of the year. We will cycle from Manali at a little under 2000 metres and climb to Leh at 3500 metres, crossing several passes in excess of 4000 metres, including the Taglang La at 5360 metres, the world's second highest road pass. After a rest day in Leh we will tackle the Khardung La, 5603 metres, the world's highest road pass.

#### **Rides and rest days**

This tour is best suited to experienced enthusiast cyclists with a sense of adventure. Daily mileages are not excessive to allow for adequate altitude acclimatization and the difficult terrain. There are several long climbs, and road surfaces are poor in places. Re-routing or itinerary changes are standard procedure in the Himalaya. There are rest days for sightseeing in Manali, Leh and Delhi.

#### **Altitude**

Travellers to the Himalayas may suffer breathlessness and headaches before becoming acclimatized. It is important to take things lightly at first and to drink plenty of water. When climbing high passes, you may experience headaches, mild nausea or lack of appetite until your body adjusts to the elevation. These symptoms generally disappear after a few days.

#### **Accommodation / Meals**

As there are few places to stay en route, we will camp between Manali and Leh. All camping equipment, large 2 man tents, hot water for washing and 3 meals per day are provided, but bring your own sleeping bag, pillow case and torch. In Delhi, Manali and Leh accommodation will be in 3 star hotels.

#### **Visas**

It is necessary that all travellers to India obtain a tourist visa before departure from the UK. You cannot get a visa by post or directly from the Indian Embassies in London or Birmingham. All applications have now been outsourced to FGS Global - see <http://in.vfsglobal.co.uk/> where application forms must be completed online. Budget £35.

#### **Group information**

The maximum group size will be 20 including the leaders.

#### **Weather and Clothing**

Temperatures and climate vary according to the altitude. The summer days are warm with brilliant blue skies (max 25°C. min 10°C), but the weather in mountainous areas can be very unpredictable. Come prepared for chilly evenings and a small possibility of rain. Early morning starts and descents at altitude require good quality weather gear.



## Cycles / Equipment

A lightweight mountain bike or sturdy touring bike will be suitable if well maintained and fitted with good wheels and fairly wide road tyres. You will not need to carry luggage, but a bar bag or rack-top pack will be useful for spare clothing, camera, sun lotion, snacks etc. You should be able to carry 2 water bottles. It is advisable to fit a calibrated cycle computer, as this will aid navigation. Lights should not be necessary. Each participant will be expected to carry sufficient spares and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs. Once we leave Delhi, cycle spares will not be available on route. Helmets are not mandatory but if you do *not* intend to wear one, please check that your travel insurance will cover you in the event of a claim.

## Money

There will be very few opportunities to spend money other than in Delhi, Manali and Leh. Sterling or US Dollars can be exchanged for Indian Rupees at Delhi airport or at the hotel in Delhi. Daily drinks and snacks should cost no more than £10 per day; budget £20 for crew tips.

## Maps

There should be no difficulty with route finding – there is only one road between Manali and Leh. A map showing the route will be provided.

## Travel Insurance and Advice

Information on CTC Cyclecover Travel Insurance is available from CTC (0870 873 0068) or can be found at [www.cyclecover.co.uk](http://www.cyclecover.co.uk).

Before booking you should check the Foreign Office 'Travel Advice by Country' at [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk) or on 0845 850 2829.

## About the leaders

We are both enthusiastic cyclists and have been CTC members for 17 years. We have led tours to many worldwide destinations and have previously cycled the entire route. Each year we look forward to the reunion with regular travelling companions but also get great satisfaction from introducing new members to the unique camaraderie of CTC holidays. We do not have a set style of leadership but adapt to suit the needs of the group. We encourage all prospective participants to contact us to talk through the tour prior to booking.

## John and Pat Ashwell

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# Ladakh – The High Road to Leh

## Detailed Itinerary

H = hotel C = camping

Date	From – To	Cycling kms	Maxi alt. (metres)	H or C	Sleeping alt (metres)	Notes
Fri 13 Aug	Heathrow - Delhi					Fly from London Heathrow on Virgin Airways flight VS300 to Delhi, departing 2200.
Sat 14 Aug	Arrive Delhi			H		Arrive Delhi 1100. Vehicle transfer from airport to hotel.
Sun 15 Aug	Delhi - Manali	0	1950	H	1950	Transfer to Delhi domestic airport for flight to Kulu. Bikes go by road. Short vehicle transfer to Manali. Assemble bikes.
Mon 16 Aug	Manali	Some local cycling 48	1950	H	1950	Day at leisure in Manali to acclimatise. Manali nestles at the head of a lush green valley, on the banks of the Beas river and at the base of the Himalayas. An undulating 24kms each way ride down the valley to the small village of Nagar. Visit old temple and castle.
Tues 17 Aug	Manail - Marhi	36	3320	C	3320	This is our first ascent as we begin to "warm up" for the tough ride ahead. Cycling out of Manali through an evergreen area of pine and deodar trees we tackle the first set of many hairpin bends and switchbacks on the way to the Rohtang pass.
Wed 18 Aug	Marhi - Gondla	69	3950 (Rhotang La)	C	3160	From our camp it is approx 15kms to the summit of the Rhotang La. Chai stalls and great views, then a descent to Gondla. We will regroup at the passport control at Khoksar.
Thurs 19 Aug	Gondla – Patseo	57	3400	C	3400	An easier ride with an increase in altitude of about 250 metres.
Fri 20 Aug	Patseo – Brandy Bridge	104	4800 (Baralacha La)	C	4400	Approx 32kms uphill to the summit of the Baralacha La, then a long descent to Brandy Bridge.
Sat 21 Aug	Brandy Bridge – 6kms before Pang	55	5090 (Namkeela La – 4950 and Lachlang La – 5090)	C	4630	A 1000 metre climb through the 21 hairpins of the Gata Loops to the first summit at 4950 metres followed by a short descent and a 6kms moderate climb to the second summit at 5090 metres. Descend through spectacular scenery to campsite at 4630 metres.
Sun 22 Aug	Nr Pang – Tsosario Lake	50	4500	C	4500	An undulating moderate ride crossing the More Plain with an overall descent of approx 100 metres. Camp at Lake Tsosario near the base of Taglang La.
Mon 23 Aug	Tsosario Lake – Near Rumptse	71	5332 (Taglang La)	C	4320	This is a challenge indeed, but truly satisfying when you reach the top, before we set off down the exhilarating 1200 metres descent of switchbacks to the campsite near the village of Rumptse. We will see the first signs of habitation for several days.

Tues 24 Aug	Rumptse - Leh	73	3400	H	3400	As we continue the descent to Upshi the scenery changes dramatically as we arrive in a fertile irrigated valley by a river dotted by pretty villages and Stupas. The spectacular red coloured mountains around us add to the beauty and richness of the scenery. Crossing the Indus River the road improves as we follow the other road users towards Leh. There will be time to visit Thiksey Monastery after lunch in the monastery gardens and the Chortens Garden before we reach Leh. (Last 6kms uphill and quite steep to hotel)
Wed 25 Aug	Leh	0	3400	H	3400	Taking a rest from the bikes today you have the chance to explore Leh and some of its twisting narrow streets, explore some of the more famous sites, such as Leh Palace or the Sakar Gumpa monastery.
Thurs 26 Aug	Leh – Khardung La - Leh	82	5600 (Khardung La)	H	3400	Leh to the Khardung La and return We will set off for the Khardung - La after an early breakfast. It will take between 4 and 5 hours to cycle the 41kms climb of 2200 metres. The last 10kms are unsurfaced. This is the ultimate challenge of the trip. It is the highest motorable road in the world taking you to a dizzy 5600 metres! The view from the top is spectacular, stretching from the Indus valley in the South over the endless peaks and ridges of the Zaskar range to the giants of the Saser Massif in the North. You can feel proud of a true achievement as you finish the trip with your final satisfying descent. Prepare bikes for journey home.
Fri 27 Aug	Leh – Delhi	0		H		Transfer to the airport for your flight back to Delhi
Sat 28 Aug	Delhi	0		H		At leisure in Delhi. Farewell dinner.
Sun 29 Aug						Return flight on Virgin Airways flight VS301 to London Heathrow, departing 1315 and arriving London Heathrow 1755.