Kathmandu Summit Club

adventure associates

INDIAN HIMALAYA ADVENTURE

EXPEDITION MANUAL

AUSTRALIAN HIMALAYAN FOUNDATION

Kathmandu

Explore Ladakh and help raise funds for the Australian Himalayan Foundation conservation efforts to protect the Snow Leopard and reduce village infant mortality in the remote Zanskar region

ABOUT THE TRIP

Offered exclusively to Summit Club members, this is an opportunity to experience the rich Buddhist culture of Ladakh – a region of the Himalaya that is not so well known. Ladakh comprises many hidden valleys where its ancient culture is largely untouched, and centuries-old traditions still survive and flourish.

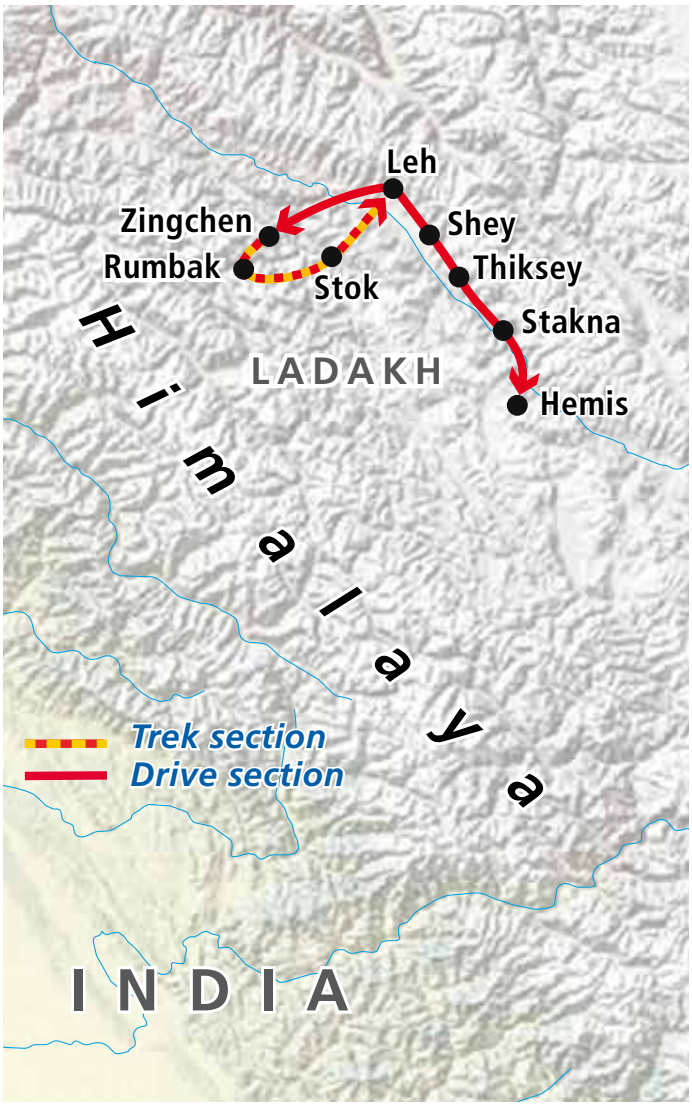
We'll explore ancient monasteries dating back to the 14th century, take time to visit the AHF projects in the region such as the Snow Leopard Conservancy, and trek over high passes of the Indian Himalaya.

Our trek takes us into remote villages that are completely cut off from the outside world for up to 5 months each year. Here we can interact with the local people and get a glimpse of what it's like to live the very basic life of a subsistent farmer in one of the harshest, high-altitude environments in the world.

Inside a monastery

KATHMANDU

The Kathmandu Summit Club Community is a group of people who love the outdoors. They believe the world is an invitation and are passionate about exploring their own boundaries – wherever in the world that takes them. **Kathmandu** have teamed up with **The Australian Himalayan Foundation** to help raise awareness and funds, and to educate and introduce people to the philosophy of giving back to the communities that we travel through.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Trek in Ladakh on a fully supported trek escorted by a representative of The Australian Himalayan Foundation
- Raise much needed funds for the Australian Himalayan Foundation
- Experience the rich Buddhist culture of Ladakh with sightseeing tours of the famous Hemis & Thiksey Monasteries
- Explore the markets of Leh, the main town of the Ladakh district
- Visit the Snow Leopard Conservancy and learn about the conservation efforts to preserve Ladakh's Snow Leopard population
- Half day white water rafting on the Indus River
- Visit remote villages and interact with the local people
- Stunning Himalayan mountain views

SINGLE SUPPLEMENTS

The cost of this tour is based on twin share arrangements; if you are travelling alone we will match you up with another traveller of the same gender. If you wish to guarantee your own room and tent you can pay the single supplement applicable to this trip.

FUNDRAISING

To join this trip there is a minimum charity donation or fundraising requirement of $1000. AHF will contact you to organise your online fundraising platform.
This trek is registered through GoFundraise, payments can be made at www.gofundraise.com.au

THE AUSTRALIAN HIMALAYAN FOUNDATION

The Australian Himalayan Foundation is committed to improving the quality of life of people living in remote areas of the Himalaya through integrated improvements in education, health and the environment. In Ladakh, AHF work with the Snow Leopard Conservancy to find ways to educate the local villagers on how to protect their valuable livestock from the Snow Leopard, allowing the community to coexist with this beautiful and endangered creature. AHF also supports and trains the local traditional healers, or *amchi*, in contemporary medicine. Ladakh has an unreasonably high infant mortality rate due to its isolation and lack of medical facilities, and AHF's support of the *amchi* gives the community a better chance at life.

Religious ceremony

TRIP SUMMARY

10 day trip
4 day trek
6 nights hotel
3 nights camping

TRIP DATE & COSTS

1 July – 10 July 2018
Cost $2750 per person twin share
Single supplement $320
Minimum fundraising or charity donation $1000
Group size min 6
Group size max 16

INCLUDED

- Kathmandu gear voucher valued at $250
- Escorted by an Australian Himalayan Foundation representative
- 9 breakfasts, 9 lunches and 9 dinners
- Arrival and departure transfers if arriving on day 1 and departing on day 10
- All internal transport by private vehicle
- 3 – 4 star hotel accommodation in Leh
- Sightseeing tour in Leh – Hemis & Thiksey Monasteries
- Experienced English speaking trek leader trained in remote wilderness
- first aid
- Sightseeing fees and trekking permits
- Trekking crew including trek cook, kitchen staff, and animals to carry 15kg of your personal luggage
- Half day white water rafting
- AHF trek duffel bag, yours to keep
- Sleeping bag and sleeping mat for use on trek
- Group first aid kit

NOT INCLUDED

- International or domestic flights
- Any meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Personal travel insurance
- Bottled water, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, hot showers in lodges, battery charging fees, phone calls
- Tips
- Visa for India

Traditional Tibetan art

ITINERARY IN BRIEF

DAY 1	Join Leh
DAY 2	Sightseeing Leh
DAY 3	Visit Snow Leopard Conservancy and AHF projects
DAY 4	Commence Rumbak Trek
DAY 5	Trek Zingchen to Rumbak
DAY 6	Trek Rumbak to Stok La
DAY 7	Trek to Stok, afternoon Stok Palace and school visit, return Leh
DAY 8	In Leh, visit Amchi Healers AHF project. Afternoon cooking class
DAY 9	White water rafting
DAY 10	Trip concludes in Leh

Typical trekking landscape in Ladakh

Thiksey Monastery, Leh

ITINERARY IN DETAIL

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

Day 01 Join Leh (3500m)

Ju-le! Welcome to Ladakh!
Upon arrival into Leh airport you will be met by a representative of Adventure Associates and transferred to you hotel. Today is a joining day and so you are free to relax this afternoon. Leh is at quite a high altitude so it's important that you take it easy today, drink water and let your body start to adjust to the higher altitude. In the evening, a trip briefing will be held with your group leader and AHF representative, before heading out for a welcome dinner. Overnight hotel. (L ,D)

Day 02 In Leh, sightseeing Hemis & Thiksey Monasteries

Following breakfast we take the day to explore the spectacular monasteries of the Indus Valley.

Hemis
Built on a green hillside surrounded by spectacular mountains, Hemis is the biggest and the most important monastery in Ladakh. It was built in the 17th century by Chapgon Gyalshas and ever since has enjoyed the patronage of the royal family. Hemis is the headquarters of the Drukpa order and all the monasteries throughout Ladakh are administered from here. This, the wealthiest monastery, contains gold statues and stupas decorated with precious stones and many priceless old Thankas.

Leh street market

Buddhist monks at an opening ceremony of the Hemis Festival

Downtown Leh

Thiksey
Thiksey, one of the most imposing monasteries belonging to the 15th century, stands on a crag overlooking the floodplain on the east bank of the Indus. The monastery belongs to the Elugpa order (Yellow sect) and is a 12-storey monastery painted deep red, ochre and white, with typical tapering walls. There is a 15m-high Buddha figure at the entrance of the new temple. The layout of the monastery complex resembles the Potala Palace in Lhasa.

We should return to the hotel by 2.30pm, the rest of the day is at your leisure.
Overnight hotel. (B,L,D)

Day 03 Visit Snow Leopard Conservancy

Following breakfast we visit the Snow Leopard Conservancy office in Leh.

The Snow Leopard Conservancy works closely with the local people to find a way for them to live harmoniously with snow leopards and also to become their guardians. This is done using remote camera traps, fecal DNA sampling and GPS satellite collars to study movements and corridor analysis to find areas to target for conservation efforts. We spend the day learning about the methods and processes involved to help protect this beautiful and endangered species. Overnight hotel. (B,L,D)

Day 04 Commence Rumbak Trek from Spituk to Zingchen (3380m)

After breakfast, we depart Leh and take a short 8 kilometre drive to Spituk. On arrival we explore the Spituk Monastery, the first Gelukpa Monastery to be established in Ladakh. We will start our trek from Spituk Village. Today is a short, easy trekking day ending in Zingchen

Spring trekkers

Near the Markha Valley

Young monks finish their teachings for the day

(3380m) where we set our first camp. Overnight camp. (B,L,D)

Day 05 Trek to Phera (2150m), trek approx. 5 hrs

A nice easy start to our second day of trekking. Rumbak is a very picturesque village set in a side valley. The Gompa was founded in 1845 by Lama Lhawang Spalgyas for the monks of the reformist Gelug-pa 'yellow hat' order.

The Gompa contains various statues including Buddha, Avalokiteswara, the Bodhisattva of compassion, and Tsong Khapa, the great reformer who introduced the Gelug-pa order into Ladakh. Overnight camp. (B,L,D)

Day 06 Cross Stok La (4900m)

After breakfast we will take it slow and steady to ascend the 4,900m Stok La, also known as the Namlung La. From the top of the pass there are excellent panoramic views of the Ladakh Himalayas, including Stok Kangri Peak, which is at an altitude of over 6000m, have your cameras at the ready for a victory shot from the top! Overnight camp. (B,L,D)

Day 07 Trek to Stok Village, visit Stok Palace

An easy walk takes us to the end point of our trek at Stok village. From here we transfer to the Stok Palace, which is the residence of the royal family and the king of Ladakh. We will also take some time to explore the pretty village of Stok before transferring back to our Leh hotel for a well-earned shower. Overnight hotel. (B,L,D)

Day 08 Visit Amchi Healers, AHF project

Zanskar is one of the most remote regions in the entire Himalaya. It is a region of Ladakh in the Indian

Amchi healers workshop

Namgyal Tsemo Gompa with prayer flags

Himalaya and during winter the heavy snows cut it off from the outside world for over six months of the year. During this time medical facilities are non-existent and the region has unacceptable rates of infant mortality, often as high as one in two children. AHF's aim is to decrease these tragic rates of infant mortality and assist with improving maternal healthcare in the region. They do this by funding annual workshops to provide primary healthcare training to the amchi – traditional medical healers of the region – aimed at improving existing health care practices as well as enhancing them with modern healthcare techniques. The response to this training by the female amchi has been particularly encouraging, with many undertaking further training in the government hospital in Leh, as well as monitoring prenatal births in their own villages, educating new mothers, and passing on their knowledge to other community members.

Overnight hotel. (B,L,D)

Day 09 White water rafting

Following breakfast we travel to the confluence of the Zanskar and Indus Rivers for an easy rafting session. This is an optional activity and should you elect to participate you will receive further information in your pre-departure information pack upon booking. In the afternoon we return to Leh and in the evening a final group dinner will be held.
Overnight hotel. (B,L,D

Day 10 Trip concludes in Leh

Thank you for your participation on this exciting tour, and for your support in assisting the Australian Himalayan Foundation to continue their work in these communities. We hope you enjoyed the experience!

After breakfast transfer to the airport for onward arrangements. (B)

Rafting on the Zanskar

AFH assists in maternal healthcare in remote villages

Rocky landscape of Leh City

ABOUT THE TREK

This is a camping-based trek, but one that is very different to any camping trek undertaken in the west. You will sleep in a tent, and you will have a trek leader, trekking crew, a kitchen crew, and animals to carry your personal baggage. The crew will set up camp, cook and serve all meals. You will be woken in the morning with bed tea in your tent, there will be time for a quick wash and to pack your duffel ready for the pack animals to take to our next night's camp. You'll be served breakfast in the mess tent before departing for your days trekking.

We use two-man tents. Each tent is supplied with a foam mattress for each person.

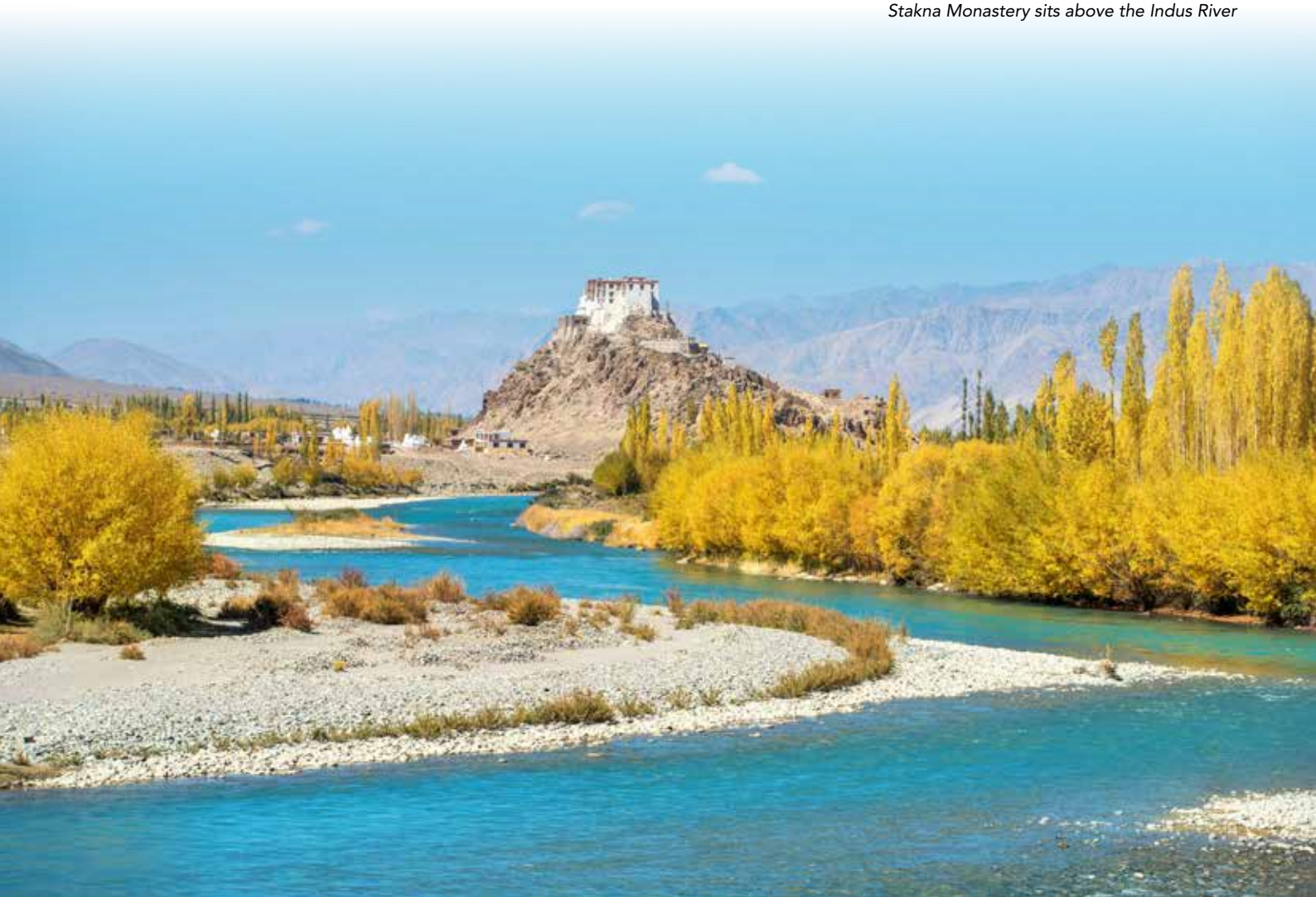
During the day all you carry is a daypack with a water bottle, camera, jacket, sunscreen and any other personal items you might need.

The rest of your gear goes into your trek duffel bag to be carried by the animals, usually mules.

TREK DIFFICULTY & FITNESS

Preparation is important to ensure you enjoy your trek and meet the challenge of each day. This trek is a relatively easy and short trek. Some days we will trek for only 3 – 4 hours or so, and others will be longer days of up 5 or 6 hours, there is one pass crossing involved that takes us to a relatively high altitude of 4900m. You should start preparing approximately 6 months before your trip commences. This trip is an introductory graded trek, and so you can expect no more than approximately 6 hours of walking per day. There is no "easy" walking in the Himalaya, and so you must expect steep ascents and descents, and possible adverse weather conditions. Aim to train 2-3 times per week, it's about legs and lungs, and so running and cycling are good, as well as gym sessions which should include an hour of cardio work and some leg work. Extended bushwalking or hiking on the weekends is great preparation. Anywhere that you can find lots of ups and downs will stand you in good stead for the challenge ahead. It is not about speed, but rather slow and steady. Your trek leader and staff will ensure you keep a slow steady pace, which helps with acclimatisation to the higher altitudes. Once you have booked your tour you will receive our comprehensive pre-departure information covering all aspects of preparation and equipment needed for your trek

Stakna Monastery sits above the Indus River



WEATHER

Ladakh is a very dry, high-altitude region, which receives very little precipitation. Our trek takes place in summer, and so during this time the weather is likely to be dry and hot. Daytime temperatures can reach as high as 28 degrees, however mornings and evenings will be cooler, especially at higher altitudes. We do not expect temperatures to dip lower than around 8 degrees. Remember that you are in the Himalaya and so weather can be unpredictable at times, make sure you come prepared for mountain weather conditions.

ALTITUDE

If you are ascending above 3500m, acclimatisation to altitude is an important factor and can greatly impact your enjoyment. Our trekking schedules have been carefully designed to minimise the effects of altitude. We ascend slowly and ensure an adequate number of rest days to enable safe acclimatisation. It is still possible for mountain sickness to occur, therefore a close watch is kept on each group member by the your trek leader, who is trained in recognising and treating early symptoms of acute mountain sickness.

These symptoms include bad headache, nausea, lethargy and, in extreme cases, ataxia or loss of co-ordination and severe breathlessness on rest. A mild headache and breathlessness are not uncommon at altitude but in combination with any of the above more serious symptoms, immediate descent is imperative. If you or your friends display any of these symptoms please make sure that you inform the Group Leader immediately. It is essential at altitude that you keep your fluid intake up and it is important that you drink at least 4 liters of liquid per day to keep well hydrated.

FOOD & HYGIENE

The trekking crew is very conscious of hygiene and food is carefully prepared.

Whilst camping, much of the food will be carried in with us so that we do not impact on local resources.

The food will be a mix of Indian and western style and you will be amazed at the quality and variety that the kitchen staff can produce. Safe drinking water is provided for you throughout the trek. Please let us know in advance if you have any dietary requirements.

Young monk plays the conch shell

ROUTINE

The average day begins at dawn (around 6.00 am) with a hot cup of bed tea and basin of washing water. The crew will break camp and pack while you are having a cooked breakfast. The kitchen crew walks on ahead to set up and cook lunch, which we normally eat around noon.

After lunch we travel for a couple of hours. Normally we reach our campsite around mid-afternoon, which leaves time for relaxing, or exploring, there are always things to explore and curious locals to meet.

We eat around 5.30 – 6pm

OUR LEADERS IN THE FIELD

Our trek leaders are experienced and highly trained in wilderness first aid and high altitude medicine. They are local to the region and highly skilled expedition leaders who are knowledgeable and passionate. They will ensure that all aspects of you trek run smoothly.

LADAKH

Known also as 'Little Tibet' owing to it's geographical and cultural closeness to Tibet, Ladakh is a fascinating destination with high mountain passes, impressive gorges, centuries old trade routes and glacial tributaries carved by the mighty Indus River. Leh is the region capital and is the cultural heartland of Ladakh with many gompas and forts. It is a deeply spiritual place reflecting a strong Buddhist heritage. Zanskar is a tiny kingdom, which lies to the south of the Indus Valley and is relatively isolated. Opened to tourism in 1981, it contains two valleys; the Tsarap valley and the Stod valley. This region affords stunning mountain panoramas of the Ladakh Range and the East Karakoram, and is dotted with some of the most impressive and remote monasteries to be found anywhere in the Himalaya.

CONSERVATION – SAVING SNOW LEOPARDS

There may be as few as 3500 snow leopards left in the world and many of these are found across the Himalaya. Humans are largely responsible for the snow leopard's decline – poachers hunt them for their pelts, body parts are used for traditional medicines and the leopards often come into conflict with local farmers. The AHF is working closely with the Snow Leopard Conservancy to protect the endangered snow leopard through partnerships with local communities in India, Nepal and Bhutan.

The SLC supports community-based protection

The elusive snow leopard

of these big cats through grassroots conservation initiatives, environmental education, training of herders in wildlife monitoring and research blending traditional knowledge and modern science.

Conservation and education activities are designed in consultation with local communities, building foundations for locally driven wildlife conservation. Through this partnership, we provide basic training in improved animal husbandry, farm corral construction and other livelihood skills to eliminate the threat of poaching and unnecessary killing of snow leopards.

ADVENTURE TRAVEL

In the remote areas that we operate things don't always go to plan. By its very nature adventure travel presents it's own challenges, sometimes flights don't run on time, or traffic makes us run late. The weather may not always co-operate or any other number of issues may arise to keep us on our feet. Sometimes we may need to adjust our itinerary and schedules due to events beyond our control. If something like this occurs your trek leader will always keep you informed. Keep an open mind and a flexible attitude, and any challenges that may arise will be taken in your stride.

HOW TO BOOK

Adventure Associates will be handling all arrangements for this trip. Passion, integrity and going 'beyond the ordinary' are the values that have made Adventure Associates such a long-standing success. Adventure Associates can also provide assistance with booking your international flights and any pre or post tour arrangements you require. To confirm a place on this exciting project we require a $500 deposit and completed booking form.

Any questions concerning this trip please contact Julie at Adventure Associates. Julie will be looking after all aspects of your trip arrangements.
julie@adventureassociates.com

Alternatively you can access a Booking Form on our website and read the Terms and Conditions.
http://www.adventureassociates.com/about-us/

Buddhist Lamas during the Yuru Kabgyat festival at Lamayuru Monastery

AUSTRALIAN HIMALAYAN FOUNDATION

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