



Ü འདུས་

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Best Places to Eat

- » Friendship Snowland Restaurant (p118)
- » Yarlung Kitchen (p121)
- » Tashi Restaurant (p121)

Best Places to Stay

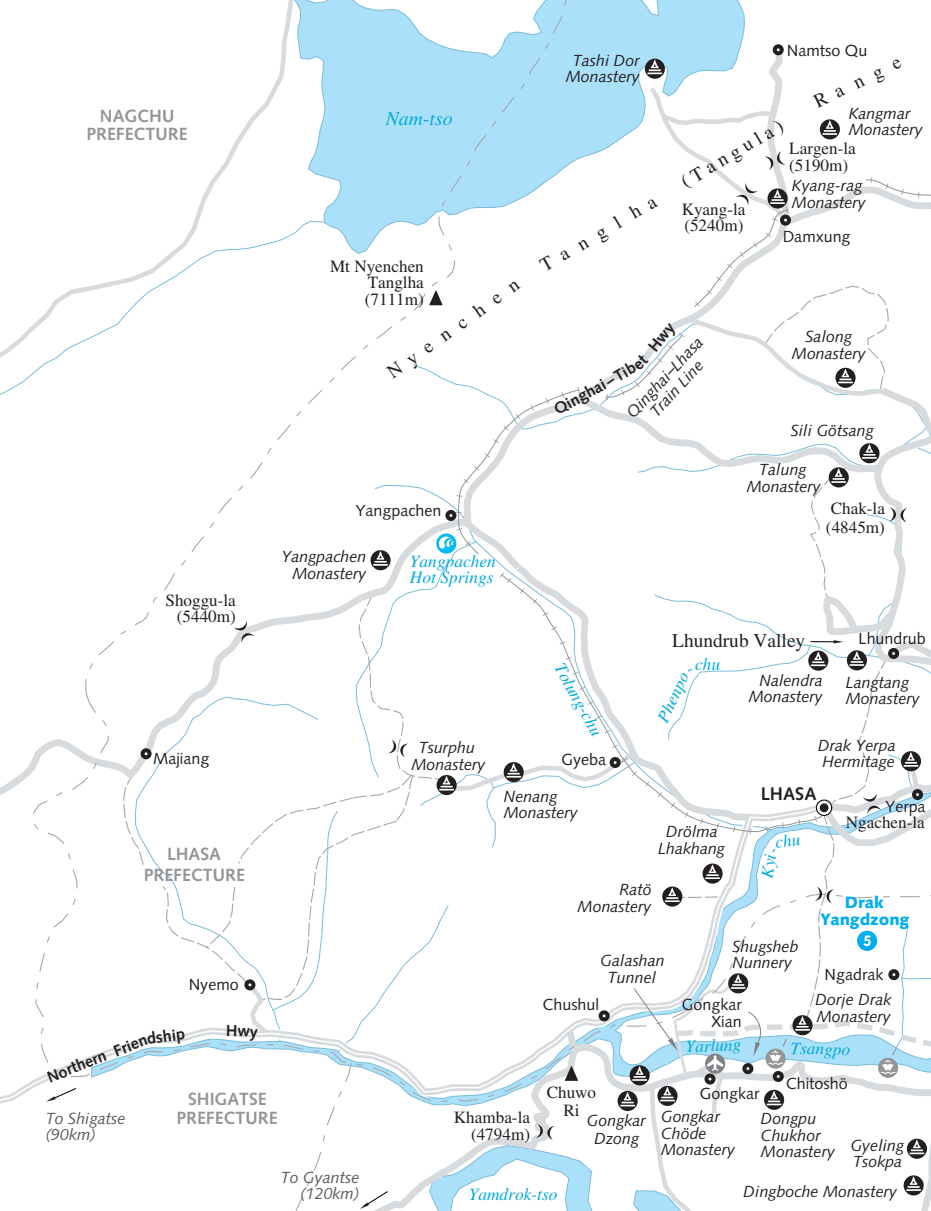
- » Drigung Til Monastery (p108)
- » Tidrum Nunnery (p109)
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Why Go?

Ü is Tibet's heartland and has almost all the landscapes you'll find across the plateau, from sand dunes and wide rivers to soaring peaks and alpine forests. Due to its proximity to Lhasa, Ü is the first taste of rural Tibet that most visitors experience, and exploring the region on foot is the best way to appreciate its scenery – fine walking opportunities abound, from day hikes to overnight treks. Ü is also the traditional power centre of Tibet, and home to its oldest buildings and most historic monasteries. A thousand-year-old temple or hilltop fort seems to lie around every bend in the road. Some of its best-known destinations are crowded in high season, so consider getting off the beaten path – there are endless valleys along the Yarlung Tsangpo river to explore. Head up one and you'll feel like you have Tibet all to yourself.

When to Go

Pilgrims converge on Tsurphu in May/June to take part in a festival of *cham* dancing, religious devotion and bouts of Tibetan-style drinking games. Festival season at Samye Monastery comes in June/July. Take part in the party then trek over the mountains to Ganden Monastery. Serene Lake Nam-tso comes alive in September for an annual horse festival. It's a good time to see horse racing and horse games before the cold sets in.



Ü Highlights

1 Divine your future by peering into the mystical waters of **Lhamo La-tso** (p125)

2 Take a scenic river journey across the Yarlung Tsangpo to the spectacular circular complex of **Samye** (p114), Tibet's first monastery

3 Hike the Yarlung Valley, including the iconic **Yumbulagang** (p123) – the first building in Tibet – and the ruins of **Rechung-puk** (p123)