

# Upper Dolpo Trek

DURATION: 25 DAYS

## Trip Facts



**Group Size** 1 - 10 Persons



**Trip Grade** Basic



**Accommodation** Hotel / Tea House / Camping



**Max Height** 4960 Metres



**Start From** Kathmandu



**End At** Kathmandu



**Transportation** Plane / Car



**Duration** 25 Days



**Meals included** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner Days



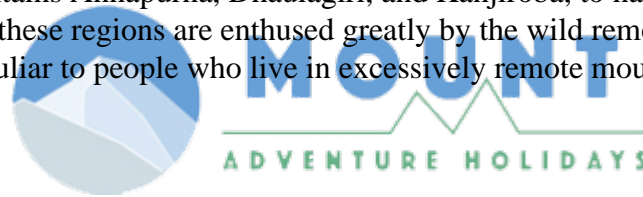
**Best season:**

March - May, September - November

**Trip Overview**

Upper Dolpo Trek is a trip to the land beyond the Himalayas, conjuring up visions of mysterious monasteries, snow leopards, and blue sheep. It is situated in the western part of the country and is one of the most remote regions in Nepal. The Dolpo region is a very isolated area that has been strictly off-limits until only recently, so the traditions and way of life have remained intact. The east and south of Dolpa are surrounded by the Dhaulagiri and Churen Himal ranges and to the west is the Jumla district. Trekking into Dolpa presents an exposure to the high and remote Himalayan valleys, resembling the Tibetan highlands. The main highlight of Dolpa trekking includes “Shey Phoksundo National Park” which is one of the major National Parks of Nepal. “Shey Phoksundo [Lake](#)” is another famous feature of this region. The lake is totally free of aquatic life, which the crystal waters clearly demonstrate. Surrounded by rocks, forests, and snow-capped peaks, the area has been described as one of the world’s “Natural Hidden Wonders”. The Dolpa trekking starts at Juphal and follows the track to Dunai, then continues to Tarakot, way up to Bang la Camp, the uppermost point of Dolpa trekking. After passing through Sanu Bheri village, we then descend to the good-looking Phoksundo Lake, which is a piece of the Shey Phoksundo National Park.

Upper Dolpo Trek passes through many gigantic mountains Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, and Kanjiroba, to name a few, and passed through Lower Dolpo, at one time a small kingdom in its own right. The trekkers of these regions are enthused greatly by the wild remoteness, the stunning mountain scenery, and the fact that the local people had that innocent friendliness peculiar to people who live in excessively remote mountainous regions.

**Trip Itinerary**

Day 1 KATHMANDU – NEPALGUNJ

 1 Hr    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Hotel    Plane    150 m

After our short briefing about Upper Dolpo Trek in Kathmandu, we take an hour-long flight from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj, located in Western Nepal. Nepalgunj, a town near the Nepal-India border, is also the gateway to Simikot, Humla. The town itself is an interesting Terai town that showcases the diverse culture of Nepal. In Nepalgunj, we visit the local market, mini-zoo, and nearby villages. Overnight in Nepalgunj.

## Day 2 NEPALGUNJ – JUPHAL - DUNAI

 4 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Tea House    Plane    2400 m

We fly to Jhupal after breakfast. The town is beautifully located over the Himalayan foothills, with views of Annapurna and Dhaulagiri peaks to its north. Our real Upper Dolpo Trek starts here. We walk through terraced fields to the Bheri River and its narrow gorge. We continue walking to Dunai, which is the administrative headquarter of the Dolpo region. We explore the small town in the evening and camp there for the night.

## Day 3 DUNAI – ANKHE (2,896M)

 6 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Tea House    Walking    2896 m

We leave Dunai and cross a suspension bridge and turn to the west following a trail past a hospital. The trail ascends up the side of the treeless, Thulo Bheri valley before entering the Phoksundo river valley. During the walk we get to the view of Kagmara Peak up the valley. We pass through walnut groves, Dhara and Rahagaun villages, walk down dense jungles and finally reach Ankhe. Overnight in Ankhe.



#### Day 4 ANKHE – SULIGHAT



7 Hrs



Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner



Camping



Walking



3100 m

Our trail ascends and descends along a wooded riverbank and climbs on a steep trail. The ups and downs can be a bit monotonous, but there are several streams along the way that offer a chance to cool off. The trail eventually leaves the forests and passes through a grassy slope high above the river. We trek downhill on a trail surrounded by lush forests before reaching a cliff followed by a dizzying drop on a wobbly stone staircase to the river bank. We continue trekking until we reach Sulighat where we spend the night



#### Day 5 SULIGHAT - PHOKSUNDO LAKE (3,611M)



5 Hrs



Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner



Camping



Walking



3611 m

We continue our journey along the valley floor to the confluence of the Phoksundo and Pungmo rivers. After crossing a bridge, we walk on the western bank of the Pungmo Khola. The trail passes through a cedar forest before reaching Palam village. From here we trek up to a ridge and enjoy distant views of Phoksundo Lake and a spectacular waterfall, one of the highest in Nepal. Next, our trail descends through birch forests to the upper reaches of the Phoksundo Khola, and then to the picturesque Ringmo village with its mud-plastered chortens and mani walls. From here it is a short walk to the shores of the Phoksundo Lake. Overnight at Phoksundo Lake.



#### Day 6 PHOKSUNDO LAKE - Exploration Day

 Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    3611 m

Today will be a well-deserved rest day for acclimatization at Phoksundo Lake. It is one of the best days in our Upper Dolpo Trek. During the day we can embark on a short hike to the village of Ringmo and its Tibetan Buddhist Monastery. During our short walks, we also get a chance to get acquainted with the local culture. The Dolpo people wear homespun clothing that is sometimes dyed a maroon color and they favor Tibetan-style samba or dacha (boots with upturned toes) for footwear. Both men and women often wear religious amulets and strings of coral, amber, and turquoise. Overnight at Phoksundo Lake.

## Day 7 PHOKSUNDO LAKE – KHOLA

 6 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    3507 m

Our trail moves around the top western end of the Phoksundo Lake as it contours on a rocky ledge along the lake's western bank. This unsteady trail suspended on a gangway of wood supported on pegs driven into crevasse in the rocks, signals the remoteness of the area we are about to enter. At the westernmost edge of the lake the path leads through a lush meadow that opens up into the flood plain of the Phoksundo Khola. Then we walk through the valley, crossing the river and avoiding the occasional boggy marsh underfoot and then coming on the bank of the river to the overnight camp.

## Day 8 PHOKSUNDO KHOLA - PHOKSUNDO BHANJYANG

 7 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    4400 m

For an hour or so we walk on a trail that leads us along the level path through a glacial valley which heads due north. At the confluence of the Phoksundo Khola and another mountain stream, there is an old wooden bridge. From here, we walk towards the north-east. A long climb brings us to a sheep meadow where our trail veers up a steep ravine. A hard climb to the top brings us to yet another valley where we can see the Kang-La pass. We set up our camp near the pass in a place that Peter Matthiessen christened 'Snowfields Camp'. During our trek today we also get to admire the views of

Chhamlang peak 6 (6739m) and peak 7 (6105m).



#### Day 9 PHOKSUNDO BHANJYANG – SHEY GOMPA (4,500M)



7 Hrs



Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner



Camping



Walking



4500 m

In the morning, we ascend on a steep trail littered with slate towards the pass. The climb to the top of the pass is quite strenuous. From the top of Kang-la pass we get excellent views of the large valley dissected by a gushing river. We descend to the valley floor on a steep trail. Next, we walk on a meandering trail along the banks of a river, crossing and recrossing it several times. There are mud caves lining the hills overlooking the river. We also pass through meadows where we see grazing yaks, hundreds of sheep, and domestic mountain goat (Chyangra). After crossing a quaint log bridge we reach the Shey Gumpa compound where we will be spending the night.



#### Day 10 SHEY GOMPA (Exploration Day)



Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner



Camping



4500 m

Shey Gumpa was built in 1655 and the monastery is noted for its giant copper with gilded gold statue of a seated Shakyamuni Buddha. To the east of the gumpa is Crystal Mountain which is one of the strangest mountains, as its contorted cliffs are laced with quartz and embedded with a rich variety of marine fossils. Today is another well-earned rest day for acclimatization. We spend the day hiking around Shey village which is famous for its ancient pre-Buddhist culture, the Bon Po. In Dolpo the ancient Tibetan way of life combines animism with the teaching of Buddha. Overnight in Shey Gumpa.



### Day 11 SHEY GOMPA – NAMDUNA GAUN (4,800M)

7 Hrs   Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner   Camping   Walking   4800 m

We begin the day by following a pleasant trail amidst juniper trees which descends into a grey, stony canyon. This is one of the beautiful days in Upper Dolpo Trek. Then the path begins to zigzag over bare rocks and coarse eroded soil until it eventually brings us to the top of Saldang-La pass. The subsequent descent towards the north is long and tiring but grazing yaks and sheep, and nomadic tents made from yak hair is a comforting sight. In Namduna Gaun we visit the Namgung monastery. The red stone monastery is built against the backdrop of a cliff on the north wall of a gorge. Overnight in Namduna Gaun.



### Day 12 NAMDUNA GAUN – SALDANG (3,900M)

5 Hrs   Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner   Camping   Walking   3900 m

We leave the village and climb up a slope and begin a long walk along dusty barren mountains. After 3-4 hours of hard climb, we begin to see Saldang Village below us on a plateau high above the Namga Khola stream. It has a picturesque appearance. Saldang is the largest village of the inner Dolpo area. The village stretches for nearly two kilometers on an open slope and consists of five villages having about eighty well-built houses with nearly six hundred people. It is a prosperous village not only agriculturally but also for its strategic location on a trade route to Tibet. Overnight in Saldang.



### Day 13 SALDANG – YANGZE GOMPA (4,960M)

 6 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    4960 m

From Saldang, we walk further north along the Nagaon Khola (river) on a wild and barren terrain. We begin our walk on a fairly gradual path with few ups and downs. On the way, we pass through Marang and Ki villages. Next, we cross a tributary of Panzang River and walk towards the east and cross the river again before reaching Yangze gompa which houses an old Bon-Po Monastery. Overnight in Yangze Gompa.

#### Day 14 YANGZE GOMPA – SIBU (4,560M)

 7 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    4560 m

From Yangze, there are two trails that connect to Sibü. To save time we will retrace the path back towards Saldang village, which will be much easier and shorter than the other route. From Saldang we walk along a river and pass through terraced fields, stupas, chortens, heaps of mani stones, and a Chaiba monastery, then pass through the Namdo village, which is also prosperous, with about sixty houses having nearly 400 inhabitants. It stretches for more than 5 km on the high slopes to the left of Nam Khong Khola. The Namdo monastery is located near the river bed. Our journey continues further down the river for another two hours to camp near a small settlement of Sibü.

#### Day 15 SIBU – JENG-LA PHEDI (4,900M)

 6 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    4900 m

We walk along the Nam Khong Khola for a while and pass by caravans with yaks that are moving towards the Tibetan border. After turning east and walking for a while, we arrive at a confluence of two small streams. Next, the steep trail ascends to a grazing area below the Jeng La pass (4,900m/16,072ft). Our camp will be set up in this beautiful meadow. Overnight in Jeng la Phedi.



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### Day 16 JENG-LA PHEDI – TOKYU GAON (4209M)

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 7 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    4209 m

We get up early in the morning and set forth on today's trek. It will take us two long hours to reach the top of the Jeng La pass from where we get remarkable views of the north face of the Dhaulagiri massif. From here we descend on a rough trail to the Tarap Valley, a fascinating valley with vast plains in high mountains that extends twenty kilometers along Tarap Chu river. We camp close to the monastery at Tokyu.

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### Day 17 TOKYU – DHO TARAP(4,040M)

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 5 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    4040 m

We trek downhill on a plain valley with patches of lush grass on both sides of the river which is completely different from other parts of inner Dolpo. There is also a marsh which is a common feature in the Desert Mountains of Tibet and the Ladakh Himalaya. Both the Bon Po and Buddhist sects are practiced in the valley. After a short trek, we reach Dho Tarap). Overnight in Dho Tarap.

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### Day 18 DHO TARAP (Rest Day)

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 Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    4040 m

We spend today resting and strolling in the village of Dho Tarap which is surrounded by an irregular stone wall. This could be one of the memorable experiences in Upper Dolpo Trek. Our walks will help us get acquainted with the local culture of the area. At Dho, about 40 houses are divided into three clusters and built in a haphazard way inhabited by few Tibetans and mostly Magars who are a hill tribe of Nepal. While here, we can visit a Buddhist Gumpa which is closest to our campsite, or we could embark upon a 40-minute walk and visit a Bon Po Gumpa. Overnight in Dho Tarap.

#### Day 19 DHO TARAP – SERKAM (3,800M)

 6 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    3800 m

From Tarap we descend towards a wide valley which eventually narrows into a gorge. We walk along with juniper and wild rose bushes just above the tree line. On our trek we see herds of blue sheep and by the afternoon, we reach the confluence of the Tarap Chu and the Lang Khola, a stream that joins with Tarap River from further east. We will make our camp on a nice meadow also known as Kamakharka and spend the night.

#### Day 20 SERKAM – KHANIGAON (2250M)

 6 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    2250 m

We continue walking down the gorge of the Tarap River, at times alongside it. During our walk we pass by the local people who will be taking their herds to lower pastures for the winter. This will be one of the most exciting days of this trip as the valley becomes so narrow in a deep gorge that in some places we can jump from one side to another. Sometimes there is no trace of a path and we may have to walk across stone slabs fitted on logs in between the walls which act as a bridge. The gorge also provides unexpected adventure and thrills. At some places, the bridges are either damaged or washed away and we may be forced to cross the icy torrent on foot. Finally, we reach our camping spot beside the Tarap Khola at Khanigaon where we spend the night.

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### Day 21 KHANIGAON – TARAKOT (2281M)

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 4 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    2281 m

From the camp we follow a trail that takes us to the village of Lalberi. Our trail then passes through a lush forest, descends into another gorge, and continues to follow the river again. After reaching Tarakot, we can visit Sandul Gompa which lies about 8 km east of the village at a juncture of Barbung Khola and Tarap Chu. The monastery stands on a hill to the south of Bheri River. Today we camp by the Tarap Chu river about 150 meters below Tarakot, near the police post. Overnight in Tarakot

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### Day 22 TARAKOT – DUNAI

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 5 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    2052 m

We begin our trek on a trail behind the Bheri River before crossing a bridge near the Lawan village. Our trail will continue alongside the big Bheri River ascending until the Byas Gadi. From here the trail moves towards the west on a relatively easy trail. We cross the river again near the Lochakhola Gaon and ascend to Dunai for an overnight stay. Today's trek will mostly be on a wonderful gorge with pine trees.

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### Day 23 DUNAI – JHUPHAL

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 3 Hrs    Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner    Camping    Walking    2402 m



#### Day 24 JHUPHAL – NEPALGUNJ – KATHMANDU

2 Hrs   Breakfast   Hotel   Plane   1400 m

We take the earliest flight from Jhupal to Nepalgunj and to Kathmandu.



#### Day 25 DEPARTURE

Our Upper Dolpo Trek comes to an end today! A representative from Mount Adventure Holidays will take you to the airport approximately 3 hours before the scheduled flight.

## Cost Includes

- ✓ Full board meal (veg. /non veg.) during camping, prepared by our expert cook with Tea & coffee.
- ✓ Boiled and purify drinking water for the trek.
- ✓ Twin sharing tented accommodation and other equipment during the camping trek. We will provide a fully waterproof two men tent, dining tent, kitchen tent, Table with chairs, kitchen utensils, toilet tents, etc.

- ✓ A government licensed English-speaking Guide during the trek. A cook, the Kitchen helper, required a number of porters, their food, accommodation, salary, insurance, equipment, and medicine.
- ✓ Medical supplies (first aid kit will be available).
- ✓ Arrangement of Emergency Helicopter service which will be paid by your Travel insurance company.
- ✓ Down sleeping bags / Jackets, walking poles, and other necessary equipment during the trek. (If you don't have your own)
- ✓ Special Trekking upper Dolpo permit and other required paper documents.
- ✓ Flight fare from Kathmandu-Nepalgunj-Juphal -Nepalgunj-Kathmandu including transport and airport tax airport taxes.
- ✓ All our government taxes tourist service charges. official expenses.

## Cost Excludes



- ✗ Nepalese visa fee.
- ✗ Personal expenses (phone calls, laundry, bar bills, battery recharge, extra porters, bottle or boiled water, Beverage bills, shower, etc.)
- ✗ Travel and rescue insurance.
- ✗ Tips for guide(s), porter(s) and driver
- ✗ Excess baggage charges (if you have more than 10 kg of luggage, a cargo charge is around \$1.5 per kg)
- ✗ OPTIONAL ADDONS (Available during check-out)
- ✗ Porter
- ✗ 1 hour Mountain flight