Mystic Magic
CSS Latha relives her experiences at the magnificent Kailash Mansarovar

To visit Kailash Mansarovar, one of the most sacred spots in the world, is indeed an opportunity of a lifetime. So when I got the chance, after joining the Isha Yoga Center, to go for a two-week sojourn to this holy place, led by the master, Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, I am ecstatic!

Landing Site
We opt to travel from Kathmandu and are booked at the Crowne Palace hotel at Sooltee in Kathmandu. On the first day after we reach, we have a preparatory sitting with Sadhguru regarding the details of our journey. After all, tackling an altitude of 15,000 meters above sea level and a weather that grows grimmer at every step, at times dipping below 0°C, is indeed a daunting task.

From Kathmandu, we cross the ‘Friendship Bridge’ or the Indi-China Gate where the Chinese scrutiny includes testing our body temperatures too! After getting a ‘positive’ clearance, we pass through the Gate into Chinese controlled Tibet for immigration clearance. From there on, we mount a sturdy Toyota Land Cruiser that revs smoothly through 2,200 miles to Mansarovar, Kailash and back!

Stunning Landscape
The drive along the rugged landscape is ethereal and though it’s night, the sheer beauty of the land keeps me glued to the window of our car. Time flies admiring nature’s beauty. As we halt at our assigned
tryst, our tents in colourful hues are already ready and
so is hot delicious Indian veggie food, thanks to the
Nepali sherpas who accompany us throughout the
journey.
We halt at a place called Saga for two days. This is
essential, we are told, to get us acclimatized to the
altitude and weather.

SLOW AND STEADY
After two days, we move on to our destination –
Mansarover. The altitude is obviously a problem for us
greenhorns, but Sri Jaggi offers us simple yet sensible
techniques to deal with it. ‘Stalk around in slow
motion’ is his mantra.
We reach Mansarover and the first view of it is heady!
So breathtaking is its beauty that we stand awestruck,
watching the calm blue lake reflecting the many colours
of the sunset.
We have a 2.30 a.m. meditation session by the lake.
It is Guru Purnima (full moon night), and we sit there
on a guided meditation trip with Sadhguu, after a
session of yogic preparation. The intense cold sends a
chill down our spines, despite the layered thermal
wear. I take a dip in the freezing cold water and feel
distilled inside out.

LOFTY SHOW
Mount Kailash is our next destination. Incidentally,
Kailash Parbat can be viewed from Mansarover. We
reach the base from where we have to trek 10
kilometers. I, however, opt to ride a pony. Trekking up
to Kailash is a stupendously intense process, more so
as it is very difficult to breathe in the high altitude.
Reaching there, we meditate atop the snowy peak.
Despite the extreme cold, our spirits are soaring and
energy levels, full-on. It is indeed the most beautiful
moment of my life!

BLISSFUL!
We go back to Kathmandu and spend a day visiting the
Pashupatinath temple. It feels like the two-week
journey has come to an end too soon. Back home, I feel
a sense of peace. It is very rare that one gets an
opportunity to experience bliss.

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FACT FILE
- Kailash Mansarover is located at a distance of 865
kms from Delhi.
- The Kailash Mansarover Yatra is one of the most sacred
pilgrimages in India. Mount Kailash, near the Indo-Tibet
border, is sacred to four religions — Hinduism, Jainism,
Buddhism and the Tibetan Bonpo faith.
- It is considered one of the most arduous treks of the
world. The Government of India, in tandem with the
Government of China, makes arrangements for the
Yatra from India.
- The journey takes one through the Himalayas in both
India and Tibet. The best time for the Yatra is from mid-
May to mid-October.

PHOTOGRAPHS: CSS LATHA
Waterfalls near the friendship bridge in Nepal
In route Kailash