

Annual Shandur Festival and Kalash Valley 11 Days Tour

From 7-9th July (Festival)

Explore the unique Kalash Culture with mighty Hindukush, Karakoram and Himalayan
Once in a lifetime opportunity

Pakistan, a magnificent country on the map of the world which houses some of the majestic mighty mountain ranges of the world. Out of the 14 highest mountain peaks of the world, 4 are in Pakistan that notably lies in **Karakorum Mountain Range**.

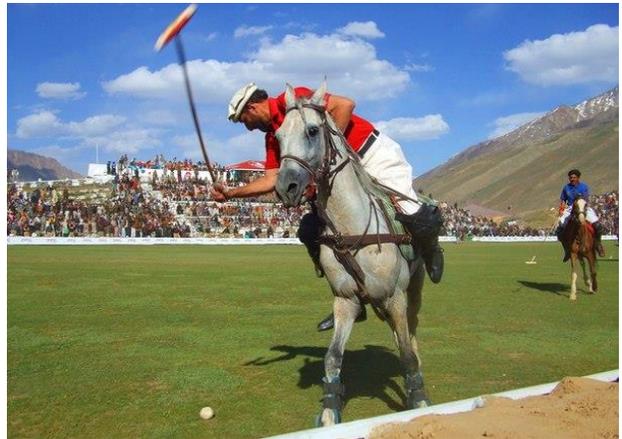
In addition to Karakorum, there are hundreds of peaks above 7000 meters, are situated in Karakorum, Himalaya, HinduKush, and Nanga Parbat region-the most famous mountain ranges of Pakistan. All of these mountains add more amazement to the scenic beauty of landscapes. These mountain ranges are storing the 3rd largest glaciers deposits of world after Antarctica and Greenland.

Many wonders, including the world highest Highway (KKH) the world highest polo ground on the ground (Shandur), the largest tunnel of Asia, the unique Kalash culture etc.

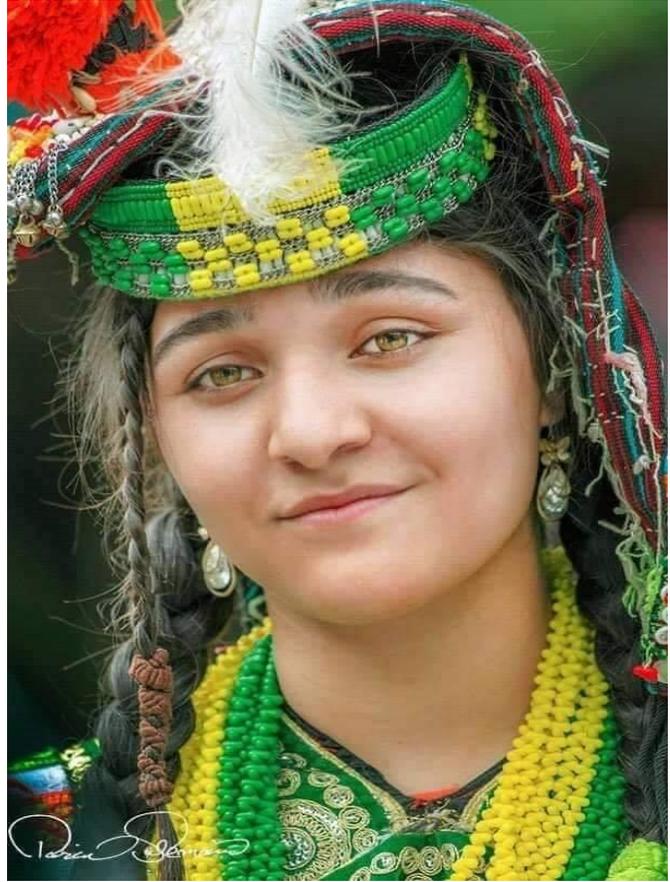
At the top of world, Shandur festival is an amazing challenging festival for the participants, celebrated by the tribes of Gilgit and Chitral in the northern areas of Pakistan.

This is centuries old festival, the tribes from the mountain regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral meet annually at the fascinating pasture and highest polo ground of the world (12500 feet=3810 meter). A living civilization, prestigious heritage and amazing culture of mountain communities is practiced in a way that attract and hold attentively by a unique power,

personal charm, unusual nature with some special quality; enthrall: a vivacity that is **fascinating** the audience to arouse the interest or curiosity of allure.



Shandur top in District Upper Chitral is often called the “Roof of the world” is vivacious challenged for every life who are not acclimatized with the high altitude atmosphere – is multiplying the challenges for the sportsmen and the polo horses(evolved over the past 45 to 55 million years from a small multi-toed creature and taxonomic family Equidae) at the world highest polo ground in a unique free style polo- the Game of Kings and kings of games- and others sports and culture activities under the open sky adjacent to one of the largest glacier lake on the top roof of Hindukush range. The polo tournament is featured in the first episode of Himalaya with Michael Palin. Various teams of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral have always played the game of polo closest to its original form. In the past, the British Rulers were the patrons of the game.



The festival also includes full night folk music, dancing, showcasing craft and arts, culture show performed by different group of Chitral and Gilgit Baltistan in the camping villages established in the vicinity of the polo ground near the glacier lake. Other attractions of the festival, includes trout fishing, mountaineering, trekking, hiking, horse riding, paragliding and motorized gliding and a beautiful display of fireworks.

Kalash or Kalasha valleys are wonderland for tourism: The Kalash are an indigenous people living in District Lower Chitral KP Pakistan. The Kalash community holds on to their own religious beliefs, along with their own identity, way of life, and language. The Kalash people are also noted for their fair skin and blue and yellowish eyes, leading to a popular hypothesis that they were of Greek origin, specifically the descendants of Alexander the Great’s soldiers who followed him on his campaign in India.

They live in three specific valleys in south of Chitral- Bumburat, Birir, and Rumbur, an estimated population of about 4000 people, which makes them the smallest minority group of Pakistan. Kalasha culture is one of the ancient and rich cultures from across the world and might be described as being of universal value, would be something which was extraordinary and unlike anything else in other parts of the world.

The Kalasha are a unique people, unlike any other on the globe in cultural practices and way of life, clearly differ from both the surrounding cultures of Pakistan, and the rest of the world. A Greek volunteers in the valleys said that the **“Kalasha are the cultural heroes of 21st century”**. The Kalasha way of life is finely balanced, allowing both men and women to do their duties freely. The Kalasha society is not a male-dominated society like other communities in Pakistan. The Kalash social organization is very effective, and ensures there is no cruelty or discrimination based on issues of gender. The Kalasha culture is appreciated globally- here one cannot marry with a close relative, including second cousins not within the same caste. The Kalash peoples believe in a single, creative God, referred to in the Kalasha language as **Dezau**- use the Persian term Khudai as well.

Kalasha peoples do not have any routine daily prayers, they do pray whenever they initiate any activities like harvesting, plugging, construction and whenever the favor and honor of **Dezau** is needed. Most prayers are offered during Kalasha festivities. There is a strong belief of in purity and impurity in the Kalasha culture. In the Kalasha belief system women are considered to be especially impure during menstruation and childbirth. There is a separate building for these women and it is prohibited for men to enter this building. The building where the women stay during the menstruation and childbirth is known as **“Bashali”**. Kalash women have a unique and colorful dress that serves as the most obvious symbol of identity for the Kalash community. They are fun of music and dance and both male and female celebrate the four seasonal festivals together by dancing and celebrating happiness. It may be not wrong, if we say that Kalash are the most happiest and innocent people on the planet.



ITINERY FOR THE TRIP.

- **Day-01:** Arrive Islamabad airport and transfer to hotel
- **Day-02:** Drive to KALASH, 412km, 10-12 hrs
- **Day-03:** Full day exploration of Kalash valley and return to Chitral 45km for o/n stay
- **Day-04:** Drive to Shandur 160km, 5-6 hrs
- **Day-06:** Two days at Shandur pass for final event and drive back to Phunder for o/n stay
- **Day-07:** Drive to Gilgit lunch at Gilgit and afternoon drive to Hunza 100 km 1 hour.
- **Day-08:** Local visits in Karimabad full day exploration evening drive to Gilgit for o/n stay.
- **Day-09:** Drive to Naran via Babusar Pass 4137m for overnight stay
- **Day-10:** Drive to Islamabad after exploring Buddha sites at Abbottabad/Haripur 6-7 hrs
- **Day-11:** Transfer to Islamabad for the return flight

NOTE: Cost of the trip is 105,000 PKR per person or US\$ 745. This costing is based on 9+pax, and smaller group will be little expensive and larger groups will be comparatively be economical.

The cost of this itinerary includes:

- Pick and drop from airport at Islamabad
- Full board hotel accommodation at Islamabad, Kalash, Chitral, phunder, Hunza, Gilgit, and Naran
- Camping and food at Shandur and phunder 2 nights, including tents, mattress, sleeping bags.
- Guide from Islamabad to Islamabad
- Transport: Islamabad to Dir by coaster and transferred to Jeeps till return to Gilgit from Hunza.
- Transport Gilgit to Naran and Islamabad 2 days by coaster
- Over night at Islamabad and transfer to air port-Islamabad.
- Double occupancy of rooms and tents.

Package will not Include:

Warm cloths, jackets, sun protection kits, medicines, extra mineral water, mini bars use in hotels, addition food or fruits, tips, single supplement in hotel and tented accommodation, additional travelling and transport, travel insurance etc.

Map of Chitral:

