

# 1-c Trekking

## Main Reading text

**Trekking** is not an easy holiday. Trekking is not a 'lying-on-the-beach, going-to-discos, or visiting-famous-places-in-Europe, type of holiday.

So what is trekking? Trekking is hard work. Trekking is walking in the mountains for hours carrying a back pack. Trekking is sleeping in a tent, cooking your own food, and washing in clear cold mountain streams. It may sound like hard work, but the rewards are often amazing. You get to see views that few 'ordinary' people rarely see, you meet people and experience their culture far from the usual 'tourist' routes. But be careful. After you have been trekking once, you will want to go again, and again, and again.

One of the best places to go to experience trekking is in the Himalaya mountains in northern India. The Himalayas form an enormous range of mountains stretching across the top of India from Bhutan in the east, through India, Tibet, and China to Pakistan in the west. The highest mountain in the world, Mt. Everest, is in this range.

Let's start with a brief journey to the region of Ladakh, also known as the "Land of **High Passes**", which is located at an height above sea-level ranging from 2750 - 7672 meters, in the northern-most part of India.

Ladakh is an **inspiring** place of temples, friendly villages and **breathtaking** scenery. This **incredible** region is considered to be a paradise for those who search for places in which to achieve the thrill of adventure.

In this region you can experience an amazing **topography** of hilly terrains, rocky cliffs, **lush** green grasslands and high altitude peaks. When making a grand Ladakh trek you will be able to experience, mountain climbing and biking, safaris, water rafting and many more exciting adventures as you explore the wilderness at the most isolated, deserted, yet fascinating location of India.

'Frozen River Trekking' in the Ladakh region during the winter is undoubtedly the most challenging kind of trekking in the world. But it is only one of the many trekking trails in Ladakh that will bring you **tremendous** excitement and the opportunity to discover challenges.

You walk along the snow covered bed of the Zaskar River and explore the remote areas of the Zaskar Valley. As difficult as it may seem, this is actually a part of an old trade route for the local people, the Zaskaris, and their only possible option for travelling during the tough winters. This twelve to thirteen days of **strenuous** walk from Chilling to Padum is both challenging as well as an **incomparably** exiting experience.

Another trekking trail well worth experiencing is the Ladakh Monastery Trek. This trek will take you to some of the most beautiful places in the world, including snow covered peaks, remote villages, ancient Buddhist monasteries and fascinating Gompas. These Gompas, which are a mixture of university, monastery and fort, are usually built on **solitary** hill tops, and have a **serene** as well as **tranquil** aura.

The many monasteries for which Ladakh is well known are the true emblems of both Mahayana and Heenyana **sects** of Buddhism and exhibit the teachings and life of Buddha. Most of these monasteries are built on lone rocks or on **craggy** mountain faces and possess statues, relics, murals, paintings, sculptures, frescoes, manuscripts, and religious preaching's. All of them play a major role in beautifying the lifestyle and culture **prevalent** in this region. The head **lama** is known as 'Kushak', which means 'reincarnation'.

As you can imagine, the monasteries of Ladakh bring the region its unique flavor and beauty. With the captivating landscapes of snow-capped mountains, emerald green valleys, **azure** lakes, **sonorous** waterfalls, and rural villages, this is indeed a place of peace and meditation.

Just to give you a flavor of what you can expect, we'll briefly look at some of the most important monasteries.

Without doubt the most inspiring must be the Thiksey Monastery. Thiksey is one of the most beautiful and majestic monasteries of Ladakh. Situated on top of a hill, it is twelve stories high and contains an impressive collection of **stupas**, statues, **thankas**, wall paintings and swords. One cannot help but be **enthralled** by the various pillars and walls which are **engraved** with Buddha's teachings. Its main prayer hall has a massive fifteen meter high statue of a seated Buddha. Every year, the Gustor festival is celebrated at this Gompa from 17th to 19th day of the ninth month of the Tibetan calendar.

The Zongkhul (or Dzongkhul) Monastery is a splendid cave monastery located in the Zanskar Valley. The monastery has been skillfully constructed by joining two caves on the rock face of the Ating Gorge. The monastery is associated with the famous Indian **Yogi**, Naropa, from Vikramshila. It is believed that Naropa used these two caves as a site for his solitary meditation. Here, one can have the privilege of viewing 300-hundred year old artistic **frescoes**, which are said to be the original **murals** completed by Zhadpa Dorje, a scholar-painter of the monastery.

Phugtal Monastery was established in the early part of the 12th century by Gangsem Sherap Sampo. This famous monastery seems to have grown out of the side of the rugged and rocky mountain. This amazing construction leaves one **spellbound**. The monastery was been built around the opening of a cave which looks out over a vertical gorge. This remarkable monastery is home to about seventy monks and its structure contains an historical library and various prayer rooms.

# Vocabulary

## 1. TREK [listen here] (n). 徒步健行

a. To walk, usually for a long distance.

*We had to trek up six flights of stairs with our groceries..*

b. To travel by walking through an area with many mountains, rivers, etc., for pleasure and adventure.

*We had to trek up six flights of stairs with our groceries.*

## 2. HIGH PASSES (n.) 最高步道

There are many uses for the word 'pass', here we just look at how it is used in the text.)

**PASS:** To move or go into or through a particular place.

*Places that is relatively easy to travel between mountains; so that you do not have to climb over the mountains.*

## 3. INSPIRING (adj.) 激勵人心的

Causing people to want to do or create something or to lead better lives.

*He inspired generations of future scientists.*

*Her first book was inspired by her travels in the Far East.*

## 4. BREATH-TAKING (adj.) 驚人的

a. Very exciting.

*The train raced past with breathtaking speed.*

*They gave a breathtaking performance.*

*The view of the mountains was breathtaking.*

b. Very surprising.

*His breathtaking ignorance.*

*The size of the error is breathtaking.*

5. **INCREDIBLE**(adj.) 不可置信的

a. Extremely good, great, large beautiful.

*A landscape of incredible beauty.*

*A person of great skill/talent/intelligence.*

b. Difficult or impossible to believe.

*The movie tells an incredible story of survival.*

6. **TOPOGRAPHY** (n.) 地形

a. The features (such as mountains and rivers) in a region.

*The map shows the topography of the island.*

b. The making of maps that show the height, shape, etc., of the land in a particular area.

*A map of the topography of the coastline shows a significant loss of wetlands.*

7. **LUSH** (adj.) 繁茂的

a. Covered with healthy green plants.

*She always wanted to live on a lush Caribbean island.*

*The hills are lush with deep, thick grass.*

b. Having a lot of full and healthy growth

*The frequent rainfall encourages the lush growth of trees, ferns, and shrubs.*

8. **TREMENDOUS** (adj.) 極大的

a. Very large or great.

*He has a tremendous amount of energy.*

*A tremendous problem.*

*The engine's power is tremendous.*

*She is a writer of tremendous talent.*

b. Very good or excellent.

*That music is tremendous!*

*We had a tremendous time at the concert.*

9. **STRENUOUS** (adj.) 費力的

Requiring or showing great energy and effort. Energetic.

*Avoid all strenuous exercise until your leg heals.*

*A strenuous climb.*

10. **INCOMPARABLE** (adv.) 無敵地

Better than any other. Having no equal.

*An incomparable view of the valley.*

*The quality of their products is incomparable.*

*An incomparable musician.*

11. **SOLITARY** (adj.) 單一的

a. Without anyone or anything else.

*We saw one solitary [=single] figure coming down the street.*

b. Done by a person who is alone

*He took a solitary walk on the beach.*

*A solitary job.*

12. **SERENE**(adj.) 尊貴的

Clear and free of storms or unpleasant change. Calm and peaceful.

*Serene skies. Serene music.*

13. **TRANQUIL** (adj.) 平靜的

a. Free from anxiety of mind or spirit

*Though she should have been upset, she felt oddly tranquil upon learning that she would not be receiving the scholarship.*

b. Free from disturbance or turmoil.

*The house was once again tranquil after the kids moved outside to play.*

14. **SECT**(n.) 派別

A religious or political group that is a smaller part of a larger group and whose members all share similar beliefs.

*One sect of medical researchers believes that the disease is not caused by a virus.*

15. **CRAGGY** (adj.) 崎嶇的

a. A steep rugged (partly broken) rock or cliff.

*The craggy mountain side was too dangerous to climb.*

b. Rough in a way that suggests strength, especially in a man.

*The famous actor who is known for his craggy good looks.*

16. **PREVALENT** (adj.) 崎嶇的

Generally or widely accepted. Happening often or over a large area at a particular time.

*Those teaching methods are still prevalent at some schools.*

*A fashion that is prevalent among teenagers.*

17. **AZURE** (adj.) 蔚藍的

The blue color of the cloudless sky.

18. **SONOROUS** (adj.) 宏亮的

Having a sound that is deep, loud, and pleasant.

*A sonorous waterfall that can be heard from a considerable distance.*

*He has a deep, sonorous voice.*

19. **STUPA** (n.) 塔寺

A mound-like structure containing Buddhist relics, typically the ashes of Buddhist monks, used by Buddhists as a place of meditation.

20. **THANKA** (n.) 唐卡

A painting on silk with embroidery, usually depicting a Buddhist deity.

21. **ENTHRALLED** (adj.) 吸引住的

To hold the attention of someone by being very exciting, interesting, or beautiful

*Enthralled by the flickering of the fire, we lost all track of time.*

*Enthralled by the flickering fire in the hearth, we lost all track of time.*

22. **YOGI (n.)** 瑜珈

A person who practices yoga. A mystical person.

23. **FRESCO (n.)** 壁畫

A painting that is done on freshly spread moist plaster with water-based paints.

24. **MURAL (n.)** 壁畫

A (usually) large painting that is done directly on the surface of a wall.

25. **SPELLBOUND(adj.)** 入迷的

Giving all of your attention and interest to something or someone.

*The children were spellbound by the puppet show.*

*She's a storyteller that will hold you spellbound.*

26. **GORGE (n.)** 峽谷

a. A narrow passage through land; *especially* a narrow steep-walled canyon or part of a canyon

*The journey through the gorge was very quiet and a little scary.*

b. To eat large amounts of food (sometimes greedily).

*We gorged on pizza and chips.*



## Review exercise

Choose the best word or phrase to complete the following sentences taken from the text.

1. It may sound like hard work, but the \_\_\_\_\_ are often amazing.  
( A. rewards B. mountain C. food D. stream )
2. One of the best places to go to \_\_\_\_\_ trekking is in the Himalaya mountains.  
( A. arrive B. practice C. experience D. arrive )
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ mountain in the world, Mt. Everest, is in this range.  
( A. tallest B. highest C. biggest D. more biggest )
4. Ladakh is an \_\_\_\_\_ place of temples, friendly villages and breathtaking scenery.  
( A. inspiring B. difficult C. foreign D. bigger )
5. Trekking in Ladakh will bring you \_\_\_\_\_ excitement and the opportunity to discover challenges.  
( A. far away B. to C. many D. tremendous )
6. Gompas are usually built on \_\_\_\_\_ and have a serene as well as tranquil aura.  
( A. Solitary hill tops B. mountain sides C. valleys D. river beds )
7. The monastery has been skillfully \_\_\_\_\_ by joining two caves on the rock face.  
( A. made into one B. constructed C. contrasted D. erected )
8. The monastery is associated with the \_\_\_\_\_ Indian Yogi Naropa.  
( A. old B. ancient C. famous D. young )
9. Phugtal Monastery was \_\_\_\_\_ in the early part of the 12th century.

( A. Already old B. born C. building D. established )

10. This remarkable monastery is ----- to about seventy monks.

( A. home B. owned C. a place for D. a workshop )

## True or False

1. Trekking is an easy holiday. T/F
2. Trekking is walking in the mountains carrying a back pack. T/F
3. The Himalaya mountains are in southern India T/F
4. Mt. Everest is the second highest mountain in the world. T/F
5. Ladakh is located in the northern-most part of India. T/F
6. When making a grand Ladakh trek you will be able to experience biking. T/F
7. The frozen Zaskar River is an old trade route for the zaskaris. T/F
8. Frozen River Trekking' in the Ladakh region takes about five days. T/F
9. The Thiksey Monastery is located in a serene valley T/F
10. The Zongkhul Monastery is situated on top of a hill T/F

## Reading Comprehension - choose the best answer

1. ( ) If trekking is such a difficult and strenuous type of holiday, why do so many people like to do it?
  - a. Trekking is popular because trekkers are rewarded by being able to show other people how tough they are.

- b. People like to on trekking holidays so that they can get to see views and have experiences that few general tourists rarely have.
- c. Because, unlike regular tours that stay in hotels and eat in restaurants, trekking is a cheap holiday.

2. ( ) What aspect of trekking makes it so interesting for some people?

- a. There are many different types of ancient religious buildings built in unusual places, and containing unique works of religious art.
- b. The food is unusual and not the type of food you would normally find in a restaurant. This makes the trekking experience unique.
- c. With all the craggy mountain faces, snow-covered peaks and lush green valleys, it is an excellent place to go mountain climbing.