

# Sample Tibetan Plateau Faculty Led Program (3.5 Weeks, 6 Towns)



**\$ 2985**

*for support from two staff,  
class space, volunteer  
placement, domestic travel,  
entrance fees, room & board*



## Minds Abroad

Named a "Top Ten Program" by the Center for  
Citizen Diplomacy and U.S. State Department



## Program Introduction

The Tibetan Plateau, hidden away in the snow-capped Himalayan ranges, has always fired the imaginations of poets and philosophers for its invigorating scenic beauty and mysticism. Also famously known as the “Roof of the World” and home to mysterious Buddhist kingdoms, the plateau had beckoned the West with its irresistible allure. For explorers it had been a forbidden repository of hidden treasures. For many, who are on a spiritual journey, it is the doorway to Shangri-La, a slice of heaven on earth. Endowed with beautiful monasteries, wild mountainous treks and riveting displays of isolated, ancient cultures, the Tibetan Plateau, is a rewarding destination for anyone, looking for respite from the concrete din and bustle of everyday life.

Whether one wants to ruminate on life in the solitude of a monastery or one wants to trek past towering mountains into tribal villages to befriend local people, the Tibetan Plateau, covering five provinces and nearly a third of China, presents a dizzying range of options.

## Components of the Program

### Faculty-Led Classes

In Deqin, the faculty members accompanying the students on the trip will offer classes on areas of their expertise. These classes will be held on weekday mornings. We will arrange for classroom space, where they can efficiently offer these classes. Our staff will also further assist the instructor with study materials and organizing their classes. We can also arrange for guest lecturers, who can offer classes on issues closely related to the Tibetan Plateau.

### Afternoon Volunteer Service Learning at Local Non-Profit Organizations

In Deqin, during weekday afternoons, participants will teach English to students in non-profit organizations that are devoted to helping children from a variety of disadvantaged backgrounds. By teaching basic English to these children, participants will indirectly give them the skills that they need to escape poverty. Through this activity, participants will not only have an excellent opportunity to immerse themselves in the local culture, but will also learn about community and developmental issues in a typical emerging Asian city.

### Academic Travel

As a part of this program, over the weekends, students will visit Tibetan Himalayan towns and other locations in the Himalayas steeped in history, culture and natural beauty. These places are described in depth in the next section of the program.

## Locations Covered in Our Program

### Kunming

Kunming, a modern city situated at the foot-hills of the Himalayas, is famous for its year-round, spring-like weather, excellent air quality and striking cultural diversity. The city is the cosmopolitan capital of Yunnan Province, which is home to a multitude of ethnic minorities in China, including a major section of the Tibetan population.

Exploration of Kunming provides an in-depth understanding of what modern day China is like. A city like Kunming, in China's interior heartland, is a more “typical” Chinese city than Beijing or Shanghai. It is the kind of city where most Chinese people live but where few foreigners visit.



## Locations Covered in Our Program (Continue)

### Dali

Dali, which lies between the Cang Mountains on the shores of the Lake Erhai, was once regarded as the political, economic and cultural hub of Yunnan Province. Over 1000 years ago, Dali was the capital of the Nanzhao Kingdom, the southern rivals of the Tang Dynasty. Apart from its breath-taking scenic beauty and historical importance, Dali bristles with a curious mélange of ethnic groups---mostly Bai, one of Yunnan's largest ethnic minority groups as well as Yi and Hui. An exploration of Dali's old city and a trip to the verdant Cang Mountains are the highlights of this leg of the trip.

### Lijiang

Lijiang is one of northern Yunnan's most scenic towns and a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site. It is also home to the Naxi ethnic group famous for their animistic religion, their ancient music and their unique Dongba script, the only remaining pictographic writing system in the world. It is an old town with cobblestoned streets and dotted with traditional wood and stone houses. Lijiang is situated in a valley below the gigantic Jade Dragon Snow Mountain. Students here will experience the traditional charm of the ancient, beautiful mountain town with a distinct minority culture of the Naxis.



### Zhongdian

Zhongdian is a serene, authentic Tibetan town surrounded by high mountain peaks, gorgeous rivers and lush-green forests. A treasure trove of charming, well-decorated Tibetan farmhouses, this town perfectly embodies Tibet and its myriad charms. One does not need to travel all the way to Lhasa to gain an insight into Tibetan life. Replete with gorgeous lakes, mountains and parks, Zhongdian perfectly embodies Tibetan culture, heritage and identity.

### Deqin

Deqin is a picturesque town tucked in Yunnan's Hengduanshan Mountains. Tibetans make up the majority of the town's population. Sitting on a small valley adjacent to the Mekong River Gorge, the town commands gorgeous views of the snow-clad mountains that overlook it. If someone is aiming for pristine vistas dominated by mountains, secluded monasteries and excellent hiking trails, then Deqin is the place. Besides exploring the town, students here will participate in classes offered by their own faculty and volunteer at a local non-profit organization, most weekdays.

### Lhasa

Lhasa, one of the highest cities in the world and frequented by pilgrims from all over the world, is a city that holds many wondrous surprises. The administrative capital of the Tibet Autonomous Region in the People's Republic of China, this prefecture-level city is studded with numerous cultural and historic attractions, including the magnificent fortress of Potala Palace and Jokhang, a couple of kilometers to the east, serving as the main spiritual hub of the Holy City.



## Calendar

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
				In Transit	Kunming	Kunming
				Depart from home country	<b>AM:</b> Arrive at Kunming <b>PM:</b> Eat a traditional Tibetan meal for dinner <b>Evening:</b> Green Lake Park	<b>AM &amp; PM:</b> Western Hills <b>Evening:</b> Travel to Dali
Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
Dali	Lijiang	Zhongdian	Deqin	Deqin	Deqin	Deqin
<b>AM:</b> Dali Old Town <b>PM:</b> Cang Shan Mountain <b>Evening:</b> Rest	<b>AM:</b> Travel to Lijiang and rest upon arrival <b>PM:</b> Baisha Old Town <b>Evening:</b> Lijiang Old Town	<b>AM:</b> Journey to Zhongdian <b>PM:</b> Bike ride around Napa Lake <b>Evening:</b> Circle dancing and Guishan Park	<b>AM:</b> Songzanlin temple <b>PM:</b> Head to Deqin <b>Evening:</b> Free time	<b>AM:</b> Faculty-led class <b>PM:</b> Volunteer at a local non-profit organization	<b>AM:</b> Trekking and exploration Yubeng <b>PM:</b> Spend a night in Yubeng	<b>AM:</b> Continue the trek in Yubeng <b>PM:</b> Travel back to the down
Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17
Deqin	Deqin	Deqin	Deqin	Deqin	Deqin	Deqin
<b>AM:</b> Faculty-led class <b>PM:</b> Volunteer at a local non-profit organization	<b>AM:</b> Faculty-led class <b>PM:</b> Volunteer at a local non-profit organization	<b>AM:</b> Faculty-led class <b>PM:</b> Volunteer at a local non-profit organization	<b>AM:</b> Faculty-led class <b>PM:</b> Volunteer at a local non-profit organization	<b>AM:</b> Faculty-led class <b>PM:</b> Volunteer at a local non-profit organization	<b>AM &amp; PM:</b> Mingyong Glacier	<b>AM:</b> Feilai Temple <b>PM:</b> Enjoy the amazing view of the Meili Snow Mountain
Day 18	Day 19	Day 20	Day 21	Day 22	Day 23	Day 24
Deqin	Deqin	Zhongdian	Lhasa	Lhasa	Lhasa	Home Country
<b>AM:</b> Faculty-led class <b>PM:</b> Volunteer at a local non-profit organization	<b>AM:</b> Faculty-led class <b>PM:</b> Volunteer at a local non-profit organization	<b>AM:</b> Travel back to Zhongdian and fly to Lhasa. <b>PM:</b> Arrive in Lhasa and take a rest	<b>AM:</b> Potala Palace <b>PM:</b> Dazhao temple, Bakuo street	<b>AM:</b> Drive to Namucuo <b>PM:</b> Visit Namucuo, drive back and stop in Yangbajing	Depart to BJ/SH, connect to flight home	Arrive back in home country