Skardu Blossom · 7 days

A Week in Blossom



From £1,400

per person, all-inclusive from Islamabad, based on 2 travelling.

Overview

For a few weeks each spring, the apricot and cherry orchards of Baltistan flower against snow-covered peaks. This is our Essential Skardu route timed for the blossom: two nights in the Shigar Fort and Khaplu Palace, orchard walks in the villages, and two nights in Skardu at the end. The pace is gentle and well suited to photographers.

Day by day

Day 1: Arrive in Islamabad

You're met at Islamabad International Airport and taken to your hotel. Later, visit the Faisal Mosque and Daman-e-Koh at sunset, or take a gentle spring walk in the Margalla Hills.

Day 2: Fly to Skardu and on to Shigar

Weather permitting, fly to Skardu (2,230 m) and drive straight on to Shigar across the Sarfaranga cold desert. Spend the afternoon in the Shigar Fort garden and the Hashopi orchards, with a visit to the Amburiq Mosque.

Day 3: Shigar to Khaplu

Drive east along the Shyok to Khaplu, the valley of gardens, where the orchards often flower a little later than Skardu. Explore Khaplu Palace and its orchards and the Chaqchan Mosque.

Day 4: Machulo, Haldi and back to Skardu

Walk in the blossom villages of Machulo and Haldi, then drive back towards Skardu with a village lunch in Yugo and a stop at the Manthokha Waterfall. The evening is yours in Skardu.

Day 5: Kachura Lakes and Nangsoq

See the orchards around the Kachura lakes and the Manthal Buddha Rock, then walk through Nangsoq, the organic village behind Kharpocho Fort. The day ends with a farewell dinner.

Day 6: Fly to Islamabad

Weather permitting, take the morning flight back to Islamabad. In the afternoon, visit the Pakistan Monument and the Lok Virsa Heritage Museum.

Day 7: Spare day in Islamabad and fly home

This day is held in reserve in case weather delays the Skardu flight. If everything has run to plan, visit Taxila or walk in the Margalla Hills before your transfer to the airport.

What's included

- Return flights between Islamabad and Skardu
- Boutique hotels throughout: one night at Serena Shigar Fort, one at Serena Khaplu Palace, two in a boutique hotel in Skardu and two in Islamabad
- All meals, from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 7
- Private 4x4 with an experienced driver, and all airport transfers
- Professional English-speaking guide throughout
- Entry tickets, permits and park fees
- The spare day in Islamabad

Not included

- International flights
- Pakistan visa
- Travel insurance
- Tips