



## Silk Road expedition, 23 May – 12 June 2012

Thank you for your interest in our Silk Road Tibetan adventure. We've now finalised our itinerary as much as is possible, given below, and I'd like to invite you to join us on this unique biking adventure.

Your guides will be: Eric Moffat, Alam Hussein, Yugyal and Dawa (our Tibetan guide)

The bikes will be Enfield 500 Bullets, with some Chinese bikes available as well (sorry, the KTMs didn't materialise)

Flights can be from anywhere, we can either connect with our direct London flights or meet you in Beijing.

The tour includes all accommodation on a twinshare basis, all meals, group entrance fees to monuments, etc, road tolls, London – Beijing direct flights (please call for a quote from other airports, upgrades, or price without international flights), domestic Chinese/Tibetan flights, local transfers, support vehicles, First Aid kit

Extra tour costs will be: fuel \$150, alcoholic drinks, souvenirs, camera fees, tips

Prices:

Rider £4950

Passenger £4650

Single room supplement (pls note no single rooms available on possibly 3-4 nights) £495

Travel insurance is available if required, £98.50/person (annual policies also available)

Booking deposit £1000 per person

We are looking to run the tour with just 10 bikes, max 12, so if you decide this is the trip for you, please don't delay.

Any questions, please call 01256 770775.

I look forward to hearing from you again very soon.

Yours sincerely  
David Grist

## Provisional itinerary

**23 May** – Day 00, Depart UK. London – Beijing direct flights depart this evening

**24 May** - Day 01, Arrive in Beijing lunchtime

We will meet you from your flight and transfer you to our local 4\* hotel for a chance to dine and recuperate. Because fellow group members may be arriving on different flights, we will wait to have our official welcome dinner and briefing once we have arrived in Lhasa.

**25 May** - Day 02, Arrive in Lhasa

We will transfer you from our hotel in Beijing to the direct domestic flight to Lhasa. Upon arrival in Lhasa we will transfer you to our luxury hotel where you can rest and refresh. If flight timing allows, we will have the opportunity to tour the Jokhang Monastery at the heart of Lhasa and then perhaps explore the city a bit on our own before a welcome dinner and tour briefing at the hotel.



**26 May** - Day 03, Lhasa acclimatization and sightseeing

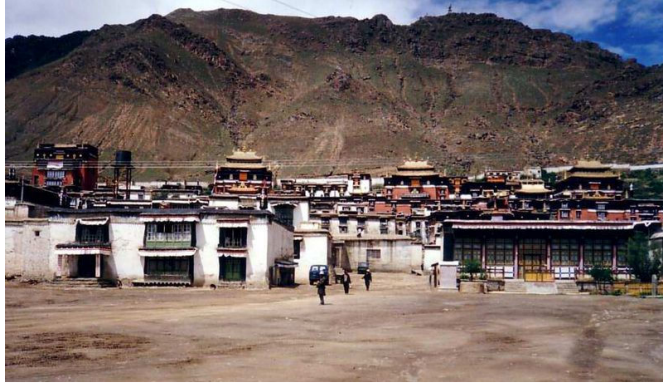
Today we will rise early for breakfast and then head out for our city site-seeing tour, which will include the Potala Palace, and if we did not have a chance to see it the day before, the Jokhang Monastery. There will be plenty of time to explore the Barkor and surrounding area before dinner and a briefing on the next day's ride. This is our second night at 3600 m, important to counter possible altitude sickness.

**27 May** - Day 04, Lhasa – Gyantse, 290 km

Today we ride out of Lhasa and the adventure begins. The roads are good and the scenery exceptional as we pass Yamdrok Tso lake on the scenic back roads. We ride on over our first two 5000 m passes, Karo-La and Kamba-La, before arriving in Gyantse, where we'll visit the famous Buddhist Monastery complexes housing some of the rarest Tibetan Buddhist art in the world. Tonight we'll dine just opposite our Gyantse Hotel at a local cafe known for having the best lo mien on the trip.

**28 May** - Day 05, Gyantse - Lhatse via Shigatse, 240 km

After an early breakfast at the hotel, we'll leave Gyantse and travel south-west to Tibet's second largest city, Shigatse, where we'll stop for a brief tour of the Tashi Lumpo monastery - home to the Gelukpa sect's spiritual leader, the Panchen Lama. We'll lunch at one of Shigatse's fine Tibetan restaurants, and then make our way to Lhatse along smooth tarmac roads and increasingly stark and gorgeous scenery. Luxury accommodation.



**29 May** - Day 06, Lhatse – EBC, 190 km

We'll rise early, breakfast, and head from Lhatse through stark high desert up over 5200 m Langpa-La before descending to New Tingri. From there we veer onto the main road to Everest Base Camp - a wide, well-groomed gravel road that sweeps up and then down a series of breathtaking and regimented switchbacks. If the skies are clear, expect to see Everest rising impossibly high and majestic behind nearer ridges. We'll lunch in the small Tibetan village of Pesong and then ride the final stretch to Everest Base Camp Hotel at Rongbuk Monastery. Weather and time permitting, we'll ride the 8 km from the hotel to base camp and explore a bit. Basic accommodation.

**30 May** - Day 07, EBC – Saga, 330 km

There's nothing like sunrise on Everest! We'll rise early and take the official bus to base camp for photos and brief exploration before making our way back down from Rongbuk. If it's not too wet we'll take the back road down to Old Tingri - certainly the most technical section of road we've hit so far, but also some of the most fun. From Tingri we'll ride our last stretch of the Friendship Highway before turning off toward Saga. Guest house accommodation.

**31 May** - Day 08, Saga – Paryang, 230 km

Today's ride takes us further into the western reaches of Tibet and toward Kailash as we diverge from, and then meet up again with, the Brahmaputra River. The scenery is stark and vast - the Tibetan Plateau at its best. The first 150 km are good tarmac, the last section is prone to steady winds and blowing sand - road conditions vary. Paryang is set along the Karnali River and acts as the gateway to Mt Kailash and Lake Manasarovar. It is a small but bustling pilgrim town, also famous for its magnificent packs of dogs! Our guesthouse accommodation is basic, but the best in town!

**01 June** - Day 09, Paryang – Kailash, 280 km

From Paryang we'll rise early and ride the 280 km to reach Kailash. While roads to Kailash are always being improved, the climate is tough on them - expect variation from good, smooth tarmac to broken pavement. We'll arrive in Darchen by late afternoon and retire to our basic guest house.

**02 June** - Day 10, Rest day Kailash

After 6 days of riding you deserve a rest in the splendid shadow of arguably the world's most holy mountain. Optional activities include exploration of the area by foot, a brief ride to Lake Manasarovar, or just resting in the guest house.



**03 June** - Day 11, Kailash – Ali, 280km

After an early breakfast we'll make our way along the plateau toward Senge Tsangpo, also called Ali. The road is a mix of good tarmac, broken pavement, and in places dirt. Ali is the capital of Western Tibet and the last major town we'll run across before getting to Kashgar. Ali is known for having a large Chinese army base, for its large dam across the Senge Tsangpo River (one of the Indus River's major tributaries), and for being a great place to spend the night. Basic guest house accommodation.

**04 June** - Day 12, Ali - Duoma (or further), 225 km

An early start today. The roads north and west of Ali deteriorate to dirt and dust with some water crossings - expect everything! Going is slow but adventure is high and the scenery is some of the best along the entire route with nearly 50 km along the great Himalayan saline lake Pangong Tso, one of the largest in all of the Himalayas. Basic accommodation.



**05 June** - Day 13, Douma – Kangziwar, 315 km

From Douma we'll ride a longer day through stark high mountains and over two 5000+ m passes to the tiny town and army base at Kangziwar. Snow capped peaks more than 6000 m high line the horizon to the north. Basic guest house accommodation.

**06 June** - Day 14. Kangziwar – Mazha, 300 km

Today's ride takes us on challenging dirt roads along the Yarkan River - watch for washboard hidden by thick dust or, in the event of precipitation, mud. The hard work is worth it though, as the valley is an icon of desolate alpine desert beauty, rimmed with the snowcapped peaks of the Himalaya to the north and the Karakoram range to the south. Basic guest house accommodation.

**07 June** - Day 15, Mazha – Yecheng, 240 km

Today finds us dropping gradually along the riverside until reaching Akazi, where we begin our last major climb before our long descent toward Kashgar. The mountains in this area are young, dramatic, and steep - we have traded our views of the vast Tibetan Plateau for multi-layered mineral ores and ridge after sharp ridge. The road from Mazha to Yechen improves in stages from broken dirt to wide, graded gravel. By the time we reach Yechen, we will have left the mountains behind. Good accommodation - private baths with plenty of hot water and all the amenities.

**08 June** - Day 16, Yecheng –Kashikar, 254 km

Our last day of riding takes us across the stretch of the old silk route from Kargilik (Yechen) to Khashgar. The road is in good shape - paved - though slightly busier than the vast reaches of the Tibetan Plateau have left us to expect! After a fast day's ride we arrive at our destination with plenty of time to relax, possibly poke around the bazaars a bit, and then dine in our luxury hotel.

**09 June** - Day 17, Free Day, Kashikar

Kashikar was a hub along the old silk route and there is too much here to see to cram into one day free day. Over the next two days we'll have an opportunity to explore Kashgar's many wonders, including what is considered to be the world's largest bazaar. We'll rise for a leisurely breakfast and then make our way out into the city, either exploring as a group or, for the more adventurous, on our own. Tonight we'll have a closing dinner to say farewell to our Tibetan and Indian staff. We've allowed this free day just in case the itinerary doesn't go to plan.

**10 June** - Day 18, Free Day Kashgar

While every day in Kashgar is bazaar day - Sunday is when it is at its most splendid and largest - it is the traditional market day of old and when livestock is traded and bartered. Today you'll have plenty of time to gather last-minute gifts and souvenirs, or do whatever the hell you want!!



**11 June** - Day 19 Kashgar - Beijing flight

Today we'll have a leisurely breakfast in the hotel and then transport you to the airport for your direct domestic flight back to Beijing. Once in Beijing we'll transport you to our local 4\* hotel where you can rest before your flight home the next day.

**12 June** - Day 20, Fly Beijing - London

After a breakfast in the hotel, we'll transfer you to the airport for your international flight home, which departs at lunchtime and arrives in London later that same evening. (other flight options available).