

Pilgrimage 2010 Approximate Cost worksheet in USD

<http://www.oanda.com/converter/classic> *currency converter*

Here is a little document to help you consider all of the cost factors.

1. Plane fare

International \$ 900\$ to \$1000.00 and Domestic travel to New York \$0 to \$200.00

2. India Tour and Teachings

20 to 30 pax (people) \$735.00 to \$910.00

3. Travel Insurance \$ 50.00 to \$100.00

4. Meals/Water/Spending \$ \$200.00-500.00

5. Trains \$ 90.00

6. Porters, Extra Taxi's, tips \$ 30.00

7. Tsok , Stupa and Lama offerings, your preference

8. Health Care

Physical Exam yours to determine

Immunizations yours to determine

9. Pre-trip expenses yours to determine

10. Passport yours to determine

11. Tourist Visa \$60-100 depending on country.

Meals, spending money: 16\$/day times 14 days = \$224.00 or \$200.00

Though you may want to budget more for shopping for gifts ect.

Lama Jamdor and Tenzin are experts at all of this – they will be our guides and protectors along with Yogi Lama Gursam himself. They will assist with all Buffet style meals in clean and appropriate restaurants. They will advise you accordingly what is safe and not safe to eat. They can also help you barter for good deals when you are shopping.

Porters: It is expected that we need to pay porters to carry our luggage at times. We occasionally need taxis or auto rickshaws for short trips across town. Most tips and porters are included in Pilgrimage cost, but there are always a few unexpected needs to take care of.

Offerings: Please take into consideration Lama Jamdor's helpfulness and Yogi Lama Gursam's guidance and months and years of preparation, and volunteer hard work and organization has gone into this tour. Our travel agent Tenzin is being paid a good wage. Lama Gursam supports his refugee family in India as well if you are wondering where his hard earned offerings go to. We of course do also take into consideration your own means and abilities and our goal is that you enjoy your pilgrimage without financial worries. The significance of meeting the lineage masters is great as well. It is difficult to put a monetary value upon any of this. In general, there is never any expectation of monetary reciprocation during any of the offering ceremonies; it is your own wish. At Buddhist holy sites – for example, we purchase "robes" (beautiful fabric) for the Buddha statue in the Mahabodhi temple and there are also opportunities for offering of

flowers ect. to show devotion and respect to Shakyamuni Buddha. The tsog offering is a feast offering made using a specific prayer practice, and includes local food items that Jamdor purchases for us at a local store.

Health:

Pilgrimage 2010 recommendation: consult your health care practitioner prior to travel, and get a physical. You will need to purchase Travel Health Insurance as well. Consider Hep B immunization if you haven't already. Food and water borne diseases most common – may want to bring antacid and/or probiotic supplements. Read up on prevention. Emergen-C or other electrolyte replacements, Tylenol, and/or Motrin type pain relievers may be helpful as well as Pepto Bismol Tablets, anti diarrheal pills like Loperamide and an anti nauseant like Gravol and Gravol suppositories in case of dysentery. Please note that if you get dysentery and you have the proper meds, it is not much of a hassle at all, but if you have no meds it is quite the pain in the you know what. Please also bring a face mask for travelling through dusty areas.

CDC also recommends Hepatitis A, Typhoid, possibly Japanese Encephalitis (we will be in Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh in Northern India). However we understand that all of these things are at your own discretion and that you are responsible for your own health needs.

Malaria

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel>

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/regionalmalaria/indianrg.htm>

<http://www.malariaandhealth.com/public/introduction.htm>

Notes of interest:

- 1. Most do not use anti-malarials when traveling in India in the winter. It is the dry season, i.e. no mosquitoes. Mechanical and chemical mosquito repellants, and being informed, are the methods they use.*
- 2. You may want to take an antimalarial, but please know that Antimalarials can have uncomfortable side effects like hallucination.*

Pre-trip expenses: this is up to you. In general – you'll want to be dressed warmly in layers in the northern mountains, and lightly and protected from the hot sun on the plains. You will need a pair of comfortable walking shoes as well. We'll have a chance to donate our warmer layers at a monastery when we leave the North in Dehra Dun so that we don't have to carry them the rest of the trip, and they'll be helping someone else out! You shouldn't need to bring much – pack lightly as we need to carry the luggage to so many places. A small flashlight, general medications, a facemask, wet wipes for travel are a must. I will be providing you with more detailed lists as the tour approaches.

Passport: Please make sure you have one at latest two months in advance of trip so you can get your visa. You should get one asap if you are planning on this trip.

Visa: This is very simple and most reliable when you do it yourself by Priority Mail. You will need to do this about 6 weeks to one month in advance. Do not wait until the last minute or you will have to go and pick up you Passport at the consulate. You will need to go to the website of the nearest Indian Consulate or Embassy in your Country, Google it. Print out the forms for the 6 month (general) **Tourist Visa**. Print, Read and Fill it out and send it to the nearest consulate with your Passport, 2 Passport size pictures and a return Priority Mail envelope on which you fill out your own return address information. This is the visa that all tourists get. Just fill in “tourist or holiday” for purpose of trip. **Don’t forget to keep the tracking numbers of both envelopes! The Postal workers are familiar with this procedure just ask them.**

Please contact me, Amber (Lama Gursam’s wife) for additional information. I have been travelling in Asia for 15 years and can happily answer most of your questions.

My main e mail is blueskypie@gmail.com. I will be in Asia for most of the year, so for me e mail is best, however I am happy to give you a call as well if need be or we can Video Chat on G mail.

May many blessings be with you!