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 located in a remote region of Nepal, surrounded by the Dhaulagiri and Churen Himal ranges as well as the Jumla district. It provides an opportunity to explore high and remote Himalayan valleys that resemble the Tibetan highlands. The main attractions are the Shey Phoksundo National Park and the stunning Phoksundo Lake, which is a natural hidden wonder. The trek begins at Juphal and continues through Dunai, Tarakot, Bangla Camp, Sanu Bheri village, and Phoksundo Lake. The region offers views of towering mountains and Lower Dolpo, a small kingdom. Trekkers are enchanted by the rugged remoteness, breathtaking mountain scenery, and welcoming locals. The journey through Shey Phoksundo National Park is a unique experience, with diverse landscapes ranging from lush forests to barren cliffs. The crystal-clear waters of **Phoksundo Lake reflect the surrounding** snow-capped peaks, creating a mesmerizing sight. As trekkers make their way through the rugged terrain, they also have the opportunity to interact with the friendly locals and learn about their traditional way of life. Overall, the Lower Dolpo region is a hidden gem waiting to be discovered by adventurous souls seeking a truly unforgettable trekking experience.

Upper Dolpo Trek offers a unique experience in a centuries-old way of life surrounded by rugged terrain, towering peaks, and lush forests. The locals are known for their hospitality and sharing stories, making it an unforgettable adventure. Witnessing ancient rituals, ceremonies, and festivals, the trek is not just a physical one but also spiritual and cultural.

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 it’s 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 Gompa compound where we will be spending the night.

Day 10 SHEY GOMPA (Exploration Day)

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner | Camping | 4500 m

Shey Gompa 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 gompa 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 Gompa.

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 monstery is built against the backdrop of a cliff on the north wall of a gorge. Overnight in Namuda 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 Sibu. 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 Sibu.

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.

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

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.

Day 17 TOKYU – DHO TARAP(4,040M)

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.

Day 18 DHO TARAP (Rest Day)

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 Gompa which is closest to our campsite, or we could embark upon a 40-minute walk and visit a Bon Po Gompa. 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.

Day 21 KHANIGAON – TARAKOT (2281M)

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

Day 22 TARAKOT – DUNAI

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.

No Itinerary Found

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

