



NORTHERN MOUNTAINS **AND ANCIENT CULTURE**



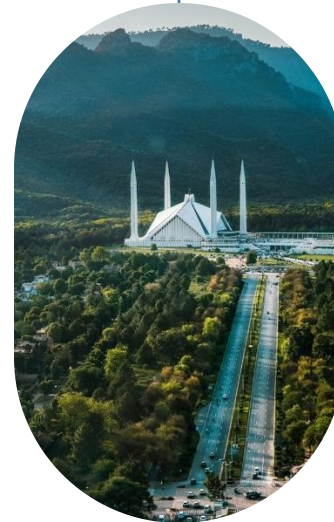
DAY 1 - ISLAMABAD

Arrive
Islamabad



Transfer to
Hotel

Visit the Faisal Mosque,
Daman-e-Koh and the
Lok Virsa Museum

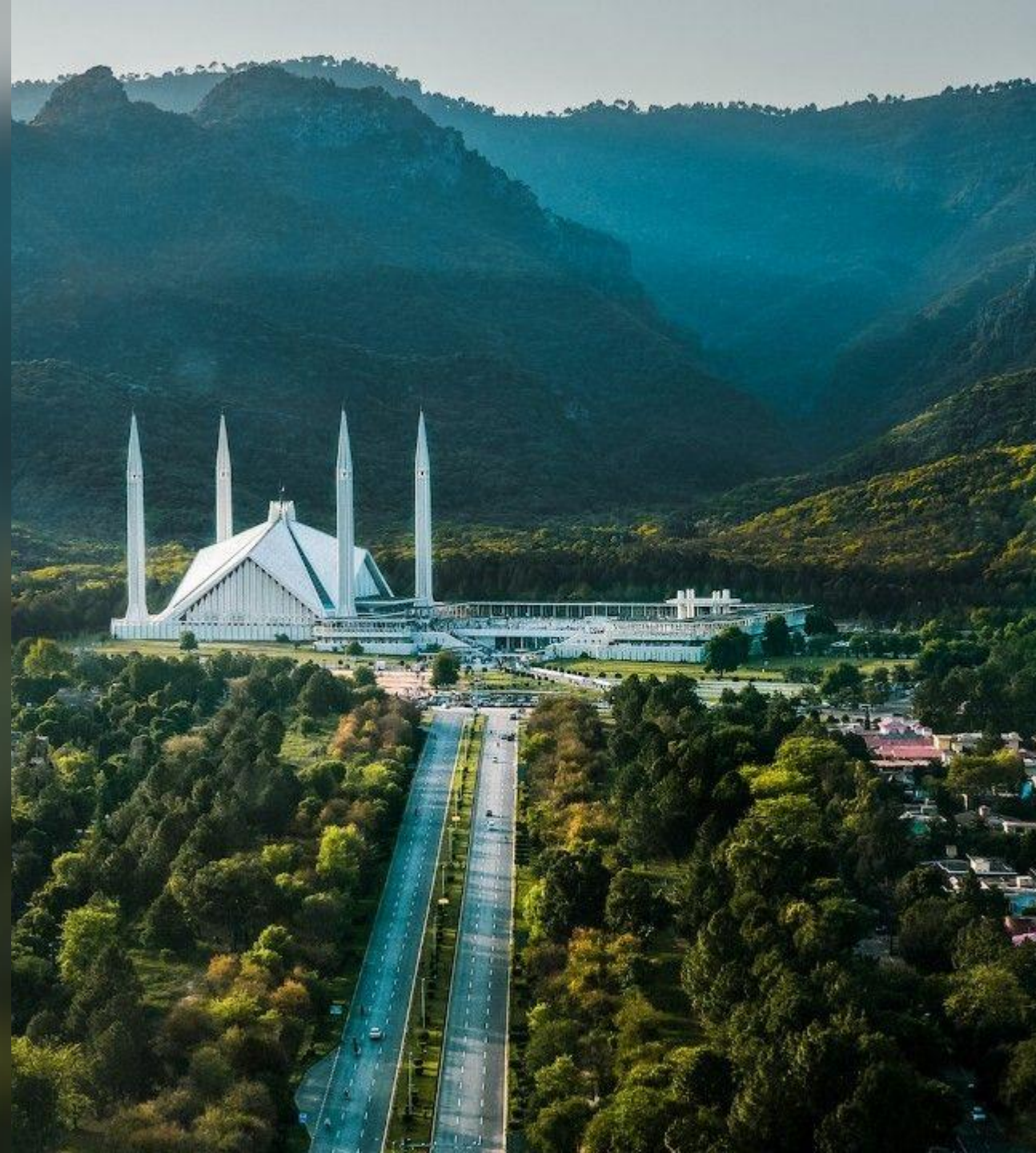


Overnight at
Hotel



FAISAL MOSQUE

Built in 1986, Faisal Mosque is the sixth largest mosque in the world. It holds a capacity of 300,000 worshippers. Designed by a Turkish architect, it is shaped like a Bedouin tent with four 80 m tall minarets.





DAMAN-E-KOH

Islamabad lies at the foothills of the Himalayas, with Daman-e-Koh offering a panoramic view of the city. From this viewpoint, you can see the well-planned city with its straight highways and lush greenery.



DAY 2 - PESHAWAR

Drive to
Peshawar



Arrive Peshawar.
Transfer to Hotel.

Enroute visit Taxila
museum and
Dharmarajika
Stuppa





DHARMA RAJIKA STUPPA

Taxila is mentioned in Petropolis as the easternmost province of the Achaemenid Empire. Alexander the Great peacefully entered the city in 328 BCE. Ashoka the Great later introduced Buddhism to the region. Pali, the renowned scholar, wrote Sanskrit grammar while teaching at Taxila University. During the Kushan rule, in 1st century CE newer interpretation of Buddhist theology developed as Mahayana Buddhism. We will visit the Taxila museum and Dharma Rajika Stupa to explore this rich historical and cultural heritage.

PESHAWAR

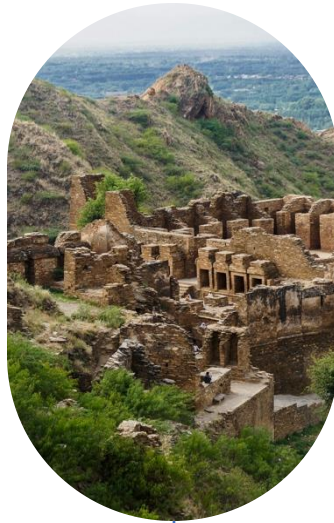
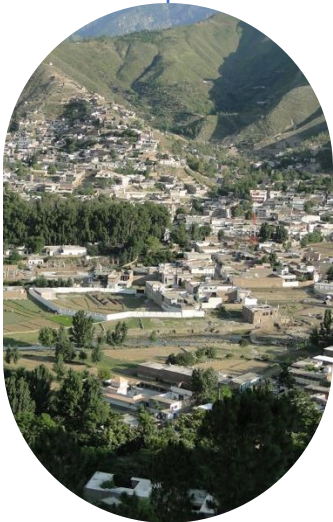
Peshawar, the last of the oriental cities on the route from Asia to Europe, remains preserved in its original colors. We will stroll through the Kissa Khawani Bazaar, literally meaning "Storytellers' Market," where travelers once shared tales of distant lands while sipping tea in the caravanserais along the bustling bazaar. Walking through the streets of Peshawar feels like stepping into a museum of faces, with people from diverse ethnicities—Afghans, Afridis, Wazirs, Tajiks, Uzbeks—engaged in barter trade with one another. It is the sole remaining hub of oriental nomadic rugs and carpets, where they are weaved and exported worldwide.





DAY 3 - SAIDU SHARIF

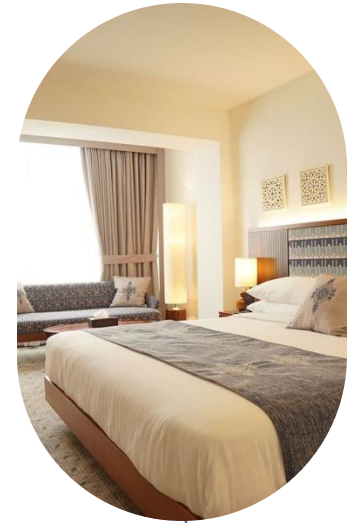
Drive to Saidu
Sharif Swat



Enroute visit
Takhti Bahi



Afternoon visit to
Archeological site of
Butkara



Dinner and
overnight at
Hotel

TAKHTI BAHI

Takhti Bahi is an archaeological site of a 1st-century CE Buddhist monastery, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is perched on a hilltop near the city bazaar.





BUDDHISM IN SWAT

The ancient name for Swat is Udayana. Chinese pilgrims visited this holy city, praising the peace and tranquility of the region, where 25% of the male population devoted themselves to becoming monks. Thousands of monasteries adorned the hilltops, visible from miles away. The founder of Tantric Buddhism, Padmasambhava, was born in Swat Valley and later took his teachings to Tibet, where he established Lamaism.

THE BUTKARA STUPPA

The Butkara Stupa is a Buddhist site dating back to the 2nd century BCE, built under the Mauryan Empire.





DAY 4 - CHILLAS

Drive to
Chillas



Stops at rock carving
sites from Chinese
Buddhist pilgrims

Dinner and
overnight at Hotel



DRIVE TO CHILLAS

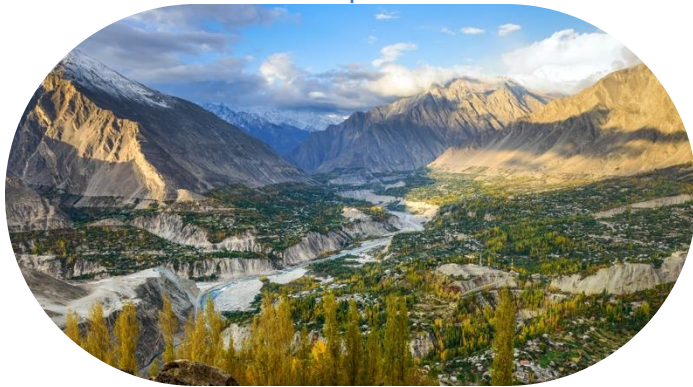
Climbing the lush green eastern slopes of the Hindukush Mountains, we cross Shangla Pass (2100m) before descending into the Indus Gorge towards Besham. Continuing along the Karakoram Highway to Chilas, the landscape gradually transforms from the verdant Hindukush to the dry, desert-like Karakoram.





DAY 5 - HUNZA

Drive to
Hunza



Picnic lunch

Arrive and
transfer to
Hotel





THE DRIVE TO HUNZA

The drive to Hunza Valley is a testament to remarkable engineering in mountainous terrain, with roads carved out of solid rock. The route runs alongside the Indus River, offering breathtaking views, while small valleys branch off from the main valley, adding to the scenic beauty of the journey.



DAY 6 - HUNZA

Visit Altit Fort, Baltit Fort,
Duikar and Nagar Valley



Overnight at hotel



HOOPER GLACIER

The drive through Nagar Valley provides a glimpse into the local culture and mountain agriculture, with stunning views of Ultar Peak along the way. The journey culminates at Hooper Glacier Point, where you can marvel at the impressive 20-kilometer-long glacier.



An aerial photograph of Altit Fort, a 900-year-old mud masonry structure built on a hillside. The fort is surrounded by a dense cluster of small, traditional houses with flat roofs. The area is lush with greenery, including many flowering trees in shades of pink and white. A small pond is visible near the bottom center of the village. In the background, a river flows through a deep valley, and steep, rocky mountains rise on either side. The foreground is filled with tall, golden-brown grasses.

ALTIT FORT

Altit Fort, a 900-year-old building, is the oldest monument in the region. Its mud masonry is reinforced with wooden planks, supporting the structure. The fort features a beautiful garden filled with apricot and cherry trees.

BALTIT FORT

Baltit Fort, built 800 years ago, is located on a hill overlooking the whole of Hunza Valley. It was constructed by Tibetan masons who accompanied the Balti princess married to the local king. The fort was restored by the Aga Khan Foundation in 1996 and is now a museum.





DUIKAR

Duikar, a viewpoint at an altitude of 3000 metres, offers stunning views of the valley and seven peaks towering over 7,000 metres. The sunrise and sunset from this point are particularly breathtaking.



DAY 7 - HUNZA



Drive to Upper
Hunza

Drive back to
hotel

Visit Attabad Lake,
Hussaini Bridge and
Passu



ATTABAD LAKE

Attabad Lake, located in the Hunza Valley, was formed in 2010 following a massive landslide. The stunning turquoise waters, surrounded by towering mountains, create a picturesque setting.



PASSU

The Gilgit-Baltistan region, home to over 5,000 glaciers, has the highest density of glaciers outside the polar regions. Among these, we will visit the Passu Glacier, a striking example of the region's glacial beauty



HUSSAINI BRIDGE

The Hussaini Bridge is a suspension bridge. It features wooden planks spaced about half a metre apart, offering an adventurous crossing.





DAY 8 - SKARDU

Drive to
Skardu



Arrive and
transfer to Hotel

Picnic lunch



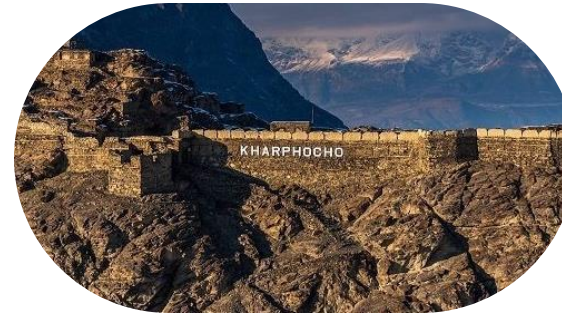


DAY 9 - SKARDU

Visit Shigar Fort,
Sarfaranga desert and
Kharpocho Fort



Overnight at hotel



THE SARFARANGA DESERT

Sarfaranga Desert is a high-altitude desert known for its large sand dunes, which are covered in snow during winter. The desert gives unique photography opportunity of sand dunes with a backdrop of snow-covered mountains.





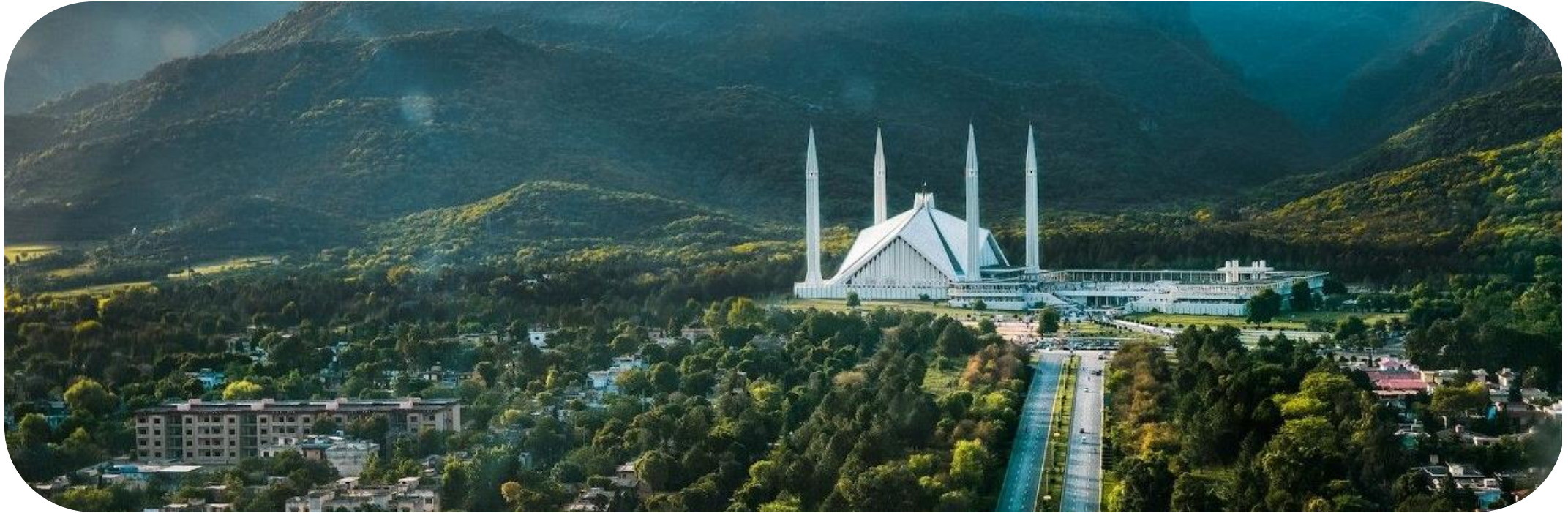
THE SHIGAR FORT

Shigar fort is a 17th century residence of the Raja of Shigar. It was built on a large boulderstone and the primary materials used for the construction were stone, wood and clay.



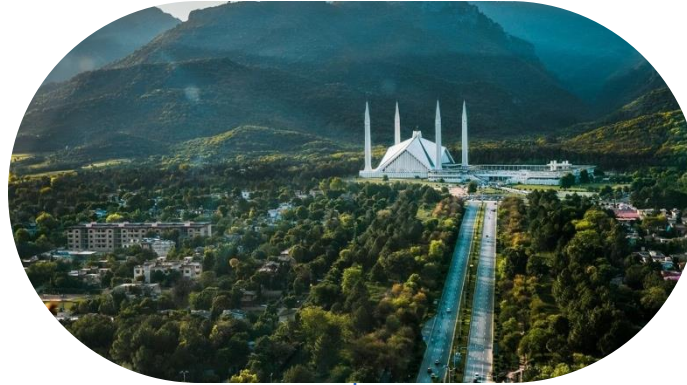
KHARPOCHO FORT

Kharpocho Fort, built in 1490 by the Maqpoon Dynasty, is located 1,000 feet above Skardu city, offering stunning views of the 30-kilometer-wide valley and surrounding snow-capped mountains.



DAY 10 - ISLAMABAD

Transfer to the airport
for the flight from
Skardu to Islamabad



Overnight at hotel



Arrive Islamabad.
Rest of the day at
leisure



Fly Back Home