

Mugu Dolpo Reconnaissance Trek - 27 Days

Dolpo mugu trek is one of the hidden classic trek in north west Nepal. This trek is starts from dolpa district airport Juphal and ends in the Mugu Talcha airport through out the great himalayan trail(GHT). The trek will be completely wild camping and numerus passes. Shey Phoksundo national park and Rara National park are the highlights of the entire trek. You will be witnessed of trans himalayan eco system, cultural beauties and wild animals like Snow leopard, Blue sheep, Musk deer, Pika, Marmot and himalayan birds are the central attractions of the trek.

PRICE INCLUDES

- 4-night hotel in Kathmandu on a bed-and-breakfast basis
- 1 night hotel in Nepalganj with breakfast
- Domestic flights from Kathmandu - Nepalganj - Juphal and return airfare
- One expert trek leader or Hire Norbu along with a local assistant
- All meals (the best and healthiest food in the local tea houses) And accommodations
- Trekking permit and national park fees
- Trekking equipment -Mattresses, Member tents, and Kitchen utensils.
- Three-time meals during a trek along with Tea/coffee and snacks.
- Staff's salary, food, insurance, and clothing.
Farewell dinner in Kathmandu.

PRICE EXCLUDES

- Nepal Visa
- International flights
- Personal expenses and meals in Kathmandu.
- Travel insurance (It's mandatory to have for Rescue and evacuation).
- Tips and gratitude for staff and guide.
- Donation and local entrance fee.
- Extra baggage weight on domestic flight
- Personal expenses like Alcohol, Local fabric, and Local monuments.

ITINERARY IN DETAIL

Day 1: Day 1 Arrival in Kathmandu

When you arrived in Kathmandu Airport (TIA) you will be directly transferred to a 3-star hotel by private car or tourist bus. You will be exhausted after a long flight, so you can relax in the hotel. In the evening, you will be invited for a welcome dinner, and your tour guide will brief you regarding the trek and further preparations.

Day 2: Day 2 Fly to Nepalganj 60 minutes

Most of the time, people fly in the evening to skip the high temperatures in Nepalganj. From Kathmandu to Nepalganj, the flight will be around 55 minutes. When we land, then we move to the hotel and rest.

Nepalganj is one of the most crucial places for Himalayan regions like Dolpo, Mugu, and Jumla for shopping for hardware and food items. Nepalganj is connected to the India Border, so it's comparatively cheaper than other regions.

Day 3: Day 3 Fly to Juphal Airport by flight 35 minutes and trek or drive to Dunai 2100m (6889 feet)

In the afternoon, a tourist bus and your guide will come to your hotel, and you will drive to the airport for the Nepalganj flight. The flight will be one hour, and you will see beautiful mountains from your cabin. In Nepalganj, you will be transferred to a 3-star hotel, and after checking in, you can visit some nearby cities with your guide or independently.

Overnight: Camping

Elevation: 2100m

Duration: Approx 1 hour by jeep

Day 4: Day 4 Trek to Chhepka 2700m (8858 feet) 7 hours

Early morning we will have breakfast and proceed for the actual trek. We started from Dunai. After one hour of trek, we will encounter with National Park Check post where we will show a permit and buy a National Park entry. After checking out, we follow the Phoksundo River with beautiful small hamlets on the way where Phoksundo people stay here in the winter for their animals.

Elevation: 2700m

Overnight: Camping

Duration: Approx 7 hours

Day 5: Day 5 Trek to Samjana Hotel (3100m)

Embark on an adventure trek this day. We again follow the Phoksundo River into Long Pine and Juniper Forest. After 4 hours of trek, we will encounter Riyachi Village where small lodges are running and local people can be seen. After Riyachi Village, we will trek again for about 2 hours, then our destination Samjana Hotel will be met.

Elevation: 3100m

Overnight: Camping

Duration: Approx 7 hours

Day 6: Day 6 Trek To Phoksundo Lake

After leaving Samjana Hotel we will visit the one of the best and big school in Dolpa called Taprizia Secondary School, Where our Company managing director (Norbu) had studied 12 years. Taprizia school is specially built for Children from the Phoksundo Region with an ambitions to protect Bon religion and culture. School is residential with the help of Private and government partnership.

After Leaving the school we will again follow the Phoksundo river and ascended towards phoksundo lake to our destinations.

Rigmo village and phoksundo lake is situated in the lap of Mount Kanjirowa. Sagar himal, Kanjirowa and kangla streams are the main source of water for Phoksundo lake. From Rigmo village we can see stunning Mount Norbukang, Teikatong and Kanjirowa.

Lunch Point - Rigmo Vilage

Trek distance - 4-5 hours

Elevations Of Phoksundo Lake - 3700M

Overnight: Camping

Day 7: Day 7 Rest and Exploration day

During our free days in Phoksundo Lake, we can do so many things. Phoksundo Lake is a perfect combination of nature and culture. Where you can do multiple things in a single day like nature walking and photography, Bird watching, meditation relaxation, cultural exploration, wildlife observation and short hikes.

In the Afternoon we can visit Bon Monastery which was built in the 15th Century. Phoksundo Lake is situated at 3640m which is also known as a non-living lake.

Day 8: Day 8 Trek to North Bank (Cholophugu) 3700m (12140 feet) 4-5 hours

We start our trek before sunrise and we move towards the west shores of the Phoksundo Lake with a beautiful cliff path and begins uphill and downhill to the next shores of the lake. During the trek, we will see dense birch trees and possibilities of some wild animals.

Lunch - Cholophugu

Trek Distance - 7-8 hours

Elevations of Ruktang - 3900m

Overnight: Camping

Day 9: DAY 9 Trek to Kangla Base camp 4600m (15091 feet) 6-7 hours

After Having breakfast our journey will begin through the deep gorge with both-sided giant cliffs towards base camp. Many small wooden bridges will be seen on the way, slowly oxygen level will decrease as we ascend towards Kangla pass (5300m). In the evening temperature will decrease and cold winds will directly hit your face.

Lunch - Pack lunch

Trek Distance - 7-8 hours

Elevation of High Camp - 4850M

Day 10: Day 10 Trek to Shey Gumba 4100m (13451 feet) via crossing Kangla Pass 5300m (17388 feet) 7-8 hours

Embark on an adventurous trek to Shey Gumpa, at an elevation of 4,160 meters, via the stunning King La Pass. This journey segment typically takes around 7 to 8 hours to complete, depending on your pace and the trail conditions.

Leaving behind the captivating landscapes of Nangdala or Kang La Phedi, you will navigate challenging terrain as you ascend to the magnificent Kang La Pass. The trail will test your endurance and hiking skills, with steep inclines and rocky sections. However, the panoramic vistas and the sense of achievement make it all worthwhile.

Reaching the King La Pass, you will be rewarded with breathtaking views of the surrounding Himalayan peaks and vast valleys stretching out before you. Take a moment to soak in the grandeur of nature and capture memories that will last a lifetime.

From the pass, the trail descends towards Shey Gumpa. You will traverse diverse landscapes, including alpine meadows, picturesque valleys, and glacial streams as you go down. The beauty of the surroundings will enthrall you as you continue your journey.

Upon reaching Shey Gumpa, you will be greeted by this ancient Buddhist monastery's tranquility and spiritual ambience. The tented camp, set up close to the monastery, offers a comfortable and scenic overnight accommodation option. Rest in your tent amidst the serene surroundings, enjoying nature's peacefulness.

Exploring Shey Gumpa is a must-do experience during your stay. Immerse yourself in the rich Buddhist traditions, admire the intricate architecture, and witness the spiritual practices of the resident monks. The cultural and religious significance of the monastery adds depth to your trekking adventure.

During your overnight stay at the tented camp, you will have the opportunity to unwind, share stories with fellow trekkers, and relish the camaraderie of the outdoors. The support team at the camp will ensure that you have a comfortable and enjoyable experience.

With its idyllic location and panoramic views, Shey Gumpa provides a memorable and soul-stirring setting in the heart of the Himalayas.

Overnight: Camping

Duration: Approx Approx 8 hours

Elevation: 4100m

Day 11: Day 11 Rest In Shey Gomba

We have a day to explore the environs and catch up on laundry and other camp chores. In the afternoon we side trip to visit the amazing Kagyupa monastery of Tsa Kang which is perched on a narrow ledge high on a cliff face. To get there we have to climb part way on the trail which pilgrims follow to make the 'Kora' or circuit of the Crystal Mountain. And we get back to Shey Gomba again.

Day 12: Day 12 trek to Tora/ Samling Bon Monastery 4100m (13451 feet) 6- 7 hours

Our trail heads north from Shey Gomba, cutting up the hillside on the east side of the Tartan Khola and skirting around at the head of a tributary valley to a high grazing area near the Den La. Following a broad stock trail across the open hillside, we drop down to Tora where the people from Bhijer graze their yaks in the summer. Depending on how long it has taken to get here, we could set up camp at Tora (4500m) or drop down to Samling Monastery (4120m).

Elevation: 4100m

Overnight: Camping

Duration: Approx 7 hours

Day 13: Day 13 Trek to Bicher Village 3850m (12631 feet) 3 hours

Samling is the oldest Bon Gomba in Dolpo and it was established in the 8th century. Its several white and brick-red buildings and chortens (Stupa) are scattered across a grassy slope and adorned with prayer flags. We will spend some time looking around. From Samling it's just a short walk to the village of Bhijer (3850m), a pleasant, welcoming and very Dolpo Pa village which sees very few trekkers. The house at Bhijer typically has an upper living space with the ground floor being used to shelter animals at night. The village has an open, sunny location and there's lots to see and do here. Look out for the local women doing their spinning, watch the barley harvest or visit the gomba. There is also a simple school, shop and a health post. This is the last place where the cook team may be able to purchase some fresh vegetables before reaching Mugu.

Overnight: Local Lodge

Elevation: 3850m

Duration: Approx 3 hours

Day 14: Day 14 Trek to Pho Village (4020m) (11154 feet) Crossing Yambur La (4800m) 15748 feet 6-7 hours

We'll aim to reach camp at Pho in the late morning. We head downstream (north) for about half an hour and then turn to head westwards and steeply uphill to the small village of Pho (4020m) which may be the most remote settlement in Nepal. Few people live here now and there are signs that the numbers are dwindling. Some of the fields on the edge of the village are eroded and no longer maintained. Nevertheless, Pho is a good place to make camp with level pitches and a clean and plentiful water supply.

Elevation: 4020m

Overnight: Local Tea House

Duration: Approx 7 hours

Day 15: Day 15 Trek to Daldung Khor(4700m) cross Nyima Gyalzen La (5563m) 18251 feet 8-9 hours

Once again, we are likely to see lots of blue sheep on this part of our route. We then have a similar, if slightly less steep, continuation of the day's walk up to our and cross Nyingma Gyanzen La. From here we can see numerous 6000 to 6800-metre snow-peaks of the Kanjiroba Himal more than make up for that. From Nyimagalzen La we descend for 2 hours and reach Daldung Khor and we set our camp.

Overnight: Camping

Duration: Approx 9 hours

Elevation: 4700m

Day 16: Day 16 Trek to Swaksa Khola/Pung Kharka (4500m) 14763 feet 3-4 hours

Today is a short trek, as we had a very long and hard day yesterday. After breakfast descend to Swaksa Khola and follow the river for 2-3 hours we reach at magnificent valley. This is a magnificent valley trending north-south which sees very few trekkers, although these high valleys are visited in early summer each year by local people searching for the valuable caterpillar fungus known as Yarsagumba.

Elevation: 4500m

Duration: Approx 4 hours

Overnight: Camping

Day 17: Day 17 Trek to Marjung Khola or the Chyandi Khola (4800m) crossing Cross the Yala La (5414m) 7-8 hours.

The route initially takes us alongside the Swaksa Khola and we can look out for the hoof marks of blue sheep and the pug marks of snow leopards in the sand beside the stream. We then turn left out of the valley and make a long and sustained ascent across a grassy hillside to the Yala La (5250m) which we reach after about 3 hours. We'll spend a bit of time at the pass to enjoy more great views, and snow-capped peaks in all directions, before setting off on the rocky descent into the valley of the Chyandi Khola. We reach our camp in the valley at an elevation of around 4800 metres in the late afternoon.

Day 18: Day 18 Trek to Takla Khola (3750m) 7-8 hours

Today is a long and challenging day as we descend the Chyandi Khola. There is no well-made path and we have to negotiate a lot of difficult terrain, possibly including the use of a safety rope on some short sections. Progress is likely to be slow and we will need to ford the river several times. Equally, we will have to climb up above the river at times to find the best route and this will involve contouring on a poor trail for extended periods, before a final zig-zagging

descent through ancient birch forest to the junction with the Takla Khola. A final river crossing on a log bridge before our arrival at camp may also require the use of a safety rope.

Day 19: Day 19 Trek to Thajuchaur (4000m) Crossing the Chyargo La (5100m) 7-8 hours

Another long day, initially trekking to Chyargo La Phedi at 4300 metres and then steadily upwards to the cairn-marked Chyargo La (5100m), which we reach after around 5 hours. This is a bleak and rocky place but with amazing views which provide a great overview of some of the geography we have been travelling through over recent days. It is wild terrain. A long descent then takes us into a gorge-like valley where the route becomes more tenuous again, with a mix of thick forest and several river crossings to negotiate. There is a place to camp at Thajuchaur at around 4000 metres elevation.

Overnight: Camping

Duration: Approx 8 hours

Elevation: 4000m

Day 20: Day 20 Trek to Shilenchaur Kharka (2945m) 5-6 hours

It's a relatively short distance from our camp down to the Mugu Khola, but making progress through this steep-sided and forested valley remains time-consuming with several more river crossings. Thankfully, there are bridges for the last couple of these crossings, before we emerge quite suddenly into the valley of the Mugu Khola. Here, we meet the main trail that links Rara Lake to the south with the village of Mugu and Tibet to the north.

Overnight: Local Tea House

Duration: Approx 6 hours

Elevation: 2945m

Day 21: Day 21 Off Day - It can be used in-case of difficulty or Detour to Mugu village

This day we use it if there is difficulty during the trek from Pho to Shilenchaur Kharka. If not then we detour to Mugu village. Great Himalaya Trail heads south from here, but we turn north (on the good trail) to Mugu which is about 3 hours away. There's a chance of encountering other trekkers on this trail. Arriving at Mugu (3400m), we set up camp on the broad, flat valley floor immediately below the village.

Day 22: Day 22 Trek to Pulu or Riusa (2250m) 7-8 hours.

We have 3 days to trek to the airport at Talcha just to the east of Rara Lake and for the whole of this journey, we will be on reasonably good trails that link the villages in the valley of the Mugu Karnali. On this first day, we descend steadily to the confluence of the Mugu with the NamlangNadi at Tyar and continue westwards for a further hour or two to a camping place beside the river below one of two villages, either Pulu or a little further on, Riusa.

Day 23: Day 23 Trek to Kumpha (2010m) 7-8 hours.

Another longish day in terms of distance but no big climbs, just 'Nepali undulation' beside the river. Again, there are lots of great views and we'll have plenty of opportunity to interact with the local people that we meet on the trail. We

pass through the striking settlement of Mangri which sits amongst its terraced fields on a bench above the south side of the river. Now heading in a south-westerly direction, we continue beside the Mugu Karnali through the village of Chhaila to a camping place close to the houses of Kumpha (2010m).

Overnight: Camping

Duration: Approx 8 hours

Elevation: 2010m

Day 24: Day 24 Trek to Rara Lake (2750m) 7 hours.

Day 25: Day 25 Trek to Talcha airport and fly to nepal ganj then fly to Kathmandu

Day 26: Day 26 Free day in Kathmandu which can also be used as contingency.

Day 27: Day 26 Depart to your Home Country

FAQ

1. How difficult is the Upper Dolpo Trek?

The Upper Dolpo Trek is considered one of the most challenging treks in Nepal due to its remoteness, high altitudes, and long duration. The trek typically lasts about 24-30 days and involves crossing several high mountain passes, including the Numa La Pass (5,190 meters) and Baga La Pass (5,070 meters).

Trekkers often face steep ascents and descents, rugged terrain, and variable weather conditions. Additionally, the region's high altitude means there's a significant risk of altitude sickness, making proper acclimatization essential. The lack of infrastructure, limited accessibility, and basic accommodation further complicate the trek. It's recommended for experienced trekkers with a high fitness level and previous experience in high-altitude trekking.

2. How much is the Upper Dolpo Trek permit?

The permits required for the Upper Dolpo Trek are:

- **Restricted Area Permit:** This is the primary permit for trekking in Upper Dolpo. The cost is USD 500 per person for the first ten days and USD 50 for each additional day beyond 10 days.
- **Shey Phoksundo National Park Permit:** This costs NPR 3,000 (approximately USD 25) per person.
- **TIMS (Trekking Information Management System) Card:** While TIMS is required for many treks in Nepal, it's not needed for Dolpo as the area is considered restricted, and the Restricted Area Permit covers it.

3. How far is Dolpa from Kathmandu by road?

The distance from Kathmandu to Dolpa by road is approximately 520-650 kilometers (323-404 miles), depending on the route taken. However, due to the rugged and underdeveloped road conditions, the journey is extremely challenging and lengthy. Typically, the road trip involves several days of travel, often requiring a combination of bus and jeep rides. The most common route is via Nepalgunj, which can take up to 20-25 hours by road from Kathmandu, followed by a long drive or flight to Dolpa. Most trekkers prefer to fly from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj and then to Juphal, the gateway to Dolpa, to avoid the arduous journey.

4. What is the height of Dolpa from sea level?

Dolpa (also spelled Dolpo) is a region with varying altitudes, ranging from around 1,500 meters (4,921 feet) in the lower areas to over 7,000 meters (22,966 feet) in the higher parts of the region. The district headquarters, Dunai, is located at an altitude of approximately 2,100 meters (6,890 feet) above sea level. The Upper Dolpo area, where most trekking takes place, typically ranges between 3,500 meters (11,483 feet) and 5,190 meters (17,027 feet), with the highest passes reaching over 5,000 meters.

5. What is Dolpa famous for?

Dolpa is famous for its remote and untouched landscapes, rich Tibetan culture, and the stunning Shey Phoksundo National Park. The region is renowned for the Shey Phoksundo Lake, one of Nepal's most beautiful and pristine lakes, known for its crystal-clear turquoise waters. Dolpa is also famous for its ancient Bön and Buddhist monasteries, like the Shey Gompa, and for being home to the elusive snow leopard and the Himalayan blue sheep. The area is

often called the "Hidden Land" due to its isolation and preservation of traditional Tibetan culture. Additionally, the challenging Upper Dolpo Trek, depicted in the famous French documentary "Himalaya" (also known as "Caravan"), has contributed to Dolpa's fame among adventurers and trekkers seeking a unique and off-the-beaten-path experience.

