



EXTRAVAGANT YAK
TRAVEL COMPANY

JUNE 4-14, 2018

EASTERN TIBET PHOTO WORKSHOP

11 DAYS

WITH LAURA VALENTI

Who We Are

Extravagant Yak - a foreign and local partnership - specializes in providing rich and authentic, personally crafted travel experiences in Tibet. Equally at home in the lap of luxury or in the warm hospitality of a nomad tent, we deliver tailored attention to detail on every unforgettable journey.

Why Travel With Us

We love what we do. Extravagant Yak exists to provide second-to-none overland travel services to some of the most geographically extreme and culturally fascinating corners of Tibet. Our 15 years experience in this region uniquely qualifies us to have hands on control of the quality of your trip.



"Travel with us and support [Tibetpedia](http://Tibetpedia.com)! This site represents the core of our CSR value. Tibetan Business Highlights is the feature of this site that promotes Tibetan small businesses of excellence across the plateau."
- Jim Hamp, Co-founder - Extravagant Yak



Chengdu, Sichuan, is the gateway city to all three Tibetan areas in SW China: [Central](#), [Kham](#) & [Amdo](#)



[Metok Karbo Restaurant](#) in Lhasa is an example of a Tibetan owned business promoted on [Tibetpedia](#)





What to Expect on Your Trip to Eastern Tibet

Eastern Tibet offers some of the most authentic, untouched corners of the Tibetan world. While more well traveled places like Lhasa and Everest Basecamp require enduring the crowds, in Eastern Tibet you will experience little to no tourism traffic along with an untouched natural environment. From low-lying Panda country to high-valley river towns and big-sky grasslands, the landscape of Eastern Tibet is also much more diverse. Enjoy the best of Tibetan culture and hospitality, while taking in the breathtaking mountain vistas and vast grasslands found only on the roof of the world.

Extravagant Yak has created the perfect tour for those who consider a sense of adventure and a dose of curiosity essential travel ingredients. There is no strenuous hiking. In eleven days we will take you by private vehicle from **Chengdu** to Kangding, Tagong and Danba, and then return to Chengdu in time for some souvenir shopping and your departing flight.



Eastern Tibet Photo Workshop Trip Overview

Enjoy breathtaking landscapes from 4000m+ mountain passes. Wander among nomad camps on the highest grasslands in the world. Join religious pilgrims on walks at ancient sites. Appreciate the history of Tibet with guided visits to temples and monasteries. Observe traders from surrounding villages converge at a frontier town – Tibet’s version of the Wild West – to bargain with yak meat and yoghurt for tea, vegetables, and other necessities from the outside world. Enjoy behind-the-scenes access to local artisan’s studios, to photograph artisans at work and learn to appreciate local art forms. We are thrilled to offer these diverse and iconic experiences in Eastern Tibet together with Fritz Liedtke for an unparalleled cultural and photographic opportunity. All participants will benefit from an immersion-style experience



including early morning shoots, photographic wanderings in authentic Tibetan villages, monasteries, artisan studios, and capturing views only found on the roof of the world. Each evening offers optional supportive group critique and sharing. The diversity offered over 11 days makes this adventure in Eastern Tibet a photographer’s dream.

Laura Valenti has traveled extensively around the world, with her camera as a constant companion. She has built a 20+ year career in the art world as a photographer, curator, arts director, and educator. For Laura, photography is so much more than a technical and mechanical exercise. She is passionate about helping photographers become visionary artists. Her teaching centers on clearing creative blocks and cultivating the insight and confidence necessary to make deeply authentic personal work.





Giant Panda Research & Breeding Facility in Chengdu



Lively entertainment of the Sichuan Opera

Trip Itinerary

June 4. Arrive in Chengdu.

The heart of Western China welcomes you as your driver navigates the throngs of cyclists which mix with the rhythm of a modern city. Chengdu's Buddha Zen Hotel offers a classy step into China's past, along with a neighbourhood to excite any photographer. After check-in and some refreshments, you're off to dinner and a visit at China's historical Three Kingdoms era Zhuge Liang Memorial Temple and Jinli Ancient Street. Keep your camera at your side as you will quickly become aware of just how far from Kansas you are! A relaxing trip orientation will follow back at the hotel with plenty of opportunity for questions.

Accommodation: [Buddha Zen Hotel, Chengdu](#)

June 5. Chengdu.

Your private guide will escort you to the Giant Panda Research and Breeding Center for close up viewing of these curious creatures who are more native to Sichuan than the people



themselves. Despite their relative inactivity, you will be surprised at the challenge of photographing these social furballs. In the afternoon you'll enjoy a stroll into the past on a visit to Chengdu's oldest and best preserved Buddhist temple: Wenshu Yuan. An afternoon rest will be followed by an introduction to the fun of Sichuan Opera (much more than just singing!). Following the show, an early night is advisable in preparation for your journey to an entirely different world tomorrow.

Accommodation: [Buddha Zen Hotel, Chengdu](#)

June 6. Chengdu to Kangding.

Leaving Chengdu, today you head out of the Sichuan basin to penetrate deep into the mountains that guard the approach to the ancient kingdom of Tibet. Kangding is perched on the edge of the Tibet-Qinghai plateau and this historic trading town remains a convergence of Han and Tibetan populations. You pass through a virtual time warp on your six hour journey. Everything becomes new: landscape, climate, cuisine, language, customs, and of course, the people. On the first evening in Kangding (elev. 2600m) you'll walk past Ngachu monastery on your way to dinner, followed by a community



Kangding, Gateway to Eastern Tibet



Experience the warmth of Tibetan people





Optional day hike to the grasslands above Kangding



One of several monasteries in Kangding

dance in the town square (feel free to join in!).

Accommodation: [Zhilam Hostel, Kangding](#)

June 7. [Kangding.](#)

The first thing you notice the next morning is that everywhere you look goes up! The surrounding ridges speak of the protection offered by the strategic location of this historic town. A cable car (or optional walk) to the top of Paoma - 'Running Horse' - Mountain look-out will follow breakfast. The afternoon will include a fascinating introduction to this new land you've encountered on a relaxing photographic stroll through the enclave of Baitu Kan on your way to Dordrak Monastery on the west side of the Kangding valley. A pre-dinner stroll through the markets later in the day will give you an idea of why this town has been a key historical trading center between Tibetans and the Chinese.

Accommodation: [Zhilam Hostel, Kangding](#)

June 8. [Kangding.](#)

Today a forty-five minute drive will take you out of town to the scenic mountain pass of Ya Jia Gen. Along the way, scenery of



rural Tibetan life in still-ancient villages mixes together with panoramic views from the top of the pass to become a visual extravaganza. An alpine lake at the top will provide a surreal location for a picnic lunch, followed by exploration of the surrounding ridges by foot. You'll return to town by late afternoon in time for a short rest before dinner at the beautiful Malaya Tibetan Restaurant in the heart of town. Accommodation: [Zhilam Hostel, Kangding](#)

June 9. Kangding to Tagong.

This morning is up, up, up, and over the Zheduo Mountain pass (4200m) to the renowned nomadic trading village of Tagong (3700m). Weather permitting, you'll see the peak of Gong-ga Mountain (7566m) along the way - the highest peak in China outside of the Himalayas. This high altitude grassland area is home to many nomadic families who spend their days herding yaks, and on any given day the town is bustling with nomadic traders. A visit to a local monastic community will afford the opportunity to engage with the carvers that engrave Buddhist scriptures on stones for the local pilgrims. There is an optional afternoon horseback ride (approx \$50, not included in the tour



Monastery near Tagong



Pilgrim spinning prayer wheels in Tagong





Ancient towers of Danba



Zhonglu Village

price) for those with a sense of adventure. Evening includes dinner and a night at a nearby Tibetan style luxury lodge, an astonishing rural oasis worth visiting if only to photograph.

Accommodation: [Gongga Dzong Castle Lodge, outside Tagong](#)

June 10. [Tagong to Zhonglu Tibetan Village \(Danba\).](#)

You'll enjoy one of the most scenic drives on the Tibetan plateau. The drive from Tagong to Danba is breathtaking in its rugged beauty. The route provides stunning views of one of the most beautiful mountains in Eastern Tibet, Yala Mountain, as you follow a seemingly endless mountain canyon down to the tucked away town of Danba (elev. 1900m). High up on one of the surrounding hills lies your destination for the next two nights: the quaint Tibetan village of Zhonglu.

Accommodation: [Zhonglu Village Tibetan Homestay, Danba](#)

June 11. [Zhonglu Village.](#)

Today a relaxing hike on the surrounding slopes will offer stunning views of the valley along with beautiful terraced farms where the locals have cultivated an existence for



generations. This area is also famous for its ancient tower ruins that date back hundreds of years to the warring period between Tibetan clans. In the afternoon your host will treat you to an historical and cultural tour of his 700 year old home complete with cultural relics from hundreds of years ago.

Accommodation: [Zhonglu Village Tibetan Homestay, Danba](#)

June 12. [Zhonglu Village to Four Sisters Mountain.](#)

Descending from the terraced heights of Zhonglu, this morning follows a tight canyon valley for three hours on a gradual climb to Changping, the gateway village to the alpine wonderland of Four Sisters Mt. The village is a quaint mountain community of local Tibetans who make a living off of serving mountaineers and trekkers who come from around the globe to adventure in the breathtaking mountains known as the Four Sisters (Siguniangshan, in Chinese). Following lunch, enjoy an afternoon photographic walk through the village and surrounding valley. An optional climb to the adjacent ridge for images of the sunset on the mountains will precede a later dinner.

Accommodation: [Above the Clouds Hotel, Changping Village](#)



Eastern Tibet (Kham) Architecture



Four Sisters Mountain, Changping valley





View from Four Sisters Area



Experience the power of connection through photography

June 13. Four Sisters Mountain to Chengdu.

This morning marks your reluctant departure from the mountains, but not before crossing one more 4,000m+ pass (Balang Mt.) for a final view from the Roof of the World. Descending the countless canyons and switchbacks through mountain villages will remind you again why Tibet has remained so cut off from the rest of the world for much of history. After a half day of travel you'll pull into Chengdu in the afternoon to enjoy rest and refreshment in your room at the Buddha Zen. Enjoy an optional bamboo bike ride along Chengdu's Funan River to feel the vibe of the city before a farewell dinner. Following dinner, a fun opportunity for a mini "exhibit" to display your favourite trip images via video projector provides the perfect way to reminisce over the past 10 days.

Accommodation: [Buddha Zen Hotel, Chengdu](#)

June 14. Depart Chengdu (flight)

Your tour concludes after breakfast. Airport shuttle included.

Dates & Cost below...



Dates & Cost

Dates: June 4-14, 2018 11 Days

Cost: **USD \$3,300 /person**

*Special Early-bird pricing for the next 4 registrants

Inclusive of:

- As much (or as little) photographic coaching from Fritz as you would like
- All transport, including airport pick-up and transfers
- Private vehicle and driver, plus an excellent English speaking local guide
- All meals, including complimentary bottled water en-route
- All accommodation based on double occupancy
- All activities and entrance fees en-route (per the itinerary)
- Comprehensive packing list

Excludes:

- international airfare
- medical, travel, and trip interruption insurance
- passport and visa fees
- activities not included on the trip itinerary
- souvenirs, laundry, items of a personal nature

