

PAKISTAN THE CIVILIZATION OF THE INDUS VALLEY

April 03 - April 17, 2025
Led by STS Tour Lecturer /Manager

Pakistan, a country located on the western side of the Indo-Gangetic Plains, has a rich, diverse terrain consisting of high mountain ranges, plateaus, and the Indus River Plain. Its long history includes a section of the ancient Silk Road (Karakoram Highway) that runs through the country over the famous Khyber Pass. There are many fascinating ancient archaeological and UNESCO World Heritage sites waiting to be discovered. On this amazing adventure, you will visit mountain villages to meet the hardy souls that live in a stunningly beautiful landscape under harsh conditions. Travel the Karakoram Highway through high-mountain valleys and passes. Explore ancient archaeological sites and wander through the streets of interesting and culturally enriched cities.

Ihab Zaki
Managing Director

Thursday, April 03

Arrive in Karachi (SOUTH PAKISTAN)



Upon arrival in **Karachi**, meet and transfer to **Roomy Hotel** or similar for check-in and have some rest. Meet for lunch and later head to visit the **Mohatta Palace Museum** near Clifton Beach, where unique collections of art and textiles are on display. The Mohatta Palace was built in 1927 by Shivratan Chandraratan Mohatta, a Hindu Marwari merchant from modern-day Rajasthan in India. After separation, the palace became the state's property and initially housed Pakistan's foreign affairs office when Karachi was the capital of Pakistan. After the capital was moved to Islamabad, the palace became the private residence of Fatima Jinnah, a Pakistani dental surgeon, political leader, and one of the founders of Pakistan. Later, the Sindh government converted it into a museum and meticulously restored it to its former glory. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(D)**

Note: Standard check-in time is 3:00 pm. If you arrive on April 02 or in the early morning of April 03, an extra hotel night needs to be booked.

Friday, April 04

Karachi



After breakfast, begin the tour of **Karachi** with a visit to the **Mausoleum of Muhammad Ali Jinnah**, the founder of Pakistan. Then continue to the **National Museum of Pakistan** with its numerous galleries. The museum features many artifacts, including objects from the pre and ancient history of the region (5000 to 1500 BC). After lunch, visit the **Saddar Bazaar** (Empress Market) & Zainab Market. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Saturday, April 05

Karachi - Hyderabad



After breakfast, drive to **Haidarabad**, stopping en route at **Thatta**, the medieval capital of Sindh. Visit the 17th century **Grand Mosque of Shah Jahan**, a gift he made in recognition of the hospitality he received in Thatta while seeking refuge from his father, Jahangir. The mosque is a contemporary of Shah Jahan's famous Taj Mahal in Agra, India. Visit the **Historical Monuments** at Makli, one of Pakistan's most visually stunning archaeological sites. Covering over 9.3 miles and said to contain over one million tombs, it is considered the world's largest necropolis. Tour the **tombs of Jam Nizammudin, Isa**

Khan Tarkhan, Jan Baba, and Diwan Shurfa Khan.

Finally, visit the **Chokondhi** to view the tombs that are thought to be from the 13th - 16th century and are attributed to the Jokhio and Baluch tribes. These superbly carved sandstone tombs are built out of rectangular slabs placed one on top of the other in a pyramidal fashion, some reaching 13 feet in height. They stretch for several miles along a low ridge with two large domed mausoleums in the center. This style of tomb is found only in the Sindh and Baluchistan provinces, particularly along the coast of Makran, and their intricate designs are still applied to the textiles, pottery, jewelry, and woodcarving in those regions. Transfer to *Indus Hotel* or similar for check-in and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Sunday, April 06

Hayderabad - Ladkana



After breakfast, drive to **Larkana** and head to visit the impressive **Shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar**, as the 13th century Sufi saint and religious poet Syed Usman Marvandi was known. His writings are still celebrated in present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan. Later explore the famous archaeological site of **Mohenjo-Daro**, one of the most important archaeological sites in South Asia and one of the best preserved and restored prehistoric sites in the world. Built in 2500BC, it was one of the largest settlements of the ancient Indus Valley & contemporary with ancient Egypt and Minoan Crete. The site was first excavated by the Indian Archaeological Survey team under Sir John Marshall in 1922 and 1931, and then by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in 1947. Now in the hands of the Pakistan Archaeological Survey team and supported by UNESCO, the site is excellently presented. Tour the **great bath**, the **granary**, the **College square** and **Pillared Hall**, **private homes**, and the **Mohenjo-Daro Museum**. Transfer to *Sambara Inn* or similar for check-in, dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Monday, April 07

Ladkana - Sukkur



Begin the day with a morning drive to the **Kot Deji** archaeological site to visit the famous **fort** of the state of Khairpur. This site stands on one of the rare outcroppings of limestone part of the Rohri Hills to the north. The site dates from 3500 to 2500 BC and has two distinct parts. Excavation of the upper level revealed pottery of the Harappan civilization, while the lower levels exposed

evidence of an unknown pre-Harappan culture, designated as Kot Deji. Later head to visit the **Shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bittai** and then continue to **Sukkur** & upon arrival, transfer to *Hotel One* or similar for check-in, enjoy the sunset and a boat ride on the Indus River, then return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Tuesday, April 08 Sukkur - Bahawalpur



After breakfast, head to the **Hindu shrine** near the town of Sukkur. The Sadh Belo shrine gets its name from "Sadh Belo" or a "Hermitage of a Monk," the **Lodhy Barrage** was built on the Indus River during the British Raj in the early 20th century. It is the largest single irrigation network of its kind in the world, providing water to Sindh Province. The name Barrage borrowed from the French word "barrier," meaning "To bar." Also, visit the famous **Hindu pilgrimage center** of Sadh Belo. This beautiful temple, considered sacred for Hindu pilgrims, sits on an island on the Indus River. Continue to **Bahawalpur**, and upon arrival, transfer to *Hotel One* or similar for check-in, dinner, & overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Wednesday, April 09 Bahawalpur



Enjoy a full-day tour of **Bahawalpur**, visiting the **Cholistan Desert**, locally known as "Rohi," the **Deraward Fort**, a large square fortress in Yazman Tehsil. Visit the town of **Uch Sharif**, believed to have been founded by Alexander the Great during his invasion of the Indus Valley and renowned for the extensive tile work of its shrines dedicated to Muslim mystics. If time permits, visit the famous **library** of the **Abbasi family**. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Thursday, April 10 Bahawalpur - Multan



Begin the morning with a drive to **Multan**, stopping en route at a **factory** that produces the famous blue pottery of Multan. Visit the **tombs of Sheik Baha-ud-din Zakariya** and **Shah Rukn-e-Alam**. Rukn-e-Alam was an eminent Sufi saint from Multan and the grandson and successor of Baha-ud-din Zakariya. He was buried in his grandfather's mausoleum but later transferred to the present mausoleum, which dates from the 14th century. His tomb is a pilgrimage site, drawing over 100,000 pilgrims a year. Visit **Hussain Agahi Bazar**, a huge market full of local colors, before your transfer to *Hotel One* or similar for check-in, dinner, & overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Friday, April 11 Multan - Lahore



After an early breakfast, drive to **Lahore**, stopping en route at **Harappa**, founded over 5,000 years ago. It is one of the world's earliest cities. Visit the **archaeological site** and the **museum**, then transfer to *Pearl Continental Hotel* or similar for check-in, dinner & overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Saturday, April 12 Lahore



After breakfast, head to the **Wazir Khan Mosque**, the **Shahi Hammam** (Royal Bath), and the 17th-century **Badshahi Mosque**. This marble structure is an example of some of the most aesthetically pleasing architecture of the Moghul period. Continue to **Lahore Fort**, locally known as "Shahi Qilla." Built-in 1631 by Shah Jahan as a private apartment for his empress, it has several pavilions, including Shish Mahal, the Palace of Mirrors. Visit the **Samadhi of Ranjit Singh**, a 19th-century building housing the funerary urn of this ruler, and the **Gurdwara Dera Sahib temple**, which marks the spot where Guru Arjun Dev, the 5th-century guru of Sikhism, died. Return to the *Hotel* in time for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Sunday, April 13 Lahore



Begin the day with a visit to the **Lahore Museum**, Pakistan's largest museum. Established in 1894 and contains fine examples of Mughal and Sikh doorways and woodwork and has an extensive collection of paintings dating back to the Mughal, Sikh, and British periods. There are also collections of musical instruments, ancient jewelry, textiles, pottery, and armor.

After lunch, head to the **Shalimar Gardens** before heading to the **flag-lowering ceremony** at the Wagah border with India, known as the Beating Retreat Border Ceremony; it is famous worldwide and the subject of many "YouTube" videos. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Monday, April 14 Lahore - Islamabad



After breakfast, begin the drive to **Islamabad**, visiting en route the **Hindu temple** at Kitas Village also known as Qila Katas, a complex of several Hindu temples connected to one another by walkways. Transfer to *Roomy Hotel* or similar for check-in, dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Tuesday, April 15 Islamabad - Taxila



After breakfast, begin the drive (1 hr.) to **Taxila**, one of the sub-continent's most important archaeological treasures, with the remains of three great cities and dozens of Buddhist monasteries dating from 600 BCE to AD 600. It is strategically located at the meeting place of trade routes linking China, India, Central Asia, and the West. Taxila survived through many empires and became the cultural crossroad of the ancient world.

Buddhism took hold in the region around 275 BCE and from here the religion spread to Central Asia, Tibet, and China. Visit **Taxila Museum**, famous for its finest examples of Gandharan sculptures and art. It also houses some of the important artifacts and discoveries about ancient civilizations. Then continue to one of the

important **Buddhist stupas** at Dharmarajika and ancient city of Sirkap. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, continue the tour to famous **Raja bazaar** of Rawalpindi, then return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Wednesday, April 16
Islamabad



Enjoy a free morning at leisure, then head for a city tour and lunch, starting with a visit to the **Heritage Museum**, also known as Lok Virsa Museum, which the National Institute of Folk & Traditional Heritage manages. It is a museum of the history and culture of Pakistan, located on the Shakarparian Hills. Have a glimpse of Pakistan's history and culture under one roof. After the visit, drive through government buildings, including the **Supreme court** of Pakistan, the **Prime Minister's house**, the **Parliament building**, and the **Presidential Palace** until the arrival at **Faisal Mosque**, named after the King of Saudi Arabia, who did fund the construction of the Mosque. It was designed by the Turkish designer Vedat Dalokay and reflected modern designs but also shows the Islamic principles of design with the 8-sided main halls that look like an Arab desert tent instead of constructing Traditional domes. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Thursday, April 17
Islamabad - USA
OR continue to AFGHANISTAN

Transfer to the airport for your flight back to the **US. (B)**
OR join us on an exciting journey to **AFGHANISTAN**.

"We reserve the right to change the order of activities/visits or sites due to unexpected events such as flight cancellations or changes of schedule, or any other reasons beyond our control. We will do our best to ensure that any necessary changes when/if needed to meet the needs of our clients".



Special Trip Remarks:

Moderately Rigorous Touring: Anyone joining this trip must understand that in many places, the tourist infrastructure (roads, restaurants, and bathrooms) is very primitive. Some days are long and hard, and the level of services will not match those offered in most tourist locations. Elevations vary from 5,000 to 10,000 feet, and the Khunjerab Pass is 16,000 feet high. The hotels and lodges are comfortable, but some need more luxuries provided in the West. Security checkpoints can be annoying, but travelers must be flexible and patient. Many roads need to be in a better state of repair; journeys can be long and tiring. Appreciate the flexibility and accepting any necessary changes. By signing up for this tour, you acknowledge your complete understanding and acceptance of all terms and conditions and assert that you are in good physical and mental health and that you will maintain an open mind, a sense of adventure, and a tolerant and patient spirit during all aspects of the tour.



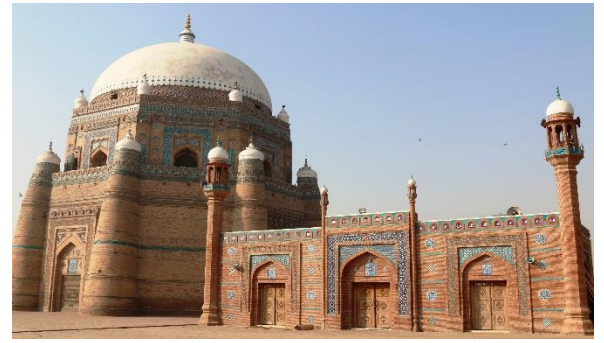
Tour Cost (Land Only): \$8,495.00

Per person sharing in double occupancy

Single Supplement: \$995.00

Price based on group size minimum of 6 participants and maximum of 14 participants

Trip Grade: III Lodging Level: **_****



Tour Includes:

- Airport/Hotel/Airport transfers.
- Accommodation in Hotels mentioned or similar.
- Meals as mentioned in the itinerary (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch and D: Dinner).
- Travel by modern & air-conditioned motor coach.
- Sightseeing in each city as per the itinerary.
- Escort of a lecturer throughout the trip (provided minimum number of travelers is reached).
- Service of Gov't licensed, experienced and English-speaking guides, drivers, any porters needed, any support staff, during the trip.
- Entry fees to Museums, forts and National Park Areas or any taxes, and any other applicable taxes on any service.
- Visa support letter/documents.
- Water on the bus on touring days.
- Gratuities to guide, drivers, and porters (provided minimum number of travelers is reached).

Tour does not include:

- International airfare USA-Karachi / Islamabad-USA.
- Pakistan Visa (e-visa - approx. \$160.00 - subject to change).
- Beverages with or without meals.
- Items of a personal nature (camera fees, laundry, emails, excess luggage, etc.).
- Transfers if not arriving/departing on scheduled flights/tour dates.
- Dayroom/overnights necessitated by changes in airline schedules.
- Trip surcharge to operate below required minimum participants.
- Travel protection insurance. (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED)

Trip Grade

III Challenging - Parts of the trip are physically challenging, involve some hiking on unpaved terrain or in sand. There may be long drives on rough roads; weather conditions with high heat (in the 90's). You may have simple picnic lunches, primitive bathroom facilities along the road and remoteness from modern towns or cities.

Lodging Level

**** Basic** - Comfortable yet on the Spartan side, usually small but generally with private facilities. Some such lodges and motel-styles need repairs, added cleaning, and improvements but they are suitable for one-night stays even if they lack western style amenities. (2 or 3 stars).

***** Superior** - Lodges and hotels with additional amenities, refined service, and comfort level acceptable to the western standards. (3 or 4 stars).

