

Upper Dolpo Trek - 27 Days

Trekking up the Upper Dolpo leads to the fabled "Hidden Land," or Ba-Yul. Dolpo is located in the vast Himalayan rain shadow on the border of the Tibetan Plateau. Geographically, extensive forests, deep valleys, and high mountains separate Upper Dolpo from the outside world. As a result, this stunning, untamed, and crystalline region had long been off-limits to outsiders. After several days of hiking through authentic Himalayan nature to the Upper Dolpo, we can see this location.

The itinerary for the upper Dolpo Trek will take you into the center of the Dolpo region, allowing you to see the traditional villages and engage with the locals. The journey begins in Juphal and ends at the remote town of Shey Phoksundo, where you may take in the area's pristine natural beauty. The upper Dolpo Trek Route is ideal for hikers seeking a distinctive experience because it winds through verdant forests, steep mountain passes, and secret valleys.

The Upper Dolpo Trek is a challenging yet incredibly rewarding trek located in the northwestern part of Nepal. This trek takes you through some of the Himalayas' most remote and least explored areas. It's not just about reaching high altitudes but also about immersing yourself in the unique culture and lifestyle of the people living in this secluded part of the world. One of the rare pockets of unrepressed traditional Tibetan culture exists in Dolpo. There is a lot of walking, but it is not difficult.

PRICE INCLUDES

- 3-night hotel in Kathmandu on a bed-and-breakfast basis
- Domestic flights from Kathmandu - Nepalgunj and return airfare
- One expert trek leader 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 and shift to Hotel

Upon your arrival at Kathmandu International Airport, you will be received by our representative to collect your baggage and drop you to the hotel. Depending on your arrival you will have time to explore or rest in your room.

Day 2: Day 2: Explore Kathmandu

We will begin our guided sightseeing of some of the most significant historical sites in the city after a hot and delectable breakfast. We will travel to Kathmandu Durbar Square, the ancient royal palace inside the city, and the well-known monkey temple, Swoyambhunath. We will not visit Boudhanath Stupa and Pashupatinath Temple today if they were visited yesterday. Rather, we will go to the Durbar Squares in Patan and Bhaktapur, which are the other two cities in the Kathmandu Valley. UNESCO has designated each of these places as a World Heritage Site.

Three durbar squares in the valley, once the royal palaces of past monarchs, are now museums: Kathmandu Durbar Square, Bhaktapur Durbar Square, and Patan Durbar Square. Inspired by Newari culture, the three durbar square complexes include unique and similar arts and architecture. Historians and culture vultures adore each durbar square, and they are all must-see locations in the valley.

Following our scenic tour, we will proceed to the office for a briefing on the Upper Dolpo walk. Now is the perfect time to buy or rent your preferred trekking snacks and personal equipment, as these items will be difficult to locate on the trail

Day 3: Day 3: Fly from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj (150m) 1 hour

After exploring Kathmandu and Completion of our permit and general trek preparations in Kathmandu, we will embark to the west region of Nepal. After one hour of flight to Nepalgunj, the hotel representatives will be there to receive you and you will be dropped off at the hotel Depending on your arrival you will have time to explore.

Nepalgunj is one of the central cities in the western regions and people from the Himalayas like Dolpo come up here to trade on the Indian border.

Day 4: Day 4: Nepalgunj to Juphal and trek to Dunai (2,150m) 3 hours

We need to go to the airport early morning to get the flight for Dolpo. After 35 minutes of flying across the rugged terrain mountains, we will land at Juphal Airfield, which is only the gateway to upper Dolpo and Phoksundo Lake. From Juphal Airfield, we need to trek for 2-3 hours depending on your pace to get our destinations.

Accommodation: Camping or Lodge

Elevation: 2100m

Day 5: Day 5: Chhepka (2,660m) 6 hours

After meeting with our all ground staff and mules. We will embark on Chhepka along the Phoksundo River. At the Shey Phoksundo National Park check post, we need to take an entry permit and we commence our trek. While trekking between these two beautiful destinations, we will get an opportunity to see Some Nomad camps and Small Lodges on the way called Kagani and Sangta. After crossing dense forests and narrow paths we will enter deep gorges and terrains where we will see small hamlet Chhepka in front of you.

Accommodation: Lodge

Elevation : 2660m

Day 6: Day 6: Saijol or Chunuwar (3,500m) 6 hours

Embark on an adventure journey this day we will again follow the Phoksundo River and dense pine, juniper, and birch forest. The narrow landscape will open slowly and chirping birds and clean pristine river water will welcome you along the trek. After 4/5 hours of trek, we will encounter Riyachi Village where some Gurung communities are residing there and we will make our lunch break here. After the Lunch break, we will again continue our journey towards our destination Saijol or Chunuwar. In Saijol Samjana Hotel, Snow Leopard Hotel, Trekkers Inn, Jhharana Hotel, and Shey Karnali are the running lodges here.

Accommodation: Lodges or Camping

Elevation: 3500m

Day 7: Day 7: Phoksundo Lake (3,600m) 5 hours

After early morning breakfast we will move forward towards Phoksundo Lake. Rugged terrain and opening landscape will lead us to Beautiful Phoksundo Lake along the nation's biggest waterfall, narrow cliff path, and Birch, juniper, and pine forests.

We will be in Phoksundo during the lunch break depending on the time we can figure out for the short hike or rest in your warm.

Accommodation: Lodges or Camping

Elevation : 3600m

Day 8: Day 8: Phoksundo Lake (3,600m) Rest day and Exploration Day

On this day we will hike a little bit higher than our camp for acclimatization. We will take out a packed lunch and our guide will navigate our entire day.

After the return from a higher altitude, our team will prepare some hot soup for us and we will certainly move to Bon Monastery called Palshenten Thasang Tsoiling Bon Gompa which is located at the shores of Phoksundo Lake. The Bon Monastery was built in the 15th Century it was built for protect wildlife and the surrounding environment. Phoksundo Lake is another attraction for tourists during free days, The lake frequently changes its color and is known as a non-living lake also.

Accommodation: Lodges or Camping

Elevation: 3600m

Day 9: Day 9: Ruktang (3,507m) 5 hours

Embark on an adventure journey towards Upper Dolpo we will enter in Upper Dolpo Region from Phoksundo Lake. While leaving the Shores of Phoksundo Lake you will be reminded Famous Film Himalaya or Caravan. After crossing all the narrow cliff paths we will ascend towards the North bank of the lake called Cholophugu where some local people from Phoksundo come up there for Tea houses. By reaching the end shores of the lake you will enjoy the pebbles beach with the calmness of natural lake waving sounds. At the same time, we will have our lunch on the shores of Phoksundo Lake.

Accommodation: Camping

Elevation: 3707m

Day 10: Day 10: Kangla Base Camp (4,402m) 7 hours

We will leave after having a heavy breakfast towards Kangla Pass which is bestowed for our entire trek and you will get more confident after crossing this giant Pass. Entering deep gorges crossing many times bridges and small streams. The streams coming from the Kangla Pass always change the water volumes depending on the season. After completing the deep gorges the landscape will slowly open up and the high camp will be just below the small waterfall with a small Shelter house.

Day 11: Day 11: Shey Gompa (4,126 m) via Kang-La pass (5,350m) 6 hours

Embark on an Adventure journey this day will challenge you with one of the highest passes in our set itinerary. After leaving High Camp we will proceed in the North direction and turn left when we reach the bottom of Kangla. The straight steep sandy trail leads us to the summit, While approaching the pass we will see the next trail to go to Saldang village directly. After crossing Kangla we will descend steeply down till Shey Gompa.

Shey Gompa is a nearly 800-year-old monastery that is a sect of Buddhists. There are three main monasteries, they are Sumdo, Tsakahng, and Gomeche.

Accommodation: Camping

Elevation: 4100m

Day 12: Day 12: Shey Gompa exploration (5,151m) Rest day

We can utilize our whole day by visiting the Monasteries and Meeting with some Buddhist monks. From our Camping, we need to walk nearly an hour to get to Red Hermitage or Tsakhang Monastery, which is the Nyingma sect monastery currently this monastery is taken care of by Sheri Choktul Rinpoche by Their Lineage.

There is the next monastery 30 minutes from Tsakhang which is the main Monk place that introduced Shey Gompa and Crystal Mountain at that time his holiness Druptop Shinge Yeshe meditated and attained enlightenment. His Relics are kept in a cave there.

Accommodation: Camping

Elevation: 5151m

Day 13: Day 13: Namgung Gumba (4,400 m) via Saldang La (4,785m) 7 hours

Leaving Shey Gompa Village behind, we take the path that takes us up to the gray stone gorge and then towards the juniper forest. Next, we hike up the rugged, zigzagging trail that leads to the top of Salang-La Pass (4785 meters). From this vantage point, you can see the Tibetan mountains and the Mustang area. We appreciate the views of the grazing cattle, landscapes, and a few nomadic tents as we make our way down from the summit. These sights indicate that we have arrived at the Saldang village compound, which consists of stone buildings and farm fields that go all the way to the Nam Khong Khola. We will spend the first part of the day exploring the area before visiting Namgung Monastery, a red stone monastery in Namduna Gaon.

Accommodation: Camping or Lodge

Elevation: 4785m

Day 14: Day 14 : Saldang (3,903m) 5 hours

We are going to trek through an ancient trade route to Tibet today. After breakfast, we depart from Namduna Gaon and hike uphill on a slope, starting our hike through the rocky and steep slopes. After walking for a few hours, we begin to see hints of Saldang Village, which is the biggest settlement in the inner Dolpo and is encircled by breathtaking hills. Perched well above the Nam Khong Nala River is the location of this plateau. We will take a stroll through the village, chat with the residents, and sample some Chhyang (barley beer) or SuCha (salt butter tea). Dolpo's historic Buddhist and Amchi traditions thrive in this hamlet. Spend the night in Saldang Village at a tented camp.

Accommodation: Camping

Elevation: 3903m

Day 15: Day 15 : Yangze Gompa (3,855m) 5 hours

We will be taking a side trip today to Yangze Gompa (3885 m), also known as Yangtsher Gumpa, which is situated in Saldang's northern region. We will experience some ups and downs as we stroll down the bleak, windy trail by the Nagon Khola. After traveling past the towns of Marang and Ki and crossing a Panzang River tributary, we head east till we arrive at Yangze Gompa. It is thought to be a monastery dating back a millennium. The largest monastery in the area, it boasts numerous chortens of all sizes that contribute to its impressive appearance. It is the culmination of the day's work. After paying our respects and touring the monastery, we head back to Saldang. Or you could decide to stay at the Gompa for today and come back.

Accommodation: Camping

Elevation: 3855m

Day 16: Day 16: Sibü (3,942m) 6 hours

After breakfast, we head out of Saldang village and follow the trail to the riverbed, passing by a number of terraced farms en route. Then we continue past Mani walls, prayer flags, prayer wheels, and chortens. We will visit Namdo Monastery after walking along a river that leads to Chaiba Monastery and Namdo Village. After several hours of nonstop river travel, we arrive in Sibü village. Spend the night in Sibü at a tented camp.

Accommodation: Camping

Elevation: 3942m

Day 17: Day 17: Jeng-la Phedi (4,369m) 6 hours

Following a substantial breakfast, we set out on the day's hike, tracing the path alongside the Nam Khong Khola and crossing a brook. From here on, we move into the dense forests of silver birch, pine, and juniper. We then start our ascent toward the side valley after a little distance. Trails get a little trickier from this point forward. We keep going till we come to a trail split and ascend via yak pastures to the base of Jenga La. This lovely meadow will be our camp for the night.

Accommodation: Camping

Elevation: 4369m

Day 18: Day 18 : Tokyu Gaon via Jeng pass (5,210m) 5 hours

The travel to Jeng La Pass begins early in the morning. We arrive at Jeng La Pass's summit, which provides a captivating vista of the Dhaulagiri Mastiff, after a two-hour hike. Once we have had enough time to take in the grandeur from the viewpoint, we make our way down a rugged path that leads to the intriguing valley known as Tarap Valley. Stretching twenty kilometers along the Tarap Chu River, we can see the great grasslands in the high mountains. When we get at Tokyu Gaon, we shall explore the Chortens and Gompas. We are going to stay overnight close to the Tokyu Monastery.

Accommodation: Camping or Lodge

Elevation: 5210m

Day 19: Day 19: Dho Tarap (4,090m) 5 hours

Due to our visit to the old Tokyo Monastery before departing the hamlet and beginning our day's travel, our morning begins much earlier than it has in the past. Together with the fields, Mani Walls, and Chortens, the trail descends a plain valley. We might arrange for you to visit the picturesque Chaiba Gompa along the way and explore its environs. After that, we follow routes with additional chortens and mani walls until we get at our destination. In the settlement of Tarap, there are Magars and a small number of Tibetans who follow both the Buddhist and Bon Po sects. We will set up tent, take a nap, and then go explore the hamlet, meet the people, and pay a visit to the gompas. Spend the night.

Accommodation: Camping or lodging

Elevation: 4090m

Day 20: Day 20: Dho Tarap exploration (4,090m) Rest day

It is worthwhile to spend the day relaxing and seeing the village of Dho Tarap. Dho Tarap is a large settlement surrounded by numerous mani walls, chortens, and monasteries, all decorated with vibrant Buddhist prayer flags. Gorgeous fields of potatoes, buckwheat, barley, wheat, and other green crops enhance the village's beauty. In the well-known movie "Caravan," directed by Eric Valli, this village is shown. Karma, Thinley, and their friends go across the high passes to trade salt for grain. We can choose to visit one of the monasteries in the Dho Tarap region today, including the Mekhyim, Ribo Bumpa, Drakmar Dewa, and Dhoro monasteries.

Accommodation: Camping or Lodge

Elevation: 4090m

Day 21: Day 21: Nawarpani (3,800m) 6 hours

We descend from Dho Tarap towards a broad valley and come across juniper and wild rose bushes. On our journey, if we are fortunate enough, we might come across flocks of blue sheep. We will arrive at the intersection of Tarap Chu and Lang Khola by the afternoon, where the Tarap River empties into the east. We are going to tent in Nawarpani and stay there for the night.

Accommodation: Camping

Elevation: 3800m

Day 22: Day 22: Lasicap (2900m) 6 hours

We are going to have an amazing adventure on our trip today since the valley gets so small that we will have to jump from one side to the other. In the areas between the walls where we require more caution, we will also tread on artificial stone slabs. Under the large, graceful trees that shade it, our campground next to the Lasicap is incredibly lovely and relaxing.

Accommodation: Camping

Elevation: 2900m

Day 23: Day 23: Tarakot (2,281m) 5 hours

We depart Lasicap shortly after breakfast and travel to the village of Lalberi. After that, we hike through a thick forest, descend into a different settlement, follow the river, and eventually arrive in Tarakot. Perched atop a hill at the meeting point of Barbung Khola and Tarap Chu rests the Sandul Gompa. We will camp out next to the Tarap Chu River police post and spend the night there.

Accommodation: Camping or Lodge

Elevation: 2281m

Day 24: Day 24: Dunai (2,140m) 6 hours

Our route follows the Bheri River until it meets the village of Dunai. We have reached the end of our journey to Upper Dolpo. When we get to the village, we will stop for a new break and have some local brews, wines, or bottles of beer in the evening.

Accommodation: Camping or Lodge

Elevation: 2140m

Day 25: Day 25: Juphal (2,502m) 3 hours

We follow the Bheri River as we depart Dunai, taking in the breathtaking scenery. We stroll by the villages of Dhupichaur and Ruggad, proceed in the direction of Kalagaonda and Motipur, and eventually arrive at the small airstrip in Juphal.

Accommodation: Camping or Lodge

Elevation: 2502m

Day 26: Day 26: Fly to Kathmandu via Nepalgunj 1 hour

We will take the earliest flight possible from Nepalgunj and Juphal, then change to a later flight to Kathmandu. Once you are in Kathmandu, the rest of the day is yours to do as you choose. You can take a leisurely stroll through Thamel or the other old marketplaces of Ason and Indrachowk, picking up a few distinctive souvenirs for your loved ones. We will have dinner and take part in a traditional event in an authentic Nepalese restaurant in the evening.

Day 27: Day 27: Depart From Kathmandu

It is time for us to say goodbye to one another today. Following breakfast, three hours before to your scheduled flight back to your home country or further destination, we will assist you with checking out of the hotel and transferring you to the airport.

FAQ

1. How difficult is the Upper Dolpo Trek?

The trek is considered strenuous due to high altitudes, long walking hours, and rugged terrain. That being said, it is appropriate for people with prior trekking experience and decent physical shape. However, Good physical fitness is essential.

2. What is the best time to trek Upper Dolpo?

The best time to trek is during spring (April to June) and autumn (September to November) when the skies are clear and the weather is stable. This is because the high passes have little to no snowfall during these warmer months.

3. What is the accommodation like on the trek?

Basic accommodation is usually provided in tents or teahouses. Prepare for simple living arrangements as there aren't many facilities, just shared rooms and basic toilets, but they're enough for hikers' needs.

Some hikers decide to camp, but this means carrying your own cooking supplies and camping equipment.

4. Are there any cultural or religious sites to visit during the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Indeed, the Upper Dolpo Trek includes several religious and cultural attractions, such as the Shey Gumpa and Crystal Mountain. These websites provide an opportunity to learn about the Dolpo region's Tibetan Buddhist spirituality and culture.

5. What kind of physical preparation is needed for the Upper Dolpo Trek?

Due to the physical demands of the Upper Dolpo Trek, physical preparation is essential before starting the adventure. Exercises like jogging, weightlifting, and trekking can be used for both strength and cardio training. Before undertaking the Upper Dolpo Trek, it's crucial to increase your endurance by going on shorter climbs or treks.

6. Why is Dolpo famous?

Dolpa, also known as Dolpo, is famous for its remote and unspoiled natural beauty, rich Tibetan Buddhist culture, and challenging trekking routes. It features stunning landscapes like Shey Phoksundo Lake, ancient monasteries such as Shey Gumpa, and diverse wildlife within Shey Phoksundo National Park. The region's isolation has preserved its unique traditions and lifestyles, making it a captivating destination for adventurous trekkers and cultural enthusiasts.

7. What is the height of Upper Dolpo?

Upper Dolpo reaches its maximum height at Kang La Pass, which stands at 5,350 meters (17,552 feet) above sea level, presenting a significant challenge and remarkable views for trekkers exploring this remote region of Nepal.