



Potala Palace: Lhasa means “sacred land” in Tibetan, and Potala Palace, the architectural wonder in the center of Lhasa, is the symbol of that sacred land. The palace that we see today had finally been completed in 1645. Over the past three centuries, the palace gradually became a place where the Dalai Lama lived and worked and a place for keeping the remains of successive Dalai Lama. Potala Palace was begun in 641, by Songtsan Gambo, ruler of Tibet’s Tubo Kingdom, who had the palace built for his fiancé Princess Wencheng of the Tang Dynasty. This structure was later burned to the ground during a war and was rebuilt in the 17th century by the Fifth Dalai Lama. The Buddhists later named it Potala Palace, meaning the sacred land of Buddhism.

Potala Palace is made of stone and wood and consists of the White Palace and Red Palace. The White Palace, made up of halls, temples, and courtyards, were built three hundred years ago by the fifth Dalai Lama as living quarters and served as the living quarters of the Dalai Lama. The Red Palace includes various chambers for worshipping Buddha and chambers housing the eight stupa that contain the remains of fifth through thirteenth Dalai Lama. All the stupas are covered with gold foil. The most magnificent stupa belongs to the fifth Dalai Lama, which measures 14.85 meters tall. It is inlaid with pearl and jade. Also on exhibit are a large number of sculptures, murals, scripture and other valuable cultural relics.

Potala Palace is located on the Red Hill in Lhasa, Tibet, and is 3,700 meters above sea level and covers an area of over 360,000 square meters, measuring 360 meters from east to west and 270 meters from south to north. The palace has 13 stories, and is 117 meters high. In 1994, the palace joined the list of world cultural heritage sites.

Sunlight Hall in Potala Palace is flooded with sunlight throughout the year. Eastern Sunlight Hall was the residence of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, and Western Sunlight Hall was lived in by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. Now these luxurious halls house valuable pearls, jewels, and antiques.

Mural art is an intrinsic part of the architecture of Potala Palace. Every room, no matter how small, is decorated with colorful, vivid murals. The 698 murals along the painted second-floor

## Lhasa Potala Palace□□□□

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corridor are the most extraordinary, depicting Buddhist stories and the unique scenery, customs, and legends of ancient Tibet.

Tips: 1. According to the local custom, you should tour the palace in a clockwise direction. Also, do not step on the doorsill and do not smoke in the halls. Last, do not take photos without permission! 2. It is a steep climb to get to the top of the palace. Keep this in mind when you start the journey up the stairs, and remember to relax and go slowly. The halls are always chilly so take a coat! 3. Potala Palace is allowed less than 2,300 tourists and pilgrims to enter each day, so try to purchase your tickets beforehand in order to secure entry. Remember your ID card or passport.

Admission Fee: CNY 100

Opening Hours: 09:00 - 19:00 Recommended Time for a Visit: Two and a half hours

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