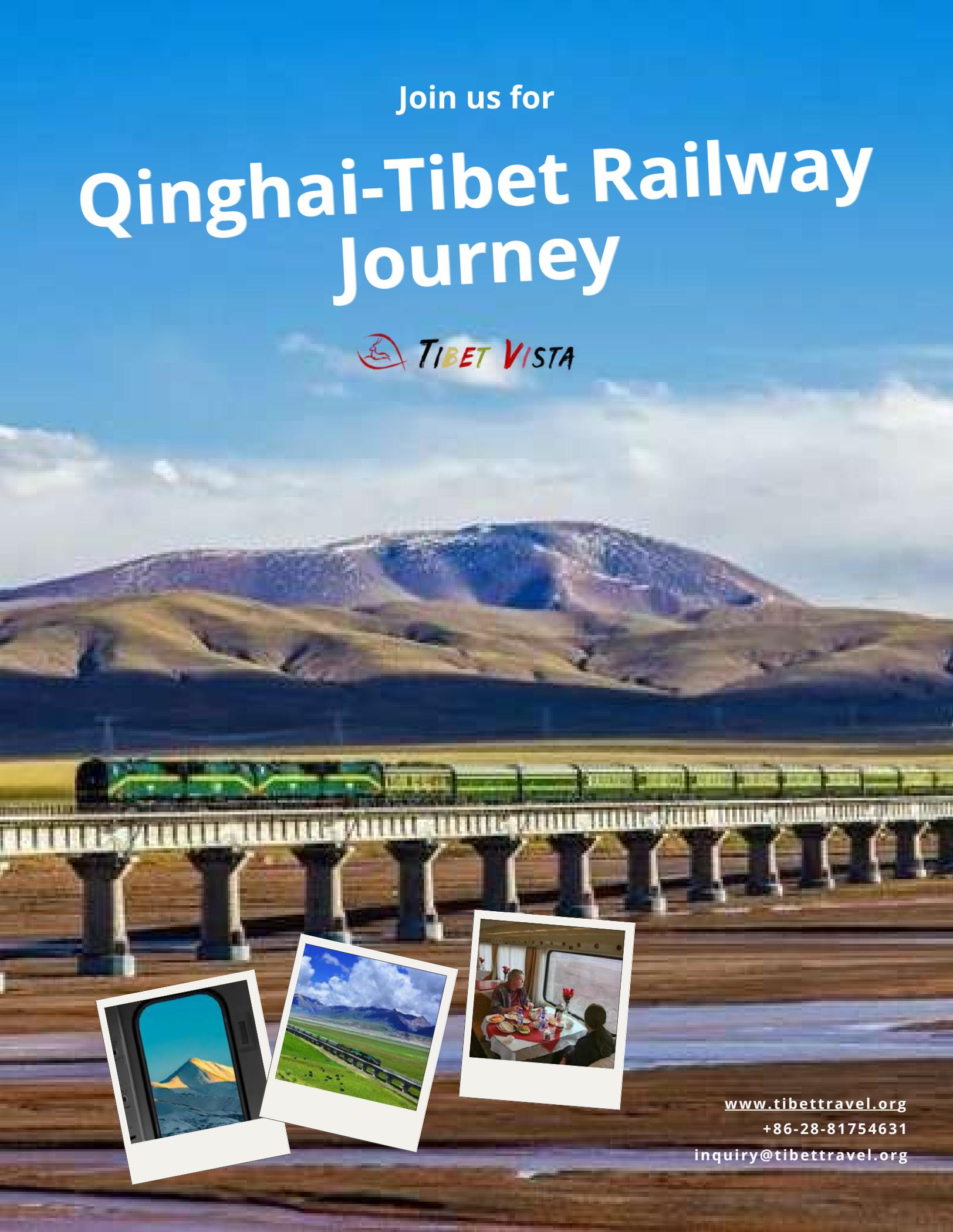


Join us for

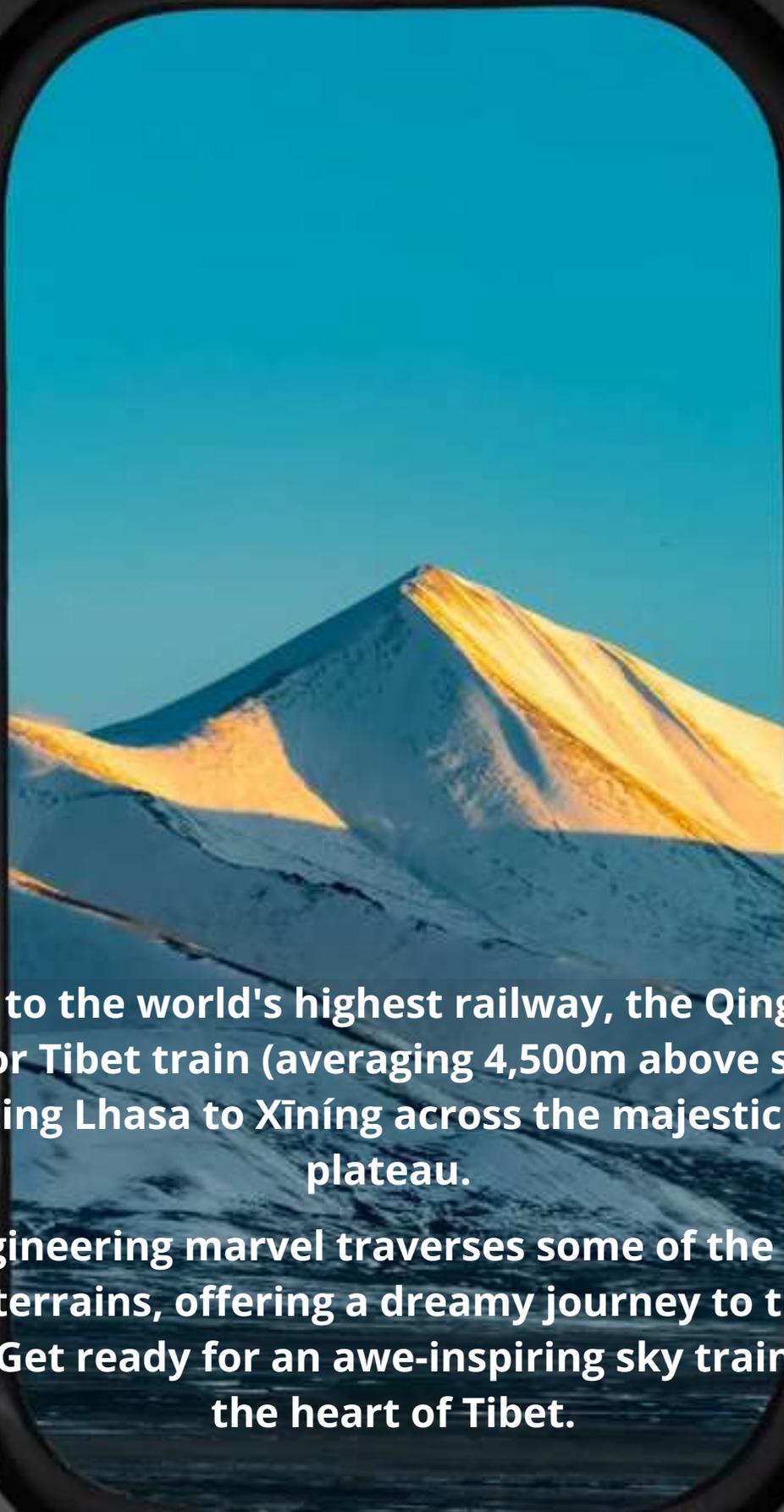
# Qinghai-Tibet Railway Journey



[www.tibettravel.org](http://www.tibettravel.org)

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**Welcome to the world's highest railway, the Qinghai-Tibet Railway or Tibet train (averaging 4,500m above sea level), connecting Lhasa to Xīníng across the majestic Tibetan plateau.**

**This engineering marvel traverses some of the planet's toughest terrains, offering a dreamy journey to the Roof of the World. Get ready for an awe-inspiring sky train journey to the heart of Tibet.**

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## PLAN YOUR TIBET TRAIN TOUR

# Qinghai-Tibet Railway at a Glance

**Distance:** The Qinghai-Tibet Railway is approximately 1,956 kilometers (1,215 miles) long. It stretches from Xining in Qinghai Province to Lhasa, the capital of the Tibet Autonomous Region. It takes 19.49 hours via 5 stations to reach Lhasa station from Xining.

**Stations:** Xining(2,275m), Golmud(2,809m), TuotuoRiver(4,547m), Anduo(4,702m), Nagqu(4,513m), Lhasa(3,600m).

**Speed:** Xining to Golmud (160km/h), Golmud to Lhasa (100km/h).

**Train Ticket:** Hard Seat, Hard Sleeper, and Soft Sleeper.

**Oxygen-supply system:** The Tibet train is air-sealed with an advanced pumped-in oxygen supply system and oxygen outlets to ensure passengers' safe and pleasant travel.

**Travel Formalities:** Train Ticket, foreign nationals' passport, Tibet Travel Permit.

**Cities to Board Tibet Train:** While the Qinghai-Tibet Railway primarily starts from Xining, there are connecting trains from various cities across China that link up with it, such as Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai, Chongqing, Xi'an, Lanzhou, Guangzhou, etc.

**Dining:** There is a restaurant carriage serving Chinese dishes (¥35 to ¥60). Boxed meals, snacks, instant noodles, crisps, drinks, and fast food, are also available aboard.

**Toilet:** Most are squatters whereas Western-style seated toilets are also available in soft sleeper cabins. Bring your own toilet paper. There are sink basins at the ends of carriages for general washing up.

## 10 Amazing Facts about Tibet Train

- ✓ **The world's HIGHEST railway**  
960 kilometers of this railway lie at 4,000 meters above sea level and its highest point is 5,072 meters, at least 200 meters higher than the former world's highest railway, the Peruvian railway in Peru.
- ✓ **The FIRST railway to Tibet**  
The Qinghai-Tibet Railway is the first railroad to Tibet, linking Tibet with mainland China and ending Tibet's history without rail.
- ✓ **The world's LONGEST plateau railroad**  
The total length of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway is 1,956 kilometers from Xining to Lhasa. The Golmud-Lhasa section zigzags 1,142 kilometers across the Kunlun and Tanggula mountain ranges.
- ✓ **The world's LONGEST track on frozen earth**  
550 kilometers of the railway is built on frozen earth, the longest in any of the plateau railways on Earth.
- ✓ **The world's HIGHEST railway station**  
Tanggula Railway Station located at 5,068 meters above sea level is noted as the highest train station on Earth.
- ✓ **The world's HIGHEST railway tunnel**  
The Fenghuoshan Tunnel of Qinghai-Tibet Railway built at 4,905 meters above sea level, is the most elevated on frozen earth in the world.
- ✓ **The world's LONGEST plateau tunnel**  
The Kunlun Mountain Tunnel with a total length of 1,686 meters is the world's longest plateau tunnel built on frozen earth.

✓ **The world's LONGEST plateau railway bridge**

With a total length of 11.7 kilometers, the Qingshui River Bridge, at an altitude of 4500 meters in the Hoh Xil unpopulated area, is noted as the longest plateau railway bridge in the world.

✓ **The world's FASTEST train on frozen earth**

Upon its completion, the train's maximum speed is designed to reach 100 kilometers per hour in frozen earth areas, and 120 kilometers per hour on non-frozen earth.

✓ **NO worker died of altitude sickness**

Around 100,000 engineers and construction workers were involved in the construction of this railway, and 10% of them were from local ethnic groups. None of the workers died of altitude sickness during the construction.

## 8 Major Gateway Cities to Lhasa by Tibet Train



<b>Train Code</b>	<b>Dep.Time</b>	<b>Arr.Time</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Z21 (Beijing to Lhasa)</b>	19:53	11:36	3761km	39hr.43min	Every Day
<b>Z164 (Shanghai to Lhasa)</b>	18:33	15:05	4373km	44hr.32min	Every Day
<b>Z322 (Chengdu to Lhasa)</b>	21:11	07:41	3360km	34hr.30min	Every Other Day
<b>Z223 (Chongqing to Lhasa)</b>	21:56	07:41	3641km	33hr.45min	Every Other Day
<b>Z917 (Xi'an to Lhasa)</b>	23:35	10:20	2864km	34hr.45min	Every Other Day
<b>Z264 (Guangzhou to Lhasa)</b>	09:15	14:17	4980km	53hr.02min	Every Day
<b>Z21 (Lanzhou to Lhasa)</b>	12:31	11:36	2188km	23hr.05min	Every Day
<b>Z8991 (Xining to Lhasa)</b>	21:50	17:39	1960km	19hr.49min	Every Day



**Xining-Lhasa Train:** Each year, there are around one-quarter of tourists taking Tibet trains to Lhasa from Xining. The famous Qinghai-Tibet railway starts from Xining to Lhasa. It is the shortest train route to Lhasa and covers the best-highlighted scenery of all railways to Tibet.



**Beijing-Lhasa Train:** Known as the capital and one of the most vibrant cosmopolitans of China, Beijing is often the first option for overseas travelers to access China. Every year, many tourists, both home and abroad, choose to enter Tibet from Beijing, making Beijing Lhasa railway one of the most popular railway routes to Tibet from mainland China.



**Shanghai-Lhasa Train:** Shanghai is an ideal city for international travelers because it has many international flights and cruises connecting the global world. As traditionally the most developed international metropolis of China, the city's multicultural flair endows it with a unique glamour and lifestyle which can be felt deeply by visiting famous attractions such as the Shanghai Museum, Yu Garden, Oriental Pearl TV Tower, the Bund, and Nanjing Road.



**Guangzhou-Lhasa Train:** Guangzhou, one of China's three largest cities, serves as a major port and transportation hub and one of the popular gateways for travel into Tibet. For avid railfans, you can board this longest Tibet train to Lhasa, witnessing the diverse Landscapes across China from bustling metropolises to untamed wilderness on the Tibetan plateau.



**Chengdu-Lhasa Train:** Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan Province and home to giant pandas, is one of the major cities offering trains to Tibet. Thanks to the rapid development of the local transportation system in recent years, you can now have easy access to Chengdu Railway Station to start your lifetime Tibet train journey from any corner of the city.



**Chongqing-Lhasa Train:** Surrounded by mountains and built on the hills, Chongqing is known as the Mountain City. It serves as the economic center of the upstream Yangtze basin and transportation hub. Passengers can arrive at Chongqing by flight or Yangtze River Cruise, and then take the Chongqing-Lhasa train to Tibet.



**Xian-Lhasa Train:** Xian serves as the capital of numerous Chinese dynasties, including the Qin, Han, and Tang dynasties. It was the starting point of the ancient Silk Road and home to the famous Terracotta Warriors of the Qin Dynasty. Passengers can take a flight or train to Xian, explore this amazing city for a couple of days, and then board the Tibet train to Lhasa.



**Lanzhou Tibet Train:** Lanzhou is the capital city of Gansu Province in northwest China and used to be a very important point on the ancient Silk Road. As an important tourist city and transportation hub in central China, Lanzhou has convenient transportation connections to major cities. There are regular flights to Lanzhou every day, you may go to Lanzhou by plane and then go to Lhasa by train.



# 5 Most Popular China Tibet Train Tours



## 10 Days Xining and Tibet Natural Scenery Tour by Train



**Tour Route:** Xining-Qinghai Lake-Lhasa-Namtso-Shigatse-Everest Base Camp

“Start in Xining, boarding the scenic Qinghai-Tibet train to Lhasa. Discover Lhasa's spiritual wonders—Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple, and Drepung Monastery. Experience lively debates at Sera Monastery and the serenity of Namtso Lake. Journey to Shigatse via Yamdork Lake and Gyantse, visiting Kumbum Stupa. Conclude with a pilgrimage to majestic Mount Everest, witnessing breathtaking sunset and sunrise vistas.”

[View Details](#)

## 12 Days Chengdu and Tibet Train Tour

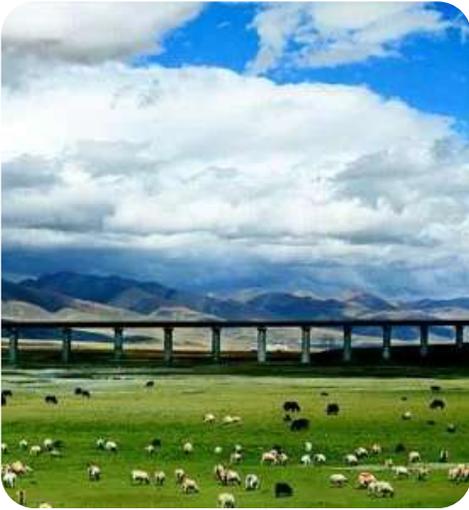


**Tour Route:** Chengdu-Lhasa-Namtso Lake-Shigatse-Everest Base Camp-Lhasa

“Start your journey in Chengdu with a visit to the charming giant pandas at the Panda Breeding and Research Center. Then, take an overnight train to Lhasa, where you'll be captivated by the beauty of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway. Explore Lhasa's cultural treasures for two days before heading to Namtso Lake and Mount Everest, experiencing the natural wonders of the Tibetan plateau.”

[View Details](#)

## 14 Days Mt. Everest Adventure Tour from Beijing by Train



**Tour Route:** Beijing-Lhasa-Namtso Lake-Shigatse-Everest Base Camp-Lhasa

“Begin your adventure from the iconic Great Wall and delve into Beijing's imperial splendors, including the Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven. Then, catch an overnight train from Xi'an to Lhasa, where you'll explore famous palaces, temples, and monasteries, and witness the breathtaking beauty of Namtso Lake and Mt. Everest.”

[View Details](#)

## 11 Days Tibet Train Tour from Shanghai



**Tour Route:** Shanghai - Lhasa - Namtso Lake - Shigatse - Everest Base Camp - Lhasa

“Set out an unforgettable journey from Shanghai aboard the Qinghai-Tibet train, exploring Tibetan Buddhism and the awe-inspiring landscapes. From stunning lakes to majestic mountains, vast grasslands, and boundless deserts, every moment offers a glimpse into Tibet's diverse beauty. Our expedition culminates at Namtso Lake and Everest Base Camp.”

[View Details](#)

## 14 Days Kathmandu-Lhasa-Beijing Tour by Train



**Tour Route:** Kathmandu-Syabrubesi-Gyirong--Shigatse-Gyantse-Lhasa-Xian-Beijing

“Discover a 14-day journey through the Himalayas, admiring the world's highest peak and exploring renowned Buddhist sites from Everest to Shigatse and Lhasa. After your Tibet tour, enjoy a scenic train ride to Xi'an for a glimpse into ancient Chinese civilization. Conclude your adventure in bustling Beijing, where majestic palaces and rich cultural attractions await.”

[View Details](#)

# Why Choose Tibet Vista



## SECURE TIBET TRAIN TICKET

Securing the perfect Tibet train ticket to Lhasa can be tough for overseas travelers. Luckily, our network maximizes your chances of booking the ideal Tibet train ticket.



## 100% GUARANTEE FOR TIBET TRAVEL PERMIT

Boarding the Tibet train to Lhasa requires a Tibet Travel Permit. We ensure a hassle-free process to obtain your permit for free and deliver it to you as promised.



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Trusty by



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inquiry@tibetravel.org

Room 8102 (first floor) of Lhasa Gang Cyan hotel, Beijing East Road, Lhasa



# Top 20 Tibet Train FAQs

## 1. Where Can I Board the Tibet Train to Lhasa? Preferably from Xining?

You can board the Tibet train to Lhasa from major cities in China, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu, Xining, Xi'an, Chongqing, Lanzhou, and more.

However, to enjoy the shortest Tibet train ride while capturing the highlighted views of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway journey, the [Xining-Lhasa train](#) is the best Tibet train route you can choose from. It stretches 1,956 kilometers and it takes around 20 hours from Xining to Lhasa by train.



Due to the popularity of the Xining-Lhasa train ticket, it tends to sell out quickly. So, for international tourists, it's advisable to book your Tibet train tickets through your travel agency to maximize your chance of getting the ideal train ticket.

## 2. Can I Book Tibet Train Tickets Online? Yes, But Not Recommended

Well, theoretically you can book Tibet Train tickets yourself on 12306 China Railway's official English website and Trip.com.

Yet, in reality, due to the shortage of Tibet train tickets, and more importantly foreign nationals can't board the Tibet train or flight to Lhasa until you get the [Tibet Travel Permit](#) through a pre-booked Tibet tour with a local Tibet travel agency, the best solution is to allow us to help you secure the Tibet train permit to Tibet.

## 3. What Travel Documents Are Needed to Board the Tibet Train? Tibet Travel Permit Is a Must-have

According to the policy of the Tibet Tourism Bureau, overseas travelers can only visit Tibet through a pre-arranged guided tour with a local Tibet travel agency like us.



You need to show your Tibet Travel Permit applied from your Tibet travel agency, together with your valid passport and Tibet train ticket to board the Qinghai-Tibet Railway to Lhasa. So, it would be a hassle-free solution to rely on us to help you get a Tibet Travel Permit and Tibet train ticket to embark on your Tibet train journey.



#### 4. Any Jaw-dropping Window Views I Expect to See along the Qinghai-Tibet Railway?

Definitely! The highlighted views of the world's highest train start to unfold after the Tibet train leaves Golmud for Lhasa. In the daytime, you are expected to see:

**Qinghai Lake (3,260m):** One of the largest and highest saltwater lakes in the world.

**Mt. YuZhu (6,178m):** Marvel at the stunning vista of snow-capped Youzhu peak, parts of Kunlun Mountain Ranges.

**Kekexili Nature Reserve (4,600m):** Keep your eyes wide open to spot any Tibetan antelopes, wild yaks, wild asses, alpine foxes, etc. if you are in luck.

**Tuotuo River (4,547m):** Witness the majestic flow of the Tuotuo River, one of the headwaters of the Yangtze River, meandering through the Tibetan plateau.

**Tanggula Mountain Pass (5,068m):** This is the highest point on the railway, offering awe-inspiring peaks and dramatic scenery of the Tanggula Mountain Range.

**Tsonag Lake (4,600m):** Feast your eyes with the serene and one of the highest fresh lakes.

**Qiangtang Grassland (4,500m):** Enjoy the endless stretches of grassy plains, dotted with Tibetan yaks and nomads' tents in summer.



## 5. What Is the Best Time to Travel on the Qinghai-Tibet Railway? April to Nov.

Though the Tibet train journey can be enjoyed all year round, certain times of the year may be more appealing to different travelers.

June to August, though being the high season of Tibet travel, offers you a perfect time to see the grasslands in their full greenery, and glittering alpine lakes and experience the beauty of snow-capped mountains along the Tibet train journey.

April to May and Sept to Oct promise pleasantly mild weather, crisp air, and stunning visibility for trekking, cycling, kora (pilgrimage), etc. You may also combine your Tibet train tour with major [Tibetan festivals](#) such as Saga Dawa, and Shoton festivals, to explore the Tibetan traditions.

Starting from November, the off-season for Tibet travel means easier access to soft sleeper tickets along your preferred Tibetan train route. You can enjoy a less crowded Tibet train cabin and wander through the holy Lhasa city with more pilgrims for an immersive Tibetan experience. Meanwhile, you can book 4-5 star hotels with less money.

## 6. Is It Safe to Travel in Tibet Train? Safe and Secure

Rest assured that the Tibet train journey is safe and secure. The conductor will patrol the different carriages for security checks and offer help to passengers in need.

Moreover, the Tibet train boasts an air-sealed design and features an oxygen supply system. This ensures passengers remain comfortable even as the train ascends to high altitudes, alleviating any headaches or light-headedness commonly associated with altitude changes.

In addition, the Tibet train will stop longer at certain stations, such as Golmud (25 minutes), to allow you to stretch your legs off the train and have better acclimatization before heading to high stations.

## 7. Are There Any Altitude Sickness Precautions on the Tibet Train?

Definitely! As the world's highest train, the Tibet train is equipped with an advanced oxygen system. As the train heads to Golmud, the train staff will activate the oxygen supply system, ensuring the safe amount of oxygen level within the carriages.



The train cabins are air-sealed like a plane, protecting you from harsh climate and thin air outside the harsh plateau environment. Additionally, you may easily access the piped-in oxygen through a special socket beside each seat or berth to ease altitude sickness symptoms such as headache, dizziness, fatigue, nausea, etc.



## 8. Tibet Train Ride vs Flying to Tibet, Which Is Better for Acclimatization to High Altitude?

The rumor has it that taking the Tibet train to Lhasa helps better acclimatize to altitude sickness, compared with flying to Tibet. However, the reality is that traveling by train to acclimate to Lhasa's high altitude only helps a little.

Since the Tibet train carriages are pressured with pumped-in oxygen, it's pretty similar to traveling on air. Remember, altitude sickness can affect anyone, regardless of your health and fitness level. It has more to do with your natural ability to adapt to high elevation.

While the [Tibet train journey](#) does help in acclimatization given the gradual ascent and slower speed than a plane, it's not a guaranteed solution. Many travelers may still experience mild altitude sickness during the journey, such as lightheadedness or dizziness. But, no worries!

## 9. What Are the Classes of Seats Available on the Tibet Train? Go for a Soft Sleeper

There are three kinds of seats on the Tibet train. For the utmost comfort and privacy, go for the soft sleeper ticket if it is available.

**Hard Seat:** As the name suggests, a hard seat offers a basic stiff seat for passengers. You will see 98 passengers packed into a single carriage. It's the most economical option for the Tibet train while sacrificing comfort and privacy.

**Hard Sleeper:** Hard Sleeper is a mid-range Tibet train ticket. A Hard sleeper carriage can accommodate six passengers in bunk beds, with bedding provided in triple-tier bunks. There is a curtain and table available, but there is no door. Do keep any valuables close if you move around the train.

**Soft Sleeper:** Soft Sleeper is the most comfortable and popular option. Soft sleeper cabins are more spacious and only accommodate four passengers in bunk beds, with TVs available for each passenger and a lockable door for privacy. You may use seated toilets in the bathrooms and a designated place to store your luggage above the door.



Hard Seat



Hard Sleeper



Soft Sleeper

## 10. What Can I Eat Aboard Tibet Train? Far More than Boxed Meals

Well, there is a dining carriage on the Tibet train where you can savor traditional Chinese food such as Kung Pao chicken (Spicy chicken with peanuts), Mapo tofu (Spicy tofu with minced meat), Gong Bao shrimp (Spicy shrimp with vegetables), fried rice with various toppings such as egg, vegetables, and meat, tomato egg stir-fry, noodles, scrambled eggs, etc.

If you don't want the fuss of going to the dining carriage, during 3 meal times, the staff pulling the food trolley loaded with boxed meals is another option. For breakfast, you can choose from pickles and eggs to bread and milk, which is just 10CNY.

Note that Western cuisines are rarely found on Tibet trains. Besides, you can stock up on small snacks, biscuits, and fruit to enjoy and share with berth mates aboard the Tibet train. Don't forget to bring a thermos bottle to get free boiled water at the dispenser at the end of each carriage.



## 11. Are There Restrooms and Shower Facilities on the Tibet Train?

There are two kinds of restrooms in the Tibet train: squat toilets and Western-style (seated) toilets. Do bring your own toilet paper. The sink basins are available at the ends of carriages for general washing up. The showering facilities are not available on the Tibet train.



Squat Toilet



Western-style Toilet



Soft Sleeper

## 12. How Early Should I Arrive at the Train Station for Check-in? 45min to 1 Hour Earlier

Usually, there is a long line to board the Tibet train at most train stations, and for foreign nationals, you need to present your Tibet Travel Permit, passport, and train ticket for more security checks. So, do arrive earlier at the station between 45 minutes to 1 hour before the train leaves for Lhasa.



## 13. Are There Any Restrictions on Luggage Size or Weight? Yes, But No Worries

The maximum limit of free cabin luggage for each passenger is 10 kg for children (including those free of tickets), 35 kg for diplomats, and 20 kg for other passengers.

The maximum dimension of each item is 160 cm in total (rod-shaped items 200 cm) for traditional trains; the maximum weight for each item is 20kg. Foldable wheelchairs used by people with disabilities are not included in the above range.

Daggers, three-edged knives, and explosives are forbidden. Additionally, it's recommended to pack lightly and bring only essential items, as space in the train cabins can be limited.

## 14. How Much Does It Cost to Travel on the Qinghai-Tibet Railway?

The cost for a Tibet train journey mainly comes from the Tibet train tickets.

Prices for soft sleeper tickets can range from around \$150 to \$300 or more, depending on the route and season. Besides, if you book a Tibet train ticket from the travel agency, the extra service fee is also expected (300-500 RMB).

The rest is the cost of food on the Tibet train, you can budget \$10-15 for daily dining aboard the Tibet train.

### **15. Can I Hop off the Tibet Train and Hop back on Days Later with the Same Ticket?**

Nope! The tickets for Tibet trains are usually issued for specific segments of the journey and have assigned seat or berth numbers. Once you disembark from the train, your ticket is no longer valid for further travel.

If you plan to make multiple stops along your route, you would need to purchase separate tickets for each segment of the journey.

### **16. Are there Power Outlets Available for Charging Electronic Devices?**

Yes, the Tibet train is equipped with power outlets available for you to charge electronic devices. These power outlets are typically located near the seats or berths in the train cabins.

It's a good idea to bring a universal travel adapter with you to ensure compatibility with the power outlets on the train. Additionally, it's recommended to bring a portable power bank when power outlets may be in high demand in a crowded cabin.

### **17. Can the Tibet Train Staff Speak English? Not Many**

Well, some Tibet train staff may have basic English language skills, but English proficiency among train staff can vary. It would be a great idea to use translation apps or Chinese phrasebooks to chat with train staff or birthmates during their Tibet train journey.

### **18. Can I Book Guided Tibet Train Tours to Lhasa or Extended Tours from Lhasa through the Train Service? Yes**

Of course, whether you are traveling to or from Lhasa via Tibet train, you can book a guided tour with us, an award-winning and Lonely Planet-recommended local Tibet travel agency. We can help you secure the Tibet Travel Permit and Tibet train ticket and arrange small group and custom the [Tibet tour](#), [Tibet Nepal Buthan tour](#) and [China Tibet tours](#) as well. Please feel free to inquire.

### **19. Are There Any Entertainment Provided During the Tibet Train Journey?**

Well, apart from enjoying the amazing window view from the Tibet train, you can watch TV in soft sleepers or chat with fellow travelers during the journey with the help of translation apps, sharing stories, snacks, and experiences.

Alternatively, share photos through Instagram, read your prepared novels, or listen to music or your favorite podcasts. Other than that, there isn't much public entertainment available on the Tibet train.

## 20. Do I Have Internet Access Aboard the Tibet Train? Yet, But Unstable Due to the Terrain

Well, free public Wi-Fi is not available on the Tibet train. A great solution is to purchase a local SIM card with data coverage before boarding the train and later use 4G internet access to browse the web.

Note that internet access is unstable as the train passes through long tunnels and remote Tibetan regions along the route.

So, taking the Tibet train to Lhasa is just an iceberg of a bigger and more exciting adventure in Tibet. Hopefully, our informative Tibet train FAQs have sparked your excitement for the journey ahead. If you're hungry for more insights or need expert travel advice, don't hesitate to [email us for a free inquiry](mailto:inquiry@tibettravel.org). Cheers to your upcoming Tibet train adventure!

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[Contact Us](#)

 **TIBET VISTA**  
2024-2025