



SERENA HOTELS

SAFARI LODGES • HOTELS • RESORTS

PAKISTAN | *Spellbinding* ESCAPES

YOUR ROMANTIC GETAWAY IN BEAUTIFUL BALTISTAN!

Royal Palaces, Fortresses, Adventure and the Authentic Baltistan! – 5 days / 4 nights



EXPERIENCE SERENA HOTELS. EXPERIENCE GILGIT-BALTISTAN

NAME: Your Romantic Getaway in Beautiful Baltistan: Royal Palaces, Fortresses, Adventure & the Authentic Baltistan
LENGTH OF TIME: 5 days with options to extend and the option of staying in the Islamabad Serena Hotel
BEST TIME TO TRAVEL: Anytime from April through to November!

Day	Destination / Drive time	Accommodation Details	Activities & Highlights	Optional Experiences	Visual Reflection
1	<p>Skardu (55 minute scenic flight)</p> <p>Khaplu (2 ½ hour's drive)</p>	<p>Khaplu Palace & Residence (Full board) – Heritage Boutique Hotel <i>Deluxe Heritage Room</i> Click here for more information</p> <p>Supplement: Treat yourselves to the royal suite in the old Palace – enjoy the privacy of your own sitting room with superb views over Khaplu & the towering mountains.</p>	<p>Get your cameras charged and ready for an ultimate romantic getaway of awe inspiring scenery.</p> <p>Arrive in time for a late lunch.</p> <p>Take a guided historical tour of the beautifully restored Khaplu Palace & Residence.</p> <p>Spend the afternoon exploring the historical & cultural beauty of Khaplu.</p> <p>Visit the imposing historic Khaplu Khanqah and its newer addition being built by the community in tradition style.</p> <p>View the UNESCO award winning tomb of the saint “Astana Mir Muhammad”.</p> <p>Romantic dinner for two under the stars or in one of our private dining rooms!</p>	<p>You have just arrived so we suggest you take it easy today.</p> <p>Top Tip #1: Stop in Skardu bazaar to purchase some local dried apricots & almonds. A great snack to overcome a hungry tummy on your journey.</p> <p>Top Tip #2: Take your pic at the junction of two powerful rivers – where the Indus River meets the Shyok River. A great moment to capture!</p> <p>Witness the game of the kings when the locals of Khaplu jump on their horses for a chukka or two of authentic Polo.</p> <p>Candle light dinner for two pre-arranged in your private balcony!</p>	 <p>Khaplu Royal Palace & Gardens</p>  <p>Polo – the games of the Kings!</p>

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2	Khaplu	<p>Khaplu Palace & Residence (Full board) – Heritage Boutique Hotel <i>Deluxe Heritage Room</i> Click here for more information</p>	<p>Macholo Valley - vernacular architecture and spell bounding landscape. A photographers dream.</p> <p>Take a short walk to see one of Central Asia's largest Buddhist Stupa's and rock carvings.</p> <p>Enjoy a magnificent picnic lunch for you and your beloved other by the Shyok River surrounded by towering mountains and overlooking Khaplu.</p> <p>Devour deliciously cooked trout from the local trout farm and enjoy other BBQ treats.</p> <p>It's time to stretch your legs – climb to Toqsikhar, panoramic view point and ancient seat of Yabgo rulers where ruins of the 400 year old castle are visible. (2 hour return walk)</p>	<p>Top Tip #3: Learn a little bit of Balti before you arrive. The locals will really appreciate it. Here is a start:</p> <p>Hello <i>Assalamu Alikum</i> Goodbye <i>Khudai fakring</i> How are you? <i>Lakbmo yota ju</i> Thank you <i>Baksobish</i> How much is it? <i>Xam la yo</i></p> <p>Top Tip #4: Live like royalty and experience Khaplu Palace & Residence's Royal High Tea. Try the traditional Balti Tea - Payoo Chai. You will never forget it!</p>	 <p>Picure Perfect Picnic Spot - Saling</p>  <p>Sunset from Toqsikhar, Khaplu</p>
3	Shigar Valley via Thalley Valley (2 ½ hour's drive to Thalley and 2 ½ hours drive to Shigar)	<p>Shigar Fort Residence (Full board) – Heritage Boutique Hotel <i>Heritage Room</i> Click here for more information</p> <p>Supplement: Upgrade yourself to the royal suite – enjoy the privacy of your own roof top terrace that gets the best views of Shigar Valley & the towering mountains or ask for the Honeymoon Suite in the Garden House.</p>	<p>First stop is Bara – a small village just 20 minutes from Khaplu. Visit a wool spinning & weaving centre that trains & supports local women. Purchase a local Baltistani topi!</p> <p>Drive up through the Thalley Valley – possibly one of the most spectacular & interesting valleys in Pakistan filled with terraced agricultural fields, local men & women attending to their wheat & potato crops, high altitude yaks & mules and towering jagged mountain peaks.</p> <p>Feel like the only two on earth with a gourmet picnic in total seclusion.</p> <p>Welcome to Shigar Fort Residence – one the most romantic places in Baltistan.</p>	<p>Top Tip #5: If you have any spare note books and pens the local Thalley School would be hugely appreciative.</p> <p>Top Tip #6: Ask the chef to make you some local fry (pancakes) – they are seriously delicious with butter and honey and go particularly well with a hot cup of tea!</p>	 <p>Thalley Valley</p>  <p>Yaks braving the chilly river, Thalley</p>

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4	Shigar	<p>Shigar Fort Residence (Full board) – Heritage Boutique Hotel Heritage Room Click here for more information</p> <p>Supplement: Upgrade yourself to the royal suite – enjoy the privacy of your own roof top terrace that gets the best views of Shigar Valley & the towering mountains.</p>	<p>Relive the history of Shigar Fort with a guided walking tour.</p> <p>Morning trip to the Great Walls of Skardu, Satpara Lake, a 7th century Buddhist rock carving & Skardu Fort.</p> <p>Late lunch back at the Shigar Fort Residence.</p> <p>Visit the UNESCO award-winning restoration project of the 14th century Amburiq Mosque & nearby Khilingrong Mosque.</p> <p>Astana of Syed Mir Yahya - the burial place of a Sufi missionary from Xinjiang who promoted Nurbakhshism in Baltistan during the 17th century and now a place of pilgrimage and reverence for the Balti Nurbakhshi community.</p> <p>Enjoy a romantic dinner for two in a surprise location.</p>	<p>Take an early morning walk to see the ruins of Shigar's first fort, Kari Dong, dating back to the 11th century.</p>  <p>16th Century mosque dating back to the arrival of Islam in Baltistan, Skardu Fort (Kharphocho Fort)</p> <p>Optional all day trip to see the world's 2nd highest plateau (4,100m) – the Deosai Plains (6 hour return drive).</p>	 <p>Shigar Fort</p>  <p>The architecture of the Astana of Syed Mir Yahya is a blend of Tibetan and Kashmiri styles typical of Balti saintly tombs.</p>
5	Islamabad (55 minute flight)	<p>Homeward bound! Or perhaps you would like to stay on and continue exploring Beautiful Baltistan with Serena Hotels.</p> <p>How about a trip to the famous high altitude plateau of the Deosai Plains? We can tailor make an experience of a life time that you will never forget. Just let us know!</p> <p>How about staying a night in the Islamabad Serena Hotel. Ask about our city tours!</p>	<p>It is time to leave Beautiful Baltistan!</p> <p>Stop off at the Italian K2 Museum in Skardu before ending up at the airport for your departure.</p>	<p>Top Tip #8: When checking in ask for a window seat on the left hand side of the plane – you will get a fantastic view of Pakistan's 2nd highest mountain Nanga Parbat (8,126m).</p> <p>Up, up and away!</p>	 <p>The world's 2nd highest mountain – K2</p>

SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE BOOKS TO READ ON BEAUTIFUL BALTISTAN:

- ✓ *Pakistan Trekking Guide: Himalaya, Karakoram and HinduKush* by Isobel Shaw
- ✓ *Empires of the Indus* by Alice Albinia,
- ✓ *Where the Indus is Young: Midwinter in Baltistan* by Dervla Murphy
- ✓ *A taste of Baltistan: Famous for Balti-Style Cooking* by Sabiha Khokhar
- ✓ *A History of Ladakh, Gilgit, Baltistan* by Parvez Dewan
- ✓ *The Big Game of Baltistan and Ladakh: A Summer in High Asia* by Frederick Edward Shafto Adair and Stuart Hill Godfrey

LET THE PICTURES DO THE TALKING

Spellbinding ESCAPES



The awe inspiring mountainous landscape



Khaplu Palace Residence in its glory!



Amburiq Mosque, Shigar



Sunset over the Karakoram



Dine in style at
Khaplu Palace & Residence



Ancient Buddhist Rock Carving, Satpara



The stunning meadows of Saling



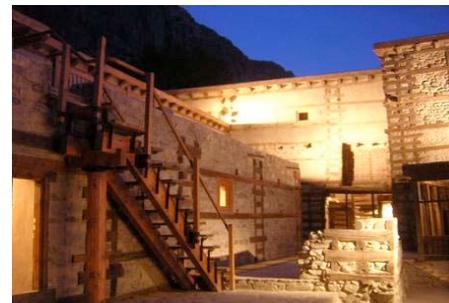
Historical luxury – Shigar Fort Residence!



Traditional threshing techniques
Shigar Valley



The game of the Kings – Polo!



The historical Shigar Fort Residence



Satpara Lake, Skardu

To book your Karakoram Experience call us on +92 (051) 111-133-133 or email at holidays@serena.com.pk
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