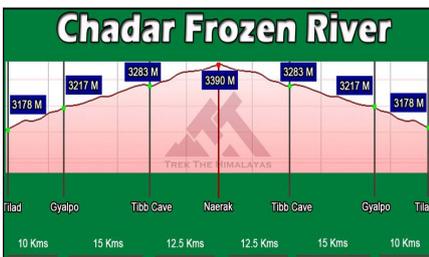




Milestone - Chadar Trek

On 15th to 24th January 2018

Location - Leh-Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, INDIA



GRADE – Difficult
MAX ALTITUDE – 11,123 Feet
Approx Trekking Route – 75 KM

Ladakh region is as beautiful & scenic as a difficult place to travel. It takes day or two for you to get acclimatize. The mountains are steep and in the winter snowfall closes many of the mountain passes and makes the few roads treacherous. With the lack of basic infrastructure like roads, due to the terrain condition, some villages become completely inaccessible between November and March. As it is said that "NECESSITY IS MOTHER OF ALL INVENTIONS" local villagers, who are left with no option during harsh winter, commute by trekking on top of the ICE of FROZEN RIVERS. The Chadar trek is one such route, connecting villages in the Zaskar Valley (deep in the mountains) with Chilling (on the road to Leh) along the frozen Zaskar River. This route has been used for centuries for trade and transportation and is most reliable in February when the ice is most stable.

The Zaskar river is big and fast-flowing. For most of its length between Chilling and the Zaskar valley the river is confined within a steep canyon. If the idea of walking over frozen river ice with a large pack on your back and very cold rushing water a few inches below your feet is terrifying, then you are not alone. Usually local porters who carry goods on the river for their livelihood can't afford to be conservative and they have to take this risk. The hike from Chilling to the Zaskar valley takes more than a week, and at night porters usually sleep in caves in the canyon walls.

For better or worse, the Chadar trek is an endangered activity and within 5 years will cease to exist in its current form. A road is currently being blasted out of the rock face above the river. When completed, winter access to the Zaskar valley villages in the interior will be relatively straight-forward. The road will certainly be safe and more convenient than the river, but its completion will mark the end of an ancient local practice.

The 'Chadar' is a perfect example of this resourcefulness of the Ladakhis and their indomitable spirit, in the face of such daunting odds. The term 'Chadar' means blanket in the local language, thereby giving an indication to the nature of this whole experience. Large sections of the river Zaskar, which is one of the mightiest rivers in Ladakh, freeze over in the dead of winter and are covered by a thick blanket of ice. This frozen blanket or 'Chadar' is the only way in and out for Zaskaris in winter, when the road and various other caravan routes of The icy wonderland of the 'Chadar trek' are closed due to heavy snowfall blocking the high passes. It has been their traditional trade route in winter for Centuries. The seven to eight days walk from chilling to Padum is both challenging as well as an incomparably exiting experience. The landscape acquires a pristine grandeur in winter as the trail enters into the gorge of the Zaskar, where temperatures sometimes drop to -30 to -35 Degree Celsius.

For detailed itinerary and information please contact us on – **9011023789** or

Mail us at ways2explore@gmail.com