

The Mountaineers  
Outings Committee  
China: K2 Trek

## Itinerary

This is a daily plan for the outing. Generally, we will fly from Seattle to Beijing, sightsee before the trek, trek to K2, sightsee again after the trek, then fly back to Seattle. We have scheduled this outing at the optimal time of year for the climate. However, adventure travel may bring changes to this itinerary because of weather, road and/or trail condition, medical issues, your health, political situation, or other circumstances. Please bring this itinerary with you.

Date	Activity
Tuesday May 24, 2005	<b>Fly from Seattle to Beijing</b>
Wednesday May 25	<b>Arrive in Beijing</b> Arrive in Beijing, capital of the People's Republic of China. Upon arrival, you are met by your guide and transferred to the hotel. O/N Marco Polo Hotel (5 star)
Thursday May 26	<b>Layover day in Beijing</b> Today is our first day of sightseeing around Beijing. We will have a second day of sightseeing in Beijing at the end of the trip. After many hours of sitting in airplane seats, it feels good to stretch your legs. First is an excursion to the Great Wall at Badaling. As the old Chinese saying says, "No one is a real man unless he has climbed the Great Wall". You can enjoy the dramatic vistas and marvel at the Wall as it climbs and descends steep ridges and narrow valleys. After lunch, visit the Ming Tombs, built 1409-1644 AD where 13 emperors of the Ming (1368-1644) and their empresses and concubines were buried. Lastly, we visit the Lama Temple, the largest and most complete of its kind outside Tibet. The temple halls are set in enclosed courtyards and are adorned with magnificently carved statues of Buddha, the biggest of which is 18 meters high, carved from a single piece of sandalwood. In the evening, attend a welcome banquet featuring Beijing Roast Duck, specially prepared for you! (INCL:B-L-D) O/N Marco Polo Hotel (5 star)
Friday May 27	<b>Fly from Beijing to Urumqi</b> This morning we board a flight of XO9104 (09:20-13:10) across China to Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Home to 13 nationalities -- Uygur, kasak Hui, and Uzbek, Xinjiang is rich in cultural diversity and experience. In the early afternoon we tour the lively market at Erdaoqiao, where anything from Uygur handicrafts, silk carpets to fruits and kebabs are sold. We will also visit the Old Town area, where we will see how Uygurs live in today's modern capital (the New Town is the Han Chinese area of town). Our Urumqi tour also includes the Museum of National Minorities and History housing the bodies from Turpan's Astana tombs. (B.L.D) O/N World Plaza Hotel (4 star)
Saturday May 28	<b>Fly from Urumqi to Kashgar. 4WD from Kashgar 275kms to Kargilik at 2,200 m</b> In the morning we board a 1.5-hour flight to Kashgar. Upon arrival, we travel in 4-wheel drive SUVs - most likely Toyota Landcruisers. Driving south from Kashgar the road crosses a large level plain, following the historic trade route, which led to the Karakoram Pass and British India. On clear days the snow covered peaks of the Kongur / Muztagh Ata massif can be seen to the west. We stop for lunch at an outdoor restaurant in Yarkand (Chinese name: Sache) before continuing to Kargilik (Chinese name: Yecheng). Here we stay in the comfortable, modern, but strangely named "Electricity Hotel". (4-5 hrs) (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Yecheng Dianli Hotel (3 star)

Sunday May 29	<b>4WD from Kargilik to Yilik at 3,500 m</b> Once we leave the fertile fields of Kargilik the terrain becomes dry and dusty. The road climbs a dramatic series of hairpin bends to reach the summit of a 3,150m mountain pass, and then drops down the other side towards the Kudi River valley. After lunch the road follows the river valley rising relentlessly to the top of a 5,000m road pass. Another dramatic descent takes us to the army checkpoint at Mazar beside the Yarkand River. Here we leave the Xinjiang/Tibet highway and follow a dirt road into the mountains to reach our first camp site Yilik located at the junction with the Surakwat river. There is a small army post here overlooking a steep-sided gorge. A modern bridge crosses the river and leads to our camp on a grassy patch. (245kms,10hrs) (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Monday May 30	<b>Trek from Yilik half way to Sarak. Camp at 3,700 m</b> We meet with our camel drivers and load the entire group's equipment onto their animals. The terrain underfoot becomes more difficult as we follow the valley of the Surakwat River past the junction with the Zug Shagskam. Much of the walking is on smooth river-washed stones. High cliffs of river deposited conglomerate rock rise on either side of the narrow valley. (3 hrs) (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Tuesday May 31	<b>Trek to Sarak at 3,800 m</b> After 3 hours we reach a small campsite on a terrace overlooking a tributary of the main river. (3 hrs)
Wednesday June 1	<b>Trek from Sarak to Kotaz (4,330 m or 14,204 feet)</b> The valley turns into a narrow gorge in places as we follow the river higher into the mountains along a faint path made by the nomadic herders who visit this area in the summer months. We turn up a side valley to reach some abandoned mud and stone huts where we camp below the Aghil Pass. (5-6hrs) (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Thursday June 2	<b>Trek from Kotaz over Aghil Pass (4,870m or 15,679 feet) to Quinghongtan at 3,950 m</b> The ascent of the Aghil Pass is quite gentle and takes approx 3hrs. From the top there is a panoramic view of the great snow-covered peaks of the Karakoram Range in the distance, including the Gasherbrum Group. The descent into the valley of the Shagskam River is straightforward with striking views of the Karakoram Range. If there is much water in the river, then we will ride the camels to reach the campsite on the other side. We camp in a grove of willow bushes at 3,950m, the only green in this dry landscape. (7-8hrs) (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Friday June 3	<b>Trek from Quinghongtan to river junction camp at 3,800 m</b> A slight drop in altitude today as we follow the Shagskam River downstream to the junction with the Sarpo Lago River. The river meanders across the 2km-wide flood plain and we must cross it several times. If the level is low we can wade. High water levels (or a dislike of freezing water) can cause us to climb onto the camels. (7-8 hrs) (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Saturday June 4	<b>Trek from river junction camp to Sughet Jangal at 3,900 m</b> Shortly after leaving camp we get our first clear view of K2 as we climb a small shoulder above camp. It is then an easy walk south along the Sarpo Lago River valley to the green campsite at Sughet Jangal (3,900m). The crossing of the K2 River can add a little interest to the final part of this journey. This camping spot was used by Francis Younghusband in 1887 and was the base camp site of Eric Shipton's 1937 "Blank on the Map" expedition. It is now also known as "K2 Base Camp" although expeditions attempting K2 from this side use several advance camps on the North K2 Glacier. It is an excellent location for our base camp as well. 4 hrs
Sunday June 5	<b>Layover day at Sughet Jangal at 3,900 m</b> Optional hikes: 1) south up the ridge toward Peak 6050 2) southwest up Sarpo Lago valley.
Monday June 6	<b>Trek from Sughet Jangal to the Glacier Ice Tongue at 4,300 m</b> Follow the K2 River south up to the K2 North Glacier terminal moraine. This is as far as the camels can walk up the valley. 5-6 hours
Tuesday June 7	<b>Trek from the Glacier Ice Tongue to the junction of the K2 North Glacier and Sughet Glacier at 4,800 m</b>

Wednesday June 8	<b>Trek from the junction of the K2 North Glacier and Sughet Glacier to Advance Base Camp at 5,200 m (17,000 feet)</b> Camping here enables us to watch the changing light on K2 as the sun sets in the west, and rises tomorrow morning in the east.
Thursday June 9	<b>Layover day at Advance Base Camp at 5,200 m (17,000 feet)</b> Layover day to experience K2's incredible north ridge and north face. The north ridge has never been climbed all the way to the summit, and remains K2's (and perhaps the entire Himalaya/Karakoram Mountains') last great problem. Optional hikes. Also, a backup day in case of bad weather. There may be K2 international climbers here we can talk with and watch with binoculars on the mountain.
Friday June 10	<b>Trek from Advance Base Camp to the junction of the K2 North Glacier and Sughet Glacier at 4,800 m</b>
Saturday June 11	<b>Trek from the junction of K2 North Glacier and Sughet Glacier back down to Sughet Jangal at 3,900 m</b> Return back to Base Camp.
Sunday June 12	<b>Trek from Sughet Jangal to camp at 3,800 m</b> (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Monday June 13	<b>Trek from camp to Quinghongtan at 3,950 m</b> (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Tuesday June 14	<b>Trek from Quinghongtan over Aghil Pass (4,870m or 15,679 feet) to Kotaz at 4,330 m</b> (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Wednesday June 15	<b>Trek from Kotaz to Sarak at 3,800 m</b> (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Thursday June 16	<b>Trek from Sarak to Yilik at 3,500 m, where our vehicles are waiting for us</b> (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Camping
Friday June 17	<b>4WD from Yilik to Kargilik at 2,200 m</b> From Yilik we drive 245kms dirt roads out of the mountains, crossing two high passes to reach the town of Kargilik (Yecheng) on the plains. (Incl:B-L-D) O/N Yecheng Dianli Hotel
Saturday June 18	<b>4WD from Kargilik to Kashgar</b> In the morning we ride our 4-wheel-drive SUVs 275kms to Kashgar in 4 hours. In the afternoon in Kashgar we tour the Id Kah Mosque (built in 1442) fronted by the busy square (the largest in west China) and the Abakh Hoja Tomb (built in 1640) reminiscent of the Central Asian artistic style of Samarkand of Isfahan. The site is also known as the Xiang Fei (Fragrant Concubine) Tomb in memory of Abakh Khoja's granddaughter, Iparhan, who was the Fragrant Concubine of Emperor Qianlong of Qing Dynasty. Roam through the colorful streets with Uyghur handcrafts. (B,L,D_ O/N Qiniwak Hotel
Sunday June 19	<b>Kashgar Sunday market. Fly from Kashgar to Urumqi.</b> Kashgar comes to life as thousands of Uygur farmers and tradesmen from the surrounding countryside converge on Kashgar's famous Sunday market – one of the best in the world. It is a colorfully chaotic scene as eager traders hawk their wares and piles of foodstuffs and goods fill the streets. Melons are the summer mainstay of the local agriculture. The dusty bazaar is crowded with a variety of donkey carts and bicycles, and graceful poplar trees provide welcome greenery in the desert atmosphere. The animal market is thrilling: herds of goats and sheep are bargained, Uygur men test-drive horses and camels, and chickens are passed around for inspection of plumpness. After dinner, we fly to Urumqi; upon arrival, transfer to hotel. (Incl:B-L-D) O/N World Plaza Hotel

<p>Monday June 20</p>	<p><b>Bus from Urumqi to Turpan</b>  This morning we drive to Turpan by private car (220kms, 3.5hours). Once an important way station on the ancient northern Silk Road, the city currently has a population of nearly 200,000. Turpan is China's hottest city, its "Land of Fire," with summer temperatures routinely reaching a toasty 40 degrees Celsius. Upon arrival, we will visit Gaochang Ruin, one of China's best-preserved ancient cities due to the dry, hot climate. Walls of beaten yellow stone 40 feet thick at the base surround the ruins. The Baiziklik Caves (one Thousand Buddha Caves) show the extent to which Buddhism spread in this area. Turpan Cemetery contains decorated tombs dating back to the Jin and Tang dynasties. We will stop at the ancient Astana Tombs. See the Flaming Mountains that seem on fire in the mid-day sun. Tour the Grape Valley, where you can enjoy the numerous types of grapes. A wonderful Uygur dance show will be provided in the evening.  (INCL:B-L-D) O/N Turpan Grand Hotel (3 star)</p>
<p>Tuesday June 21: Summer Solstice: (longest daylight of the year)</p>	<p><b>Bus from Turpan to Urumqi. Fly to Xian.</b>  In the morning, we will tour the ruins of Jiaohe, a Han Dynasty garrison that was destroyed by Genghiskhan, Then visit Karez that is the attraction of the area and the irrigation system devised by the Uygurs. See the Emin Minaret (Sugong Pagoda), one of the architectural gems of the Silk Road. After that we come back to Urumqi by private car or minibus. In the early afternoon we fly 2 hours to Xian. Upon arrival, transfer to hotel. (INCL:B-L-D) O/N Tanghua Hotel (4 star)</p>
<p>Wednesday June 22</p>	<p><b>Layover Day in Xian</b>  Today is our first day of sightseeing in Xian. Xian was the capital of 12 dynasties over 1,000 years, with a great number of precious relics and historical sites. The highlight is a visit to the Archaeological Museum, home to more than 6,000 life-size terra-cotta warriors and horses excavated from the tomb of the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty. These terra-cotta warriors composed an entire army designed to follow its emperor into eternity. How the people of 2,000 years ago could make such remarkably realistic sculptures remains a mystery. After lunch, visit the Banpo Neolithic Village that contains relics from the earliest known inhabitants of China. Another highlight is the Huaqing Hot Springs, where for centuries emperors came to bathe and enjoy the scenic beauty, and it has been a favorite spa since the Tang dynasty. The hall gains its name due to the slightly milky mist and vapor over the pool year around. In the evening, attend a Tang Dynasty dinner show and experience the glorious Tang culture, which can make you enjoy the royal arts like a king in the 7th century. (B,L,D) O/n Tanghua Hotel (4 star)</p>
<p>Thursday June 23</p>	<p><b>Fly from Xian to Beijing</b>  Today is our second day of sightseeing in Xian. We tour the ancient city walls, an extension of the old Tang dynasty structure, which boasts the most complete city wall to have survived through China's long history. You can learn more about China's history and culture, as we will visit the Shaanxi Provincial History Museum - a striking Tang-dynasty style pavilion, which houses a large collection of 113,000 historic and cultural artifacts unearthed in Shaanxi. You will surely be deeply impressed by the splendid archaeological discoveries of over ten ancient dynasties in China. Visit the Big Wild Goose Pagoda and the Bell Tower, where you can take a birds' eye view upon this ancient city. In the late afternoon, we fly 2 hours to Beijing.  (INCL:B-L-D) O/N Marco Polo Hotel (5 star)</p>
<p>Friday June 24</p>	<p><b>Layover Day in Beijing</b>  Today is our second day of sightseeing in Beijing. First, we visit the Temple of Heaven, which has been called "the noblest example of religious architecture in the whole of China". Second, we visit Tiananmen Square, with a total area of 440,000 square meters, which boasts the largest of its kind in the center of Beijing. Third, we visit the Forbidden City, the home of Chinese Emperors for more than 500 years. It is the place to go if you want to see the most complete and best-preserved collection of ancient buildings and historical treasures in China. For our final evening together, enjoy the Peking Opera, a national treasure with a history of 200 years.  (INCL:B-L-D) O/N Marco Polo Hotel (5 star)</p>
<p>Saturday June 25</p>	<p><b>Fly from Beijing to Seattle</b>  After breakfast, we bus to the airport to depart China.  Fly from Beijing to Seattle. (B)</p>