

TOUR · GILGIT-BALTISTAN

Skardu City Tour

Five days through the capital of Baltistan — forts, turquoise lakes, desert dunes and the Deosai approach.

DURATION

5 Days
4 Nights

SEASON

Apr–Oct
Open season

MAX ALTITUDE

2,500 m
Highest point

GRADE

Easy–Mod
Vehicle + walks

FROM

\$280
per person

The Journey

The Skardu City Tour is a 5-day, 4-night introduction to the capital of Baltistan — ancient forts, turquoise alpine lakes, desert dunes and one of the world's most dramatically situated cities. Skardu sits at 2,500m in the heart of the Karakoram, ringed by giant peaks and ice-cold glacial rivers.

Day-by-Day

1
DAY

2500 m

Arrive Skardu - Kharpocho Fort Sunset, City Tour Briefing

Fly from Islamabad to Skardu — one of the world's most dramatic flights, banking past Nanga Parbat (8,126m) before dropping into the Indus valley. Your Balti guide meets you at the airport and settles you into your Skardu hotel to rest and adjust to the altitude. In the late afternoon we walk up to the 16th-century Kharpocho Fort, perched above the town where the Indus and Shigar rivers meet, for sunset over the river braids and the surrounding peaks. Evening briefing over dinner.

2
DAY

2500 m

Skardu City - Satpara Lake, Manthal Buddha Rock, Kachura Lakes

A full day on Skardu's lakes and old stones. We start at Satpara Lake on the edge of town, then visit the Manthal Buddha Rock — a large Buddha carved into a granite boulder, a relic of Baltistan's pre-Islamic past. From there we drive to the Kachura lakes: first Shangri-La (Lower Kachura), the postcard turquoise lake beside the old resort, then the quieter, deeper Upper Kachura, ringed by orchards and poplar. There's time for a boat ride and tea by the water before returning to Skardu.

3
DAY

2500 m

Shigar Valley - Shigar Fort Palace, Apricot Orchards, Local Bazaar

Drive north into the green Shigar Valley, the gateway to the Baltoro. The highlight is the restored 17th-century Shigar Fort, a Raja's palace of stone and timber now run as a heritage hotel — we tour the grounds and learn the valley's history. We walk through apricot and apple orchards, visit the centuries-old Amburiq Mosque, and stop in the local bazaar before the drive back to Skardu.

4
DAY

2500 m

Katpana Cold Desert, Deosai Approach Drive, Sarfaranga Desert

A day of high-desert contrasts. We drive up to the Soq Valley, a green alpine pocket of terraced fields and meadows above Skardu with wide views back over the Indus. Then down to the Katpana cold desert, where pale sand dunes sit against snow peaks, and on to the vast Sarfaranga desert — the highest cold desert in the world. Optional dune walks and time for photos as the light turns gold.

5
DAY

540 m

Skardu Final Morning - Flight to Islamabad, Departure

A relaxed final morning in Skardu — a last walk by the river or through the bazaar for souvenirs and dried apricots. We transfer you to the airport for the flight back to Islamabad (weather permitting), where the tour ends. Road transfer can be arranged if flights are delayed by weather.

What's Included

Included

- Return flight or road transfer reference, all ground transport in Baltistan by private vehicle, 4 nights hotel in Skardu, daily breakfast and dinner, and a local Balti guide throughout.
- All listed sightseeing and entrance fees — Kharpocho Fort, Shigar Fort grounds, Manthal Buddha Rock, and the Katpana desert.
- Bottled water on travel days and a boat ride on the Kachura lakes.

Not Included

- Domestic and international flights to Skardu (we book these for you on request).
- Lunches, personal expenses, and any optional activities not listed in the itinerary.
- Pakistan visa fees and personal travel insurance.
- Tips for your guide and driver (appreciated, never expected).

Pricing

Fixed-departure group price is \$280 per person, all-inclusive of the services above. Private groups are priced by size — discounts apply automatically as your group grows.

Solo 1 Person

\$616

per person

2–3 Persons

\$448

per person

4–6 Persons

\$350

per person

7–10 Persons

\$280

best value · per person



Good to Know

Booking & Payment

- A deposit of \$60 per person confirms your seat. The balance is due on arrival in Skardu, before the tour begins.
- Book through our website, WhatsApp, or an authorized agent. We confirm every booking in writing.
- Prices are held once your deposit is received and may otherwise change with season and availability.

Cancellation Policy

- Cancel 30+ days before departure: full refund minus the deposit.
- Cancel 14–29 days before: 50% refund of the total paid.
- Cancel under 14 days before: no refund, as rooms and transport are already booked.

Permits & Documentation

- Foreign guests need a standard Pakistan tourist visa — no trekking permit is required for this tour. We provide a Letter of Invitation on request.
- Carry your passport and CNIC/ID; a few sites and checkpoints in Baltistan record visitor details.
- Standard travel insurance is recommended but not mandatory for this low-altitude tour.

Health & Fitness

- Easy. Suitable for families and first-time visitors — short walks at forts, lakes, and the desert, with comfortable vehicle transfers between sites.
- Skardu sits at 2,500m. The altitude is gentle, but drink water and take the first day slowly.
- Tell us in advance about any medical conditions so we can pace the days to suit you.

Ready to go?

Local hands · Real safety · Fair price · WhatsApp us for available dates

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