

Pakistan 2026

Pakistan - 12 DAYS (11 nights) tour of Northern Pakistan 31 October
- 11 November 2026

This tour can be done as a single tour or 'back to back' with
Afghanistan



Our photo tours focus on taking you to places which have unique appeal to photographers. We seek the beauty of landscape and seascape, the heritage of cultural diversity and the bustle of streets and marketplaces – effectively photography through geography.

We also strive to promote eco photo tourism where we have a sustainable, un-intrusive, approach to our photography. We strive to seek the best moments, light and opportunities to compose shots which capture a moment in time.

There is also great value in the immersion in local customs and culture, making the journey and photography more meaningful. It is recommended that participants bring a laptop or tablet to enable us to review the images or get help with editing if wished.

We welcome participants, whatever their photographic experience, as well as partners or family members who simply would like to join in the journey!

'It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see'. Henry David Thoreau



**Alternative
Visions**

Photo tours
Our mission



Starting in Lahore (Pakistan), traveling to Islamabad and then to the Hindu Kush to visit the Kalash people (a pagan culture) in their three mountain valleys. Finally to Peshawar for a few exploratory days. Then, for those who want, onwards to Afghanistan. Kabul, Bamyan, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat and Kandahar. Then back in Kabul before flying out to Dubai.

The photography

With street and cultural photography the approach is different. We use very good local guides. We are sensitive to the impacts that tourism can cause, aiming to make visits sustainable and a positive cultural interaction. It is all a delicate balance, and the local guides are often best in deciding which strategy to adopt as they know the people and culture. We have to be discreet in a conservative society.

It is interpersonal skills, which help to make the moments count. And in that moment, we want to capture light, colour, emotion, insight, character and spirit. We try to shoot in the golden hours or at least where there is shade from the sun. In the right light, at the right time, the ordinary becomes extraordinary – bringing incredible opportunities for portraits of the Kalash and on the street.

The travel

We travel in comfortable vehicles to get to some of the very best locations but some of the inter city travel takes time, especially getting to the remote villages of the Kalash near Chitral. It is also possible that we may change the itinerary spontaneously if we hear of a local festival or celebration.

You do need a sense of adventure for this trip, but I will help with good preparation and packing advice. There are a few essentials, such as a good first aid kit and appropriate insurance, but I will send out a list well in advance. We will be off the beaten track but will not be doing any arduous treks but will walk short distances to and around some of the villages and through the streets and their market places.

I first travelled to Northern Pakistan in 1989 and again in 1994. I went back in 2023 and again in 2025. It is, in my opinion, an extraordinary part of the world. The people are warm and friendly and whilst there are vestiges of colonial influence there are also ancient ruins from centuries before.

Proposed itinerary

Day 1, Saturday 31 October 2026, Arrival in Lahore

You will provide us with your flight details so that we can take note of your arrival and departure dates and times. You will arrive at Lahore International Airport, Pakistan. One or more guides will meet you at the Airport and transfer you to your hotel. Group meeting with tour overview, Q&A session at 5.30/6pm.

Overnight at Four Points by Sheraton or similar

Days 2 & 3, Sunday and Monday 1 and 2 November 2026

Two full days to explore the city of Lahore. Some of the opportunities may include mud wrestling at Akharra, shrines with Sufi (Islamic mystics), many markets (fish, vegetable, meat, spice). The old buildings from Mogul times have intricate wood carvings and balconies where families of repute used to sit. The Wazir Khan mosque, chai wallahs on the street and street doctors using cobras, leeches and lizards to cure willing patients!

Dinner at a local restaurants in Lahore.

Overnight at Four Points by Sheraton or similar

Day 4, Tuesday 3 November 2026

We leave early to drive from Lahore to Islamabad (The Capital of Pakistan) which takes 5 hours. Here there is the possibility of photographing the traditional buses and trucks. The vehicles are an art form being painted with great skill and uniqueness. We will try to visit a brick works just outside the city.

Overnight at Roomy Signature Hotel or similar.

Day 5, Wednesday 4 November 2026

A long drive and a very early start from Islamabad to Chitral. The Himalayan foothills of the Swat valley are beautiful. The roads in places are tortuous and switchbacks commonplace and sections of the road are in poor condition. We arrive in Ayun, where we take local 4x4's and drive to Rumbur/Rumbur one of the villages in the Kalash valley system, almost on the border with Afghanistan.

Overnight in a local lodge in Rumbur (This is a simple lodge in a great location but a really relaxing place to stay. We are in the foothills of the Hindu Kush so please bring warm clothing for the evenings and early mornings) Jamil will be our local guide for the three nights we have there.

Day 6, Thursday 5 November 2026

A full day in the Rumbur valley to photograph The Kalash people, an ethnic minority of approximately 4000 people. The three remote valleys are in an incredible setting with mountains as a backdrop. The valley has rich soils but is vulnerable to flash flooding. They grow walnuts, apricots, beans, maize, wheat, grapes, pears, peach, apple, mulberry, fig and more. They then store food for the winter when the valleys become inaccessible for three months. The people are 'pagan' or 'animist' and their traditions and culture are under threat from the ever enclosing Muslim populace. They have a very distinctive style of attire and many are pale skinned and blue or green eyed. Perhaps a vestige of Alexander the Great's forays into the area. They are also known as black Kaffirs (non-believers).

Overnight in a local lodge in Rumbur

Day 7, Friday 6 November 2026

A full day in the valleys to immerse ourselves in Kalash culture and to possibly visit Sheikhandeh, a Nuristani village. Their houses are all built of stone interspersed with wood. This helps to mitigate against earthquake impacts. Their beliefs revolve around the interactions between the living and non living world . The biosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and lithosphere. They have Shamans who sacrifice domestic animals (sheep, goats and cows) when there is illness or an issue.

Day 8, Saturday 7 November 2026

An early start and a long day drive to Peshawar.

Overnight at Tourmaline Hotel or similar.

Days 9 and 10, Sunday and Monday 8 and 9 November 2026

In old Peshawar there are narrow streets, bustling bazaars, old Moghul architecture with carved cedar wood. We will walk a heritage trail where some of the old architecture has been restored. Streets specialise in particular trades. Food, fruit, lamb kebab vendors, jewellery, gemstones, exotic birds, cloth merchants and tailors. Old tea sellers on the street with giant old copper urns brewing tea as they've done for centuries. Snuff vendors, butchers and fishmongers. Red beards, kohl on eyes, some with green and blue eyes. Afghanis, Pashtun (Peshwari), people from the border lands who are predominantly tribal. We may have a chance to visit a refugee camp if it is still in existence.

For those going to Afghanistan we will also get our visas here.

Overnight at Tourmaline Hotel or similar.

Day 10, Tuesday 10 November 2026

In the morning we drive to Islamabad (3 hours). If you are doing the Pakistan tour only then this is where you will fly out from. If you are starting or continuing the tour to Afghanistan then we fly from here to Kabul. This is a rest day for those going onwards to Afghanistan. Those going home may fly out in the afternoon or evening.

Overnight in Roomy Signature or similar

Day 11, Wednesday 11 November 2026

Fly onwards from Islamabad to Kabul or onwards to home destination

Services included for Pakistan

- All accommodation
- Meals – breakfast, some lunches and dinners may not be included but the costs are low.
- Transfer to and from airports at the start of the tour at the end of the tour.
- Photo tour leader
- Local guides
- All transport
- **The cost of the tour is €6000**
- **The single room supplement is €500**
- **To confirm the booking a deposit of €2000 is required.**

Services not included/additional costs



- Occasional stops for coffee/tea/snacks
- Tips for guides and drivers. Tips for guides and drivers (recommended €30 per guide/driver per day – divided amongst the group)