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KHUMBI-ILA

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MOUNTAINEERING & TREKKING

**NEPAL | TIBET | BHUTAN
SIKKIM | LADAKH**

*.....in the footprints of
Himalayan Legends*



KHUMBI-ILA
MOUNTAINEERING & TREKKING



NANASTE!

Khumbi-Ila Mountaineering and trekking derives its name from the sacred mountain, holy to all sherpas, that overlooks the village of Khumjung in the Everest region. We have a proud history of organizing treks, expeditions, tours and rafting in various parts of the Himalayas. With more than two decades of experience we organize trips all over Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet, Ladakh and Sikkim in India. The Himalayas has always been our speciality and we are committed to sharing the essence of the region – its culture, people, vastness and timelessness – an experience that guarantees adventure, personal satisfaction and self-discovery.

WHY CHOOSE US

- * Our emphasis has always been on small groups led by experienced guides to ensure personalized service.
- * Flexibility, reliability and security rate very high on our priority list.
- * Our programs are designed to suit everyone – from the novice, the adventurous to the veteran traveler.
- * Handpicked professionally trained staff who love their job and are passionate about their culture and their roots.
- * Preservation of our unique environment is of utter importance to us.
- * Camping and kitchen equipment of the highest quality is provided during treks.

- * All our programs are tailor made keeping in mind every aspect.
- * We are a versatile company. Trekking and mountaineering are our expertise, however we also operate specially tailored guided city tours and rafting trips all over Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh and Tibet.
- * We take care of all the needs of the clients like hotel reservation, flight bookings and reconfirmation of flights.
- * Once you book with us you can let us do all the worrying and you can just concentrate on enjoying your holidays to the fullest.

CHARTER ETHICS

We value our service and our thrust is always on quality and we believe in providing our clients value for their money without ignoring the needs of our workforce especially the porters who form the backbone of all our treks. We practice “CHARTER ETHICS” which is unique to our company. To ensure their safety we provide them with warm clothing equipment like jackets, caps, shoes, trousers, gloves, socks and sunglasses. All our sirdars are specially instructed that no porter is overburdened with heavy loads. The porters are provided with sumptuous meals during the trek prepared by our kitchen crew and a mess tent to spend the nights.



Dear Friends,

We at Khumbi-Ila welcome you to embark on a journey that will leave an indelible mark on you. Nothing can capture the mysteries and magnificence of the Himalayas except experience. The crisp mountain air, the languid lifestyle, the ever-smiling people and the mysteries of the land waiting to unfold are like “manna” for a soul – rejuvenating and magnificent.

Zimba Zangbu Sherpa
Managing Director



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PROFILE

Some renowned world-class European guides, who are celebrities in their own right in their home countries, work with Khumbi-Ila Mountaineering and Trekking. We have several special trips, which are led by them. On a more flexible mode, you could form a group and tailor make your program and ask for any one of these specialized guides to lead your trip. Khumbi-Ila Mountaineering and Trekking is ably supported by a team of dedicated professionals with years of experience between them.



ZIMBA ZANGBU SHERPA

Zimba Zangbu Sherpa, who has been in the tourism field since the last couple of decades, manages the company. He is ably assisted by a team of dedicated professionals. He lends his expertise and years of experience to the various trips undertaken by the company. Born in Khumjung, he went on to study in the celebrated 'Hillary School' and later on in Kathmandu. He has undergone various trainings and has been conferred with many awards to honor his involvement in the tourism sector in Nepal. Trained as a trekking guide in 1977, he went on to undertake a course in Rock and Ice Climbing from Argentiere, France with UCPA, 1979 and a year later with UCPA Le Bez, Sierre Chevelier. Apart from basic course and advanced course in Mountaineering he holds "Diplome d'Honneur" in Alpinism from Ecole Nationale de Ski Et Alpinisme under the Ministre Delege A la Jeunesse et aux Sports. As a trained mountaineer he has climbed several peaks around the world namely Mount Blanc and Mattro Horn in Europe, Ganesh Himal and Amadablam as well as most of the trekking peaks in Nepal. An avid nature lover and a trekker at heart, he has visited most of the regions in Nepal.

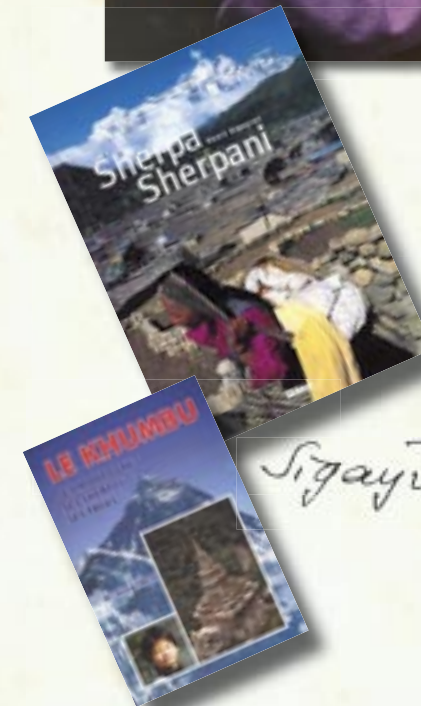


"Avec Zimba le Sherpa" a book written by the late Robert Rieffel chronicles the various treks undertaken by both of them together. He has served in various organizations in different capacities. Presently he is the 1st Vice President of Nepal Mountaineering Association - an affiliate of UIAA - and the premier organization with regard to mountaineering in the country. Zimba can converse comfortably in English and French.

PROFILE

STEVEN LAMA

A graduate in humanities from an Indian University Steven Lama possesses an in depth knowledge of the Himalayas - Nepal, Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan and Ladakh. An outdoor person he is an avid nature lover and loves to travel. As the General Manager of the company he is responsible for operation of all the treks and expeditions organized by Khumbi-Ila to various parts of the Himalayas. He also manages the administrative as well as human resource matters of the firm. With lots of experience in providing logistical support, he will ensure that you have a memorable holiday in the Himalayas. He speaks English, French and Hindi fluently.



Sigaret

HENRI SIGYARET

From the French perspective, Henri Sigaret is a name synonymous with the Himalayas. Writer, adventurer, alpinist, researcher - he is a man of many facets. He is very much at home in Nepal, his second home, where he resides currently with his sherpa wife and family. An avid mountain climber and adventure seeker, he has already climbed various peaks in Pakistan, Peru, Bolivia, Greenland and Nepal. He is also a much-trekked person. He has visited various parts of the Himalayas and he has chronicled his exploits in a book titled "Trekking au Nepal". But his quests are not only confined to alpinism and trekking, he has made inroads in other areas - mainly his understanding of Sherpa culture and Nepali way of life. His close ties with the sherpas and years spent in Nepal has enabled him to study and understand the Nepalese way of life very closely. Being a writer he has been able to put down his observation in many of the books he has written. The prominent ones being - "Sherpas, Sherpanis", "Journal d'un Sahib au Nepal", "Le Khumbu", "Lexique Toponymie en Himalaya", "Un autre Nepal" and "Lexique franco - sherpa". He is involved in various projects in the mountains. The French government has shown its appreciation for his work by honoring him with "L'ordre de Legionnaire", one of the highest honors bestowed on a French national.



PROFILE



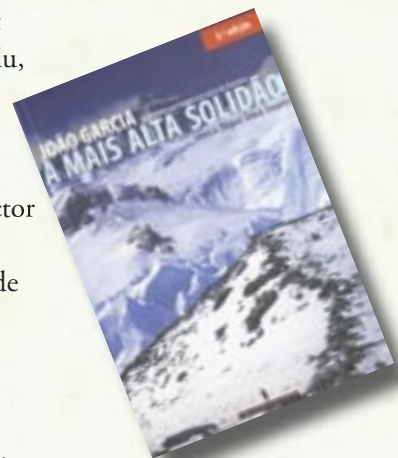
ANDRE GEORGE

An active guide since the last twenty-seven years, his curriculum is of a different genre. The list of his exploits in mountaineering is quite profound and quite unimaginable. Born in 1953, Andre George is a household name in mountaineering circles and his native Switzerland. He finds immense joy in his work and is very passionate about climbing. He has many successful ascents to his credit namely Mt. Everest, Shishapangma, Manaslu, Cho Oyu, Lhotse, Makalu, Gasherbrum II, Annapurna, Dhaulagiri. He brings the same passion and joy while leading trips. A recognised guide, and a qualified ski instructor he has been bestowed with several honours by his community for his exploits. As a guide he is always pushing towards new frontiers. It has seen him test human endurance in various parts of the world. What started as an expedition to Amadablam in 1982 has culminated into several visits to Nepal, which has become his second home. Though he leads trips in his native country and different parts of Europe, his premier destination is Nepal followed by Pakistan and Antarctica.

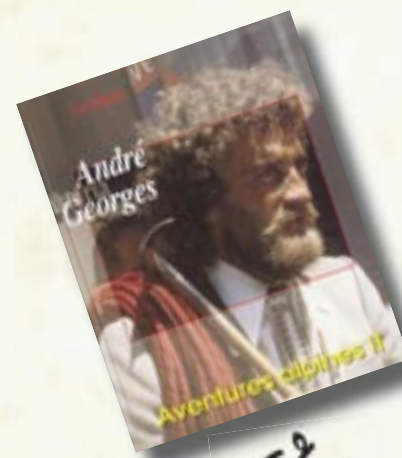


JOAO GARCIA

A Portuguese national and an ardent mountain lover; strange it may seem for person from this Iberian nation to be passionate about climbing. But he is just that, and he has been climbing since the last two decades and is a qualified sports technician in climbing from High Mountaineering School in Spain and Belgium, both recognized by UIAA. He leads various groups in climbs throughout the world mainly in the Andes, Alaska, the Atlas and the Himalayan peaks where he has climbed and trekked extensively. He has several successful ascents to his credit including Cho Oyu, Gasherbrum II and Mount Everest, all without bottled oxygen and unassisted, making him the first Portuguese to achieve this feat. He has been accorded several awards and has published many books on mountaineering, the most prominent among them being "A Mais Alta Solidão", which is already in its 7th edition. He has received the "Fair Play" award for the year 1999, by deliberation of the Executive commission of the Portuguese Olympic Committee and was acknowledged as the "sports man of the year" by the Portuguese Sports Confederation.



Joao Garcia



Andre Georges

PROFILE



Alain

ALAIN HUBERT



Explorer, civil engineer, entrepreneur, mountain guide, good-will Ambassador for UNICEF, co-founder of the International Polar Foundation; Alain Hubert is a multi faceted personality. A true adventurer to the core he has achieved many "firsts" in the world of adventure sports. He has the world record independent crossing of the Antarctic continent, with Dixie Dansercoer, to his credit. 99 days in the harshest of conditions covering 3924 km, the longest crossing ever made on foot and ski, using innovative new power kites, is a true example of human endurance and spirit. He was also a member of the team that made the first ever ascent of the "Big Wall" in Queen Maud Land, Antarctica. He has made several successful climbs in the Himalayas (Amadablam, Cho Oyu), the Andes (Bolivia), Antarctica, Patagonia, Alaska

and Antarctica and has trekked extensively all over the world. He has also written several articles and books on sustainable development, climate change, as well as contributing articles to mountaineering magazines. He has also written and co produced the film 'antarctica.org', which won the Toison d'Or (first prize) at the Adventure Film Festival held in Dijon (France) in 1999, and the First Price of the Mountain Film Festival held in Trente (Italy) in 2001, and completed a short documentary with the renowned geneticist, Albert Jacquard, entitled "La terre offerte aux hommes". Several films chronicling his various exploits have been made. This qualified guide recognized by UIAGM, UPMM he has been accorded the Georges Lemaître International Prize, 2003 and the Grand Officier de l'Ordre de la Couronne, 2003, for his various achievements.

NAMGYAL ZANGBU SHERPA

Son of Zimba Zangbu Sherpa, the Managing Director of the company, Namgyal has always grown up among stories of mountaineering and trekking exploits of his father and grandfather. It was quite natural for him to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious father. An avid traveler, trekking has always been a serious occupation for him. After graduating in tourism and business management from Australia, he joined his father in the capacity of Manager of the company, a position he holds presently. He has traveled extensively all over the country and has in depth knowledge on the Himalayas. He looks after the overall aspect of the company. He speaks English, Hindi and his native Sherpa language fluently.



NEPAL



Our tiny Himalayan kingdom is bound on the north by the Tibetan Autonomous region of the People's Republic of China. While we share our eastern, southern and western frontiers with India. Nepal stretches 885 km from east to west and 145 - 241 km from the north to south. Nowhere in the world is the altitude variation so pronounced as in our country. The change in elevation is dramatic - from the soaring Mount Everest, the highest point on earth to flat Gangetic plains,

which rise only a few meters from sea level. The lowland Terai occupies about 17% of the total land area of the country while the rest of the country is rugged mountainous terrain.

Nature has been kind to our small Himalayan kingdom. It has expressed itself in a variety of genres. The unique geographical location of this landlocked country has resulted in one of the richest countries in the world in terms of bio diversity.

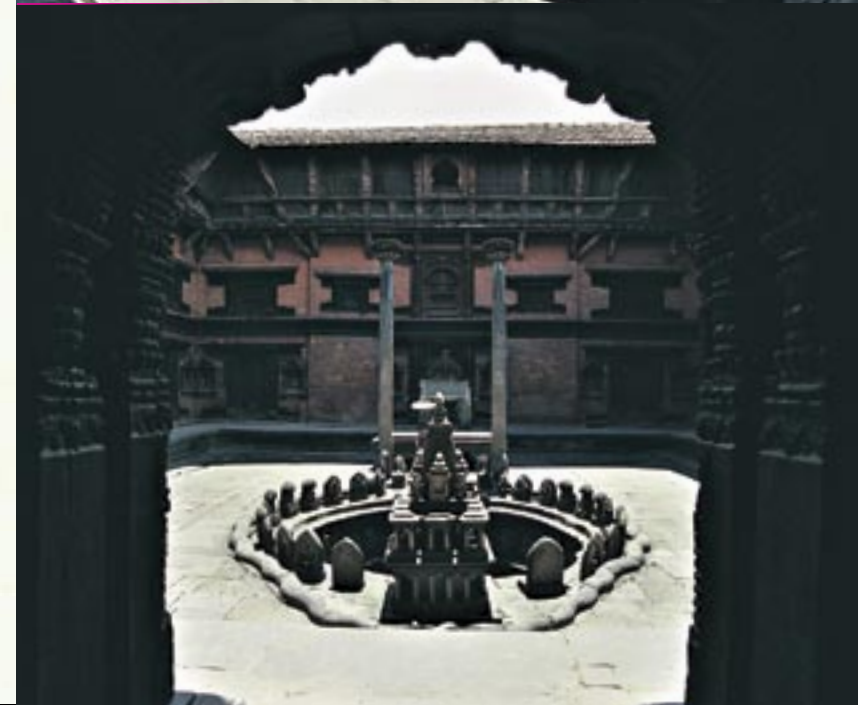
A peculiar and unrivalled ecosystem, it manifests itself within a span of a few hundred kilometers - from the icy cold Himalayan peaks to the sweltering tiger prowling plains.

It is a treasure trove of natural wonders with eight of the fourteen highest peaks in the world crowned by the mighty Mt. Everest and home to the rare animals like the Royal Bengal tiger and the one horned rhino.

No adjective is enough to describe "the true Nepal". Strange, magical, mystical, invigorating, enriching - the list goes on. Snow clad peaks, rugged barren high altitude deserts, green terraced fields, rustic hamlets, lush green valleys and sprawling plains - the country has everything to satisfy the palate of a traveler.

The land of the Buddha for a traveler looking for peace and serenity, home to the intimidating Mt. Everest for an avid mountaineer, rushing big volume whitewater for a river runner and several species of rare and distinct flora and fauna - a haven for an ardent nature lover.

It is a perfect heaven to look for some seclusion and cut loose for the every day grind and discover your true self. The unparalleled beauty and rich culture of Nepal makes a trip to the country an exhilarating and culturally enriching experience - a path to self-discovery and personal growth.



VISA INFORMATION

1. Tourists who intend to visit Nepal must hold a valid passport and visa. Visa can be obtained from the Royal Nepalese Embassy, consulates or mission offices abroad or at the immigration offices at the port of entry in Nepal.
2. A single entry visa is issued for a duration of 60 days and the visa fee is US\$ 30.
3. Multiple entry facility can be obtained by paying additional US\$ 50 or equivalent convertible foreign currency.

Tourist Visa Extension: A tourist visa can be extended upto 120 days from the Department of immigration in Kathmandu and Pokhara, upon request. Then after an additional 30 days can be extended from the Department of Immigration ensuring that tourist visa cannot be extended more than 150 days.

Gratis Visa is issued to the following:

Children below ten years, Citizen of member countries of South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) and the People's Republic of China, any foreigner who has lived in Nepal up to 15 days continuously re-entering Nepal during the same visa year, any foreigner tourist entering into Nepal for 3 days or less.

ACCESS:

Visitors can enter Nepal by air or land from any of these ports of entry: Tribhuvan International Airport (Kathmandu), Kakarvita, Birgunj, Kodari, Belhia, Jamunaha (Nepalgunj), Gadda chauki (Mahendranagar).



NEPAL

People :
Nepal has more than 61 ethnic groups and 70 spoken languages.

Language :
The national language is Nepali, however English is spoken and understood as well.

PEOPLE

The incredible landscape pales in comparison to the warmth and friendliness of the Nepalese people. The country, which has approximately 22 million people, is a complex melange of different ethnic groups - each with a distinctive lifestyle and cultural flavor and dialect.

The Mongoloids who mainly constitute of the Rais, Limbus, Tamangs, Gurungs inhabit the slopes of the western and eastern mid hills. As you go higher up you come across hardy mountain people of Tibetan descent like the Sherpas and the Dolpapas whose domain are the highest habitable regions of the Himalayas.

The indigenous people of the Kathmandu valley, the Newars, constitute an important ethnic group of the capital. Tharus, Yadavas, Satars, Rajvanshis and Dhimals inhabit the plains while the Brahmins, Chhetris and Thakuris, all of whom are of Aryan descent, are scattered throughout the country.



RELIGION & CULTURE

Superstition holds sway in virtually all parts of the globe but nowhere is it so much evident as in Nepal. Very often it has been seen that religious faith and superstition are intertwined and the lines that divide them are often blurred. In some regions people have concocted their own primordial mix of religion, which includes everything from concepts of good and evil to characters from our mythological lore. Our beliefs are replete with deities, symbols and rituals, and bit of history woven into the mystical tapestry. Despite its manifold forms it has one common thread - religion which is deeply rooted in the Nepalese psyche. Deeply religious and devout believers, almost every social aspect in the Nepalese way of life is governed by religion. It is clearly evident in every day life. The birthplace of Lord Buddha and the "only" Hindu nation, it is a melting point of Hindu and Buddhist philosophies and beliefs.

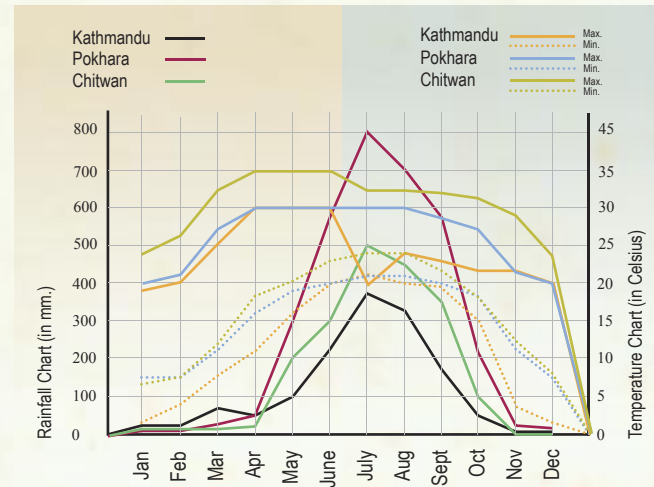
Temples and monasteries dot every nook and corner of the country and devotees taking a dip in the river or unfurling a prayer flag or offering prayers are all common sights. A multi ethnic society has given birth to a unique blend of culture and religion. Other religions like Christianity and Islam are also practiced.



CLIMATE

Nowhere in the world is the climate so distinct and poles apart. The long stretch of the northern frontier, which is mostly rugged terrain, towered by the mighty Himalayas experiences arctic type of climate and a few hours down south on the fringes of the Indian borderlands the landscape and climate changes dramatically as the elevation decreases. With lush green tropical forests and vast stretches of plains one can encounter hot humid climate.

The year is divided into 4 different seasons in Nepal - winter, spring, monsoon and autumn. The best period to visit the country for plant lovers is during spring when the flowers are in full bloom. The mountain slopes are covered with beautiful and colorful flowers. Spring season commences from early March and continues until late May. Even though the days are clear, haze disturbs the mountain views. Late May, and the downpour begins. It continues till late August. Come September and autumn season begins. It continues till late November. With temperate climate, clear blue skies and extraordinary mountain views it is the best season to visit the country. Winter begins in late November and continues till late February.



MAJOR FESTIVALS OF NEPAL

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Buddha Jayanti | 8. Dashain |
| 2. Janai Purnima | 9. Tihar |
| 3. Gaijatra | 10. Maghe Sankranti |
| 4. Krishna Astami | 11. Maha Shivaratri |
| 5. Teej | 12. Holi Purnima |
| 6. Rishi Panchami | 13. Ram Nawami |
| 7. Indra Jatra | 14. Losar |

TREKKING INFORMATION

Opened to the world only a few decades ago Nepal still preserves its sanctity and is free from the trappings of modern day life, though there are a few exceptions like Kathmandu. The hilly terrain and the lack of roads make sure that the mode of transportation is the most trusted and the oldest, that is, on foot.

The majority of Nepalese people like our forefathers have been going from one place to another on the well-worn trails that snake through the hills slopes. Trekking in Nepal means a walking trip following the trails that meander through the rugged terrain in the company of the Sherpas.

A rewarding holiday in every sense a typical trek passes through rustic hamlets, terraced paddy fields, past towering peaks. Away from civilization and modern amenities life has changed little in the hills and mountains of Nepal. It is as though time has come

to a complete stand still in this part of the world.

A trek in these regions is travel back into time and a unique opportunity to catch a peek into the Nepalese way of life from very close quarters. Many of the trekking routes offer indescribable views and glimpses into unexplored vistas. Pauses in the villages that dot the trail grant a trekker a unique opportunity to immerse himself in the surrounding. As different ethnic groups inhabit different parts of the trail, the landscape, the houses, the people and the lifestyle of the people undergo a dramatic transformation with every climb. The experience is culturally exhilarating.

Trekking in Nepal does not require climbing experience. Anyone with sound health and love for nature can go on a trek. Though the trek might require navigating steep hills and climbing down to lower elevations

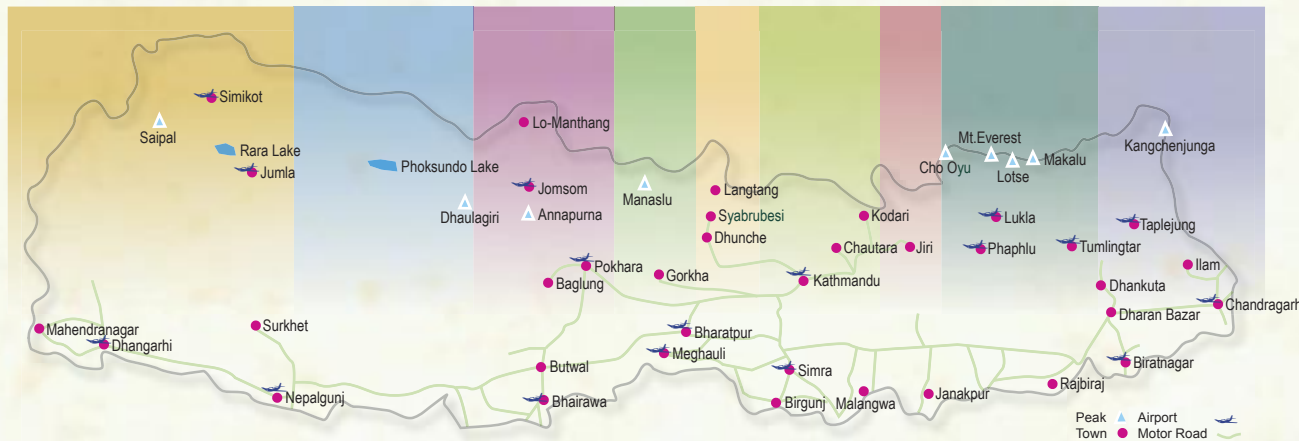
you can set up your own pace and need not wear yourself out. All our treks are tailor made keeping in mind every aspect. The preservation of the fragile Eco system is of utmost importance to us and our support staff led by the sirdar is made well aware of the significance of preserving the environment.

We provide full service tented treks all over Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh and Tibet led by highly experienced guides with knowledge on culture and high altitude survival skills. All camping and kitchen equipment and highly trained support staff to make the trek a memorable one are provided. We take pride in the high quality of service we render – personalized, professional and above all enjoyable. Our crew with a keen sense of hospitality will make your holiday worthwhile. You will make friends with our tour leader during the trip and find adventure that you will re-live the rest of your life.



MAIN MOUNTAIN RANGES IN THE NEPAL HIMALAYAS

- West Nepal
- Dhaulagiri Himal
- Annapurna Himal
- Manaslu Region
- Ganesh Himal
- Langtang/Jugal Himal
- Rolwaling Himal
- Khumbu Himal
- Kangchenjunga Region



Our treks are graded as easy, moderate, strenuous and challenging.

EASY

To do an easy trek you do not have to be in great physical shape. A reasonably active person can undertake this trek. These treks require easy walking of 3 – 4 hours and do not need ascending more than 200 meters per day.

MODERATE

It is not necessary to have previous trekking experience. Even a novice can do it. However these trips require you to be in reasonably good physical shape. The average walking hours per day for these treks is 5 – 6 hours and the elevation could increase up to 500 meters per day.

STRENOUS

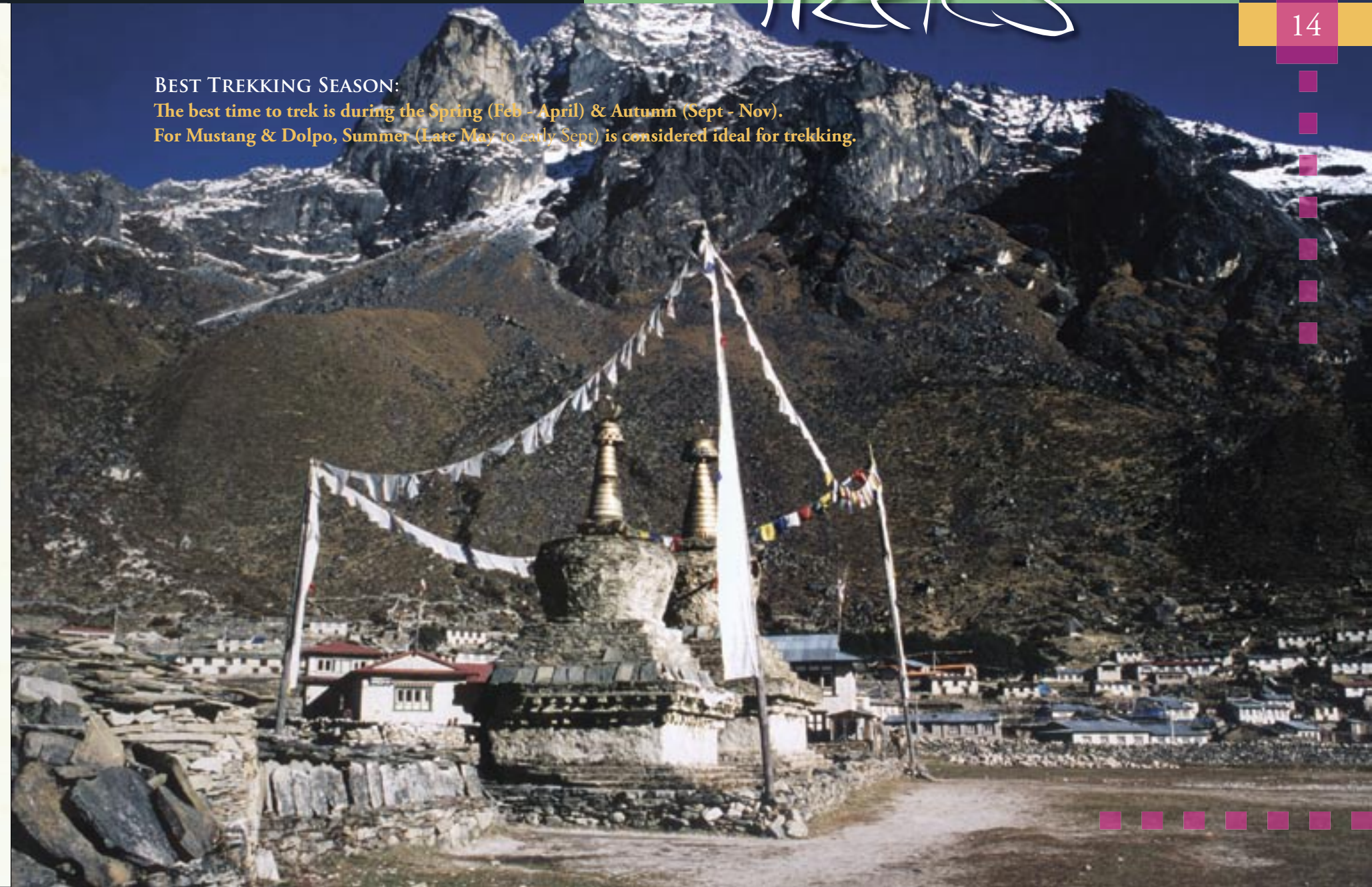
These courses offer some psychical challenge and require some previous trekking experience with the ability to walk a few hours. The changing elevation, long walking hours (6 – 7 hours) and varying mountain terrain necessities good health.

CHALLENGING

It is imperative that you have some sort of previous trekking experience to undertake these treks. They are physically demanding and technical climbing of some sort is desirable. Since these trek require walking in rugged and sometimes extreme conditions it is advisable to start the trek on a positive note and adventurous frame of mind. Walking hours may vary from 7 – 8 hours and you may be required to walk at an elevation of 4000 – 5000 meters.

BEST TREKKING SEASON:

The best time to trek is during the Spring (Feb – April) & Autumn (Sept – Nov). For Mustang & Dolpo, Summer (Late May to early Sept) is considered ideal for trekking.



NEPAL



SAGARMATHA NATIONAL PARK

Comprising mostly of rugged terrain and deep gorges the Sagarmatha National Park lies in the northeast part of Nepal. Established in 1976 with an area of 1,148 sq. km the park is listed as a world heritage site. The lower slopes of the park is dominated by pine and hemlock forests. The vegetation changes to silver fir, birch, rhododendron, and juniper trees as we go higher up.

Various types of rhododendron show their brilliant colors in spring and monsoon. The tree line is at 4,500m, where birch gives way to juniper and rhododendron scrubs. The park offers a safe habitat for rare birds and animals that roam the high mountain range.

SUGGESTED TREKS



TREKS

BEYOND BASE CAMP

Home of the renowned sherpas, and the realm of Mt. Everest, the region needs no introduction. The airhead at Lukla serves as the gateway to the region and also as the starting and ending point of almost all the treks in the Everest region. The trail follows soaring ridgelines with amazing views of Amadablam, Thamserku, Everest and a host of other peaks.

A stop at Namche, the hub of this region famous for its open-air market, is an interesting insight into the culture of the mountain hardy people. The view of Tengboche monastery, the religious pulse of this sherpa country, dwarfed by the peaks that rise up to the sky, is a sight to remember. Walk in the footsteps of legends like Hillary, Messner, Bonington and the likes and experience how they felt at Everest BC from where several assaults to tame the peak were made.

Trekking Grade Strenuous

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Lukla, trek to Phakding
- 2 - 12 Trek 13 Fly Lukla - Kathmandu

EMERALD LAKE

The trail begins at Lukla and winds through clusters of stone houses as it makes its way towards Gokyo. The vistas are ever changing – awe inspiring and absorbing. Prayer flags fluttering in the breeze, pine forests, stone chortens, mani walls calling upon the Gods and the view of the golden rays of the sun striking on the peaks in the wee hours of the morning is a rewarding experience. The towering giants serve as a brilliant backdrop to mountain life. Images of young boys with smiling faces herding their cattle in alpine pastures and the view of the emerald Gokyo Lake are sights to cherish forever.

Trekking Grade Strenuous

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Lukla, trek to Phakding
- 2 - 11 Trek 12 Fly Lukla - Kathmandu



NEPAL



RARA NATIONAL PARK

About 371 kms by air from Kathmandu lies the Rara National Park in North-West Nepal. The smallest park in Nepal, it covers about 106 square kms and the highlight of the park is the oval shaped Rara Lake located at 2990m. The park was established in 1976 to conserve the unique beauty of Lake Rara and to protect the distinctive flora and fauna of the region. A large area of the park is covered by evergreen forest and it provides a haven to hundreds of different flora and fauna.



TREKS

RARA MAGIC

Located in the western part of the country the journey into this unspoiled and remote land is a truly off the beaten track experience. Walking through provides an insight into the life of hilly tribes. Relatively hidden and unknown to the west due to its inaccessibility and remoteness, most of the region is wild country. The trail begins from Jumla, which has an airstrip and a communication tower, and winds through meadows, hills and valleys punctuated by clusters of human settlements.

En route some villages boast of archeological monuments dating back to medieval times that exudes the allure and charm of a bygone era. But the best part of the trek is the Rara Lake, which spreads over a vast expanse at a height of 2990 mts and the enticing mountain scenery. For those seeking tranquility amidst wilderness, this trek is probably the best choice.

Trekking Grade Moderate

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Nepalgunj
- 2 Fly Nepalgunj - Jumla and excursion around
- 9 - 11 Trek
- 12 Fly Nepalgunj - Kathmandu



KANCHENJUNGA CONSERVATION AREA PROJECT

Kanchenjunga was recognized as protected area in 1997 in a bid to conserve the area which serves as bread and butter to the residents who inhabit the park that encompasses 2035 sq. kms. Kanchenjunga Conservation Area Project formally came into existence in 1998 when the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and WWF joined hands to conserve the biodiversity and bring about sustainable development.

The area boasts of alpine grass lands, rocky outcrops, dense temperate and sub-tropical forests, and low river valleys with the Kanchanjunga as its crown. Situated in north eastern Nepal in Taplejung District, the conservation area is bordered by the Tibet Autonomous Region-China in the north, Sikkim-India in the east and Sankhuwasabha District in the west. It is home to rare species of flora and fauna. 15 of Nepal's 28 endemic flowering plants can be found here along with a variety of orchids. It also harbours rare animals like the endangered snow leopard, Himalayan black bear, musk deer, red panda and the variety of birds.



ENTICING KANCHENJUNGA

Located in the eastern fringe of the country adjoining Sikkim, Kanchenjunga has always captured the imagination of all and sundry. The trail leads to the interiors of the third highest massif in the world. As we journey, we pass through hamlets inhabited by people from various ethnic backgrounds like the Rai, Limbus, Gurungs, Sherpas and Tibetans. Villages with terraced fields, look very impressive against the background of some of world's highest peaks which characterize the landscape.

Crossing farmlands, gurgling streams and green rolling pastures is a part of the whole adventure. The feeling of looking at Kanchenjunga, Kabru, Jannu, Rathong, Makalu and a host of other peaks from close quarters is indescribable.

Trekking Grade Strenous

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Taplejung
- 2 - 22 Trek
- 23 Fly Taplejung - Kathmandu





ANNAPURNA CONSERVATION AREA PROJECT

Annapurna area known for its tremendous beauty and culture is a land of extremes - high mountains and equally deep valleys. People from diverse backgrounds have made this region their home. Steep terraces, soaring peaks and barren plateaus bear witness to different cultures. Nepal's largest conservation area, Annapurna covers an area of 7600 sq. kms and provides an excellent habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals that reflect the land's biological diversity. With over thousands of tourists visiting this area, this most popular trekking destination was converted into a sanctuary to protect the environmentally sensitive region.



AROUND ANNAPURNA ESCAPADE

By far the most popular trek in Nepal, the course starts at Beshisahar and eventually winds up either in Phedi or Nayapul a few hours drive from Pokhara. Generally known as the Marshyangdi trail, this course follows the Marshyangdi River.

The journey is an enriching event where you are exposed to a mixed population of Mongolian and Aryan backgrounds with distinctive culture. Thatched roofed mud houses are suddenly replaced by stone flat roofed stone dwellings as elevation increases. Even the landscape undergoes a spellbinding transformation. Terraced fields cover the lower lying region and as we go up the farmlands give way to forests.

And higher still the land suddenly turns barren with very little vegetation. Inhabited by Buddhists of Mongoloid origin, the houses and monasteries seem to cling on to the rocky mountains, in villages along the trail. Apart from the spectacular mountain views, the Thorong Pass (5416 m) crossing and the temple of Muktinath, sacred to Hindus, are other focal points of the trek.

Trekking Grade Moderate

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Drive to Beshisahar
- 2 - 11 Trek
- 12 Fly Jomsom - Pokhara - Kathmandu

ANNAPURNA SANCTUARY

Revered and worshipped Annapurna is truly awe-inspiring. Starting from Nayapul, this trail leads up to the Annapurna Base Camp and Macchapucchere Base Camp, deep in the heart of the Annapurnas. A one of its kind journey, we pass through thatched roofed houses, green fields and farmsteads. The region is primarily Gurung country famous all over the world as the valiant Gorkhas.

Awesome views of Annapurna, Macchapucchere, Hiunchuli, Gangapurna and a host of other peaks will always haunt a traveler and lure him back time and again. Annapurna BC boasts of a magnificent view with anything impeding its panorama of 360 degrees – a spectacular amphitheater formed by a host of towering peaks.

Another memorable experience is getting up early in the morning to reach Poon Hill, a viewpoint famous for beautiful sunrise. Just the sight of mountains turning golden yellow against the sunlight is pure ecstasy and makes all the effort worthwhile.

Trekking Grade Easy

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Drive or Fly to Pokhara - drive to Nayapul, trek to Birethanti.
- 2 - 10 Trek
- 11 Trek - drive to Pokhara
- 12 Fly or drive Pokhara - Kathmandu



NEPAL



PASTURES AND PINES

Closest to Kathmandu, Langtang region allows the trekker to enter the heart of the Himalayan vistas in the shortest of times. In a matter of hours, you are away from the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu amidst crisp mountain air and languid rural setting. The course leads right into what was described by H. W. Tilman as "one of the world's most beautiful valleys". The region abounds with beautiful landscape and variety of flora and fauna. The trail with stone paved path dotted with sleepy hamlets is a rejuvenating experience. Green pastures, stone houses, white snow clad mountains, clean gushing streams make this trek a wonderful experience.

Trekking Grade Easy

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Drive Kathmandu - Syabrubesi
- 2 - 13 Trek
- 14 Sundarjal and drive back to Kathmandu



TREKS

MANASLU ADVENTURE

The trek offers great diversity in vegetation, lifestyle, people and landscape. Starting from the Gorkha, the erstwhile capital of the Shah dynasty, the present rulers of Nepal, the trek offers ever changing vistas from lush green forests, stark barren valleys, quaint villages and high mountain passes. Fascinating view of Manaslu towering towards the sky is a sight to remember. This very popular trek winds through a huge precipitous valley to the contrasting world of Sama, crossing the snow clad Larkya Pass and descends down to the Marshyangdi Khola.

Trekking Grade Strenous

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Drive Kathmandu - Gorkha
- 2 - 19 Trek
- 20 Drive Beshisahar - Kathmandu



NEPAL



ROLWALING CHALLENGE

Comparatively a very quiet trek, this trail is quite unfrequented by tourists, leaving you to savor the mountain flavor. A classic Himalayan course, it showcases the real Nepal culturally and in terms of scenery. Winding beaten paths snake through picturesque villages inhabited by Tamangs and as the trail enters the Khumbu region, the lifestyle, people and language change. A relatively difficult trek, the course entails negotiating a treacherous high pass. So a certain degree of climbing knowledge is imperative.

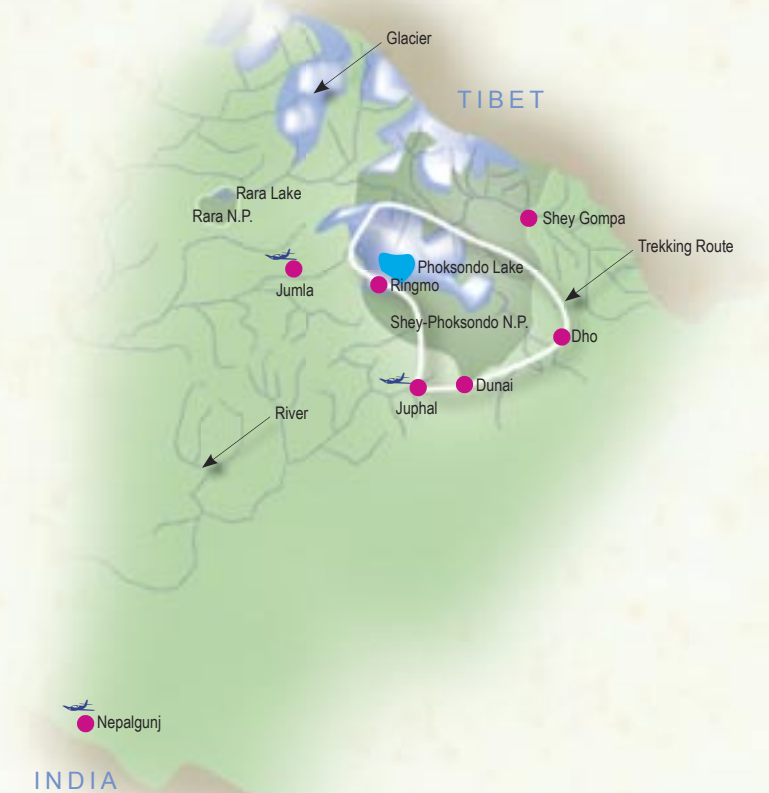
Trekking Grade Challenging

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Drive Kathmandu - Dolakha
- 2 - 16 Trek
- 17 Fly Lukla - Kathmandu



TREKS



SHEY-PHOKSUNDO NATIONAL PARK

Situated in the mountain region of Western Nepal Shey-Phoksundo National Park came into being in 1984. Home to the beautiful Lake Phoksundo and luxuriant forests, the park provides prime habitat and protection to snow leopard and blue sheep. Other common Himalayan animals are also found. Equally rich in many species of birds, it is also interesting to see the lifestyle of the locals who live in these mountain ramparts.

UNTAME WEST (DOLPO)

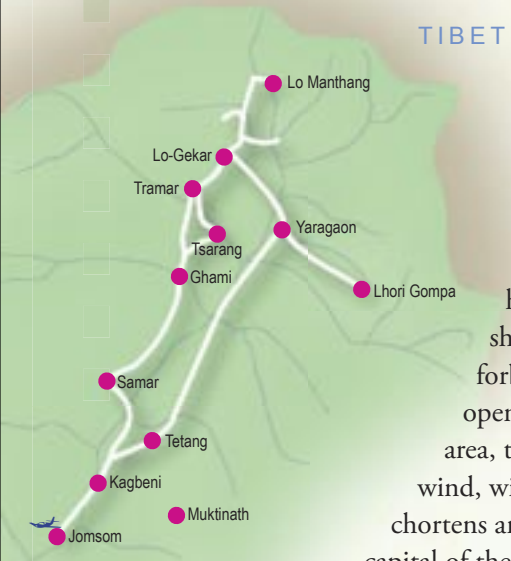
A restricted area, Dolpo located in western Nepal is wild country. Starting from Juphal, the trek is perhaps one of the best ways to savor the taste of Nepal - virgin, untouched and unspoiled. Opened to westerners only a decade ago the area remains unexplored. A walk through verdant forests and arid barren high altitude desert is mesmerizing. The snow capped mountains and beautiful landscape cast a magical spell on the traveler. The sight of yak trains making their way up the mountains is rejuvenating, a fact amply evident in Eric Vialli's film "Caravan" or "Himalaya" filmed in the high mountains of this region. The azure blue Phoksundo is the focal point of this region coupled by a few monasteries that dot the park.

Trekking Grade Strenous

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Nepalgunj
- 2 Fly Nepalgunj - Juphal, trek to Dunai
- 3 - 15 Trek
- 16 Fly Juphal - Nepalgunj - Kathmandu





FORBIDDEN MUSTANG

The trek to this ancient kingdom is a remarkable feeling. Opened only in 1992, this route entails navigating deep gorges and high altitude desolate deserts. Lying in the rain shadow area beyond the Annapurna Massif, this forbidden land is one of the least frequented areas open to tourists. Primarily a Buddhist dominated area, the images of prayer flags fluttering in the wind, wind blown barren ridges, and colorfully painted chortens are a photographer's delight. Lo Manthang, the capital of the erstwhile kingdom is the heart of this area.

It is fortress with a monastery, private houses and the palace of King Jigme Palbar Bista. On a lucky day an audience and tea with the King of Mustang can be arranged. Strictly restricted to foreigners, a foray into this untamed country requires a special permit from the immigration department.

Trekking Grade Moderate

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Pokhara
- 2 Fly Pokhara - Jomsom, trek to Kagbeni
- 3 - 14 Trek
- 15 Fly Jomsom - Pokhara - Kathmandu



MAKALU – BARUN NATIONAL PARK AND CONSERVATION AREA

A unique conservation effort in every sense, the park came into being to preserve some of the richest and rarest of plants and animals which have otherwise disappeared from this region due to human settlements. So it is a true nature park in the strictest of senses. The area is known for its treasure of abundant of economically valuable medical and aromatic plants. Apart from the valuable plants and endangered animals about 32,000 people inhabit the conservation area.

ACROSS THE COLS

One of the most difficult treks in Nepal, this route begins at Lukla, the doorway to Sherpaland, and heads towards the Arun valley. With three high altitude passes, the lowest of which is 5817 m, to be crossed it is truly for the free spirited and the adventurous. With amazing views of Makalu, Kanchenjunga, Lhotse, Baruntse, Pumori, Amadablam and a host of other peaks it is a true Himalayan escapade. Acclimatization is an essential part of this trek, which requires some technical climbing. The journey comes to an end at Tumlingtar which is connected to Kathmandu by air.

Trekking Grade Challenging

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Lukla, trek to Chutenga
- 2 - 18 Trek
- 19 Fly Tumlingtar - Kathmandu



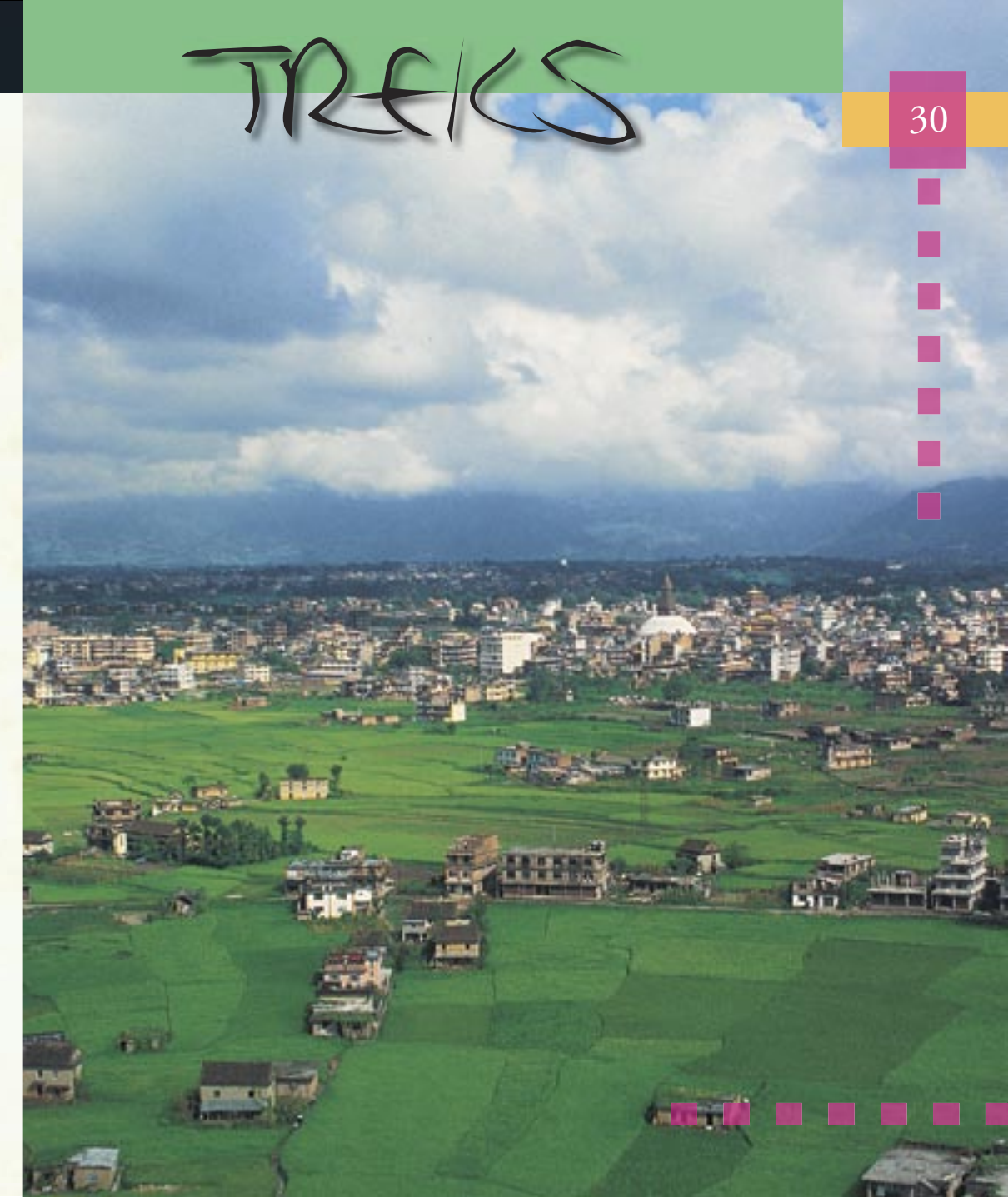
KATHMANDU VALLEY TREK

A trek along the rim of Kathmandu valley is a culturally enriching adventure. Walk along the ridges of the hills that surround the valley and catch a glimpse of lush green fields, brick houses, and thickly wooded patches. The route passes through villages that still retain their ancient splendor and the hotspots surrounding the valley that command an amazing view of the mountains.

Trekking Grade Easy

DAY PROGRAM

- 1 Drive Kathmandu - Sankhu
- 2 Trek to Bajrayogini - Nagarkot
- 3 Nagarkot - Changu Narayan - Bhaktapur - Dhulikhel
- 4 Dhulikhel - Namo Buddha - Panauti
- 5 - 6 Panauti - Phulchowki - Godawari
- 7 Godawari - Baregaon - Chapagaon - Pharping
- 8 Pharping - Dakshinkali - Champadevi - Banbari - Kirtipur - Kathmandu
- 9 Kathmandu sightseeing



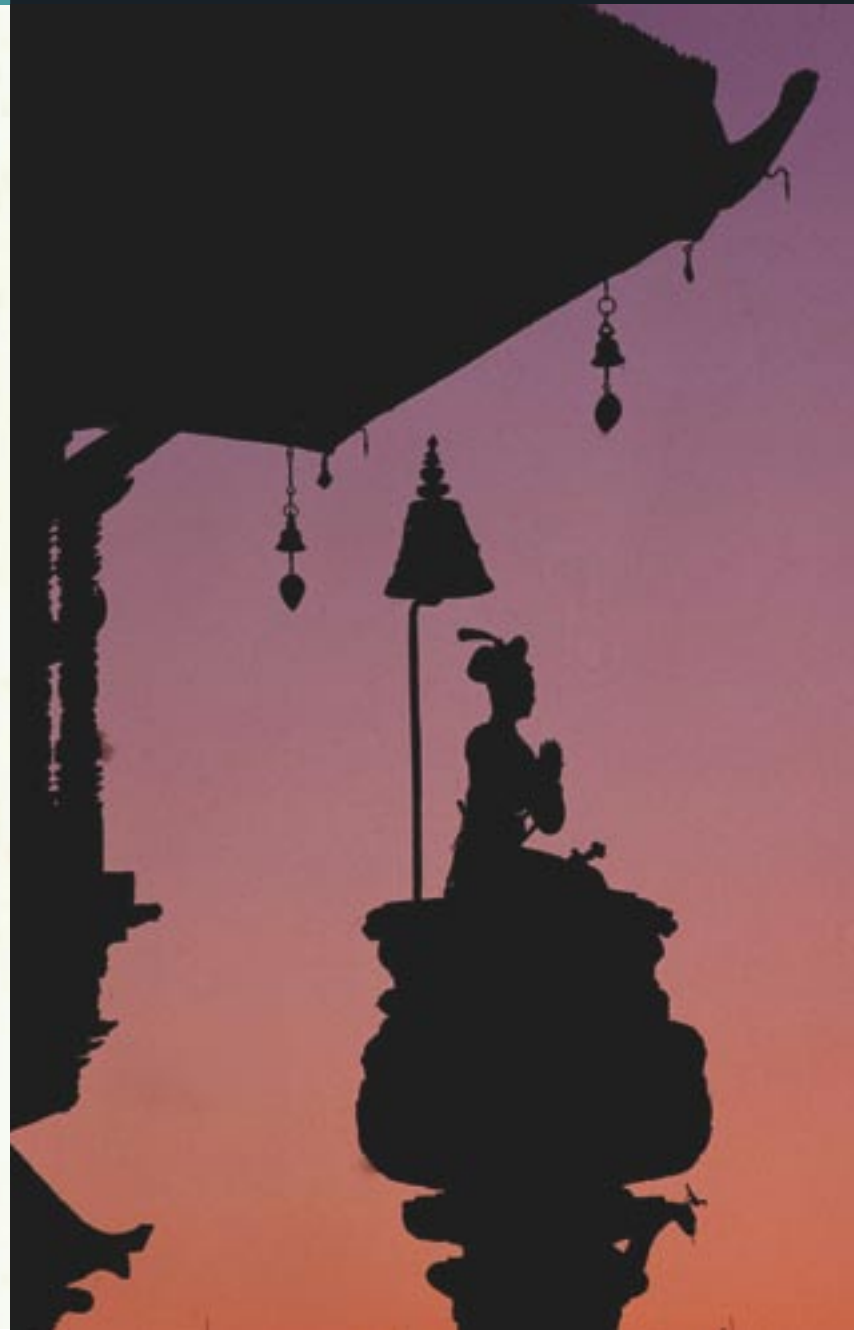
KATHMANDU VALLEY

Legend has it that Kathmandu valley was once a great lake and Manjushree is said to have slashed a hill, which is presently known as Chovar, to drain the water to give us Kathmandu valley as we know it. Today it is no longer an expansive watery body but a vast lake of architectural and cultural wonders.

This small valley surrounded by mountains and hills that soar up to the sky has seen kingdoms rise and fall and Nepalese art and culture develop and flourish. Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Patan, the three districts that make up the valley, each have extraordinary history that rivals each other. It is no wonder that seven UNESCO designated world heritage sites are situated within a radius of a few kms in the valley.

The commercial and political hub of the kingdom, Kathmandu is the most densely populated city in the whole county. Modern yet traditional, the city offers a window to the glorious past of the valley.

Just walking through the narrow lanes of the city is travel back into time. Unchanged for centuries some of the places look like open air museums with skillfully built temples, palaces and stone structures which bear testimony to the rich cultural and artistic heritage of the city. It is also home to Kumari, the living child goddess who is the protector of the city.



DURBAR SQUARE

It is located in the center of the city. A cluster of beautiful architectural delights surrounds the huge square. The Kasthamandap, built probably in the 12th century, is a wonderful example of craftsmanship made from a single tree. The medieval building is said to have given the city its name. The Kumari Bahal on the southern side of the square is the residence of Kumari, the living goddess, who is chosen from a special clan called the Shakyas. Hanuman Dhoka, the old royal palace, serves as a museum that chronicles the life of the past rulers of Nepal.

SYAMBHUNATH

Believed to be one of the oldest of Buddhist stupas this glorious manmade landmark is perched on a hillock in the western part of the city. Referred to as the monkey temple, this instantly recognizable structure with the all seeing eyes of the Buddha, the symbol of Buddha's clairvoyant powers, is also the symbol of the capital city.

BOUDHANATH

Situated in eastern Kathmandu, this huge edifice is the largest stupa in the world measuring a massive 27 meters in diameter. It is built on a huge base that symbolizes a mandala. On the base stand 13 tiered spires representing the 13 steps in the journey to nirvana topped by an umbrella. Like Syambunath the stupa also has the all seeing eyes of the Buddha. Tibetans primarily inhabit the surrounding area, and it is one of the few places where Tibetan culture can be accessed unhindered.



PASHUPATINATH TEMPLE

The temple is located on the banks of Bagmati, one of the holiest rivers. Dedicated to Lord Shiva, the destroyer and creator of the Hindu pantheon, this is the holiest of Hindu shrines. It draws a lot of pilgrims from the whole kingdom and neighboring India. Ascetics in colorful saffron clothes thronging the temple grounds is a familiar sight. The temple of Pashupatinath, with a double tiered golden gilded pagoda roof is an architectural feat in itself. The ghats on the banks of the river close to the temple serve as a crematorium for Hindus.

BUDHANILKANTHA

It is located 9 kms north of Kathmandu at the base of Shivapuri hill dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Among his many manifestations, one of his incarnations Narayan, is said to be the creator of the world. Believed to be created in the 7th or 8th century, the statue with the creator in reclining position is one of the most impressive sculptures in the valley. Lord Vishnu is seen reclining on a bed of multiheaded snake. The image attracts a constant stream of believers.

PATAN

Also known as Lalitpur, it has a long and proud history. Patan is well known for its craftsmen. The highlight of the city is the royal complex and the intricately carved temples and palaces, which is undoubtedly one of the most visually stimulating displays of Newari architecture.



BHAKTAPUR

Situated on the banks of Hanumante river Bhaktapur was the capital of the whole valley until Prithvi Narayan Shah, the ancestor of the present King, overran the kingdom. The city thrived as a transit point during this era and until today the remnants of its glory, rich cultural heritage and architecture is evident. The five storied Nyatapola temple fashioned as a pagoda, the Dattareya temple and the Durbare Square are the most prominent landmarks. The old royal palace and Pujari Math with exquisite carvings are masterpieces of Newari artisans.

NAGARKOT

Perched on a ridge on the northeastern rim of the Kathmandu valley, at an elevation of 2175 m, this hill station is most popular among Kathmanduites. Several factors have contributed to its popularity – easy accessibility, crisp mountain air, pristine and tranquil atmosphere, and the 360 degree view of the Himalayas. The most scenic spot close to the valley the village has managed to force its way into the travel section of Time magazine, a befitting honor. Breathtaking sunrise and splendid evenings make a trip to Nagarkot most rewarding and refreshing.

DHULIKHEL

Popular as a Himalayan viewpoint this small town is 30 kms from the capital. Located on the Arniko highway that connects Nepal and Tibet, the small town still retains its ancient grandeur - age old customs, temples and houses. A few minutes from Dhulikhel are the ancient villages of Panauti and Namobuddha which have their own stories to tell.



MOUNTAINEERING

Located high up in the mountains, Nepal has always been a country of eternal fascination – the kingdom of the mighty Himalayas with Mt. Everest as its crowning glory. The lure of the mountains has always been inescapable. It has inspired poets to write verses, filmmakers and writers. IMAX films like “Everest” by David Breashears and the hugely popular book “Into Thin Air” by Jon Krakauer bear testimony to the appeal that the Himalayas have on people.

Climbers come each year to tame these colossal hulks. Some come for personal glory, some come on a quest – a form of psychological pilgrimage to set out not just to conquer these huge obstacles but also to attain a new level of understanding about the inner self – a search for the personal Shangri-La.

With 8 peaks over 8000 meters, and the northern frontiers draped by high towering peaks, Nepal has always been a paradise for thrill seekers. And the simple fact that Everest, an overpowering attraction, was there to be climbed as the famous English climber Mallory had put it, drew in Nepal’s first tourists – the mountaineers.

After the first conquest of a 8000 peak, the Annapurna, in 1950 by a Frenchman named Maurice Herzog several westerners assaulted the highest peak in the world until an unknown beekeeper from New Zealand and a Sherpa for the Everest region stood on the top of the world. Now mountaineering has come a long way from those pioneering years. Now it is style in which you do it that matters. Several records have been made and shattered but still the peaks stand tall and proud.

KHUMBI-ILA IN MOUNTAINEERING

Mountaineering to the most celebrated of the Nepalese people, the Sherpas, is not a sport but a job. It is his lifeblood. Climbing has become a part of the Himalayan folklore and we at Khumbi-ila organize fully supported expeditions to the various mountain peaks that are opened for Mountaineering by the Ministry of Tourism.

With years of experience, a proven track record and highly trained and accomplished mountain guides, we as a team we strive to provide the best possible service and results for our clients. Khumbi-ila specializes in this part of the world and mountaineering is a part of its expertise.

Once you have signed in with us, you need not worry about the logistics. From camping equipment to kitchen equipment, oxygen canisters to climbing ropes – we take care of everything. Above all safety and reliability are our foremost concerns.

Unlike trekking climbing is an activity that cannot be undertaken alone by the client. As per Govt. rules it is imperative that climbers work in liaison with an agency recognized by Govt. Peaks in Nepal are classified as climbing peaks and trekking peaks. Permits for climbing peaks are issued by the Ministry of Tourism.



No trip to Nepal is complete without visiting one of the various wildlife sanctuaries. These wildlife reserves located in the flood plains of the country attract visitors from all over the world. It is quite amazing to see that the country holds such diversity in a small area. The magnificence of the towering mountains is matched by the abundance of wildlife in the tiny kingdom.

A foray into the deep jungles of the terai is stepping into the domain of the Royal Bengal tiger, or Sher Khan made famous by Rudyard Kipling in his ever popular 'Jungle Book'. So you can step into the shoes of Mowgli to match his escapades and relive the adventure.

The various parks scattered around the country offer a unique opportunity to view a variety of animals from close quarters. Several resorts that boast comfortable accommodation and delectable cuisine dot the parks. Manned by trained personnel they provide various wildlife activities like safaris on elephant backs, walks thorough the jungle, canoe trips that take you deep into the jungle, beyond the beaten tracks. The anticipation of encountering a rhino or a tiger face to face or listening to the sights and sounds of the jungle gives you a high beyond comprehension. Apart from animals the culture and lifestyle of the tharus, the local indigenous people of the terai, offer a unique cultural experience.

WHEN TO GO

The Terai is stifflingly hot during summer. Covered primarily by riverine forests the humidity and heat makes it quite unfriendly during the summer. Moreover the problem is aggravated by the monsoon showers and thick undergrowth that makes animal sighting very difficult. The best season to visit the park is during autumn, winter and early spring.

CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK

Designated as a world heritage site in 1984 by UNESCO, the park is one of the most frequented areas in the whole of the country. What served as a hunting reserve for the erstwhile rulers of Nepal is today a success story in terms of conservation making it one of the finest wildlife experiences in the world. The park today covers an area of 932 sq. kms and is covered by tall grasslands, interspersed with oxbow lakes, flood plains and tropical forests making it s prime hunting ground for the Royal Bengal tiger and a host of other animals prominently the one horned rhino. During winters it is a joy to watch a host of migratory birds who find a temporary home in the park. Two airport at Meghauli and Bharatpur connect the park to the capital. Several tourist and local buses transfer passengers from Kathmandu to the park and adjoining areas.



ROYAL BARDIA NATIONAL PARK

The park situated on the fringes of Indo – Nepalese border in west Nepal formally achieved National Park status in 1988. Today the park spreads over an area of 968 sq. km. Interestingly it is the largest and most undisturbed wilderness area in the Terai. Covered with tropical and riverine forests the parks provides refuge to a host of endangered species like the rhinoceros, wild elephant, tiger, swamp deer, black buck, gharial crocodile, marsh mugger crocodile and Gangetic dolphin. Many rare migratory and resident birds can be found in the park. The closest town to the park is Nepalgunj, the business hub on the Indo Nepalese border. Regular bus and air services are available between Kathmandu and Nepalgunj. All the major resorts in the parks offer transportation to and from the pick up point.



KOSHI TAPPU WILDLIFE RESERVE

Located on the flood plains of the Sapta-Koshi River in eastern Nepal the preserve was established in 1976 mainly to protect the habitat for the remaining population of wild buffalo in Nepal. The rectangular shaped reserve covering an area approximately 175sq. km., offers refuge to a variety of wildlife. The last surviving population of wild buffalo is found here. The sanctuary is also home to about 280 species of birds making it a bird watcher's paradise. It is an extremely important resting-place for migratory birds and many species recorded here are not seen elsewhere in Nepal. Sightings of endangered animal like the gharial crocodile and Gangetic dolphin have been recorded. Biratnagar is the nearest city to Koshi Tappu reserve. It is connected to Kathmandu by road and by air. All major domestic airlines operate daily flights to the airhead.

PARSA WILDLIFE RESERVE

Situated in central Nepal Parsa Wildlife Reserve enjoys a sub tropical climate. The Churiya Hills, which form the dominant landscape of the reserve, runs from east to west through the reserve. The reserve supports a good population of resident wild elephant, tiger, leopard, sloth bear, gaur, blue bull, wild dog and other common animals. Apart from amphibious creatures and reptiles, it is also home to nearly 300 species of birds. The reserve headquarters is located at Adabar on the Hetauda – Birganj highway and hence it is easily accessible by road from Kathmandu. Several buses ply on this route. It is also connected to Kathmandu by air. Most of the airlines operate flights to Simra, the nearest airport.



RIVERRAFTING

Gifted with a multitude of rivers that are perennially fed by the Himalayas, Nepal is one of the richest countries in water resources. In recent years avid river runners have taken notice of its potential and within a short span of time it has earned a reputation as one of the best places in the world for white water rafting.

Though only ten rivers have been opened by the Govt. for commercial rafting, Nepal offers a unique opportunity to all to taste the thrill of whitewater rafting. There is something for everyone – slow moving rivers with idyllic sand beaches ideal for relaxation to high action big volume rapids that will have your adrenaline pumping. Spectacular scenery, rich culture and spectacular rivers make the trip gratifying.

**TRISHULI**

It's easy accessibility and easy rafting makes it one of the most popular rivers among river runners. A three-day trip can be combined with a trip to Chitwan National Park.

MARSHYANGDI

The four-day trip down the river offers beautiful mountain views. The raging water offers some stiff challenge to even the most seasoned rafter.

BHOTE KOSI

It is for the thrill seekers. One of the most challenging rivers in the country, it is rafting at its extreme all the way.

KARNALI

The longest and largest river of the country, this big volume river is the lifeline of western Nepal. The river meanders through thick forests and sleepy

hamlets, and a part of the trip is total isolation without a soul in sight. The steep gradient in some places provides some of the most challenging rapids in the world. The seven-day trip can be combined with a trip to Royal Bardiya National Park.

KALI GANDAKI

This is one of the finest raftable rivers in the country. With interesting places to visit en route, the river running in Kali Gandaki is very interesting. Class 4, 5 rapids and wildlife sightings make the trip worthwhile.

SUN KOSI

It is one of the longest river journeys Nepal has to offer. Starting from Dolalghat, on the Arniko highway, the river makes its way to the Gangetic plains. The 8 –10 day trip has many rapids that test your skill and at the end it is a rewarding experience.



TIBET



Tibet – the name itself evokes a sense of mystery and magic. Spread over a vast expanse of high altitude desert beyond the Himalayas this ancient kingdom is truly the last of the Shangri-Las. Often referred to as the roof of the world the region is untamed, wild and alluring. The high rising mountains, azure blue lakes and snow capped peaks against the backdrop of one of the richest cultures preserved in its primordial state give a visitor the feeling of having made the trip – gratifying and delightful. A trip to this awesome country is a passage back into time – a look at the past. The magnificent landscape, exquisite monasteries and age-old culture leave an everlasting mark. The spiritual and religious nature of Tibetans is evident everywhere. The sights and sounds of the country - be it the monks chanting prayers or prayer flags fluttering in the breeze – are replete with religious tones. Nowhere in the world is religion so much a part of everyday life.



ACCESS

Visitors can enter Tibet directly by air or by land. The 1 and ½ hour Trans - Himalayan flight between Lhasa and Kathmandu is a one of the most spectacular journeys by air in the world. Air China operates flights between Kathmandu to Gonggar airport, Tibet's only commercial airport, located 84 Kms away from Lhasa.

BY LAND

Zangmu, the doorway to Tibet is a small town across Bhote Kosi, perched on a hill about 123 kms away from Kathmandu. The drive from Kathmandu – Lhasa normally takes 4 days with stopovers at Zangmu, Xegar, Shigatse and Gyantse. The scenic drive takes you over high mountain passes, across fields, monasteries and windblown barren mountains. The joy of driving along the Yamdrok Tso Lake, which stretches for several kilometers, as the road surges forward towards Lhasa is a unique adventure.

Simikot, located in western Nepal also serves as a corridor to Tibet which is normally used by people trekking to Mount Kailash.

VISA FORMALITIES

The Visa section of the Chinese Embassy opens for Visa on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 am to 11 am.

We need your full names as they appear in the passport, date of birth, profession, passport number and nationality at least three weeks before your arrival in Kathmandu for visa processing formalities. We will need one full working day at the Chinese Embassy to obtain Tibetan Visa upon your arrival in Kathmandu.

VISA FEES:

Normal Visa: US\$ 26 per person

A visitor is granted a normal visa in case he/ she applies for a tourist visa 5 days prior to departure provided that visa-processing formalities have already been fulfilled.

Urgent Visa: US\$ 11 extra for visas processed 3 days prior to departure.

US\$ 17 extra for visas processed 1 day prior to departure.

MONEY MATTERS

Yuan is the standard currency in Tibet. As per the present exchange rate US\$ 1 = 8 Yuan. The Bank of China, which is located in the major towns in Tibet like Lhasa, Shigatse and Zangmu, accept foreign currency and traveler's cheque. In towns like Shigatse and Lhasa all major credit cards are accepted.



TIBET

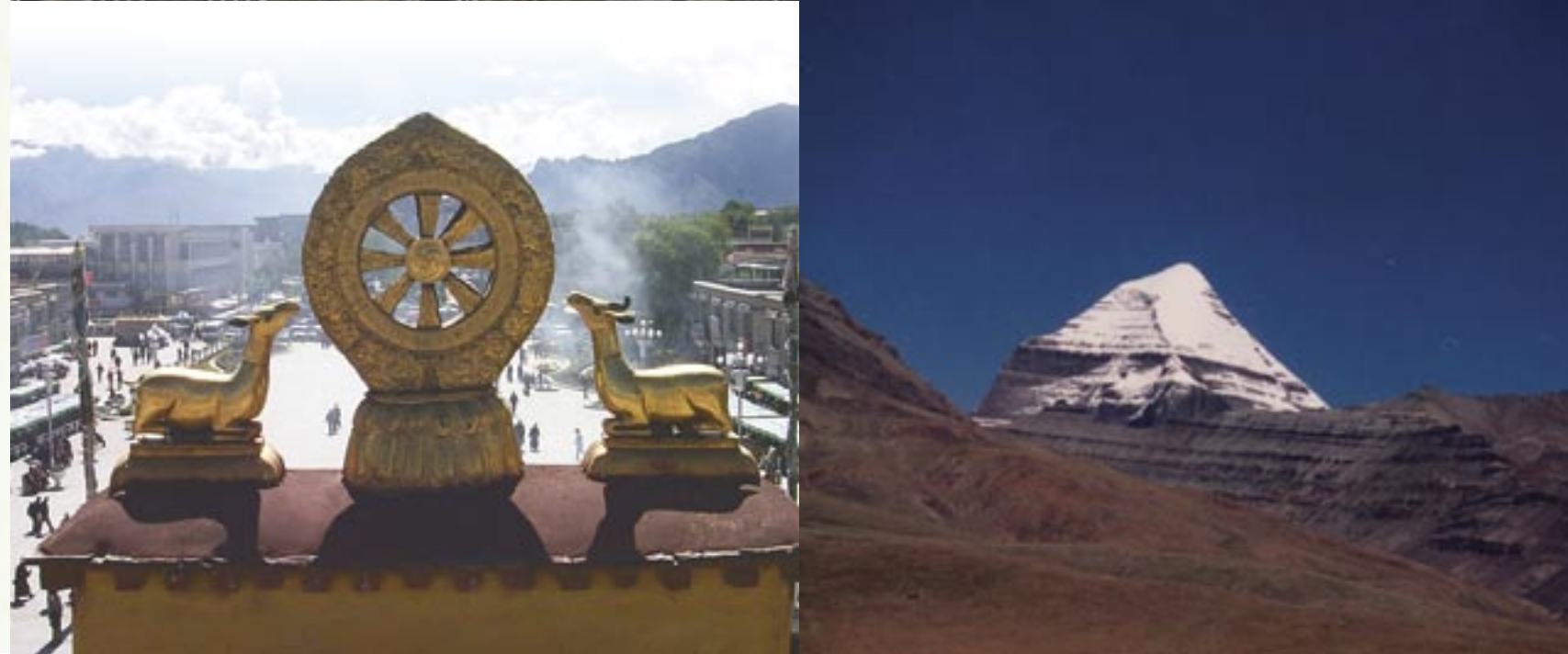
LHASA

Located at 3700 m, Lhasa is the cultural, spiritual and political capital of Tibet. Though modern in every sense, the city located on the banks of the Kyi Chu still retains its age old culture, a lifestyle that has changed little over centuries. With a long and rich history the city is a treasure trove waiting to be explored. The towering Potala palace perched on Marpo Ri (red hill) is a monumental landmark, visible from all corners of the city. A remarkable feat of architecture, the former seat of the Dalai Lama houses some of the most sacred and valued Tibetan artifacts. A visit to the mammoth building is a peek into an important aspect of Tibetan history.

Another awe-inspiring feature of the city is the Jokhang temple, Tibet's most sacred shrine, and the spiritual heart of the Tibetans. Built in the 7th century by Songsten Gampo, it is the oldest and the most significant institution in Tibet. Hundreds of pilgrims from all over the plateau throng the temple to pay homage. It houses the statue of Jowo Sakyamuni, regarded as the holiest object in Tibet.

Norbulingka, the summer palace of the Dalai Lama located in the midst of a wooded garden is a pleasant retreat. Spread over a huge enclave on the outskirts of town it still retains its charm. Started by 7th Dalai Lama Kelsang Gyatso (1708 -57) the huge complex boasts of several quarters that consist of no less than 400 rooms and chapels.

Other cultural, religious landmarks in Lhasa are the Drepung and Sera Monastery. Founded in 1416 by Jamyang Choje and Shakya Yeshe in 1419 respectively these two monasteries, among the six great centers of Gelugpa sect, are vital centers of religious activity that impart knowledge on Tibetan Buddhist philosophy to students from all over Tibet.



GYANTSE

Located 260 kms south west of Lhasa, Gyantse is a major town in Tibet that still retains its true Tibetan entity. A stop here is travel back into time and a look into a bygone era. The most absorbing feature of Gyantse is the 77 roomed multi tiered Kumbum stupa which houses 100, 000 images of Buddha. The Gyantse fort that commands an aesthetically rewarding view of the town and Pelkor Chode Monastery are other major attractions.

SHIGATSE

Shigatse is the second largest city in Tibet and home to Tashilhumpo Monastery. Founded in 1447 by the first Dalai Lama it is the largest and one of the most hallowed monasteries in Tibet and it also serves as the seat of Panchen Lama, the most important religious head in Tibet after the Dalai Lama. A principal monastery of the Gelugpa sect located in the Tsang Province, it draws hordes of devotees from all over the Tibet.

KAILASH – MANASAROVAR

Considered to be the center of the universe and the abode of Lord Shiva, Mt. Kailash, draws in hordes of Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims from around the world. The Manasarovar Lake, which spreads over a vast area, is spell binding. The sight of Kailash and Manasarovar is refreshing and a deeply fulfilling experience for the mind and human spirit.



LOSAR

It is one of the biggest festivals of the Buddhists. In Tibetan, “LO” means year and “SAR” means new. Thus Losar means New Year. During this festival, even the young Tibetans wear Chuba and entertain themselves with music, games, drinks and parties etc. Generally, the house lady goes and fetches water early in the morning from the well after worshipping the Water God.

Then she prepares porridge from “chang” (a brew made from barley). After drinking the porridge, with a special Tibetan bread called “Khapse” along with many other nuts and sweets, it is also offered to each other and the whole day is spent in merry making. Some play Sho (Dice).

MONLAM FESTIVAL

In Tibetan language, Monlam means prayer. It has its origin in a prayer meeting organized in Jokhang Temple by Tsong Khapa, the founder of the Gelukpa Sect, in 1409. Thousands of people from far and near gather to celebrate this festival. During this festival prayers services are held at the monasteries and “Chams” (Tibetan dances) are organized.

**CHOTRUL DUECHEN**

It is also called the Butter Lamp Festival. It is celebrated by lighting many butter lamps to honor the victory of the Sakayamuni in a debate. It is a celebration of Buddha’s miracle at Sravasti. During this festival, some debates are organized and the winner is honored. Gigantic butter sculptures are erected around the Barkhor.

SAGA DAWA

This is one of the most important festivals of Tibetan Buddhism. Saga Dawa commemorates the Buddha Sakayamuni’s birth, enlightenment and death. “Chams” and religious gatherings are organized during this festival. During this day, many people donate lots of things to poor people to gain merit.

BATHING WEEK

It is believed when the sacred planet Venus appears in the Sky, the water in the river becomes purest and cure diseases and washes away greed, hate and delusion. During its appearance for one week in the sky, all the people in Tibet bathe in the river.

HORSE RACING FESTIVAL GYANTSE

Gyantse has the honor of being the earliest in history dating back to as early as 1408 to organise horse racing.

CHANGTHANG KYAGQEN HORSE RACING FESTIVAL

Archery contests on horseback are popular throughout the Tibetan plateau. It is one of the most important festivals in North Tibet to mark the golden season in the grassland. Thousands of herdsmen demonstrate thrilling horse races, archery and horsemanship. Song and dance troupes from all part of Tibet add to the fun.

DRUKPA TSESHI

Also called the Choekhor Duechen, this festival is celebrated in memory of the first teaching of the Buddha Sakayamuni at Buddha Gaya at the age of 35. During this festival pilgrims climb holy mountains around Lhasa especially the Gephel RI behind the Drepung Monastery. Most people recite prayers and later they enjoy picnics and make themselves busy in merry making.

GHOST EXORCISING FESTIVAL

It is a festival to drive out evil and the old year. Houses are meticulously cleaned to get rid of misfortune and pray for Godly blessing. “Cham” dances and sorcerer’s dance are performed in monasteries throughout Tibet. On this day every family come out of their house after dinner with torches and howl collectively to shoo away evil and ensure a new year without misfortune.



SHOTON FESTIVAL

It is one of the grandest festivals of Tibet. Prior to the 17th century it was an exclusively religious observance. In ancient times pious folks went into the mountain hermitages for penance, and when they ended their meditation they were offered alms in the form of yoghurt. From around the 17th century local operas were added to the celebrations.

And today it has evolved to one of the greatest Tibetan festivals of folk songs and dances. Since the 17th Century, opera performance was held for days in Norbu Lingka. Presently, opera contests and distribution of prizes are held for seven days at the Norbulinkha. At Drepung Monastery "Chams" are organized and a grand thanka unveiled to mark this event.

NGACHU CHENMO

This festival is celebrated mainly as the anniversary of the passing away of the Tsong Khapa, the founder of the Gelukpa sect of Buddhism. On this day, butter lamps are placed on the roofs of all monasteries and people recite prayers in praise of Tsong Khapa.



CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

The days can be relatively warm but the nights are freezing hence it is advisable to carry warm clothes and the following materials.

- Strong, comfortable walking shoes
- Sunglasses
- Sun screen lotion
- Water bottle
- Warm clothes
- A scarf for protection against dust
- Medicines

BEST SEASON

The most appropriate time to visit Tibet is early spring and late autumn. The sky is clear and the views excellent.

PERSONAL INSURANCE

It is strongly advised that all clients have personal travel insurance covering trip cancellations, medical treatments and interruption of trips due to natural causes like landslides etc.

HIGH ALTITUDE SICKNESS

Lying at an average altitude of 4000 m travelling in Tibet is quite a challenge in itself. The villages that scatter the huge desert are far apart and isolated and sometimes travelers face health hazards, primarily due to isolation and altitude. Visitors are likely to feel minor symptoms like headache, nausea, and loss of appetite due to the high elevation.

However all Khumbi-Ila programs are designed prioritizing high altitude. Our program is specially prepared to allow a traveler ample time to acclimatize.



PALACES AND MORE**DAY PROGRAM**

- 1 Drive Kathmandu - Zhangmu
- 2 Drive to Xegar
- 3 Xegar - Shigatse
- 4 Shigatse - Gyantse
- 5 Gyantse - Lhasa
- 6 - 7 Lhasa Sightseeing
- 8 Fly Lhasa - Kathmandu

MYSTERIOUS TIBET**DAY PROGRAM**

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Lhasa, transfer to Tsedang. Afternoon sightseeing tour to Yambu Lhakhang and Cha Duk Monastery
- 2 Tsedang, visit to Samye Monastery and the valley of tombs
- 3 Drive to Gyantse via Yamdrok To Lake, afternoon visit Khumbum Stupa and Phalkor Monastery
- 4 Drive via Shalu - Shigatse. Sightseeing tour of Tashilunpo Monastery
- 5 Drive to Lhasa via Northern highway and visit Norbulinka Palace
- 6 Sightseeing tour of Sera Monastery, Jokhang Temple and Barkhor Bazaar
- 7 Sightseeing tour of Potala Palace and Drepung Monastery
- 8 Fly Lhasa - Kathmandu

INSTANT KARMA**DAY PROGRAM**

- 1 Drive Kathmandu - Zangmu
- 2 Zangmu - Nyalam (Rest and acclimatize)
- 3 Nyalam - Paiko Tso
- 4 Paiko Tso - Saga
- 5 Saga - Paryang
- 6 Paryang - Manasarovar
- 7 Manasarovar - Darboche
- 8 Darboche - Dri Ra phuk Gompa (Around Kailash)
- 9 Cross Drolma la pass - Zuthulphuk (Around Kailash)
- 10 Zuthulphuk - Darchen
- 11 Darchen - Manasarovar
- 12 Manasarovar - Paryang
- 13 Paryang - Saga
- 14 Saga - Xegar
- 15 Xegar - Shigatse
- 16 Shigatse - Gyantse
- 17 Gyantse - Lhasa
- 18 - 19 Sightseeing in Lhasa
- 20 Fly Lhasa - Kathmandu

LHASA INSIGHT**DAY PROGRAM**

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Lhasa
- 2 Visit Sera Monastery, Jokhang Temple and Barkhor Bazaar
- 3 Visit Potala Palace and Drepung Monastery
- 4 Morning tour of the Norbulinkha Palace, Tibetan Museum and Tibetan Medical Centre. Rest of the day free to explore Lhasa city
- 5 Fly Lhasa - Kathmandu

HOLY TRAIL**DAY PROGRAM**

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Nepalgunj
- 2 Fly Nepalgunj - Simikot, trek to Majgoan
- 3 Majgoan - Kermi
- 4 Kermi - Yalbang
- 5 Yalbang - Tumkot Khola
- 6 Tumkot Khola - Yari
- 7 Yari - Hilsa
- 8 Hilsa - Taklakot
- 9 Taklakot - Manasarovar
- 10 Manasarovar - Darboche
- 11 Darboche - Dri Ra phuk Gompa (Around Kailash)
- 12 Cross Drolma la Pass - Zuthulphuk (Around Kailash)
- 13 Zuthulphuk - Darchen
- 14 Darchen - Manasarovar
- 15 Manasarovar - Paryang
- 16 Paryang - Dzongba
- 17 Dzongba - Sang Sang
- 18 Sang Sang - Shigatse
- 19 Shigatse - Lhasa
- 20 - 21 Sightseeing in Lhasa
- 22 Fly - Lhasa - Kathmandu

RUMBUK EXPERIENCE**DAY PROGRAM**

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Lhasa
- 2 Transfer to Tsetang, Visit Tibetan Tombs, Yambulhakhang
- 3 Visit Samye Monastery
- 4 Transfer to Lhasa
- 5 - 6 Lhasa visit
- 7 Transfer to Gyantse, visit Pelkor Choede Monastery, Kumbum Stupa
- 8 Drive to Shigatse, visit Tashi Lhumpo Monastery
- 9 Drive Xegar
- 10 Drive Xegar - Rumbuk Monastery
- 11 Rumbuk Monastery - Excursion to Everest BC and back to Rumbuk
- 12 Drive Rumbuk Monastery - Tingri
- 13 Drive Tingri - Zangmu
- 14 Drive Zangmu - Kathmandu

LAKES AND MONASTERIES**DAY PROGRAM**

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Lhasa, drive Tsetang
- 2 Tsetang - Samye - Tsetang
- 3 Tsetang - Tiagang
- 4 - 6 Trekking around Yamdrok Tso Lake
- 7 Nakartse - Gyantse
- 8 Gyantse - Shigatse
- 9 Shigatse - Lhasa
- 10 - 11 Lhasa
- 12 Morning Fly Lhasa - Kathmandu

NAMTSO ODESSEY**DAY PROGRAM**

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Lhasa
- 2 - 3 Lhasa Sightseeing
- 4 Drive to Lake Namtso
- 5 Excursion to Lake Namtso
- 6 Visit the Tashi Dor Monastery and the Tibetan Normad; living at Namtso
- 7 Lhasa
- 8 Fly Lhasa - Kathmandu

GYAMA VALLEY ENCOUNTER**DAY PROGRAM**

- 1 Fly Kathmandu - Gongar Airport, transfer to Tsetang
- 2 - 3 Lhasa Sightseeing
- 4 Drive to Galden, trek to Nomad Camp
- 5 Trek to South base of Jookarla
- 6 Trek to Valley Junction
- 7 Rest and Excursion
- 8 Trek to Ningong
- 9 Trek to Samye
- 10 Tsetang
- 11 Lhasa
- 12 Fly back to Kathmandu



BHUTAN



Bordered by the Tibet Autonomous Region of China in the north and India in the east, west and south, the small Himalayan kingdom is truly one of the last Shangri-las. Mysterious and alluring, the land of the thunder dragon has always fascinated the outside world. Unexplored and uncharted until a few decades ago the tiny Himalayan kingdom is still rustic, timeless and extraordinary - free from the trappings of modern day life. A trip into the country provides a glimpse of the myriad colors of Bhutanese lifestyle – unspoilt yet stimulating. The castle like Dzongs that rise over the various towns with their gently tapering walls, large stone cluttered courtyards and beautiful galleries are uncommon architectural wonders special to Bhutan. Gurgling streams, high snow capped peaks, green terraced fields, green alpine forests and sprawling valleys form a backdrop to Bhutanese way of life.

GENERAL INFORMATION



RELIGION

Ever since Shabdrung Nawang Namgyal, a Tibetan Lama, arrived in 1616 and introduced the system of religious and secular government, religion forms an important aspect of the Bhutanese way of life. It is the only country in the world, which has retained the tantric form of Buddhism as its official religion. Legend has it that Guru Padmasambhava, the father of the tantric strain of Buddhism, made a legendary trip to Tibet on the back of a flying tigress in the 8th century AD and meditated at Taktsang Monastery popularly known as Tiger's nest near Paro. Religious faith plays a central part in the cultural, ethical and sociological development of Bhutan and it is evident in all walks of life. Monasteries, stupas, chortens and religious flags fluttering in the breeze are familiar sights in this tiny country which bear testimony to the hold religion has on the local populace.



BHUTAN

PLACES OF INTEREST

THIMPU

Situated on the banks of Wongchu River, the capital town is the political hub of this tiny kingdom. An enjoyable way experiencing Bhutanese life from close quarters is a walk through its streets. It is a joy to watch the hustle and bustle of the streets. With no modern high rises - the government has decreed that all the building in the town be built in the traditional Bhutanese style - the city is like an open museum which provides a window to the craftsmanship of the local artisans. Tashidzong, one of the most impressive landmarks and arguably the most impressive building in the country, houses the Bhutanese throne room and serves as the summer residence of the venerated monastic community. Other interesting sites include the Traditional Painting School where age-old Bhutanese art and craft is kept alive and passed on to the forthcoming generation. The Memorial Chorten, an important monument in Thimpu, built in memory of His Majesty, the third king of Bhutan is also worth visiting. A delightful day on the outskirts of Thimpu is a visit to the Tango and Cheri Monasteries. Simtokha Dzong, 6 kms from the city limits, is the kingdom's oldest dzong, which now houses the school for Buddhist studies.

PARO

The gateway to the dragon Kingdom, Paro is one of the most beautiful valleys in the country. As you disembark from the

plane you will be greeted by a whiff of Bhutanese air and the tranquility of the valley. Apart from being the highest agricultural yielding place in the kingdom it is also home to the national museum and one of the oldest and celebrated dzongs in Bhutan. Perched on a hill overlooking the Paro Valley, Rinpung Dzong is not just an architectural marvel but also a religious and secular center. Built in the 15th century it houses ancient Bhutanese artifacts and history. The Taktsang monastery, one of the most venerated religious sites in Bhutan, is a wonder in itself. The Guru Rinpoche, the founding father of the Bhutanese strain of Mahayana Buddhism, is said to have arrived here several millennium ago on the back of a legendary tigress and medicated for three months in a cave where a monastery was later built. Clinging to the sheer face of a cliff about three hours from Paro, this monastery also known as the tiger's nest can be reached either by pony or on foot.

PUNAKHA

The erstwhile capital of the country Punakha lies on a sprawling valley. The most visible landmark is the Punakha Dzong located on the confluence of the Pho Chuu and Mo Chuu. built by the first Shabdrung of Bhutan in 1637, The old custom of moving from Thimpu to Punakha and back is still followed by the Je Khenpo (Head of Bhutan's religious order) and the monk body. The migration, is a culturally enriching experience.



TRONGSA

Four-hours drive from Wangdue Phodrang, Trongsa, the ancestral home of the royal family, is a sleepy village with a leisurely paced life. It is also a welcome rest to travelers. Like everywhere else the most dominating landmark is the dzong that dominates the valley, dwarfing the surrounding buildings. Situated high on a ridgeline the Trongsa Dzong, is one of the most beautiful sights, of which you will never tire. Built in 1648 the Dzong worked as a defensive fortress with a labyrinth of temples and offices.

BUMTHANG

The spiritual capital of Bhutan, Bumthang, is shrouded in religious legends. The heart of Bumthang is Jakar with its dzong. A number of smaller monasteries dot the hills surrounding the valley. Tales of Guru Padmasambhava and Guru Rinpoche, whose bodily marks are impressed upon a rock in Kurjey, ring through the air. With religion holding sway in this region the air is replete with the chants of hymns, prayer flags fluttering in the breeze, monks playing among themselves. It is also the traditional home of the great Buddhist teacher Pema Lingpa to whose descendants the present dynasty traces its ancestry.



BHUTAN



PRACTICALITIES

Visitors to Bhutan must be either guests of the government or tourists. All tourists must travel on a pre-planned, prepaid, guided package tour. Independent travel is not permitted.

SEASON

The best time to visit are the spring months of March, April and May and the autumn months of September, October and November.

ACCESS

Tourists can enter Bhutan by road through Phuentsholing, the economic center of the country, situated on the southern fringes of the country adjoining the Indian border. Paro serves as the only airport in Bhutan. Druk Air, the national carrier and the only airline operating in Bhutan, connects Bhutan to Calcutta, Bangkok, Kathmandu and Delhi. Leaving Bhutan from the eastern border town of Samdrup Jongkhar is also possible.

VISA FORMALITIES

It is obligatory for all foreigners to acquire a visa to visit the country. Visa clearance from Thimphu must be obtained before departing for Bhutan. Prior visa clearance is also mandatory for boarding Druk Air flights. Khumbi-ila requires all passport details (as they appear in the passport) along with two photographs at least three weeks prior to your arrival for the visa processing formalities. In case of time constraints the details can be faxed directly to Khumbi-ila and the photographs can be handed on arrival. Actual visa is issued upon arrival at the entry points, either Paro airport or Phuentsholing. Visa fee of US \$ 20 should be paid directly. A visa is granted for a period of 15 days and can be extended at Thimphu.

MYSTIC BHUTAN

DAY PROGRAM

1 Arrive by Druk Air - Paro, transfer to Thimpu 2 Thimpu full day sightseeing tour, visit Zeleukha Nunnery, National Library and Memorial Chorten of His Majesty Late Jigme Dorje Wangchuk. Stroll down town to the Handicraft Development Corporation which displays all kinds of traditional handicraft products of Bhutan 3 Drive to Paro, visit the Drukgyel Dzong / Kyichu Lhakhang 4 Full day excursion to the Tiger's Nest, Drive to Sartsham Chorten 5 Fly Back to Kathmandu

CHOMOLAHARI TREK

DAY PROGRAM

1 Arrive by Druk Air - Paro 2 Paro - Sightseeing 3 Trek Paro - Shana 4 Shana - Soi Thangthangkha 5 Thangthangka - Jangothang 6 Jangothan - Lingshi 7 Lingshi - Shodu 8 Shodu - Dolam Kencho 9 Dolam Kencho - Dodinanad - Thimphu 10 Thimphu Sightseeing - Paro 11 Fly Back to Kathmandu

THOUSAND LAKES

DAY PROGRAM

1 Arrive by Druk Air - Paro 2 Paro - Sightseeing 3 Paro - Thimpu 4 Thimphu - Sightseeing 5 Thimphu - Talekha 6 Talekha - Japhuna 7 Japhuna - Jadula 8 Jadula - Labatama 9 - 10 Labatama - Halt 11 Labatama - Genekha 12 Genekha - Paro 13 Fly Back to Kathmandu

ACROSS THE KINGDOM

DAY PROGRAM

1 Arrive by Druk Air - Paro, drive to Thimpu 2 Thimpu full day local sightseeing 3 Drive over the spectacular Dochula Pass to Punakha. Visit the historic Punakha Dzong 4 Drive to the valley of Bhumthang through the Yotola Pass. 5 In Bhumthang, drive to Mebartsho, a holy site and pilgrimage place also known as the Burning Lake. Visit the Jakar Dzong, Kurjey Lhakhang and The Swiss Farm. 6 Drive Bumthang to Thimpu 7 Drive to Paro. Visit the Drukgyel Dzong & the national Museum located in Ta Dzong 8 Fly back to Kathmandu

BEAUTIFUL LAYA

DAY PROGRAM

1 Arrive by Druk Air - Paro 2 Paro - Sightseeing 3 Paro - Excursion to Takasang 4 Paro - Shana 5 Shana - Soi Thangthagkha 6 Soi Thangthagkha - Jangothan 7 Jangothan - Lingshi 8 Lingshi - Chebisa 9 Chebisa - Shomuthang 10 Shomuthang - Robluthang 11 Robluthang - Lemithang 12 Lemithang - Laya 13 Laya - [Halt] 14 Laya - Koena 15 Koena - Gasa 16 Gasa - Gasa Tsachu 17 Gasa Tsachu - Geon Damji 18 Geon Damji - Tashithang 19 Tashithang - Khuruthang 20 Khuruthang - Thimphu 21 Thimphu - Paro 22 Fly Back to Kathmandu

SUGGESTED
PROGRAMS



SIKKIM

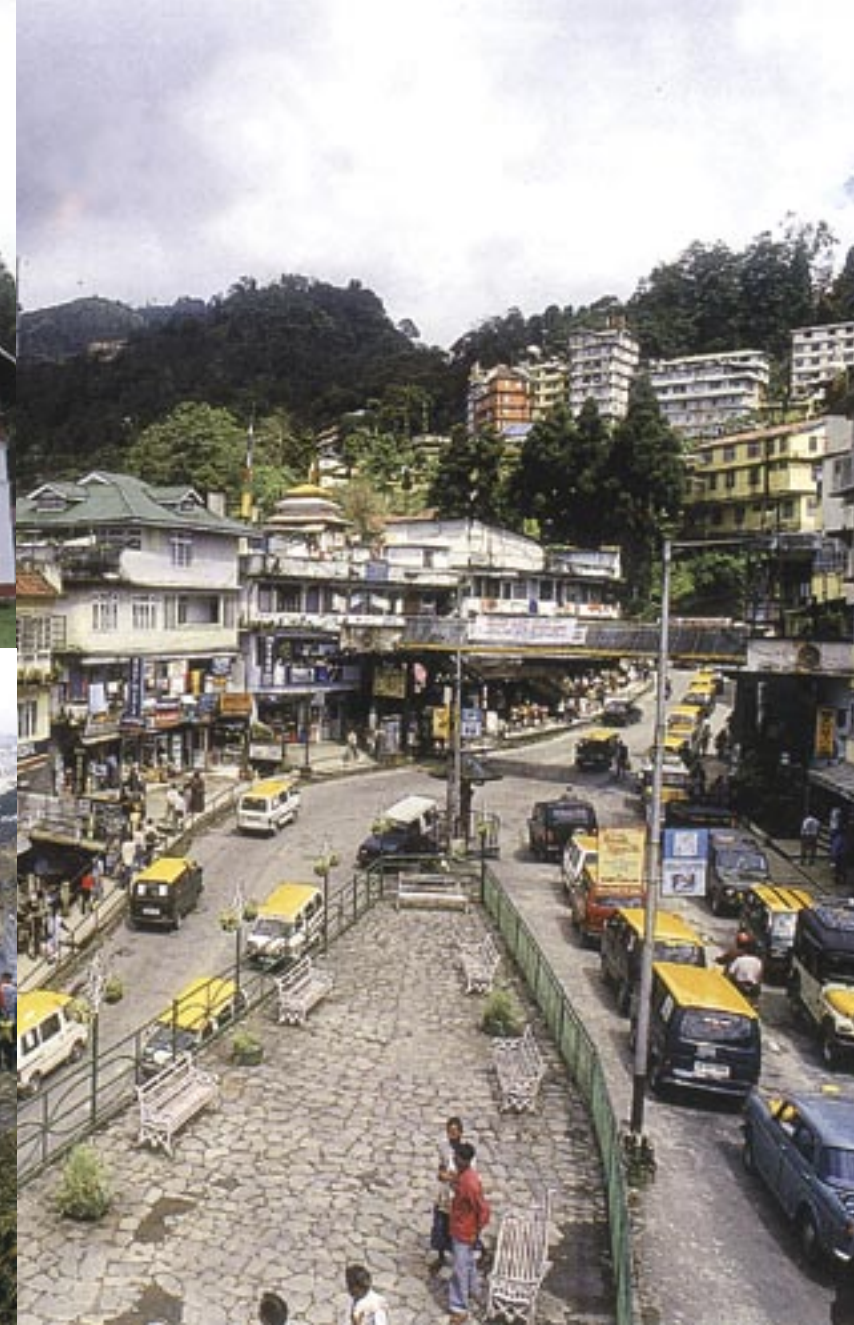


TIBET
INDIA
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN

Small but beautiful, this small erstwhile Himalayan Kingdom in the northeastern frontier of India, is wedged between China, Nepal, Bhutan and the sleepy Darjeeling district. Remote, wild and unbelievable, the small state tucked in the eastern Himalayas is an experience simply out of the world.

Catch the sunrise atop the mighty Kanchenjunga, visit ancient Buddhist monasteries and tea gardens, enjoy a nature walk, or relax amidst peaceful environs of emerald green Lake. Merged into the Indian republic in 1975, the last of the Shangrilas, Sikkim offers the magical feel of a Himalayan fairytale land.

It is everything you need to relax the body and revive the human spirit. It is an amazing place of hidden valleys, mystical monasteries, and snow fed mountains covered with rare flora and fauna. A collage of three distinct ethnic groups – Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese – this former kingdom offers a colorful melange of distinctively flavored cultures.



RELIGION

Religion forms the main thread in the fabric of Sikkimese life. With hundreds of monasteries and lamaseries, the influence of Buddhism is ever so evident. Even in the remote mountain regions, near wind swept summits, fringing monasteries and houses flutter the ubiquitous flags can be seen. The Sikkimese Nepali is also the inheritor of the legacy of Hindu traditions. Colorful Hindu festivals overawe the visitor to Sikkim, which is celebrated with great pomp and show.

PEOPLE

The people of Sikkim are warm, simple and friendly. The customs and rituals of the land are as diverse as the people who inhabit the land. The Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese make up the populace.

CLIMATE

June - September is generally considered as summer / monsoon season when the precipitation is maximum between 130 cms – 430 cms. The maximum temperature range between 21 degrees – 37 degree C and the minimum between 13 degrees – 23 degree C. October and November loosely form the autumn season with clear blue skies with plenty of greenery around. Winter stretches from December to February with the minimum temperature falling between 0- 9 degrees and the maximum from 13 – 28 degrees C. March to May is the spring season with warm days and cool nights. Spring and autumn season are the best seasons to visit Sikkim, specially if one is interested in trekking. The snow in the higher reaches makes high altitude trekking difficult during winter but low altitude treks are as good as it is in spring and autumn.



SIKKIM

ENTRY FORMALITIES

Apart from the Indian Visa a foreigner must also obtain inner line permit (ILP) to visit Sikkim. The permit can be obtained from all the Indian missions, Tourism Office (New Delhi), Sikkim Tourism Office (Calcutta and Siliguri), on the strength of an Indian visa. The 15 days duration permit is issued on the spot without any delay provided photocopies of passport and visa details along with two passport photos of the applicants are made available then and there.

ACCESS

By air: The nearest airport is Bagdogra in North Bengal, which is 124 kilometers away and approximately 4 hours drive from Gangtok. Indian Airlines and other Airlines operate from Bagdogra linking Calcutta, Guwahati and Delhi. Sikkim Tourism operates five-seater helicopter services to Gangtok daily.

Rail: The two closest railway stations, Siliguri and New Jalpaiguri connect Calcutta, Delhi, Guwahati, Lucknow and other important cities in India.

Road: Gangtok is connected by road to Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Siliguri and also to all the district headquarters within Sikkim.



TREKKING

It is difficult to envision Sikkim without mountains. The unspoilt natural beauty of the countryside make trekking in Sikkim an experience of many dimensions. The mountains that reach up to the skies form an intrinsic part of Sikkim. Listen to the sound of the wind among the trees, make your way across snow covered pastures and immerse yourself in the snow-covered peaks that dwarf the mountain ramparts.

SUGGESTED PROGRAMS

SIKKIM DISCOVERY

DAY PROGRAM

1 Fly Kathmandu - Bhadrapur or arrive by air at Bagdora (India) 2 Gangtok, full day sightseeing 3 Drive Gangtok - Hilley - Trek to Versey 4 Day halt at Versey and explore around 5 Trek Versey - Dentam - Drive to Pemayangtse and visit the Pemayangtse Monastery 6 Visit Khecheodpalri Lake and Sangachholing Monastery. 7 Drive back to Bhadrapur or Bagdora

SIKKIM SUBLIME

DAY PROGRAM

1 Fly Kathmandu - Bhadrapur or arrive by air at Bagdora (India), Drive to Pelling 2 Visit Pemayangtse Monastery and proceed for Khechelopari Lake and Yuksom. Visit Tashiding Monastery and drive back to Pemayangtse 3 Drive Pemayangtse to Gangtok via Temi Tea Gardens 4 In Gangtok, visit Rumtek Monastery, Tibetology and Dodruk Chorten 5 Full day excursion of Phodong & Labrang Monastery 6 Drive back to Bhadrapur or Bagdora

KHANGCHENDZONGA TRAIL

DAY PROGRAM

1 Fly Kathmandu - Bhadrapur or arrive by air at Bagdora (India), Drive to Yuksom 2 Trek Yuksom - Tshoka 3 Tshoka - Dzungri 4 Dzungri - Thangsing 5 Thangsing - Samiti Pokhari 6 Samiti Pokhari - Goecha - la 7 Samiti Pokhari - Thangsing 8 Thangsing - Bakhim 9 Bakhim - Yuksom ☒ Drive Yuksom - Bhadrapur or Bagdora

MYSTICAL DARJEELING

DAY PROGRAM

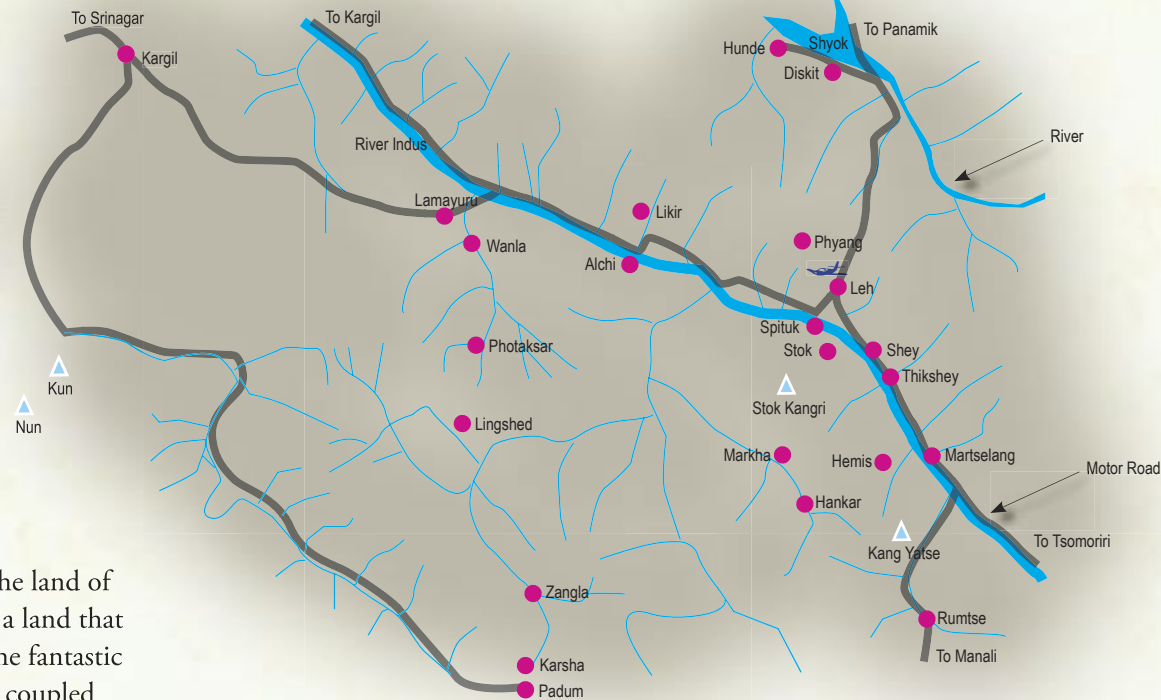
1 Fly Kathmandu - Bhadrapur or arrive by air at Bagdora (India), transfer to Darjeeling 2 Full day sightseeing visit Tibetan Refugee self help center, Himalayan Mountaineering Institute. Happy Valley Tea Garden. Botanical Garden 3 Early morning drive to Tiger Hill (2,573m) for Sunrise with view of Mt. Kanchenjunga, Mt. Everest and surrounding peaks. On the way back visit Ghoom Monastery, afternoon free 4 Transfer to Gangtok, En route visit Rumtek Monastery 5 Gangtok Sightseeing. Visit Institute of Tibetology, Do - Drul Chorten, after lunch visit Govt. Institute of Cottage Industry and Enchey Monastery 6 Transfer to Kalimpong. Visit some flower nurseries, Durpin Monastery, Dello view point. 7 Drive back to Bhadrapur or Bagdora





LOCATION

Beyond the renowned Zojila Pass lies Ladakh, the land of high passes – magical, unchanged and raw. It is a land that has withstood the ravages of time. A step into the fantastic land is a journey back into time. Very little rain coupled with its location in the rain shadow area has resulted into a high altitude desert – desolate, barren and untamed – with beautiful landscapes. Sandwiched between Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the Kashmir Valley, this area forms a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.



LANDSCAPE

With virtually no forests, the most striking feature of Ladakh is its stark naked landscape. Windblown mountains that spread for miles give you the feeling of de'ja vu. Located in the rain shadow area, Ladakh experiences very little rainfall hence rivers that rise high up in the mountains and the various lakes that spread over the high altitude desert serve as a lifeline to the region. Scattered settlements and terraced fields along the riverbanks with barren mountains as the backdrop is a sight to remember.

PEOPLE AND RELIGION

Ladakh is an interesting mixture of diverse ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups. The altitude averaging between 2700 m – 4200 m and the harsh climatic and geographical conditions has resulted in one of the lowest population densities of the world. With faces, physique and lifestyle akin to those of Tibet and central Asia, travelers who pass through this region forget that they are in India. Cattle rearing, small business and agriculture are the basic occupations of the industrious mountain hardy people in the region.

Ladakhis have long had the reputation of being one of the friendliest and most hospitable mountain people. Islam and Buddhism co-exist side by side and religion deeply rooted in their culture, is manifested in the mosques and monasteries that cling to the sheer mountain slopes. Mani walls, prayer flags fluttering in the breeze and chortens that dot the region bear testimony to the grasp that religion has on the culture and life of the land which is full of myths and legends. Every day is a new beginning with surprises waiting to unfold.

ACCESS

The largest town and the de facto capital of the region, Leh, lies at an altitude of 10, 800 ft. Spread over a large valley along the river Indus, it is the commercial hub of the region. Leh is connected to Sri Nagar, the capital of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and Delhi by air and road. It is also possible to fly or drive to Kulu from Delhi and commence the trek to Leh.

Indian Airlines and other private airlines operate regular flights between these places.



ENTRY FORMALITIES

Apart from Indian visa it is essential to acquire an inner line permit that can be obtained at Indian missions abroad to visit Ladakh.

WHAT TO TAKE

Days and nights experience drastic changes in temperature. Hence it is advisable to have both light and warm clothes. In addition basic trekking gear like good comfortable trekking shoes, flashlights, woolen undergarments, small backpack, warm socks, sun cream, water bottle, basic first aid kit, toiletries, good sunglasses are essential.

TREKKING

Ladakh with scattered settlements far and wide and varied trekking options attract tourists from all around the globe. The trekking season begins in early June and continues till mid October. A trek in Ladakh can be a very rewarding experience. The trails pass through high mountain passes, along placid lakes and human settlements that dot the region. Though it is imperative that the person undertaking a trek should be physically fit and mentally prepared to face the challenges the numerous trails poses, the experience attained is rejuvenating and once in a lifetime occurrence.

**MONASTERIES OF LADAKH****DAY PROGRAM**

1 Arrive Delhi 2 Fly Delhi - Leh 3 - 4 Lehigh Sightseeing 5 Transfer Phiyang, trek Taru 6 Trek Taru La - Nyemo 7 Trek Nye 8 Trek Likir 9 Trek Yangtang 10 Trek Rizong - Hemis - Sukpachan 11 Trek Katza 12 Trek Khalse 13 trek Wanla 14 Trek Lamayuru 15 Transfer Leh 16 Fly to Delhi

LADAKH AND NUBRA**DAY PROGRAM**

1 Arrive Delhi, transfer to Chandigarh 2 Transfer Manali 3 Manali 4 - 7 Transfer Leh 8 Lehigh Sightseeing 9 Transfer Phiyang - Alchi 10 Transfer Rizong - Wanla 11 Trek Prikiti La - Lamayuru, transfer Leh 12 Transfer Panamik 13 Transfer Hundar 14 Trek Diskit 15 Transfer Leh 16 Fly to Delhi

MARKHA VALLEY**DAY PROGRAM**

1 Arrive Delhi 2 Lehigh Sightseeing 3 Transfer Lamayuru 4 Trek Prikiti La - Wanla 5 Trek Hinju 6 Trek Konzke La - Sumda 7 Trek camp du Dundunchen 8 Trek Dundunchen La - Skaya 9 Trek Markha 10 Trek Hankar 11 Trek Nimaling 12 Trek Kongmaru La - Sumdo 13 Trek Hemis, transfer to Leh 14 Lehigh 15 Fly to Delhi

SUGGESTED
PROGRAMS

TSOMORIRI AND SPITI**DAY PROGRAM**

1 Arrive to Delhi - Leh 2 - 3 Lehigh Sightseeing 4 Transfer Rumtse 5 Trek Chorten Sumba 6 Trek Kumur La - Stazurma 7 Trek Shibuk La - Nabukha 8 Trek Thukje 9 Trek Nuruchan 10 Trek Gyamabarma 11 Trek Yalung Nyau La - Korzok 12 Trek Kiang Dam 13 Trek - Camp 1 Parang chu 14 Trek Camp 2 Parang Chu 15 Trek Camp 3 Parang Chu 16 Trek - Parang La - Jukstak 17 Trek Kiber 18 Transfer Manali 19 Transfer Chandigarh 20 Transfer to Delhi

GRAND ZANSKAR CROSSING**DAY PROGRAM**

1 Arrive Delhi, transfer to Chandigarh 2 Transfer Manali 3 Manali 4 Transfer Darsha 5 Trek Palamo 6 Trek Zanskar Sumdo 7 Trek Tchoumig Nagpa 8 Trek Shingo La - Lakong 9 Trek - Camp at Khi 10 Trek Purne 11 Trek Phuktal - Galboh 12 Trek Reru 13 Trek Camp at Shilla 14 Trek Karsha - Camp at Doda 15 Trek Pishu 16 Rest Day 17 Trek Hanumil 18 Trek Parfila - Snertze 19 Trek Hanuma La - Lingshed 20 Trek Kuba La - Camp at Senge Valley 21 Trek Senge La - Boumitse La - Photoksar 22 Trek Sirsir La - Hanupatta 23 Trek Wanla 24 Trek Prikiti La - Lamayuru, transfer to Leh 25 Lehigh 26 Fly to Delhi

